

ment of these properties. I will support the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	8

Majority for .. 7

AYES.

Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. E. H. Harris
Hon. G. Potter	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. R. Brown	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. A. Burvill	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. J. Ewing	(Teller.)
Hon. J. W. Hickey	

Amendment thus passed

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That before "person" in line 1 of paragraph (b) "other" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move an amendment—

That after "Act" in paragraph (b) the words "and every such person shall, in accordance with their respective priorities, if more than one, have a lien on the amount so payable as compensation" be inserted.

I pointed out on the second reading that the first mortgagee, the man who created the asset, would come in with the other creditors with a claim for compensation. Later the Minister, I think, said that that was not so. I have one of the best legal authorities behind me and he claims that it is necessary to add the words contained in my amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I suggest that we have done enough for one day. We are now about to define what is meant by the unimproved value of land. It is the crux of the whole Bill. The Minister ought to be content for to-night.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 26th November, 1924.

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

QUESTION—PEMBERTON SAWMILL BOARDING-HOUSE.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that a new hostel or boarding-house has been erected at Pemberton? 2, If so, has the lease of this hostel or boarding-house been granted to an ex-postal official? 3, If so, was the leasing of this proposition advertised in the usual manner and was the Tender Board acquainted? 4, Did the State Sawmills Department assist in any way to guarantee furniture, etc., to the lessee?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, Yes, a new boarding-house is being erected at Pemberton and is nearing completion. 2, No. 3, Tenders were called for the leasing of this proposition in the "West Australian" and also by notice at Pemberton Mill office, and are now under consideration. This is the first occasion tenders have been called for the letting of State Sawmill boarding-houses, and such matters are outside the jurisdiction of the Tender Board. 4, No guarantee or assistance has been given by the department in the way of furnishing.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Richardson, leave of absence for one week granted to Lieut.-Col. Denton (Moore) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILLS (5)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Forests Act Amendment.
- 2, Stamp Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier.
- 3, Waroona-Lake Clifton Railway.
Introduced by the Minister for Railways.

- 4, Mining Development Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Mines.
- 5, Racing Restriction Act Amendment.
Introduced by Mr. Sleeman.

BILL—NORSEMAN-SALMON GUMS RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Norham) [4.39]: I am sure it must be an unhappy moment for you, Mr. Speaker, to be in the Chair. Doubtless you would like to be on the floor of the House to advocate the construction of this railway. Times have changed, however, and there is not much need now to battle for the Esperance district. The Minister told us that of the 640,000 acres of land that will be served by 40 miles of the 60 miles of new line—eliminating 10 miles from either end—one-half is first-class land. I hope the report of the Minister for Lands justifies the statement of the Minister for Works. No doubt it will. When we discussed this matter on a motion moved by you, Sir, last session, I said that if the reports justified the construction of the line, I would introduce a Bill to authorise it. It was not possible for me to do that, but it is possible for me to support the second reading. Unfortunately, production along the line already constructed has been disappointing. I am firmly convinced that in time production will increase and that we shall get more traffic. At present, however, the line must be a non-paying proposition.

The Minister for Lands: Traffic has hardly been run on the line yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This season has been a bad one and it will take time to get traffic.

The Minister for Lands: It has been a very good season down there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not over the whole area. After leaving the coast the rainfall declines very rapidly. A 23-inch rainfall at Esperance becomes 13 inches at Salmon Gums, 60 miles away. The extension of the railway from Salmon Gums to Norseman will serve very much better land than that already opened up. Though it has not as heavy a rainfall, from our experience at Southern Cross, I am hopeful the land will turn out well. Ten years ago the wheats grown in this State took about 150 days to mature, but now we have wheats that will grow in 100 days, and that has altered the position completely. In almost all this country it is possible to get 100 days of good growing with sufficient rainfall. I hope the Premier will agree to the railways already authorised being first constructed. The Yarramony eastward line, promised many years ago by the present Premier when Minister for Railways in the Scaddan Government,

and promised by every Government since that time, should be commenced before the Norseman-Salmon Gums line. The line to Newdegate should also be given priority. People are settled at Newdegate and have a considerable quantity of wheat to send away. That line should be constructed without any delay. Then the line to the Dale River, long promised and fully justified, should also be built. These three lines should be constructed prior to the Salmon Gums extension. There is another railway that I shall leave the member for Williams-Narrogin to discuss.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The most important of all.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then there is the Dwarda-Narrogin line, which was authorised by my friends opposite in about 1912.

The Premier: I think that authorisation has lapsed now. The line will have to be authorised again.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Possibly the Statute of Limitations bars it. However, the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) can attend to that railway. The four lines in question do not amount to very much in length; the Newdegate line is short, and the Dale River line represents only 30 miles. I hold that we should build very much cheaper lines in the early stages of settlement.

The Premier: We have practically decided on that policy.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We should lay down lines similar to the wood lines, for a start. The Public Works Department, however, have always contended that the cost of rails and sleepers is so great that a cheap line cannot be built. I suppose rails will cost at least £1,000 per mile, and sleepers at least £400 or £500 per mile; and then there is the cost of laying the track. However, we ought to get down to a cost that is reasonable, a cost that we can afford to pay interest on.

The Premier: About £2,000 per mile.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. In the old days we built railways for about £1,000 per mile. I regard the purchase of new 45lb. rails as a mistake. We should in future substitute 60lb. rails for 45lb. rails on established lines, and use the lighter rails in districts that are in the early stage of development. I hope the Government will give an assurance that the railways which have been authorised will be commenced before this line is started. I feel sure the Government have no wish to do injustice to the old settled districts with regard to promised railway facilities. The Premier has enough loan money to go on with a moderate policy of railway construction during the coming 12 months. Would it be possible to commence any of these authorised lines straight away? If the Government decided on a very light type of railway, the cost would be reasonable. We know it is impos-

sible to get money transferred from London to Australia just now, and also that money is extremely difficult to obtain in Australia. I hope that the country to be opened up by the line which this Bill proposes to authorise will prove of great benefit to Western Australia. It has been said time and again that the opposition to the Norseman line was the opposition of the coastal people to the possibility of loss of trade, because South Australia might supply the goldfields with goods which otherwise would be supplied by the coastal area of Western Australia. That objection, however, has practically disappeared. No doubt the port of Fremantle was a rival of the port of Esperance, but the Minister for Lands will certainly tell us that that rivalry has disappeared.

The Minister for Lands: I always voted for this line.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. gentleman voted with his party, of course.

The Minister for Lands: I voted with your Government for this line.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The opposition that we were told was entertained by the people of the coast to this line no longer exists.

Hon. S. W. MUNNIE: The line is coming 15 years too late.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [4.51]: I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill to connect the line running from Esperance to Salmon Gums with the goldfields railway system at Norseman. It is natural that the Country Party should support the Government in this proposed action, because the Government are really carrying out a policy which is in entire consonance with our platform. We stand for decentralisation and also for the construction of railways to already settled areas and their further extension to precede settlement. I am indeed pleased to see that plank of our platform put into operation, whether by the Government of the day or any other Administration. I understand that the proposed line will serve a good belt of agricultural land close to the goldfields market. At one time this was a burning question in the coastal area, but to-day there is far more unity than there was formerly between the goldfields and the coast, which is evidenced by the fact that a Minister representing Fremantle, and a Government in which Fremantle has strong representation, have determined to do justice, by this measure, to the Esperance district. It will be found that the members of the Country Party in both Chambers will give the proposal unqualified and unconditional support. The linking up of our railway system will be a very good thing. The Commissioner of Railways has constantly complained of the difficulties regarding rolling stock and otherwise in working isolated sections of railway. In fact, it would have been a very good thing if the previous Labour

Government had been permitted to do what they tried to do, namely, build the line right through from Esperance to Norseman straight away, instead of constructing it in 60 mile sections. The Leader of the Opposition referred to other railways which should be built, but my object in speaking is not to do that so much as to support this line. At the same time I welcome the action of the Leader of the Opposition in urging the Government to build the line from Narrogin to Dwarda, if that action is only to be regarded as a sign of the hon. member's repentance of his unfortunate decision a little more than two years ago to stop the construction of that railway when it was in full swing. From that point of view I hold that there should be more joy over a sinner that repenteth than over anyone else.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What do you accuse me of?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. gentleman stopped the construction of the line from Narrogin to Dwarda immediately upon his return from England, and, therefore, I am now delighted to hear him urge the present Government to give that line preference. I support the proposal of the Bill on its merits. I believe the Government intend to build the several other lines to which reference has been made, and that they will do a fair thing by the old settled districts, as well as by this new district, which they quite properly desire to furnish with railway facilities.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [4.55]: I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill as a measure of decentralisation. Every port should get the traffic to which it is geographically entitled. Each time that a Bill in this connection has come before the House, it has received the support of Murchison members, who realise that there is now a good case put up for the railway from an agricultural point of view, whereas in past years the argument was based on the volume of trade which geographically belonged to the port of Esperance, but was diverted to the port of Fremantle. The more ports we open up, the better for Western Australia. Murchison members realise that a question relating to the port of Geraldton will come before Parliament, and they know that they will then receive the support of Eastern Goldfields members.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You can't bargain.

