

tralia generally, of our great dependence on both the goldmining industry and the base metal mining industry. Instead of the goldmining industry being referred to as a primary industry, it should be referred to as an ante-primary industry, because it does more than any other activity to fertilise industrial enterprise. Without the products of our base metal mining industry, the wheels of industry could not be kept turning.

During the war there was a great demand for many of our base metals. That demand made it very clear that there was a great dependence in the Commonwealth and in other parts of the world, as well as among the Allied Nations, upon the possibility of our finding and recovering base metals; and, by what amounted to almost superhuman effort and the stimulation of most unusual activity in the base metal mining industry throughout the Commonwealth, and the expenditure of a great deal of money, much of which I think could not have been expended on an economic basis, we were able to increase the production of many base metals that were most urgently required in the United States and the British Empire and also in Australia for the prosecution of the war.

So I trust the Commonwealth Government will develop or maintain that sympathy it at present appears to have for the goldmining industry; that it will not only further its desires to promote prospecting and the search for new mineral deposits; but that it will, by monetary grants, and by the setting up of proper machinery, and by the assistance of its geological and other technical officers, both in the C.S.I.R. and the Mineral Resources Survey Department, also assist the mining industry generally, so that an intensive search may be made for new discoveries. Our position throughout the Commonwealth generally is not encouraging so far as the production of minerals is concerned, because many of our biggest producers were found many years ago, and in recent years there have not been many important new discoveries. But there is no doubt that the recent war taught us that not only are our base metals urgently required for the furtherance of our general economic interests, but also that they are urgently required in the interests of our national defence.

Progress reported.

## ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [11.29]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till tomorrow at 2.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 11.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Friday, 7th December, 1915.*

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

## QUESTION.

### WOOROLOO SANATORIUM.

*As to Civilian Cases of T.B.*

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT (for Hon J. G. Hislop) asked the Chief Secretary:

1, How long is it since a civilian case of pulmonary tuberculosis was admitted to Wooroloo Sanatorium?

2, Are civilian cases being admitted at present?

3, If civilian cases are not being admitted, how long will it be before admission is possible?

4, How many known cases of active pulmonary tuberculosis who have made application for admission to Wooroloo Sanatorium are still remaining in their own homes?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, An urgent case was admitted on the 11th November.

2, Generally no, but in very urgent cases endeavours are made to admit.

3, The limiting factor is staff. Constant efforts are being made to secure additional employees.

4, Ten.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. L. B. Bolton (Metropolitan) on the ground of ill-health.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.

Returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

2, Land Act Amendment.

*Passed.*

### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment.

2, Hospital Benefits Agreement.  
Received from the Assembly.

### BILLS (2)—REPORTS.

1, Building Operations and Building Materials Control.

2, Industrial Development (Resumption of Land).

*Adopted.*

### BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.41] in moving the second reading said: The Act was introduced for the purpose of assisting farmers who had been seriously affected by the partial failure of the wheat crop in 1914, which season was followed the next year by a severe drought. The aid given to farmers under the Act covered practically every phase of their farming requirements, and considerable benefits were derived by the recipients owing to the fact that there was a shrinkage of rural credit as a result of the drought conditions. This assistance was the means of enabling many farmers to continue their activities.

In 1934 the demand for assistance under the Act almost ceased, but the drought years of 1935-36 and later resulted in fresh

activity, and in 1940 an amendment to the Act was found necessary in order to control the distribution of funds provided by the Commonwealth to aid drought-stricken settlers. It is again necessary to bring forward a continuance Bill in order that the advances already made and outstanding may be protected, and also to provide machinery whereby future assistance may be granted to farmers affected by drought or adverse conditions. There are many instances of the value of the assistance given to farmers, who have succeeded in rehabilitating themselves and in achieving considerable success on their properties.

Since operations first commenced under the Act, a total of £14,386,227 has been advanced up to the 30th June, 1945, and of this the loss amounts to £2,910,036. For the year ended the 30th June, 1945, advances totalled £19,036, a decrease of £5,669 on the previous year's figures. Repayments during the year amounted to £19,250, compared with £58,000 in 1943-44. The total amount outstanding at the 30th June last was £42,971, which is £1,508 less than at the end of the previous financial year. This, however, relates to advances over the past ten years only. Members are aware that assistance has also been provided under the Act to various secondary industries. In asking members to approve of the Bill there is no need for me to stress the benefits that have accrued to the State from these operations, and I feel sure the House will agree to a continuance of the Act for another 12 months. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [4.45]: This Act has been in operation as a temporary piece of legislation for 30 years. Through the years attempts have been made to wind up the board. It was contended that the original purpose of the Act had been served and that the affairs of the board ought to be wound up, but whenever this was suggested, a plea was invariably advanced that the Act was useful in order to permit of the Agricultural Bank granting assistance to distressed clients. Now the Agricultural Bank has been absorbed by the Rural Bank and so that defence of the Act no longer exists. Surely the Rural Bank can make the requisite provision for its clients without recourse to this Act!

