

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 19th October, 1938.

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

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1938. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

BILLS (2)—REPORTS.

1. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.
2. Mines Regulation Act Amendment, Adopted.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 31st August.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [4.35]: This Bill seeks to amend paragraph 4 of Section 204 of the Road Districts Act. The position with respect to hawking, the subject matter of this measure, is disclosed by the Hawkers and Pedlars Act of 1892. That legislation enacts—

That no person shall act or trade as a hawker; that is, travel from town to town or house to house soliciting orders for, or carry-

ing for sale any goods, wares or merchandise, except those persons—

- (a) who seek orders from town dealers or sell books or newspapers;
- (b) who sell in a public market, fair, race-course, showground, etc.;
- (c) who sell goods of their own manufacture;
- (d) who sell vegetables, fish, fruit, newspapers, brooms, matches, game, poultry, butter, eggs, milk or any victuals.

The Act does not "take away or diminish any of the powers vested in any local authority." I refer to the powers contained in the Municipal Corporations Act which provides for regulating and licensing hawking as to "fruit, fish, meat, poultry, game or vegetables, or any articles of merchandise," and prohibiting such hawking in public places. The words "or any articles of merchandise" have been construed by the Supreme Court to mean articles of a nature similar to those specified in the Act. It was for the purpose of overcoming this weakness in the law that a clause was included in the Municipal Corporations Act Amendment Bill introduced but not enacted last session. The amendments proposed in the Bill before us are similar to those contained in the Bill of last year. The Road Districts Act provides for the regulating and licensing of hawking by the local authority, in the same way as does the Municipal Corporations Act, as well as for prohibiting hawking in any prescribed road or other part of the district.

Mr. Seward: To which section of the Act are you referring?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That would appear in the regulations framed under the Road Districts Act. The Bill before the House will have the effect of placing in the hands of the local authority power to regulate or prohibit hawking of any description. Such power will be complete. This will overcome the limitation contained in the Municipal Corporations Act and the Road Districts Act. A deputation consisting of retail traders waited on me recently to ask that the Government should take the control away from the local authorities, and prohibit the house-to-house canvassing of goods usually sold by retailers in the locality. That deputation, representative of the Retail Traders' Association, waited on me, and the association's secretary expressed the wish that the Government should take full powers under the Hawkers and Pedlars Act. I pointed out that the matter was obviously one for the local authorities. The Hawkers

and Pedlars Act is more or less a dead letter, the local authorities having undertaken the work of licensing. I pointed out also that members of a road board or municipal council are elected by ratepayers, and are business men in touch with local requirements and in a position to obtain the sense of the district or municipality in regard to such matters. Moreover, there are vast differences between the various municipalities and districts of Western Australia; and experience shows that when local interests desire anything in the nature of restriction of trade, there is an upheaval. I asked the deputation, "Do you desire that the powers given to local authorities in this respect shall be repealed?" That is the direct question I put, and the representative of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Saw, said that was not desired. He added, "We are content that the local authorities should do the work." That being so, the Bill proposes to invest local authorities with the necessary powers. Upon the passing of the measure, if any given districts so desire, that power will be given to it and the district will be able to exercise it and thus be the licensing authority. Local authorities are in touch with local traders. I presume other members besides myself have received communications from firms interested in the matter. One is Rawleigh Products Ltd., of Brunswick, Victoria.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is an American firm.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is established in Victoria. Its correspondence came to me from that State. Then there is Watkins Ltd., of Exhibition-street, Melbourne. Again, there is the Telson Manufacturing Proprietary Ltd., whose head office is established in Richmond, Victoria. I shall not put up their case, because we as a Government do not propose to take power to deal with the subject. The passing of the Bill will mean that the persons concerned can make their representations to local authorities who will be in a position to regulate the trade fairly. If outside traders act prejudicially to traders who pay rates, it will be for the local authority to take action. In the Municipal Corporations Act Amendment Bill of last session I had included a clause exactly similar in wording to the clause in this Bill. The Municipal Corporations Act Amendment Bill will be reintroduced during this session. I could have introduced it before but for the fact

that we are waiting for the report of the Royal Commission. Any recommendations that Commission may make regarding amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act will receive the consideration of the Government as to their inclusion in the Bill which is already prepared. That is the only reason why that Bill has not yet been brought down. The measure now before us proposes the necessary amendment with regard to hawking in road districts. Therefore, on behalf of the Government I support it.