Mr. CHESSON: Geraldton is the western port of the State, and Murchison members have consistently opposed centralisation. I feel perfectly certain that we shall receive from the goldfields members the support we expect. The railway proposed by the present Bill has been long required, and I am glad that at last we have a Government prepared to bring in the necessary authorisation. The majority of the people of Western Australia favour the construction

of this line, which will give Esperance the trade to which its geographical situation entitles it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.58]: I would not have spoken on this Bill but for one or two uncalled-for insinuations which have been made. I introduced to Parliament the measure authorising the construction of the first section of this railway.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I withdraw and apologise.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Previously I had on several occasions supported the construction of a line right through from Esperance to Norseman. I wish to assure the Leader of the Opposition that the reports from the surveyors sent out to inspect and classify the land between Norseman and Salmon Gums show that it is satisfactory, although the land around Norseman itself is not altogether suitable for agriculture. During last year this part of the State suffered severely from want of rain, and the commencement of this year has been somewhat similar in that respect. However, reports received by the Agricultural Bank during the last few weeks with regard to the prospects of the Esperance farmers have been very encouraging. Indeed, the prospects are much better than anticipated, and machinery is now travelling down the line for the purpose of gathering the harvest. Six weeks ago the Esperance farmers were short of water, but to-day every dam in the district is full. With the linking up of the two sections of the railways, the working of the system will be facilitated. In fact, I believe that nearly the cost of construction will be saved in a few years when we take into consideration the expenditure that would be incurred in the working of the southern section of the line had this extension not been agreed to. The Government have been considering seriously the construction of lighter railway lines. I would refer to the railway approved of in 1923 to connect Pemberton with Denmark. That line will cost £250,000 to go to Northcliffe alone.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, no!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, that is the estimate of the departmental engineers. We have caused a special investigation to be made, and there is every possibility of a lighter line being used during the first stages of development in that area. That line will be constructed at practically half that cost. Thus it is that the Government are carrying out the desire of the Leader of the Opposition, in that we are inquiring into the possibility of having cheaper lines laid down during the early stages of development.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Hear, hear! I hope you will succeed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government have definitely decided, owing

to the dearness and scarcity of money and of the necessity for opening up the country by means of railways, that railway construction shall be carried out more cheaply. It is being done in some of the Eastern States, and it was done here in the early days. The same thing can be done here to-day. If that be done, more land will be thrown open for development. If we are to populate Western Australia, we must have railways. There are millions of acres outside a payable distance from railways where people could be settled if light railways could be constructed to give access to markets. People are inquiring every day for land, and we have been informed that there are persons with means who would be willing to take up land within reasonable distance of a railway. The mistake we have made in the past has been that the State has had to carry too great a burden in connection with the development of our outlying districts. The people have largely relied upon the Government for financial assistance.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And they have done jolly good work with the money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not complaining about that, but owing to the distance of some of the country from railways, the Government cannot possibly take such additional risks as I have indicated. If we can open up the large areas I have referred to, and enable people to develop their properties with their own money, it will be of greater advantage to the State than if the Government were to accept the financial responsibility. If a profit results from the work, the settler will reap the benefit; if there be a loss, the State will have to accept that responsibility. Last session both Houses of Parliament carried a motion approving of the construction of this line. In fact the Legislative Council were so anxious about it that they urged that the Bill should be introduced that session.

Mr. Taylor: They fell in there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: However, the Government have brought the Bill forward this session, and I hope that the line will be constructed very soon. I assure the member for Narrogin-Williams (Mr. E. B. Johnston) that once Parliament has approved of a work, the Labour Party will always endeavour to carry out their promises to the people, and that when money is made available the work will be undertaken.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [5.5]: It is something like 30 years since I first advocated the construction of a line from Esperance to Coolgardie. In those days it was claimed that a line should be constructed because the goldfields areas were entirely dependent upon the Eastern States and the Old Country for food supplies, and everything else required for the development of the goldfields. Everything had to

come through Fremantle, and as Northam was the terminus of the railway, supplies and requirements had to be taken on to Southern Cross by teams, making the task expensive. The new arrivals on the goldfields, amongst whom I was one, thought that the proper port for the goldfields was Esperance. We made a strong appeal to the Government of the day to construct a line from Esperance to Coolgardie. Had the line been constructed at that time it would have paid for itself within three years, but vested interests prevented the work from being carried out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The money was not available then.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was the most urgent line at the time, for the development of the goldfields, but urgency and importance had to stand aside because there were other parts of the State whose representatives had a greater pull than had the people on the goldfields. It is proposed to build the present line wholly for agricultural purposes, because the goldfields in these days are not as flourishing as they were years ago.

The Minister for Lands: They will come again.

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope so; it will be a grand thing for the State when they do. It will take time, however, and in the meanwhile the line must be regarded as one for agricultural purposes. I am sorry the Minister did not give us more details regarding the agricultural prospects of the area between Norseman and Salmon Gums. A former Minister for Agriculture traversed that part of the State and discovered what he termed a new province.

The Minister for Lands: That is further eastward.

Mr. TAYLOR: That area is a good way from where the proposed line will cross the mallee belt. That belt is about 30 miles wide; I do not know what is its length. Some say that it extends to Newdegate in one direction and I do not know how far it goes in the opposite direction. I would like information as to what the new agricultural province I refer to is like and what has been the verdict of the inspectors who have traversed the country during the last two years. However, we must link up the two sections so as to have a line through from Norseman to Esperance, irrespective of what the agricultural possibilities may be. It must appear inconsistent to one possessing a knowledge of railway management to think that the State can run a line 60 miles northward from Esperance to Salmon Gums.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: It would not pay axle grease.

Mr. TAYLOR: That is so. A repair shop would have to be maintained at Esperance and everything required for it would have to be taken round to that port

by boat. The sooner the Government construct the line from Salmon Gums to Norseman, the better it will be for the State. That must be done irrespective of whether the line will prove a valuable acquisition to our railway system or whether it will be a drag upon it. I have been through the country there and I have no doubt that good land is available and that, with an adequate rainfall, we shall be able to produce wheat in abundance in those parts.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [5.10]: I have pleasure in supporting the Bill. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) said that 30 years ago he advocated the construction of the railway. It is 30 years since I took part in the first meeting held at Norseman in connection with the construction of a railway to the coast at Esperance. That hon. member made reference to information that the Minister for Lands might have given. A little while ago the Minister gave us a fund of information respecting the new wheat province in that part of the State. I was astounded to find what a vast expansive tract of country we possess there.

The Minister for Lands: It has not been classified yet.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I understand that is the position, but it is beyond question that we have a very fine belt of country there. I have conferred with men who have been through that section of the State and they spoke in praise of the country through to Newdegate. As some of the people at Newdegate stated at the Lake Grace show recently, they considered that belt of country would provide one of the biggest wheat-growing sections of the State. While they considered that Newdegate was not isolated, they contended they were simply out of the way. They expressed the view that some day people in Perth would recognise what a vast asset they had there and would agree to the development of that section of the State. The reference made to the construction of light railways appeals to me in view of the large areas it is impossible to settle at present because of the distance from railways. Like the member for Williams-Narriogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) I have my own particular axe to grind and I wish to see the Yarramony-Eastward railway constructed. It has been reported that I advocated the use of motor traction for the lifting of produce in that part. I deny that emphatically. I claim that a railway should be constructed through that part of the State.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.14]: To you, Mr. Speaker, it must be a source of satisfaction when you realise that that which you fought for during many years and which has been one of your ambitions,

is now within reach of realisation. It was gratifying to hear from the Minister for Lands that there is such a large area of land in the districts concerned that is suitable for agriculture. The Minister said that the only way we could open up and develop this State was by the construction of railways. As a member of a party, one of whose main planks is decentralisation, it affords me great pleasure to support the second reading of the Bill. I believe the settlers in this particular area will be in a unique position because, for the first time in the history of land settlement in this State, so far as I am aware, the construction of a railway before settlement has been determined upon. Those of us who represent districts that have suffered for years for the lack of railway communication, hope that the land is as good as the Minister claims. If that be so, then those who will be settled in such favourable conditions, having a railway already provided for them, will be in a fortunate position. The accepted distance from a railway at which wheat can be profitably grown is $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles. However, in these days of motor traction I believe we shall be able to go out even 20 miles and profitably grow wheat, for a man can get his loads along much more quickly and easily by motor transport.

The Minister for Lands: It all depends on the roads.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so. It occurs to me that another place made a serious blunder when they threw out a Bill designed to bring into being a public works committee. Frequently railway Bills are brought down to the House with but very meagre information.

Mr. Lutey: That does not apply in this instance.

Mr. THOMSON: No, it does not. I am alluding to it as a general principle. If we had a public works committee the State might often get better results than it does. In the past, railways have been authorised by the House in direct opposition to the recommendations of the railway advisory board. I hope the Government will consider the reintroduction of that Bill for the setting up of a public works committee. It would save the State many thousands of pounds. To-day the Minister for Railways has given notice of a Bill to discontinue the Lake Clifton-Waroona railway. Of course that line was constructed without the authority of Parliament; but had we had a public works committee, in all probability the railway would never have been built.

The Minister for Lands: It would not have been referred to the public works committee.

Mr. THOMSON: Perhaps not. But the public works committee, hearing of the proposed expenditure, would want to know why the work had not been referred to it.

The Minister for Lands: The line was built by a private company.

Mr. THOMSON: No, actually it was built by the ex-Minister for Works. However, I am merely suggesting that it would be in the interests of the State if we created a public works committee. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.18]: It seems that all members are in favour of the authorisation of this line, perhaps largely because of the publicity it has had during the past 30 years. In my opinion every district with a possibility of successful settlement should have its natural outlet. I am not in favour of any legislation that would serve to centralise the commerce of the State, and so I support the Bill heartily. I do not regard with so much confidence as do others the possibility of constructing light railways with satisfactory results. We should not overburden the capitalisation of our railway system by constructing light lines that, before long, will require to be standardised. Of course, in some districts, possibly in the very district to be served by this main line, light feeder lines could be satisfactorily built and operated. The only regrettable feature about the Bill is that when the line is constructed and Esperance has reached prosperity there will be a Federal Customs officer there to exploit the mining and other industries in the hinterland.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Authority to construct:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I ask for an assurance that the railways already authorised shall be built before the construction of this line begins. In 1918 the House passed a resolution affirming that the first railway to be constructed should be the Esperance Northward line. I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added: "Provided that the construction of such railway shall not be commenced until after the commencement of the construction of all other railways authorised by Parliament by any existing Act."