I would like the Chief Secretary to explain why the Bill has been introduced this session. Clause 2 provides that the Act be further amended by substituting the figures "1947" for the figures "1946". This means that already the Act has a currency of a year, so why bring down continuance legislation this session in order to carry on till 1947? The point needs to be explained. There will be nothing to prevent us in 12 months' time from extending the Act for another year. Why butt in at this stage? I cannot recall any other Act having been continued when it has still had a year to run. If the statute were due to expire at the end of the present year, action this session would be appropriate. I support the second reading, but am of opinion that it is time this department was wound up.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [4.48]: In matters of this sort it is necessary to have a reasonable period of time in order to finalise the affairs of the department.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not think it was ever found necessary before to adopt a similar method.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY**: Whether that is so or not, it is essential to know just how far we are going in a matter that entails large sums of public money and involves a considerable number of farmers.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

## **BILL—ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.51] in moving the second reading said: It is proposed by this Bill to amend the Adoption of Children Act, 1896-1921, to enable this State to enter into a reciprocal agreement with the other States, or with any territory of the Commonwealth, in connection with the registration of adoptions in accordance with similar legislation in all other States of the Commonwealth.

When the adoption of a child is finally approved by a judge of the Supreme Court in Western Australia, the Registrar-General's Department is advised and action is taken there to note the adoption on the child's original birth certificate, provided, of course, that the child is born in this State.

In the event of the Registrar-General's Department receiving an application for a copy of the child's birth certificate, the department, on examining its records, observes the fact of the adoption and issues a certificate showing the child's adopted name and parentage and not the original details of his birth. This is done not only because the adopting persons become the child's legal parents but also to prevent any other person from gaining a knowledge of certain personal details. Under present circumstances, however, if a child born in Western Australia is adopted in another State, no notification of the adoption is received here, and therefore the original entry at the Registrar-General's Department is not amended. The same circumstances apply to children born in other States and adopted in Western Australia.

There have been instances where the issue of birth certificates for children born here and adopted elsewhere have been requested from the Western Australian Registrar-General's Department, and it has been asked that these certificates show the child's adopted name. The department has not been able to comply with these requests, because of the absence of reciprocal arrangements which this Bill seeks to provide. The Bill sets out that the certified copy of an adoption order issued in Western Australia shall be forwarded to the State in which the child was born, and that similar reciprocal arrangements will obtain in the other States regarding children born in Western Australia. The details of the adoption will then be noted on the birth certificate and will obviate any possibility of the issue of a certificate detailing the original facts of the child's birth.

The Bill is in the interests of adopted children and their new parents, and is designed to protect children, many of whom have had a most unfortunate start in life and whose adoption will provide a brighter and happier future for them. I therefore

do not hesitate to ask the House to grant its approval to the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.55]: I do not want to say many words on this Bill. I commend the Government for having introduced a much needed amendment. It has been found extremely necessary because instances have arisen where children have been adopted in Western Australia who were born outside the State, and there have been no means of rectifying the certificates of birth in the other States. A little while ago I had a talk to the Minister in charge, and he stated the matter was receiving the consideration of the Government. I am pleased to see that a Bill has been introduced to deal with the matter.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [4.56]: I, too, would like to commend the Government for introducing the Bill. Having been brought into contact with the Child Adoption Branch of the Child Welfare Department on many occasions, my experience leads me to believe that the officers of that department are doing a very fine work, of which I am sure many people have little or no idea. The utmost consideration is shown by them and every possible assistance is afforded. I heartily support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

### **BILL—MARKETING OF EGGS.**

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.58] in moving the second reading said: This Bill seeks to consolidate and amend the law relating to the marketing, sale and disposal of eggs; to repeal the Marketing of Eggs Act, 1938, and the Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment Act, 1939; and to incorporate certain other provisions. Following representations from producers, a Marketing of Eggs Bill was successfully introduced in 1938 by a private member. The Government, following its customary

policy in connection with legislation referring to marketing, raised no objections to the Bill. It contained, however, a provision that a poll should be conducted by producers to determine whether it should come into operation; and notwithstanding the fact that the Government on at least two occasions made special financial arrangements for such a poll, the producers voted against the implementation of the Act. Experience has shown that the 1939 Act is unworkable. It contained similar provisions to those in the Onion Marketing Act which Parliament very recently repealed in favour of a new Act.

One important disadvantage in the 1939 Act was the provision that eggs should become the property of the Egg Marketing Board immediately they were laid. This provision placed the board in an awkward position, and meant that it was responsible for all losses of eggs from the time of laying to when they were received at the markets. The Act also omitted to provide authority for the candling or grading of eggs, for the board to pulp or dry eggs, to own any property, or for the operations which are being carried out under the present form of control. There is little wonder that the producers viewed the measure with distaste, and by poll refused it the authority to function.

As a result of this fiasco producers, in co-operation with various agents, endeavoured for three years to conduct a voluntary egg stabilisation scheme whereby those producers forwarding their eggs to agents agreed to contribute approximately one half-penny per dozen to provide a fund which would enable small surpluses to be removed from the market and stored for release at a more propitious time. This voluntary organisation conducted some very effective and efficient work and was responsible for curbing some of the wide and violent fluctuations in price which were a marked feature of pre-war marketing. These fluctuations, which were caused by periodic gluts, had given rise to considerable complaints, and producers had cast around for a method whereby the fluctuations could be controlled.

An example of these variations in price is the market of 1939-40 when eggs altered in price as much as 7d. a dozen within the period of a few days and speculation in this commodity caused prices to fall as low as 8d. a dozen—a most unfavourable compari-

son with the then export price of approximately 1s. per dozen. It is a fact that very small surpluses of only a few cases of eggs would cause a considerable fall in price, which would unfortunately affect many thousands of eggs which were in the market. This voluntary body of producers and agents did a great deal to improve this state of affairs, but its activities were handicapped by the fact that a large proportion of producers would not join them in their efforts to stabilise the markets.

The war brought about an accentuation of the difficulties owing to the doubts which arose as to the availability of shipping for the export of eggs in shell. This further problem placed a big financial responsibility upon agents who, at the end of 1941, advised the Government that they were not prepared to continue the purchase of eggs unless at a considerable discount. The Government, to obviate a consequent heavy loss to the producers, thereupon gave the agents a guarantee against loss, which enabled growers to receive a payment of at least 11d. a dozen. This guarantee prevented a catastrophic fall to perhaps 6d. per dozen for all eggs produced—a fall which would have led to most unpleasant consequences for producers.

The Government's next step was to negotiate a scheme with the Commonwealth whereby a market for surplus eggs could be obtained. The State Government undertook to provide the land and to share equally in the cost of the erection of a building suitable for the installation of an egg drying plant. The cost of the equipment for this project was borne by the Commonwealth Government, and the total cost of the whole scheme exceeded £30,000. When the National Security Regulations lapse and the Commonwealth control ceases, this building will become the property of the State. Over 10,000,000 dozen eggs passed through the drying plants in Australia in 1943 alone, approximately 1,000,000 dozen of which were handled at the West Perth plant. It is pleasing to note that this plant, although possessing only a single unit, has compared more than favourably with the rest of the Commonwealth in regard to costs of operation, general management and quality of production.

The development of the war brought an ever-increasing demand for food from the

Fighting Services based in and on Australia, and it soon became apparent that the Commonwealth would have to provide a central authority to handle all eggs produced in Australia. The necessary powers were assumed by the Commonwealth under the National Security Regulations. The producers have rallied to the assistance of the Commonwealth Government in no uncertain manner, and have achieved a remarkable result in their unstinting efforts to meet the call for increased production. The production of eggs in Australia has increased from about 56,000,000 dozen in 1942 to approximately 100,000,000 dozen last season, and it is estimated that 110,000,000 dozen will be produced this season. It will be seen that the egg-producing industry not only in this State but in the whole of Australia is a large and important one. A great many people are engaged in it, and it is absolutely essential that whatever steps are necessary should be taken to stabilise the industry, more particularly the prices associated with it.

The Western Australian production has increased at a similar rate, but this huge annual output has brought attendant difficulties in its train, more particularly now that the war is over. Unless some provision can be made for legislation for continuing the present operations when the National Security Regulations lapse, not only within the boundaries of the State but also for assuring some means whereby the huge surplus, which may be as much as 70,000,000 dozen throughout the Commonwealth, can be handled without the risk of interstate competition ruining local prices, then it is believed that the whole industry will face disaster. The Commonwealth has entered into contracts with the British Ministry of Food for the purchase of surplus Australian eggs until 1948. Because of this it is believed that when the present Commonwealth control ceases it will be necessary to organise some central authority which will arrange for the marketing of pulp, egg powder and surplus eggs, so that each State will obtain its fair share of the Australian local market.

When Commonwealth control ceases it will be necessary for some authority to assume the responsibility of continuing the scheme and taking over the valuable assets

which have been built up. The growers have made it very plain to the Minister for Agriculture that they desire a system for the control of markets to continue when the Commonwealth authority lapses. They have stated that they are unanimously in favour of a properly constituted marketing board, upon which they will be represented, for the purpose of continuing the control and marketing of eggs.