I hope the Minister will agree to that. It would be inconsistent in Ministers to oppose the amendment, since they warmly supported the resolution passed in 1918.

The Premier: The carrying of a resolution is quite different from putting such a thing into an Act. The Government are not bound by a resolution.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Any respectable Government would be. It is only fair that the several authorised lines should be built in their proper order of precedence. Moreover, if this line be built actually ahead of settlement it will be a long time before it can be expected to pay. It would be ridiculous to build the line at present, when there is not a soul resident along the route. The settlers nearer to Esperance are already served by the existing line. I have nothing whatever against this proposed line, but I want an assurance that it will be constructed in its proper order of precedence. I hope the Premier will offer no opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The present Bill authorises the construction of a certain railway. It does not deal with the inception of the work. The amendment is, therefore, irrelevant and accordingly inadmissible.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move—

That the Committee dissents from the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. Marshall: You seem to have a contrary disposition to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member put his disagreement in writing?

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.

The Chairman stated the dissent.

Mr. Speaker: I uphold the Chairman's ruling on the ground that this Bill is no more than an authorisation for construction. It is not a Bill to provide money for the construction, or for means for its construction, or for the undertaking of the work. It is purely and simply a bare authorisation for the construction. Anything beyond that, or outside that purpose, is beyond the scope of the Bill and is irrelevant. I, therefore, uphold the Chairman's ruling.

Dissent from Speaker's Ruling.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I move—

That the House dissents from the Speaker's ruling.

It cannot be contended that this railway will not be built at some time. The only Bill that can deal with the line in this one. There will be no other. Immediately the Bill is passed the Premier, if he wishes, can commence the construction of the railway. You, Sir, in February, 1918, moved a motion that the Esperance-Northward railway be constructed before other lines authorised by Parliament, and the House agreed to the motion, notwithstanding that the Opposition were in the minority. It was right then to instruct the Government that no railways should be commenced until this one had been built or commenced. If we can say that a line is to be built we can say when the

work will commence. We can limit the time when it shall be built by passing the amendment I moved in Committee. It seems to me wrong to exclude that amendment, and it would be strange if this Chamber had not power to pass such an amendment.

The Premier: There is a wide difference between the circumstances described by the Leader of the Opposition and the present circumstances. The motion referred to was one asking that in the opinion of this House the first railway to be constructed in pursuance of the railway programme authorised by Parliament should be the Esperance Northwards line. A motion of that kind is not absolutely binding.

The Minister for Lands: It did not bind the late Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course it did.

The Premier: It did not. The motion sought to obtain the opinion of the House, and the Government could accept it or ignore it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not at all.

The Premier: Yes. Motions of this kind have frequently been ignored by the Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Tell me one.

The Premier: This particular one was ignored, for the late Government commenced the Piawaning Northwards railway before the Esperance line was commenced.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not without the House being consulted.

The Premier: To the motion which you, Sir, moved, an amendment was submitted by the member for Williams-Narrogin to the effect that the railways should be built in the order of their authorisation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was not carried.

The Premier: No. When speaking to that amendment I said I regretted very much that the Premier was unable to support the motion. I said I opposed the amendment and dissented entirely from the principle of constructing railways in the order of their passage through this House. The member for Katanning interjected that this had not always been followed in the past, and I replied that it had almost invariably been followed, but that to lay it down as a hard and fast rule, not to be departed from, would be exceedingly foolish on your part. I have never supported the principle that railways should be built in the order of their authorisation. But I am rather getting away from the question, which is to dissent from the ruling of the Speaker. I remind the Leader of the Opposition that there is a wide difference between a resolution of this House and an amendment which seeks to lay it down in a Bill, and which if carried would bind the Government to the order in which railways should be constructed. Such an amendment is foreign

to the Bill; I have never known such a provision as that to be inserted in any Bill. I need not argue any further because I know that you, Mr. Speaker, will be able to advance adequate reasons in support of the rejection of the amendment. I support your ruling.

Mr. Taylor: I do not intend to discuss the resolution which you, Sir, moved some years ago, because it has nothing to do with your ruling, unless by referring to it one wishes to cloud the issue. This House is at liberty to express its opinion by way of resolution; in fact it does everything by resolution. We are dealing with Clause 2, which gives authority for the construction of the line. The marginal note reads "Authority to construct" and the clause reads—

It shall be lawful to construct and maintain a railway with all necessary, proper, and usual works and conveniences in connection therewith, along the line described in the schedule to this Act.

The Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to add words the effect of which were that power should be given to the Government to build the line under certain conditions, which were that it should not be constructed until other railways that had been authorised before it has been started. To me this does not appear to be anything irrelevant in the proposal to add the words contained in the amendment, which amendment the Chairman ruled out or order, and which ruling has received your support. I do not think that you, Sir, on further consideration can really maintain the ruling you have supported, because we are now giving power to the Government to construct a railway, and all that we desire by the amendment is to say when the work shall be started. By no stretch of imagination can it be said that the amendment is irrelevant. I have not looked up authorities; I am depending entirely on what the Bill says and what we are asked to do. Our only desire is to declare that the line shall be built under certain conditions. If those conditions are considered irrelevant, then I should like to hear quoted authorities in support of the irrelevancy.

The Minister for Agriculture: I have no doubt that the Leader of the Opposition is convinced in his own mind that the amendment is entirely out of order.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nothing of the kind.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Leader of the Opposition knows that the whole issue depends upon the irrelevancy of the amendment. For the amendment to be relevant, the clause in the Bill should have provided for the construction to take place now or a week, a month or 12 months hence. Since the clause does not make any mention of time, and the Bill itself is merely an authorisation, it is absurd to say that the amendment, which provides for a time limit, is relevant. The whole thing depends on the question of relevancy. Here is

another aspect: The Bill is merely an authorisation measure. It says that the Government shall have power to construct the railway. But the Government cannot construct the line until it gets an appropriation. If the Leader of the Opposition does not want the work to be proceeded with, then his purpose can be served if, when the appropriation is brought down, he objects to the appropriation that will have to be provided. He can say, "I will not agree to that appropriation because there are other railways to be constructed first." The Speaker need not look up precedents. If he did he could find dozens. In this case the Bill merely authorises and does not say that the Government shall spend a penny now or 10 years hence.

Mr. Angelo: Last night an amendment, made by another place to a Bill sent from this House, was considered by this Chamber. The amendment dealt with an alteration of the amount of interest to be paid, and this House, sitting as a Committee of the whole, agreed to the Council's amendment, which put a time limit on the operation of one of the clauses. The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition to the Bill we are now considering does practically the same thing. It puts a time limit on the operation of Clause 2.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is a danger, if we declare the amendment in question to be relevant, that we may limit the power of Parliament. We must be careful that such things do not have a boomerang effect and hit us at a time when we least expect it. To me it appears that if we pass the Bill as it stands we shall give to the Government the right to construct a railway, and for the purpose of that construction, they will immediately ask for an appropriation so as to proceed with the work. We may desire to limit the construction from time to time.

The Minister for Agriculture: The proper time to object will be when appropriation is sought.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If it is desired to delay the construction of the line until others are built, we shall have to strike out the full amount of the appropriation sought. We cannot amend the appropriation; we can reduce it, but we cannot so regulate the reduction as to convey the idea that the Leader of the Opposition desires to convey by his amendment. It would be impossible to arrive at any calculation of the amount by which the appropriation would be reduced. Where a Government ask for the right to construct a railway, surely it is in order for us to say that such construction shall not proceed at a greater pace than, say, 12 or 20 miles per month. It appears to me that it would be in order for us to say that the construction should not proceed at a greater rate than any time that may be specified, or that so much should be constructed per day or per annum.

The Minister for Agriculture: You cannot limit the construction of a railway in that manner.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If we say that the Government shall have the right to construct, the right should also be given to declare the rate at which it should be constructed.

Mr. Davy: I would not presume to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but I should like to point out the logical consequences of it. Any amendment relevant to the Bill is admissible. If the amendment be relevant, it is a good amendment. It would be astonishing if we could not impose a condition upon a permission. If my child asked for an apple, I might reply, "Yes, I shall give it to you, but you must not eat it till to-morrow." The Government are asking for permission to build a certain railway and they cannot build it without permission.

The Minister for Agriculture: They must have authorisation and appropriation.

Mr. Davy: I am not sure of that. If there was a revenue surplus of half a million in one year—I admit it is a gorgeous thought—could not the Government use it and build the railway without getting an appropriation?

The Minister for Agriculture: It would have to appear in the Revenue Estimates.

Mr. Davy: If the money was available I think the Government could spend it.

Mr. Speaker: I ask members to pay strict attention to the wording of Clause 2:—

It shall be lawful to construct and maintain a railway with all necessary, proper and usual works and conveniences in connection therewith along the line described in the schedule to this Act.

The clause asks for no more approval than that it shall be lawful to construct the railway. It will grant lawful authority, neither more nor less, at any time in future. In the order prescribed by the amendment or in any other order, it shall be lawful to construct the railway. But it would be irrelevant to introduce words dealing with conditions of legality. The amendment is out of order because it deals with conditions of legality and might have the effect of preventing the railway from ever being built.

Mr. Sampson: Is that an inspiration?

Mr. Speaker: The amendment reads, "Provided that the construction"—the clause does not deal with the construction and therefore the amendment is irrelevant—"of such railway shall not be commenced until after the commencement of the construction of all the railways authorised by Parliament." If any one of the railways now authorised is never commenced, this railway can never be commenced. Notwithstanding that the auth-

ority to construct the line is given, if any one of the railways now authorised be not commenced for 50 years, the line now sought to be authorised cannot be commenced. In fact some of the railways may never be built. That is obviously a negation of the authority sought, and therefore the amendment is out of order. The Leader of the Opposition has moved to disagree with the Chairman's ruling on the ground that there is nothing in the Standing Orders to prevent the amendment being made. All the Standing Orders relating to the scope of Bills and to relevancy deal with this very matter. There is nothing in the Standing Orders relating specifically to an amendment of this kind, because it would be superfluous to have a Standing Order stipulating that you shall not, in a proposed amendment, involve the possible destruction of the measure. But there are sufficient Standing Orders to meet the case. I again refer the hon. member to "May," 12th edition, page 370, and also to the quotation I read from the smaller work on the subject, "An amendment must be relevant to the subject matter of the Bill and to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates." Surely members must see there is a vast difference between making it lawful to do a thing and saying when a thing shall be done. The two things "lawfulness" and "time of construction" are quite distinct.

Mr. Taylor: They are quite relevant.

Mr. Speaker: They are not relevant in a Bill, because the order of leave does not cover the time for commencing. The clause contains nothing more than granting bare legal authority to construct and maintain the line and no time limit for commencing construction can be imposed or be relevant to the clause. To impose a time limit would in a sense be unconstitutional, because it would take out of the hands of the Government the executive power to determine when the railway should be commenced. Before this railway can be commenced, there must be the authorisation for the commencement in the Loan Estimates or Revenue Estimates, and it is then that the House deals with any amendment as to the spending of the money. It is open to any member to move a motion, such as I had the honour of moving when I was on the floor of the House, stating the order in which railways should be built, but a resolution of the House is quite different from a Bill. There is not a single precedent for such an amendment in the whole history of legislation of this character, and I hope the House will not establish a precedent of that kind. In fact the House cannot lawfully do it; you can have no limitation of the words "It shall be lawful"; the only alternative is "unlawful." Any such conditions as to time of construction are matters to be

dealt with subsequently or separately on their special merits and in their special forms.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	..	24

Majority against .. 11

AYES.	
Mr. Angelo	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. E. S. Johnston	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Maley	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Mann	Mr. Teeddale
Sir James Mitchell	Mr. Richardson
Mr. North	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Brown	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munro
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Panton
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Troy
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. A. Wan-brough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lindsay	(Teller.)
Mr. Lutey	

Question thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Committee resumed.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 8—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [7.35]: Not only members of this House, but the public generally, will welcome many of the amendments proposed by the Bill. Control of traffic is always a difficult problem, and of course the narrower the roads of a city the greater the difficulty which confronts those whose duty it is to control the traffic. Something might be, and something frequently is, said regarding joy riding and the tendency of some drivers of motor cars and motor cycles, and of other vehicles, to speed. But a subject on which there is usually a profound silence is jay walking, in which regard there might be stricter control than

obtains at present. Many cities have stringent regulations as to walking, and pedestrians are expected to observe them not only in using the footways but also in using the highways. In those cities it is a breach of regulations for any pedestrian to cross a street otherwise than by a right-angle course. This is as it should be, because road users have great difficulty in proceeding without danger to pedestrians unless the rule in question is strictly observed. In passing I may be pardoned for referring to the work of those who control the traffic in Perth. Apart from the jay walking latitude that work can with every justification be applauded. Undoubtedly, from the standpoint of being thoroughly alive to the responsibilities of their work, the officers on point duty and elsewhere in Perth are most zealous and capable. Moreover, they carry out their work with absence of friction, and with evidence of a desire to exercise every courtesy while doing their duty by the public. As regards the amendments proposed by the Bill, the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) clearly demonstrated that the Minister for Works has underestimated the revenue to be derived from the incidence of the license fees in the measure. It is plain that a sum considerably in excess of that forecasted by the Minister will be collected. I note that there is a change of control, from the local authorities to the Commissioner of Police. However, that change has been largely in existence for some time past; and here again I will pay a tribute to the officers in charge of traffic. As a result of their work very many more vehicles are licensed to-day than has been the case hitherto. Mostly the officers of the various local authorities, being already overworked, found it impossible to carry out all the duties requisite to ensure that the different vehicles in each locality were licensed. The measure is notable, like most Bills of this character, for aiming to give great power in the framing of regulations. Indeed, from this aspect a welter has been made of the power to promulgate regulations galore. The Bill as printed contains some pages setting forth the purposes for which regulations may be framed. It may fairly be said that in this respect the Minister has out-Heroded Herod. Moreover the measure suggests a desire on the part of the Minister to restrict competition with Government trams and trains. I consider that too much power is asked in this respect. I note that, under the Bill, prior to the granting of a license for the running of a time table a conference must be held between the Minister, the Commissioner of Railways, and certain officers. What the result of such conferences may be is difficult to foresee. I do not anticipate that the results will be other than fair, but I do suggest that there is a duty resting on those in control of trains and trams to see that as

far as possible they compete with motor omnibuses and other vehicles running for the convenience of the public. When all is said and done, the motor bus people are not enemies of the community. If it is possible for the Railway and Tramway Departments to give further consideration to the needs of the public, something will be done in a very proper way to limit the running of motor buses. But to render it illegal for the buses to compete seems to me to be taking an undue advantage of a governmental power. The trams and trains, I fully realise, are the property of the people, and any competition which those facilities have to face is, one way, faced by the whole community. But those in authority should look to the matter of that competition, and give it their closest consideration. They might, indeed, take a leaf out of the book of the motor bus proprietors and of the municipality of North Fremantle, which has established buses of its own to meet the needs of its residents. But to assume that since this Bill will give power to restrict the running of motor buses, ipso facto no motor buses shall be run, seems to me wrong, and, if may be allowed the term, rather cowardly.

The Minister for Railways: We cannot allow them to run wherever they like.

Mr. SAMPSON: No; but there are rumours, and more than rumours, that undue restrictions are being placed on the running of buses.

The Minister for Railways: What governs the whole question is the convenience of the public.

Mr. SAMPSON: Very well. The public are anxious that the buses should run. I am anxious that the railway service should pay. But the railway service might gain something by the running of motor coaches enabling a better time-table to be provided at a considerably less cost, than by the running of heavy trains. I realise that there is a difficulty, but anyone who has noticed what has taken place in other countries will readily acknowledge that the motor bus as a means of passenger convenience is a vehicle that has come to stay. In all courtesy I suggest that the Railway Department give further consideration to the installation of additional motor coaches. If hon. members looked over the railway time table for the service between Perth and Mundijong they would probably find that two trains run each way per day. The service is insufficient for the requirements of the district. I do not suggest that the passengers would fill large trains, but certainly there are sufficient to justify the running of several trips by motor coaches to and from the city. Then there is the question of the electrification of the suburban and outer-suburban railways. Under that system quicker transit would be assured and instead of motor buses, running at from 15 to 20 miles an hour, beating our trains, the

trains would compete more adequately with the buses.

The Minister for Railways: Have you any idea of what the capital expenditure involved would amount to?

Mr. SAMPSON: I know it would be heavy.

The Minister for Railways: Do you think the State could afford it?

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister is in a better position to answer that question. I know that Mr. Scaddan, when Minister for Railways, went into the matter while in Victoria and he brought back a film illustrating the running of the electric trains in and around Melbourne, and members of Parliament had an opportunity of seeing that picture. Whether Western Australia has arrived at a stage at which the electrification of the railways would be a paying proposition, I cannot say, but in view of the cheapness of electric current and the improvements made in the economic production of electricity, I am inclined to think that the proposition would prove profitable. I hope the Minister, when replying to the debate, will give the House some information regarding the electrification of our railway system. Another regulation to which I shall refer is that which will give power to the Minister to prescribe by regulation the maximum height, length, and breadth of a motor bus, and the maximum weight and loads for those vehicles. It seems to me that the manufactures of chassis, know best what weight can be carried with safety and what length or breadth of body is best suited for the chassis.

The Minister for Railways: Persons can put any particular body they desire on the chassis without reference to the manufacturer at all.

Mr. SAMPSON: It would not be a safe proposition at all to erect upon a chassis a body too long or too wide for the undercarriage, nor would any manufacturer who knew his work do anything of the kind.

The Minister for Railways: But the local manufacturer could put on any body he chose, and for that reason there must be some stipulation.

Mr. SAMPSON: The maximum weight to be prescribed is another point. Regulations to prescribe limitations are unnecessary. There is with each motor car a warrant issued by the manufacturers setting out what load, speed, etc., can be used with safety. No proprietor of a motor bus would act contrary to the advice indicated by the expert manufacturer. This is not a big point, but it serves to show that in the powers sought under the regulations to be prescribed there has been a prodigality that is not justifiable.

The Minister for Railways: A motor bus that may be safe for running between Perth and Fremantle might not be safe on the run from Perth to Kalamunda.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is a question of brake power.

The Minister for Railways: But apart altogether from the question of brakes.

Mr. SAMPSON: That, I admit, represents a necessary regulation, but it is one that I hope will be carefully and regularly given effect to. Already the transport officers are active regarding this matter. We have a char-a-banc running to Kalamunda, and if all motor vehicles are driven with the same care and the same regard for the safety of the public as that one, then indeed the railways will have a difficult job to compete with them.