It is for this reason that the Government has introduced this Bill, which on examination will be found to be divided into five parts. The first part deals mainly with definitions, the most important of which are the interpretation of "eggs" and "producer." "Eggs" are defined to mean the eggs of fowls or ducks. Duck eggs are delivered principally during the flush season, August to December, during the same period that there is a surplus of hen eggs. They are comparatively cheap to produce, and compete with hen eggs, particularly for manufacturing purposes. The present production during this period is approximately 10,000 dozen, and even this quantity is an embarrassment to the market as duck eggs are unsuitable for pulping and are not favoured for consumption in shell. To exempt ducks from the operation of the marketing scheme would result in a stimulation of the production of duck eggs, which would take advantage of any markets created by the board without being required to meet any of the costs involved, particularly the losses on export. A "producer" is regarded as a person who owns or controls 20 adult hens or ducks.

When the Commonwealth Control Scheme was first inaugurated, all owners of 20 adult hens or ducks were included. However, some weeks after the regulations had been gazetted, the Minister for Commerce determined to increase the limit to 40 adult birds, with the express object of stimulating backyard production in order that a greater quantity of commercially produced eggs being delivered to various marketing floors would become available for Service needs. The Egg Marketing Acts in Victoria and New South Wales stipulate 20 adult birds, and in South Australia the number is 25. At a recent conference between Commonwealth and State representatives of producers, a unanimous recommendation was made that owners of 20 adult birds should constitute a

producer under any marketing legislation. It is provided in the Bill that under special circumstances producers of small quantities of eggs may be granted a permit exempting them from the provisions of the Act.

The second part of the Bill deals with the constitution, proceedings and general powers of the board. The board to be known as the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board, which will consist of five members, two representing the consumers, two elected by the commercial producers, and a chairman, who shall be a person who is not engaged in the business of producing or selling eggs. Provision is made for the continuity of office of members of the board. Whilst the term of office is for three years, the elected producer-representative receiving the lower number of votes will be appointed for two years, thereafter all elections will be for the full period. The producer nominated by the Minister will hold office for three years.

The first consumer-representatives will be appointed—one for two years and the other for three years, and thereafter appointments will be for 3-yearly periods. The Government believes that all members of boards should be equal as far as voting is concerned, and because of this the chairman of the board will have a deliberative vote only. The powers given to the board are of a very wide nature, but nearly all of these powers are necessary to enable the board to continue the operation of marketing eggs on a scale at least as comprehensive as that which has been carried out by the Commonwealth under National Security Regulations. Part 3 of the Bill deals with registered agents and licensed collectors. The board may consider it desirable to appoint agents to receive and handle eggs on its behalf. The Bill therefore provides that these agents may be appointed under specific conditions laid down by the board, and the board will have discretionary power to terminate such agency if it should think fit.

The marketing of eggs is dealt with in Part 4 of the Bill, which states that marketing will be implemented by requiring all producers of eggs to sell or deliver eggs to the board or the board's agents. The board—provided the eggs comply with the regulations regarding quality, grade, packing, etc.—will be required to accept delivery of all eggs tendered to it and it will then be responsible to growers for pay-

ment for such eggs upon their quality and grade. Provision is made—subject to conditions which may be imposed by the board—that certain producers may be granted a permit to sell eggs direct to consumers, which would enable those producers who have built up such a trade and who have obtained permits during the period of Commonwealth control, to continue this business.

It is provided that permits may be granted to certain persons authorising them to purchase eggs from producers who otherwise would be compelled to consign their eggs to the board. This would enable country storekeepers to continue buying eggs from producers under conditions laid down by the board, thereby enabling producers of small quantities—if they so desired—to sell their eggs to storekeepers and others who would bulk such small deliveries and consign them ultimately to the board. Eggs required by the producer for his own domestic use are exempted from the provisions of the Act, and eggs which the producer would use on his own farm or in connection with his own hatching operations are also exempted.

Experience under the National Security Regulations has shown that, in order to ensure a fair and equitable sale of eggs, it is necessary to require proprietors of restaurants, hotels, boardinghouses, etc., who own their own fowls, to comply with regulations governing sales, so that they may assist in any stabilisation of costs through having to export or treat surplus eggs. Unless this were done, such businesses would be in a more favourable position for trading than their competitors and at the expense of genuine commercial egg-producers. In the Eastern States this was regarded as a loophole by a number of large businesses who either owned or could obtain a share in a poultry farm, and unless such a loophole were blocked, there would be an extension of such a system, particularly amongst suburban retail shops or such businesses as hotels or restaurants. The matter was regarded seriously by the Commonwealth authorities, and National Security Regulations were amended in December, 1943, to cover the position.

Twelve permits of this nature have been issued in this State, which does not interfere in any way with the use of eggs in the

hotel or restaurant concerned but does require that, where eggs are sold through such an avenue, then the owner as far as his production of eggs was concerned should meet the same responsibilities as other commercial producers. Unless such a provision were made, it might result in forcing all similar types of business, through unfair competition, to take shares in poultry farms in order to avoid the provisions of the Act. Clause 30 of the Bill deals with means whereby the board may dispose of eggs which have been vested in it on behalf of producers. The board is charged with arranging for the distribution of eggs within the State in as equitable a manner as possible. Certain areas of the State normally are extremely short of eggs during the summer period, and the Bill provides that such areas—the Goldfields in particular—shall be placed on a similar basis to consumers in the metropolitan area.