The Minister for Railways: We cannot run zig-zag railways everywhere.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the time is not far distant when the zig-zag railway will be done away with and a new route adopted. A survey of a new route was made some years ago, and if the line were constructed in accordance with that survey there would be no need for the dangerous and slow zig-zag route. Another regulation seeks to prohibit the display of advertisements on the outside of motor buses. I hope that power will not be exercised except in unusual circumstances. It is usual for advertisements to be displayed on trams, and I trust the Government will not treat the motor buses in that respect in a different way from the trams. What is good for the Government should be good for private persons. I do not advocate the running of char-a-bancs in competition with the railways. On the contrary, I advocate the Government giving the best service possible for the public and thus securing the traffic that is necessary if our railways are to pay their way. I again remind those concerned that all over the world there is a movement towards replacing rail-way travelling by motor buses and motors. They have realised that in Sydney and Melbourne within recent years, and 10 years ago London realised the fact. When London sets the fashion we may know there are very definite economic reasons why a similar movement should be established in other centres.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not mean State-owned buses, do you?

Mr. SAMPSON: Not necessarily, but since we run State-owned trains. I see no reason why we should not extend that system to buses, and use them as feeders for our railways.

Mr. Panton: The London "tubes" take the place of the trams here.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, the motor buses take the place of the trams.

Mr. Panton: The buses could not cope with the traffic of London like the "tubes" do.

Mr. SAMPSON: Trams are no longer to be seen in London, and the motor buses have increased to such an extent that one

can almost walk across the streets on the tops of buses. So expert have the drivers of the buses become, and so numerous are they on the streets, that if a passenger sitting on the roof allows his elbow to project over the railing, he is liable to have his arm broken by a passing bus!

Mr. Panton: That will do! Some of us have been there.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then I come to the question of exemptions hitherto enjoyed by the primary producers, of utilising vehicles for the carriage of produce and supplies. On the 5th September there was laid on the Table of the House an amendment to the regulation that set out that heavy traffic license fees should not apply to vehicles owned and used by a farmer or a settler carrying goods and materials to and from his own farm. Last night we heard comments in respect of high protection that appears to be the policy of almost every political party in Australia. With the exception of the primary producers, most people benefit from the fact that there is at least some measure of protection in this State, but it cannot be said that the primary producers benefit to any extent at all. They do not benefit by the extreme policy of high protection in existence to-day. For that reason Parliament here has from time to time realised the difficulties that the primary producers have to face and provided exemptions in their favour as I have indicated. There was an exemption for instance of £250 in respect of the unimproved value of cultivated land. That exemption was recently deleted by this House. It would appear that another exemption enjoyed by the farmer is to be struck out. In view of the high protection and the fact that the primary producer has to take his goods to the world's market, and is lucky if he receives world's parity, we should give every consideration to his needs. In the Bill there is an amendment to the third schedule of the Act under which all vehicles shall be uniformly taxed. So, for a cart exceeding 2 tons, the rate per cwt. is 2s. That rate would include not only the load carried, but also the weight of the vehicle. The weight to be charged for shall be the greatest load within the limit of the vehicle's capacity. The striking out of the exemption to primary producers is a very serious matter. Take a wagon weighing, say, 35 cwt., and with a carrying capacity of 6 tons: We have there a total of 155 cwt. This, as calculated on the basis set out in the third schedule, would amount to an annual license fee of £15 10s. It is a terrific impost and particularly ferocious when we realise that the farmer is not continually using his wagon on the roads. Actually his wagon is used, probably not more than from four to six weeks in every year. When the Bill reaches Committee I hope it will be possible to alleviate these charges. The farmers are the principal ratepayers to the local auth-

orities. The farmers contribute the funds that enable the roads to be constructed. If, in addition to the ordinary rating, they are to be called upon to pay an amount of £15 10s. for a single wagon to be used for a maximum period of six weeks in each year, they might well ask themselves if they are not being singled out to carry an unduly heavy burden. I hope that in Committee the Minister will agree to reduce the amount to some preferential rate in favour of the farmer. There is in the Bill a reference to the metropolitan area. I do not quite understand it. Perhaps when the Minister replies he will explain why that reference is made. Under another Bill before the House the metropolitan area is to be abolished and all parts of the State are to be treated alike, with no exemptions and with no special consideration. Then there is in the Bill reference to solid rubber tyres, but no reference to cushion tyres.

Mr. Mann: They are the same.

Mr. SAMPSON: They are not. There are three types of tyres, namely, the pneumatic tyre, including the ordinary pneumatic tyre, the cord tyre, and the balloon tyre; then there are the cushion tyre and the solid tyre.

Mr. Marshall: What is the difference between those two?

Mr. SAMPSON: The cushion tyre has a longitudinal cavity. But there is a new type of cushion tyre with transverse holes, an especially manufactured article that, it is claimed, has many virtues. Although as yet it is new to Western Australia, many such tyres are already in use in the wheat districts, particularly about Doodlakine and Bruce Rock. I suggest that consideration should be given to the cushion tyre as well as to the pneumatic tyre. We must encourage improvements in respect of transport, and if it be possible to produce a cushion tyre sufficiently resilient to compete with the pneumatic tyre, it is the duty of Parliament to encourage such production. I have on the Notice Paper an amendment in this regard, and I hope consideration will be given to it. I realise that the Minister has had a very difficult task in trying to frame a Bill that will do everything that is desired. The control of traffic is so difficult that I am sure the best help of every member will be given, to the end that the Bill shall be a practicable one in the best and truest sense. I again remind the Minister that the Bill will not receive the support of the House unless the consideration that has been given to the farmer in the past is continued.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [8.10]: I realise the necessity for the Bill, an important object of which is to make the proprietors of chara-bancs competing against our railways and tramways pay a reasonable contribution to the maintenance of the roads they damage. At pre-

sent what they pay is by no means commensurate with the damage they do. My only objection to the Bill is based on the harm it will do to a lot of our outback road boards. It will serve to deprive them of a large part of their revenue without in any way reducing the administrative costs. And, apart for that, it will not benefit the outer districts to any great extent. Some of those districts are served by railways and all the local roads are feeder roads leading to the railway sidings. Moreover, most of the ratepayers in those outer districts have motor cars, and if their license fees are to be collected by the Government it will be a very serious matter for the local authorities. Then, nearly all the stations outback have their own wagons and cart their own wool. Those wagons for the most part are used only twice in each year. They are fitted with 6in. or 7in. tyres and they carry a load of about 10 tons, which means that under the schedule each wagon will have to pay at least £20 per annum, and, in addition, £8 wheel tax. In consequence, the station owners will do away with their wagons and have their wool carted, possibly by motor traction, with the result that the Minister will not get the revenue he expects. Then there is the quartz carting on the outer goldfields. At Cue we have one man who does all the quartz carting for the district. He has 10 or 12 drays. He employs only two carters, for, of course, one team follows another. The load on each dray is 2 tons. That means that the individual will be charged up to £20 a year more, exclusive of the wheel tax. He will have to pay £40 if he carries 20 tons. This will be passed on to the prospector.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you refer to the ordinary wagon?

Mr. CHESSON: I refer to tip-drays used by quartz carters. The Main Roads Bill will not affect these people. When a show is found out in the bush they make their own road to it, and this is kept in repair by the road board. If we make a severe charge upon this class of traffic we shall be penalising the prospector. We should exempt this type of traffic.

Mr. Taylor: Once the drays come to a road, they come under the road board.

Mr. CHESSON: That is so. The carters may go 20 miles from a township and have to make their own tracks. If fees are to be taken from the local road board, there will not be sufficient funds left to keep these small roads in repair. In Committee we should amend the Bill making provision for the quartz carter, and in the case of wagons that are used only once or twice a year. If we impose a stiff tax such as is provided in the Bill squatters will make other arrangements for the cartage of their wool, and the Government will not get the revenue they think they will. These are the points about which I desire to voice a protest.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [8.20]: I wish to make a personal explanation in order to remove some misconceptions that have arisen. There is no intention to repeal the present practice where vehicles used on a farm are exempt from a traffic tax. The figures that have been quoted, particularly by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay), are so much at variance with those found in the department, and taken from the official records, that I suggest it would be better instead of proceeding further with the discussion to refer the Bill to a select committee, which would report to the House next week. If the House passes the second reading, I will immediately move for the reference of the Bill to a select committee in order that the figures may be checked. All we want is a fair schedule that will do justice all round. If the select committee examines the schedule it will be able to come down with recommendations that should meet with the approval of the House.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [8.22]: The Minister's statement has cleared the air to a considerable extent, particularly with regard to the vexed question of the increase in the fees for farmers' vehicles. There was nothing before us prior to that statement to show whether it was proposed to continue that exemption. I hope this will be made clear in the Bill. I wish particularly to refer to the attack on the revenue of road boards. These road boards collect license fees from vehicles. Owing to the manner in which motors are increasing in number, this represents a valuable source of revenue. Before the select committee is appointed I wish to protest against the revenues of local governing bodies being cut away from them in the manner proposed. It is necessary to bring this forward lest the committee should be appointed without knowing the feeling of members regarding this principle. Country road boards are doing excellent work. They have their offices and administration costs to maintain. I object to license fees imposed on vehicles, most of which travel on the unimproved feeder roads, being taken from the local authorities. Farmers' wagons travel only from the holding to the nearest siding. They never see a main road. I wish to record my protest against depriving the local governing body, which has to look after subsidiary feeder roads, of the means of maintaining them. I also protest against the fees being given to a central body in order that it may carry out work from Perth. I feel that this body will devote its chief energies to main roads between the big towns which, though important, are largely for the benefit of members of the Automobile Club and other persons associated with big business firms in the metro-

polis, who are constantly travelling around the country in their motor cars. The Bill proposes that these fees should be taken from the local governing bodies and spent on roads that the farmers do not use, and distributed through some Perth organisation. I object to that. I thank the Minister for the consideration he has given to the views of members in deciding to refer this Bill to a select committee, but I do not wish it to go before that committee until I have recorded my protest against the proposed interference with the revenues of country local governing bodies. These bodies will be left to maintain all the country roads and feeder roads other than main roads, and should retain all fees for the licensing of vehicles in their areas.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.25]: I welcome the suggestion of the Minister. It had been my intention to move that the Bill should be referred to a select committee. That committee will deal with the fees. I can see grave difficulties ahead with regard to the amount that will be levied upon motor vehicles. One of the most pressing needs of the Government is to have some regulations framed to enable them to deal with the motor bus traffic, which, in conjunction with motor wagons, is seriously competing against the railways. In some cases a fee as high as £22 will be paid. Under the scheme outlined in the Bill I fear some hardships will be created. A man who is running his vehicle constantly and getting 100 per cent. use out of it will get off with a light fee of £22.

The Minister for Works: He will have to pay other taxes.

Mr. THOMSON: Another man who may be using his vehicle occasionally, will have to pay the same fee. The select committee might take into consideration another phase of the matter. If one goes to a picture show or theatre one buys 1s. worth of amusement and 1d. worth of tax. A man who may use his vehicle only once a week would have to pay 30s. a year for every passenger that his vehicle will carry, plus wheel tax. Others in the metropolitan area may be running their vehicles every day. I suggest that the select committee might consider the imposition of a tax on the same principle as the amusement tax imposed by the Federal Government. Tickets might be issued by the Traffic Department in the case of all vehicles used as public conveyances. A surcharge of from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. could be made. Under the regulations of the Railway Department jarrah and other hardwoods are carried at mineral rates plus 1s. 10d. per ton. I suggest that the select committee should take into consideration the question of placing a surcharge of so much per ton on goods carried in motor vehicles instead of making a fixed rate upon

such vehicles. Those vehicles that are competing so seriously with metropolitan railways between Perth and Fremantle can make three or four trips a day between those places. These are constantly using the roads at their full load capacity, but will only pay the same amount per annum as those who use the roads infrequently. I do not propose to labour the question. There is much that one would like to say, but as the Bill is to be referred to a select committee there is no need to occupy any further time of the House at the present stage.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [8.32]: One clause of the Bill deals with the license fees of motor drivers. I suggest that the select committee, when appointed, should investigate thoroughly the matter of drivers' licenses. I am of the opinion that the test to which drivers are subjected, before a license is granted, is not stringent enough, bearing in mind the fact that the traffic is becoming congested in our streets by the presence of so many motor vehicles. No license should be given unless a person is thoroughly competent to handle his vehicle. That is an aspect that the select committee might investigate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Referred to Select Committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [8.32]: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a Select Committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Griffiths, Panton, Sampson, Withers and the Minister for Works, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on the 2nd December.

MOTION—ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL MARKETS.

Debate resumed from the previous day on motion by Mr. Mann—

That in the opinion of this House, it is advisable that legislation should be introduced empowering the Perth City Council to establish markets for the wholesale disposal of vegetables, fruit, produce (other than grain and chaff), meat, fish, poultry, and game, under the conditions as recommended by the Select Committee on the establishment of markets in the metropolitan area.

and on the following amendment by Mr. Thomson—

That "Perth City Council" be struck out with the view of inserting other words.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [8.53]: All will agree that there is a necessity for the establishment of central markets, and all must be aware that there is great economic waste under our present system of distribution. Markets, it will be admitted, should have been provided here years ago, and the question that now arises is whose particular function it is to provide those markets. There exists in this House a difference of opinion regarding the authority that should control the markets. One section stands for the City Council having the right, and another asks for the appointment of a trust upon which producers, consumers and agents would be represented.

Mr. Mann: If it is a matter of urgency the City Council is the most likely body to carry it out.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The select committee recommended that power be given to the City Council to establish markets, and certain sites were submitted as the most suitable for market purposes. One is the Marquis-street site owned by the Government; it was resumed by the Scaddan Government in 1911 or 1912. The other is the old Gas Works site owned by the City Council. Whatever site be chosen, it must be sufficiently large to provide for all the requirements of the city for many years to come, besides being easily accessible not only to the people who send produce to the markets, but to the people who want to deal in the markets day by day.

Mr. Mann: It should have an area of at least 10 acres.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is desirable that the markets be situated in a locality where railway facilities are most suitable and where there is no possibility of a block in traffic. It must be a locality capable of being approached from every suburb without undue cost or inconvenience. The Government are prepared to enter into negotiations with the City Council or any other party such as a trust or the Westralian Farmers Ltd. who are prepared to inaugurate a scheme, but so far as we can see the only body capable of financing the project to-day is the City Council. While I admit that the City Council may not be as truly representative of the people as is this House, still the City Council represents a very large section of the people, and as the markets in both Melbourne and Sydney are administered by the city councils without any disadvantage to the community, and are giving a most satisfactory service—

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is questionable.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot see why similarly satisfactory results should not be obtained in Western Australia.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are not perfect from the consumer's point of view.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no evidence to that effect and neither has the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Except from personal observation.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have attended the Melbourne and Sydney markets on several occasions and I was satisfied that the people there, without the interference of middlemen, had the best opportunity to get their produce day by day. One can go to the Melbourne markets and buy from the producers on the spot. There is no restraint and no restriction. So far as I could learn from people who had operated at those markets for years, there was no cause for complaint. The evidence is that the general community in Melbourne have never raised a question regarding the suitability or utility of the markets. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) spoke of the desirableness of the market being controlled by the co-operative company, and he spent much time in pointing out the service that the co-operative company had been to the community. The chairman of the Westralian Farmers Ltd. was a witness before the select committee, but he made no suggestion whatever that his organisation should undertake this responsibility. Though the member for Guildford spoke highly of the financial resources of the company, I feel that if the Westralian Farmers Ltd. were approached to-morrow and asked to undertake this responsibility, they would have considerable hesitation in doing so. Consequently what is the use of beating the air and talking of what should be done if the people having the opportunity do not come forward and offer to undertake the work?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Give them an opportunity like you propose to give the City Council.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government are not concerned whether the business is carried on by a co-operative company, so long as it represents the true interests of the people, or by the City Council. The Government are not in a position to spend a vast sum of money to establish central markets. Parliament understands the position. It should not be necessary to emphasise that the Government are carrying a very heavy load with respect to land settlement. The Government cannot find millions for land settlement, and millions for water supplies and railway extensions and all the other facilities required to

develop the country, and provide markets and up-to-date conveniences in the city and in country towns. There is a limit beyond which the Government cannot finance, and Parliament knows that. If any authority comes forward that the Government believe will act fairly by the people, its proposition will receive all favourable consideration.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Surely it is the Government's function to make those representations and not invite applications!

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am doing it now. The hon. member may accept my assurance that if the co-operative body can satisfy the Government that it will deal fairly by all sections of the community, its proposition will receive sympathetic consideration. The Government are most anxious to see market facilities provided, and regret that owing to the limitations of finance, they themselves cannot provide them. The select committee recommended control by the Perth City Council and provision being made by the legislature for an advisory board representative of the growers, the distributors and consumers, with power to negotiate and confer with the council on matters affecting the sale and distribution of marketable produce. I do not see that there can be any objection to an authority of that character, but it should be understood that if this power be given to the Perth City Council, there must be no obstacle placed in the way of the producer dealing with the consumer direct and without interference by the distributor.

Mr. Richardson: That is the difficulty.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The distributor should not be regarded as essential to any such arrangement, and before the Government conferred the power on any authority whatever, they would insist upon a guarantee that the fullest possible opportunity would be given to the producer to get into direct touch with the consumer. If that were provided for, the markets should give general satisfaction.

The Minister for Lands: That is a matter of impossibility as the City Council must have more control than anyone else.

Mr. Thomson: They would not agree to it.

The Minister for Lands: That recommendation is ridiculous.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not standing by the committee's recommendation; I am merely discussing it, but the select committee made the recommendation after some inquiry as to whether it would be accepted or rejected by the City Council. Much of the select committee's report dealt with the transport, sale and distribution of meat; in fact it can be said that the greater portion of the report dealt with that subject. The

reason why more cattle were shipped to the metropolitan market some years ago is that freight then was very much lower than it is to-day. Prior to the war the freight on cattle from Derby to Fremantle was 50s. to 60s. per head. From Wyndham it was 10s. more. Since the war the rate has increased by 75 per cent., and the increase has naturally resulted in fewer cattle being sent to the metropolitan market.

Mr. Mann: The operations at the Wyndham Meat Works have made a difference.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They have had some effect. Furthermore, many pastoralists have given up cattle and gone in for sheep.

Mr. Angelo: There is also the export trade to Java.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is a little of that, but it would not affect the position greatly. This, too, will be a feature in future, because much of the country is more suitable for sheep than for cattle, and the fact that sheep are a better proposition than cattle and give a quicker return, is bound to encourage pastoralists to embark upon sheep as against cattle propositions. Cattle will be carried in some parts of the country only until the wild dogs have been exterminated and opportunity is given freely to run sheep. Since the Government took office, frozen meat to the value of £50,000 has been brought to the metropolitan markets and made available to consumers. Approximately 400 tons of frozen beef is now in cold storage at Fremantle, and we hope this will have the effect of keeping the beef market steady until the next Kimberley season. Arrangements have been made with the Wyndham Meatworks to ship a quantity of the best frozen beef for this market immediately the works are put into operation next year. These arrangements have already been made by the Colonial Secretary's Department. The quantity shipped will be equal to the full storage capacity of the Fremantle cold stores. It is estimated that the placing of this large quantity of beef on the metropolitan market last year saved consumers £30,000, owing to its effect in keeping prices down. Members who realise how bare the market has been and how much frozen meat has been consumed can understand that since frozen meat has been sold at the prices fixed by the Government, it has meant immense relief to consumers. In years past it was constantly urged that consumers would not accept frozen meat, but this year owing to a shortage of cattle, the butchers have been compelled to take it, and under the definite conditions laid down by the Department of Agriculture and the Colonial Secretary's Department as to the way the beef should be handled by the butcher, frozen meat is now marketed in such a state that it is most acceptable

and is in ready demand. In fact, it would be difficult to tell the difference between frozen meat and fresh meat. Unquestionably the greater proportion of the meat now utilised in the metropolitan area is frozen meat.