During the period immediately following the cessation of Commonwealth control, in which I am informed there is likely to be a surplus of at least 70,000,000 dozen eggs throughout Australia, and a possibility of as much as 3,000,000 dozen next season in this State, producers are endeavouring to find some way to ensure that this huge surplus will be marketed at least in an orderly manner. If such an organisation is not evolved before the present control system ceases, nothing but chaos can be anticipated, as each individual State marketing organisation would endeavour to dispose of surplus production either locally or oversea and in competition with each other. The essentials for such a central authority would appear to be:—

(a) Representation of each State in the central controlling authority.

(b) Control over surplus production, so as to prevent undercutting of prices by those States which at any particular time may have a surplus of eggs or egg products.

(c) Power to direct the form in which surplus eggs shall be marketed, whether as pulp, powder, in shell, or pasteurised.

(d) Power to arrange for the sale and disposal of the whole of Australia's surplus production overseas.

(e) A uniform price for eggs and egg products throughout the Commonwealth.

A provision is therefore included in the Bill enabling Western Australia to negotiate, with power to enter into an agreement with any Commonwealth authority or

other central association which may be formed, having the orderly marketing of eggs on an Australian-wide basis as its objective. The Bill provides that producers shall be paid for eggs according to grades and qualities which may be prescribed under the Agricultural Products Act. The board has power to determine the relative prices for different grades of eggs, which would be paid from moneys received from the sale of eggs and all egg products during any prescribed period. It is intended that such prescribed period will be annual, so that the accounts and affairs of the board may be presented to Parliament each year.

Because of the very involved nature of the various processes in the marketing of eggs and egg products which may be marketed under various grades in shell as chilled eggs, as pulp, as dried eggs, as egg whites, egg yolks, and in other forms also, the board's decision as to the quality or standard involved in handling and processing and in marketing these products shall be final. Where, however, the producer has conflicting claims in respect to payment which he should have received, such dispute may be referred for decision by the local court nearest to the office of the board. Part 5 of the Bill is entitled "Miscellaneous" and includes a provision stating that the board may deduct from the proceeds of the sale of eggs a sum not exceeding 10 per cent. of the amount of such proceeds which may vary from time to time to establish an administration account. It is proposed that the Bill shall continue in operation for five years after the date of its proclamation.

That I think covers the main proposals in the Bill. It is a measure of vital importance to egg producers in this State, designed to control an industry which has developed greatly during the war. The Government is concerned that the industry shall receive all the protection that is necessary, in an endeavour to ensure that it shall prosper under peace-time conditions, and so that all concerned in it shall receive a fair deal. It is in the interest of the State that this shall be so, and I trust that Parliament will endorse the proposals. The egg-producers of this State have been endeavouring for a long while to secure a satisfactory method whereby they can stabilise their industry and con-

trol prices. They have tried voluntary methods and have also resorted to legislation which, as I have already pointed out, proved unworkable. After very serious consideration of the problems associated with the industry, the Bill now before members has been submitted to Parliament in the hope that the egg-producers will take advantage of it, comply with its provisions and thus endeavour to ensure continuity of prosperity in the industry, which otherwise will not be possible. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. G. B. WOOD** (East) [5.26]: In order to save time, I intend to proceed with the second reading debate in the hope that the Minister will postpone the Committee stage until next week, as I have prepared a number of amendments to place on the notice paper.

The Chief Secretary: I will agree to postpone it till Tuesday next.

**Hon. G. B. WOOD**: I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but further than that I will not go. I am in agreement with the Chief Secretary that there is definite need for control following upon the cessation of that which the Commonwealth has exercised over the industry. As the Minister has pointed out, there will be a huge surplus of eggs in the Commonwealth which will have to be marketed in an orderly fashion in the years to come.

Owing to the demands made upon the industry during the war years, egg-production increased tremendously. The surplus proved an embarrassment before the war period, particularly from October to December, and later on the situation will tend to become even worse. It is proposed, therefore, to set up a Commonwealth committee comprising representatives of the Egg Boards of the various States. At present, only four States have marketing boards, Tasmania and Western Australia being the exceptions. I understand that enabling legislation is being dealt with in Tasmania with a view to setting up an egg-marketing board much along the lines proposed in this State. I wish to know why the Marketing of Eggs Act, 1938, was not amended by the Government. I maintain that the Bill under discussion contains nothing that could not have been included in the 1938 Act by way of amendments.



The Chief Secretary: Who introduced the amending Bill in 1942?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I did.

The Chief Secretary: Why did not you embody these conditions?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I had reasons for that, to which I shall refer later on. I do not intend to reply to the Minister's interjection for a few moments, but I shall come to the matter in due course.