Mr. Sampson: Is it as nutritious as fresh meat?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am told by technical officers that it is, but I have no technical knowledge and therefore cannot personally give an opinion of any value. I have eaten frozen meat, and relished it; I think it is very good meat. The meat which came from Wyndham was not the best, since the best was exported under an arrangement made by the previous Government. It is to be hoped that next year we will get the best quality of beef from Wyndham.

Mr. Sampson: The Medical Department say frozen meat is not as nutritious as fresh meat.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Fifty per cent. of the people here are eating frozen meat, and they don't know the difference.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: As to the question of the number of cattle that can be shipped from Kimberley next year, the matter will depend largely upon the season. Personally I think that next year there will be a shortage of both mutton and beef, owing to the drought now prevailing over the greater portion of the sheep and cattle country. Since the drought has continued in some districts for years, there has been no natural increase; and during the past year a number of the existing stock have died. Therefore I am of opinion that beef will be short next year. The Government are making provision to meet that shortage. Some reference was made to the distribution of stock in the metropolitan markets. The State-owned abattoirs at Midland Junction are now being remodelled and extended. Chilling accommodation has been provided, and that is the subject of a recommendation by the select committee. However, that provision was made before the select committee were appointed.

Mr. Mann: Quite correct.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The system of slaughtering is now under consideration, and when a decision has been arrived at, the select committee's recommendation as to the State doing all the slaughtering will be considered.

Mr. Mann: And the detention of the meat for a period?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That will be part of the system of distribution. With regard to the future shortage of beef, I have already said that the capacity of the cold storage in the Westralian Meat Works buildings at Fremantle will be fully utilised to assist in preventing a recurrence of the high prices experienced during the last year or two. The Colonial Secretary's Department inform me that

ample space will be available next year for all fat stock offering from Kimberley. To the amendment moved by the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) there is one evident objection. If the Government appoint a trust, it means that the Government will be called upon to finance the trust.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Not necessarily. You can give the trust power to borrow.

Mr. Thomson: Yes, in the same way as the Fremantle Harbour Trust. That is what I had in view.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Fremantle Harbour Trust is an entirely different proposition from a trust to carry on marketing in the city.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: In New Zealand quite a number of these trusts have been created, with power to borrow, power to erect markets, and power to control.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Let us see how they get on. There are in Fremantle the freezing works owned by the Western Meat Works company.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: A limited liability company.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Nevertheless, it was a company whose shareholders comprised the wealthiest men in Western Australia. The company failed signally to get the capital necessary to carry on its undertakings.

Mr. Thomson: This is a different proposition.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it? The result was that the Government were called upon to come to the company's aid to the extent of £106,000; and the Government have not been able to get their interest up to date. When recently an arrangement was made with the company by which the Government took over part of the premises for abattoir purposes, it had to be stipulated that the Government should deduct from the rental a certain proportion to pay interest; but the deduction will not pay the full interest. We find the same sort of thing everywhere. At Carnarvon there are freezing works.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: For goodness sake don't draw such comparisons!

Mr. Teesdale: They are very painful to hear.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is no comparison at all.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The only comparison I desire to draw is as to the ability of the people to raise the necessary capital.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Those are boodling companies.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At this stage we do not need to discuss whether the business will be a success or not, but only whether in this community the trust can find the requisite capital for the proposition. Experiences at Fremantle and Carnarvon, and also with regard to

butter factories in the South-West, show that in the majority of cases the Government have to stand behind the proposition and even meet the interest.

Mr. Thomson: But do not forget that the high cost of sheep has absolutely cut the ground from under the feet of those people, and that that is the reason why—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not make a long speech by way of interjection.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At this stage I am not discussing whether these companies are a success or not. Just now I am merely discussing the question of raising the capital. Even having in mind that the works were going to be a success, these people could not raise the necessary capital. In almost every case of the kind that has occurred in Western Australia, with the sole exception of the wool business at Albany, the promoters have come to the Government for assistance. If a marketing trust is formed, undoubtedly the trust will approach the Government for assistance; and afterwards, when they are in difficulties, they will ask the Government to meet the interest. I am utterly opposed to the Government being called upon to undertake responsibilities of that character when the Government have no say whatever in the business.

Mr. Thomson: The Government can have a representative.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government do not want that. The Government have their hands full with a hundred and one things to-day. A Minister, even if he had the greatest commercial ability, could not spare the time to deal with such matters; and Government officials are trained technically, and not, commercially. If a trust is formed that is fully representative, and that can raise the necessary capital—

Mr. Thomson: Give them the chance.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Let them come forward. The Government are quite prepared to deal with any such trust, provided they will give a satisfactory guarantee of a square deal to every section of the community, and particularly of a channel through which the producer, and the consumer can come together. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) talks about hundreds of thousands of pounds, and four millions.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I never spoke about a capital of four millions. I said those people had a turnover of four millions. Say what I said, and don't misrepresent me.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not desire to misrepresent the hon. member, but he spoke of those people having hundreds of thousands of pounds. Let them come forward, and provided they give the Government the necessary guarantees, they will get a fair opportunity.

Mr. BROWN (Pingelly [9.12]: As a member of the select committee, I can state that we had considerable difficulty in getting witnesses of the right sort. The majority of the witnesses were middlemen. Of growers we had a very poor percentage. There was a strong conflict between the evidence of the growers and that of the middlemen. I regret very much that the House refused the select committee permission to publish the evidence taken. Indeed, I am satisfied that the paramount importance of the question of marketing warranted the appointment of a Royal Commission. Seeing the amount of public money lent to the man on the land in order that he may grow products, the Government should be interested to see that there is a good market for those products. Mr. Angwin said he would not oppose the appointment of the select committee, though he did not think it could accomplish much.

The Minister for Lands: Mr. Angwin took action in this matter in 1913.

Mr. BROWN: I regret very much that the party of which I am a member did not support the motion for publication of the evidence.

The Minister for Lands: The evidence is published now.

Mr. Sampson: But in that form it is not available to the public.

Mr. BROWN: If the evidence had been published, there would have been greater public interest in our proceedings. Had I known that the report of the select committee was to go into the waste paper basket, I would not have sat on that committee. The most important question with which we dealt was that of meat supplies. In fact, most of the evidence tendered to us referred to the shortage of meat. Some of the witnesses were men able to state the exact position of meat marketing in this State. The evidence points to a considerable shortage of meat in the future. The select committee visited the Midland Junction sale yards, and I was greatly surprised to find the number of female sheep, and particularly fine ewe lambs, being slaughtered. On the day of our visit there were between 3,000 and 4,000 lambs in the market besides big sheep, and fully half of the lambs were beautiful ewe lambs. They were being sent to the abattoirs. If anyone travelled throughout the farming districts of Western Australia they would be struck by the considerable shortage of sheep. Hundreds of farms are languishing for sheep, but they cannot be obtained. No doubt the high price of wool has something to do with it. Many sheep are producing 30s. or more per head for wool. One would think that would be an incentive for farmers not to sell even wethers. Often a man has allowed his wethers to reach the 4-tooth stage before sending them to market and getting from £2 to £2 5s. for them. When they are producing 30s. worth of wool, it

will be seen why, one would think, the farmers would act differently. While we have such a shortage of sheep it is a crying shame that ewe lambs should be allowed to be slaughtered. If this shortage is to be made up, the best way would be to provide that no female sheep shall be slaughtered until "full mouth." It is a simple matter to overcome. If we were to adopt such a course we would, within three or four years time, have a sufficient number to stock all the farms that cannot obtain sheep now. I was surprised at the general condemnation of fruit trains that have been running to the country districts. Not one witness approved of them; all considered that they did not pay the grower. When I was in the back country, at a time when the fruit train arrived, I was surprised to see the number of people who patronised it and purchased fruit at about 7s. 6d. per case. We were told that of that sum the grower got about 3s. 6d., while the balance went to the middleman or others connected with the fruit trade. If that is so, it is wrong. While we have such a quantity of fruit growing in Western Australia, thousands are languishing for want of it. Some better system should be provided. These are matters that should have been gone into, but we did not get the evidence we required. Had it been obtainable, the report in all probability would have been different. The whole evidence tended to prove that it would be best for the City Council to erect central markets. I do not altogether approve of that proposal, for I think it would be better if the Government undertook the work, because the Government would act as landlords and would see that the producers got a fair deal and that no exorbitant rents or charges were levied. The evidence, however, was largely in favour of the City Council undertaking the work.

Mr. Mann: Because the Government could not do it.

Mr. Sampson: If the evidence was in support of the City Council, why not support the proposal for the City Council to undertake the work?

Mr. BROWN: The question arises as to whether we have a large enough population to support such markets. If we could have presented a full and comprehensive report it would have been of value when the time arrived for the establishment of such markets. The kerbstone markets are doing a lot of good, but we were told that many people will not go there because they will not carry away their purchases. They prefer the middleman to come round to the houses and deliver the householders' requirements.

Mr. Angelo: Then they deserve to pay for them.

Mr. BROWN: We were told that 7½ per cent. is charged by the middleman and that out of £1,000 involved in a transaction, £75 would have to go to the middleman.