The Chief Secretary: You asked a question, and I wanted to know why you did not put these provisions in your Bill.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: At any rate, I shall refer to that later on. It is a remarkable fact that when I introduced the measure to which the Chief Secretary has referred, this House put in several desirable features, including one referring to the constitution of the board giving the producers majority representation. That is desirable and necessary. That Bill was thrown out in another place. Another clause was inserted in the Bill to which I shall refer. It was the subject of considerable criticism in another place, but I notice that that provision is included in the Bill now placed before Parliament by the Government. I shall quote what the Minister for Agriculture, the present Premier, said in 1938. These remarks will be found in "Hansard," 1938, Vol. 2, page 3174:—

I am afraid I cannot give this Bill my blessing or any commendation. Its effect will be to conscript unwilling egg producers to come within the scope of the board in whose existence they will have no say. That perhaps is the greatest socialistic act of this session of Parliament. The remarkable thing about it is that the Bill was introduced and supported by gentlemen who usually disclaim any association with boards. They resent giving away control, but in this instance they desire to hand over control of all eggs produced in the State to a board, in the election of which the majority of poultry owners and egg producers will have no say. The hon. member who introduced the Bill in this House quite innocently stated there was nothing new in it; but there are several new features and I am sure the House will not stand for them in any circumstances. It is not right that a majority of growers conscripted by the measure should have a board foisted on them if they do not desire it. If they desire that a board be appointed, the usual procedure is that 50 of them shall request the Governor to authorise an election to be taken amongst registered producers to declare whether a board shall or shall not be granted.

I was accused of introducing socialistic legislation; but the point is that this House passed it, and it has taken the Government seven years to re-introduce similar socialistic legislation. The then Minister for Agriculture, the present Premier, took exception to the Bill introduced in 1938. What a remarkable change of front!

The Chief Secretary: You ought to be pleased that he has seen the light!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I agree. I am pointing out to the House what I was up against when I brought forward a desirable and acceptable measure to control egg marketing. The Minister said that that measure was unworkable. Why? Because the Government amended it in such a way as to make it wholly unacceptable to the poultry farmers. The measure was never availed of because the Minister for Agriculture in another place amended it so that the producers should not have a majority representation.

The Chief Secretary: Would it not be correct to say that it was Parliament which amended the Bill, not the Government?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: The Minister put up the case and members voted accordingly. I will say—

The Chief Secretary: Thank you very much!

Hon. G. B. WOOD:—at his instigation. That statement is, in part, an answer to the question why I was not prepared to go on amending the 1938 Bill. The present Premier had promised the producers a board, upon which the producers would have majority representation. The president of the Poultry Farmers' Association of W.A. made that statement at Armadale the other night. He said that both the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture made that promise.

The Chief Secretary: I question that.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I am quite prepared to believe Mr. Hoops. He told me the same thing. I was in touch with these producers when they affiliated with the P.P.A. and I went to their executive meetings. Mr. Hoops said the Minister had agreed to such a board, but stipulated that the third producer was to be elected by the Minister. I shall read to the House what the producers thought about this Bill at the meeting at Armadale the other night. Mr. Hoops referred to what had happened in the other States and then said—

The legislation, however, let the poultry industry down by providing for the same number of representatives of consumers as producers. That was an absolutely unnecessary insult to the growers, the like of which he had never known before from any Government in similar legislation.

The Chief Secretary: He does not know very much about it.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Who?

The Chief Secretary: The gentleman to whom you are referring.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: That is a ridiculous statement to make. Mr. Hoops was the president of the Poultry Farmers' Section of the P.P.A. When the poultry farmers separated from the Primary Producers' Association and joined up with the commercial poultry farmers' organisation Mr. Hoops was elected president, and yet the Chief Secretary makes the amazing statement that he does not know much about it.

The Chief Secretary: About the legislation.

Hon. A. Thomson: He has suffered for it, apparently.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Does the Chief Secretary mean similar legislation?

The Chief Secretary: Yes.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: What about the Dried Fruits Board and other Commonwealth boards which give producers majority representation? There was no consumer representatives on the voluntary stabilisation scheme during the war, and it has been stated that that scheme did a very good job. The constitution of the board under this Bill went from bad to worse, because in another place the other night the Bill, which provided for three consumer representatives and three producer representatives, was amended on exactly the same lines as the 1938 Bill was amended.

The Chief Secretary: At whose instigation?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I think the member for Middle Swan. I think he was at the bottom of it. The Minister approved, much to my surprise. I was present during the debate and therefore know what I am talking about. Another place did not improve the Bill so far as the poultry farmers are concerned. On every occasion when I have introduced legislation in this Chamber affecting primary producers, the House has approved of the principle of majority producer representation, and I ask the House to amend

this Bill so as to provide for three producer representatives, one to be nominated by the Minister.

The Chief Secretary: Do you want to undo what your friends did in another place?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I presume the Chief Secretary refers to the members of my party, but they did not amend the measure. If the Minister wants some history, I shall inform him that one of my colleagues did move that the number of members be reduced to five, but he did so with another object in view, exactly opposite to what happened. The amendment was supported by the member for Middle Swan and the member for Canning; their Party had the numbers and the amendment was turned against us. If the Chief Secretary will peruse the division list, he will see that the voting was on party lines. However, this House previously assisted me in my efforts to help the producers, and I ask it to do so again. I think it only right and reasonable, in view of the promise mentioned to me by Mr. Hoops that this House should do as I ask. I have already indicated that there are many amendments which I propose to move. For instance, the Bill provides that 10 per cent. of the proceeds of the producers' eggs shall be used for administration purposes by the board. In my opinion 10 per cent. is too high and I propose to ask the House to reduce it to five per cent.

The Chief Secretary: Is not 10 per cent. the maximum?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I am not sure.

The Chief Secretary: Well, now!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I think the maximum should be five per cent. If it is made 10 per cent., the board might be encouraged to become unduly expensive. However, that is a matter which can be discussed in Committee. I also desire provision to be made for voting by partners. There may be four or five partners in a big poultry farm carrying 4,000 or 5,000 hens and they would not have more than one vote. I want the House to agree that each partner shall have a vote.

Hon. A. Thomson: The Government does not believe in plural voting.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: The Government does not believe that a man owning 20 head of poultry should have a vote; but a man with 150 head of poultry is to have a vote. In the case of partners, so long

as each partner could claim to own 150 head of poultry, he should be included in the definition "commercial producer."

Hon. L. Craig: You could have a maximum.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: We need not worry about that point for the moment. I do not think there would be more than three or four partners in any one firm.

The Chief Secretary: What would you do in the case of a company?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I do not think it would be workable to bring a company within the provisions of the Bill respecting the number of votes.

Hon. L. Craig: You could give a company one vote.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I do not think we need worry about companies, unless perhaps the Minister knows of a few that might be concerned in egg-producing. Provision should also be included in the Bill for the abolition of the board after, say, five years. The producers, if dissatisfied with the board, should have the right to determine whether it should continue or not. I do not think the Government will oppose such an amendment. Another undesirable feature of the Bill is the provision relating to hotelkeepers. A hotel-keeper may own 30 or 40 fowls, yet he would be debarred from using their eggs in connection with his business. I do not think that is right.

Hon. L. Craig: Give the Minister power to exempt him.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: There is provision for the board to make exemptions.

Hon. L. Craig: Some hotelkeepers are forced to keep fowls.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Yes, to eat up the scraps.

Hon. G. Fraser: Did not Mr. Wood limit the number of fowls to 25 in the Bill he introduced some years ago?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: No, 75. This Bill provides for two classes of producers, termed respectively "producers" and "commercial producers." The figure of 75 was arrived at as a happy medium, so that a producer owning that number could have a vote. Under the present measure, a pro-

ducer with 20 fowls has not got a vote. I shall have much more to say when the Bill reaches the Committee stage; meantime I commend the second reading to the House.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.45]: It is necessary that we should have such a measure as this on the statute-book. We have for a long time had a lot of tinkering with this industry. Mr. Wood referred to the promises made in the past, and I have been told, by men in authority, of those same promises. However, we have to deal with the Bill before us and the most important feature of it is the proposed board. I cannot understand why on a board of six members the consumer should have a third of the representation. Surely one representative of the consumers would be enough. I was, unfortunately, called out of the House while Mr. Wood was speaking and I do not know if he dealt with this part of the Bill. We should move for the deletion of one representative so that the board will be composed of five members. The Bill provides—

"Commercial producer" means a producer who owns or controls more than one hundred and fifty head of adult female poultry.

A man with that number of poultry, which is a small number, may be following another calling in life. A commercial producer should be a man who is making his living from poultry. A man's wife and children could easily look after 150 fowls.

The Chief Secretary: Experience has shown that it is essential that a commercial producer should include people with this number of hens. This is essential in the interests of the egg-producers themselves.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am going to vote for the second reading because this is a necessary measure, especially when we think of the future. There are other matters in the Bill which can be dealt with in the Committee stage. I am not enamoured of the definition of "commercial producer" and I shall strongly oppose the inclusion of two representatives of the consumers on a board of six. One is sufficient, and a board of five would be large enough.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. H. TUCKEY** (South-West) [5.50]: This important Bill has been described as a mixture of good and bad. It contains 44 clauses and if that description is correct I hope that in the Committee stage it will be improved. It should not be a party measure because in local government party politics are strictly excluded. That is so in the Road Board Association and I think it applies also to the municipalities. That is as it should be because there is no room in local government for party politics. I hope that whatever is done with the Bill will be for the good of all concerned. There are many clauses to be dealt with. I do not propose to go through all of them but I would like to refer to one or two, particularly the one dealing with plural voting. It seems to me that there has been a desire to do away with this provision, but on the other hand there has always been objection to its deletion.