That is only one of the difficulties that have to be overcome. If we could eliminate that position some good would be achieved. However, we were told that the growers in the outer districts have to send their produce to the markets for disposal through the middlemen because there was no one else to handle their stuff for them and it had to be sold. Again, we were informed that not sufficient cold storage accommodation was available and therefore supplies could not be regulated so as to secure a better return to the grower. If that position were altered, prices would be more uniform. I regret that we could not get much evidence of the type we desired. I am satisfied despite the time I wasted over this business—

The Minister for Lands: The time was not wasted by any means.

Mr. BROWN:—that when the time comes for the products of the group settlers to be disposed of in the markets, if it is not possible to deal with them in a central market such as has been proposed, markets will have to be found for those supplies elsewhere. I would be sorry to know that the report of the select committee had been thrown into the waste paper basket and that nothing will come of it.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH (Albany) [9.17]: I support the amendment. I believe such markets should be controlled by a board or trust on behalf of the people. I cannot believe that the City Council are prepared to establish markets of such a description for any purpose other than profit. I fail to see that any relief will be given to the producers or the consumers if the motion were agreed to. In consequence we would be in the same position as formerly. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) when speaking the other night, referred to the American system as the best in the world. I do not subscribe to that statement, but would refer hon. members to the system in operation in South Africa. That system is known as the "collect on delivery" system. That system is controlled by the Railway Administrator on behalf of the people, and if put into operation here would overcome many of the difficulties that confront the producers to-day. I have a copy of the scheme and with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I propose to lay it on the Table for the information of members. I ask the Minister for Railways to give that system special consideration with a view to adopting it in Western Australia. Having had some experience in the Railway Department, I am satisfied that the system can be introduced without any additional cost.

Mr. Sampson: The Commissioner of Railways is considering it.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: He has been considering it for a long time. The last time we heard about it he took one line and came out with an appeal for cheaper fruit. The freight from Mt. Barker to Perth or Fremantle was 1s. 1d. and to Kalgoorlie it

was 1s. 2d. The Commissioner of Railways amended the rates to 1s. 6d. That was a great concession! I think it was rather hard upon the consumer for the Commissioner to impose a further tax upon that section of the community. The system I refer to would do away with 50 per cent. of the producers' difficulties.

Mr. Thomson: Fruit is wasting on the ground, but the people cannot get cheap fruit.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: All that is necessary is for the Commissioner to become a forwarding and receiving agent. The bugbear of the producer is largely involved in the problem of wiping out those parasites who fasten on the producers to-day. If hon. members peruse the scheme they will at once realise how it will be possible to get over the difficulty. In legislating for the establishment of markets we are starting at the wrong end; we should be legislating for compulsory co-operation.

Mr. Sampson: The Queensland Fruit Marketing Act is what we want.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Without being personal or impudent, I would suggest to the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) that instead of advocacy the introduction of such a measure this session he should go out and organise his own electorate first.

Mr. Sampson: I have done so.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Thus would co-operation be made possible. I will not be one to legislate for a single section of the community. In my electorate I have perhaps 45 per cent. primary producers and I can heartily congratulate the Mt. Barker people on the way in which they have supported co-operation. I support the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [9.28]: I am sorry that the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) is disappointed with my action regarding the work of the select committee. I do not consider that the committee wasted time. Some of the evidence furnishes a good deal of information and the report is a fairly good one. The committee point out that during the next two years the people in the metropolitan area will be confronted with a shortage of meat supplies. All the markets in the world will not get over that difficulty if the meat is not available. By way of interjection I said it would be impossible for the City Council to carry out the recommendations of the committee. Regarding the question of control the committee's report states—

Control by either the Government or the Perth City Council is favoured, but in view of all the circumstances, your committee recommend, following on the lines of the Eastern States, the Perth City Council be given the necessary statutory authority to erect and control the markets.

Had the committee stopped at that, there would have been a possibility of that being done, but they went further and said—

The committee consider it would be of an advantage if an advisory board representative of growers, distributors, and consumers could be arranged for, with power to negotiate and confer with the council on matters affecting the sale and distribution of marketable produce.

Anybody with a knowledge of municipal government knows that the general body of municipal councillors will not brook any interference with their management. Further, I do not think the ratepayers of Perth would allow their councillors to borrow money on the security of city property if outside people were to have a voice in the control. If the advisory board were made compulsory, in my opinion that would be an end of it, whereas if the board be not made compulsory the City Council might agree to its appointment. The question is whether we are to provide markets for the metropolitan area or for the whole of the State. A previous Government, of which I was a member, gave this matter very close attention. Mr. Bath, who was then Minister for Lands and Agriculture, spent a lot of time considering the best methods by which the producers could sell their goods to the consumers. At that time it was decided that the only method that could be adopted in the interests of producers and consumers alike, was to have the markets under Government control; for under no other conditions could the Government appoint a board to manage the markets. The last Marketing Bill we had in this House was lost because the then Minister for Agriculture could not make an arrangement with the City Council in respect of the control of the markets, so as to give the producer and consumer an equal voice in the management. It was thought at that time that it might be possible to have a trust to manage the markets on behalf of the producers and consumers, if that trust paid interest and sinking fund on the cost of construction. We purchased the land, and the site was generally approved of. I have not yet seen any reason to alter my approval of that site. Then there is the question of financing the project. I am doubtful whether it would be wise to pay 6½ per cent. for money for the erection of markets. But is there any need to build elaborate markets to begin with? Would it not be possible to build the markets by degrees? Instead of our expending a quarter of a million, as was suggested by the City Council in the last Marketing Bill, it could be done for considerably less to begin with, and the markets could be enlarged as required. While I fully appreciate the work of the select committee, I hold that even if we have to wait a couple of years until money is cheaper it would be better to have the

market controlled by the producers and consumers than by the City Council. In the course of discussion it has been questioned whether the trust could raise the money. Backed by the Government, the trust could easily do so. If the people knew that the Government, with the security of the whole of the State, were behind the trust, the raising of the money would present no great difficulty. It is known that in some parts of Australia and in the Old Country markets are not so flourishing to-day as they were a few years ago. I expect the metropolitan markets, when built, will quickly take on the character of wholesale markets rather than of retail markets. When in 1886 I first went to Victoria I resided in the neighbourhood of the Melbourne markets. Those markets were then going from early morning till late at night. To-day, however, there is little or no trading done in those markets after 3 a.m., and they are used principally as wholesale markets. Except the markets in Adelaide, I know of none in Australia where any retail trading is done at all. We have municipal markets at Fremantle, but very little retail trading is done there. They are not looked upon as retail markets. I agree with the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) that the producers must have a voice in the management. It is true that almost every time the Government come to the assistance of private bodies the interest is not paid. But those bodies are under entirely different conditions. A few people come together, put a certain amount of money into a concern, and then under previous promises from the Government ask for financial assistance on the basis of pound for pound. The result is that eventually they get something more like £100 per pound, and in consequence the interest in the concern slackens. However, if a trust representative of the producers and consumers were appointed with power to remove any members of the trust who did not carry out their duties, it would be an entirely different matter. The Government, of course, have no power whatever over those private concerns to which I have alluded. Not long ago the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) brought before me a case in which an acting director in one concern had died, with the result that others had to go away and leave the concern unfinancial. Take our butter factories: At Northam, if I mistake not, there is a liability to the Government of £13,000. The factory is being run by the Agricultural Bank on a foreclosure.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I suppose Busselton is written off?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Busselton factory is being run by the Government, and as a result is the only factory that is paying. Take Ravensthorpe: The Government advanced £2,000 down there,

and the machinery has never yet been unpacked! Nearly all the butter factories are in a similar position, except perhaps Bunbury, where the factory is doing well. I do not know how Albany is at present, but on one occasion I went into that factory and found that they were keeping water in the vats to prevent them falling to pieces.

Mr. Sampson: Don't you think the City Council can satisfactorily establish these markets?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The City Council will never establish markets unless the City Council has full control of them. The ex-Minister for Agriculture declared that on several occasions he had endeavoured to get a conference of the producers and consumers and the City Council, in order to draft a Bill that would be suitable to all parties. However, he failed, and in consequence he opposed the Marketing Bill brought down by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann). And that Minister for Agriculture, it must be remembered, was a member of the Country Party. It serves to show the feeling that exists amongst the producers in regard to this question of marketing. If the Government cannot find the money to build the markets, and if a Bill were introduced as the result of a conference between the producers and consumers, a trust could be formed with borrowing powers for the purpose of erecting the markets. We have the land, so there is from £80,000 to £100,000 saved to start with. The land is centrally situated and in every way suitable. There is no doubt that if a trust were properly formed it would be able to raise the money to build these markets in the interests of all concerned. This could be done in the interests of the people of the metropolitan area as well as of the people outside it without placing the matter in the hands only of the city. I hope the amendment will be carried.

Amendment (that the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the motion) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	23
Majority against	..	..	..	10

AYES.

Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Corboy	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Maley	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Mann	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Millington	Mr. Troy
Mr. Munzie	Mr. Wilson
Mr. North	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Brown	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Panton
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Chesson
Mr. Lindsay	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negated; the words struck out.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.50]: I move—

That the following words be inserted in lieu of the words struck out:—
"Government to appoint a trust composed of representatives of the primary producers, consumers, and distributors, to arrange for the erection and control of."

Amendment put and passed.

Question, as amended, put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	24
Noes	..	..	..	11
Majority for	..	..	..	13

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Panton
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Collier	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Coverley	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Troy
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Chesson
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)
Mr. Marshall	

NOES.

Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Corboy	Mr. North
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Maley	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Mann	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Millington	(Teller.)

Question, as amended, thus passed.

House adjourned at 9.56 p.m.