Municipal councillors strongly oppose the idea of doing away with plural voting. I have been asked by men with strong feelings towards the Government to vote against this clause. That shows that Government supporters are not all of the same opinion as the Government. In a road board where the ward system prevails and a ratepayer has land in more than one ward, he should be entitled to vote for or against any candidate for the particular wards concerned. A ratepayer might own several thousands of pounds worth of property in a ward and without plural voting he would not have a vote for that ward at the time of an election. That is wrong because it is really a property vote. The Bill does not do away with plural voting entirely because it contains one provision under which two people can vote for one lot of property. That is an admission, to some extent, that plural voting is all right. I hope that, when the Committee stage is reached, we will see that this clause is passed.

Another clause deals with the term for which a mayor shall hold office. It has been suggested that the period should be extended from one year to two. I would like to see the term made three years, but

that is my own opinion. Some members think that one year is long enough. I favour the principle of councillors selecting their own mayor. That is done in the case of the road boards and it works out very well. I cannot see why a city or a town should elect a mayor to preside over the councillors, when they are elected. Furthermore, as a mayor is elected for only one year, a council might easily have a new official head every year. That is not desirable. Surely these responsible men should have a say as to who is to preside over them. I would like to see the Bill amended in that direction. I wish to revert to plural voting. In Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart this system still prevails, and even in Sydney a ratepayer can have a vote for each ward in which he holds property. So it can be seen that plural voting covers a good part of Australia.

An important clause is that dealing with wooden buildings to be erected in brick areas. I do not like that idea. To allow wooden houses to be built in prescribed brick areas where people have spent a lot of money to provide good homes, is breaking faith with those people. That is wrong. We have given the Government power to resume land and, goodness knows, there should be plenty available! I cannot see why it is necessary to allow wooden houses to be built in the brick areas.

**Hon. G. Fraser:** What about the road boards and councils breaking faith with the people who bought land before declaring a brick area?

**Hon. H. TUCKEY:** The Government has power to resume land.

**Hon. G. Fraser:** Never mind about that! People buy land without any restriction and it is later prescribed as a brick area.

**Hon. H. TUCKEY:** As a rule a brick area is made at the request of the people of the district, and is generally prescribed before any tin or asbestos houses are built.

**Hon. G. Fraser:** There have been—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! We have not yet got into Committee. This discussion might well take place in Committee.

**Hon. H. TUCKEY:** In my view the principle contained in this clause is wrong, and I am not alone in that respect. Another matter that needs careful consideration is the question of making the local authorities

responsible for providing school grounds, health centres and kindergartens. That might be very far-reaching. I know that in respect of expenditure a council cannot expend more than £150, but there is nothing here to say how much the council can earn. Apparently it can earn what it likes. That would enable a local authority to compete against people who have bought a truck with which to earn a living. That does not seem to be right. It is a good thing for a council or a road board to do an odd job to help a ratepayer, but this is a very wide clause. It would be wrong to leave it open as it is now.

The amendments contained in the Bill have not, as far as I know, been submitted to the Local Government Association, or discussed with that body. It would be wise to do that in the future, because it would have a lot of discussion when a Bill is brought before Parliament. It was customary to do that in the years gone by. The Road Board Association and the Local Government Association have always been pleased with the way in which the Government co-operated with them when bringing Bills before Parliament, but on this occasion they had no opportunity to express their views. It means now that there are many amendments which the councillors desire their representatives to bring before the House and, no doubt, there will be many amendments on the notice paper next week. There is the question of by-laws, caravan parking and other things.

I notice that the Bill was amended in another place to make suitable provision for town and river jetties, both in the city and the country districts, that are used by the people a great deal. The local authorities have had some trouble with the Harbour and Light Department at Fremantle, in deciding who shall control the jetties. If this Bill becomes law the local authorities will, in some cases, take over the structures from the Harbour and Light Department, and that will make for smooth working and give the local authorities an opportunity to provide conveniences for the people in their particular centres. In most cases the jetties are revenue producing and they will be able to recover sufficient revenue from them to maintain, and, in some cases, extend them. I am pleased that another place made it optional for a local authority to take over

the jetties or leave them under the control of the Harbour and Light Department. There are a few minor amendments that I want to deal with, but I will leave them for the Committee stage. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. E. H. H. Hall, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Friday, 7th December, 1945.*

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS.

#### GOVERNMENT MOTOR BUSES.

*As to Maylands route.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

1, Does he approve of the present route being followed by the Government motor buses on the Maylands run?

2, Is he aware that this service runs along a tram line for the greater part of the journey?

3, Can he give any reasons for the action of his department in allowing such a state of affairs to continue.