We shall be consistent. We regard the subject as one to be dealt with by the local authority, whether a road district or municipal council; and complementary legislation will be brought down to give municipalities the power which this Bill proposes to give to road boards. Thus there will be a means of having the matter uniformly dealt with throughout the State by the people who are most closely associated with trading, and who will watch the interests of local traders. This is a commonsense proposal, and in conformity with the proposal brought down last session by the Government. Accordingly I support the second reading.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [447]: I have had some opportunity to acquaint myself with the contents of the Bill sponsored by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). As the Minister for Works has pointed out, the measure proposes to confer on road boards the enforcement of the Hawkers and Pedlars Act of 1892. That Act may now be a dead letter, but evidently at the time of its being passed the Government was responsible for the enforcement of all laws. So much is plain from Section 7 of the Act, reading—

Nothing in this Act shall take away or diminish any of the powers vested in any municipal council.

Thus the Act gave municipal councils special powers.

Mr. Marshall: No. It merely allowed them to exercise the very limited powers granted to them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Act left municipal councils free to do whatever Parliament had decided they might do. That does not apply in the case of the Road Districts Act. Practically, power has been taken from the Hawkers and Pedlars Act and conveyed into the Road Districts Act.

The latter Act, in Section 204, paragraph 41, subparagraph (i), speaks of "regulating the hawking of fruit, fish, meat, poultry, game, or vegetables, or any article of merchandise, and requiring licenses to be obtained by hawkers." The words "any article of merchandise" refer only to articles similar to those specifically mentioned. The Bill will amend paragraph 41 of Section 204 by striking out of subparagraph (i) the words "fruit, fish, meat, poultry, game, or vegetables, or any article of merchandise" and inserting in lieu thereof the words "any goods, wares, or merchandise." Reference to the Hawkers and Pedlars Act shows that no power is given to hawk or peddle any goods except such as have been manufactured by the hawker or pedlar himself.

Mr. Marshall: That is correct.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Thus it appears that people to-day hawking a variety of manufactured articles are doing something that is contrary to law. The Bill proposes to enable them, subject to the approval of local authorities, to do such hawking. In common with the Minister for Works, most of us have received letters not only from certain firms in the Eastern States but also from their representatives here. Those firms have representatives in almost every Western Australian town. The representatives of the firms concerned travel through the country districts and dispose of goods manufactured by their principals in the Eastern States. By that means country people are able to purchase many serviceable articles, including stock medicines that are always in demand. Hawkers travel from farm to farm, and the country people are greatly assisted in consequence. The member for Murchison does not propose to deprive those hawkers of their right to dispose of goods, but to place upon the local authority the responsibility of determining whether or not the hawkers shall be allowed to operate in its area. Under the existing legislation, the local authorities have power to prohibit hawking within their boundaries.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, they need not license the hawkers.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. The Act provides power for the local authority to "prescribe the annual fees to be paid for hawkers' licenses and for differentiating in such fees according to the commodities

hawked, not exceeding (a) in towns and prescribed areas, £10, and (b) the country, £6." Then again, the Act provides power to "limit the number of licenses to be issued and for refusing to grant any license, either when such limit is reached, or for any other reason." It will be seen, therefore, that the local authorities already have power to prohibit hawking, if so desired. I hope that commonsense will be exercised by local authorities, and, if the hawkers are serving a useful purpose and are not proving harmful because of the trade they carry on, that they will be permitted to continue operations. The Bill does not seek to prevent that being done, but merely hands over discretionary power to local authorities. No harm can follow upon Parliament endorsing this legislation. I have given the measure serious thought in view of the fact that from various country districts letters of protest have been received on the assumption that the Bill would terminate a legitimate form of business that has been of advantage to country people. As I stated previously, I am well aware that the hawking, to some extent, has been illegal, because, strictly speaking, it should be restricted to goods of the hawker's own manufacture.

Mr. Marshall: I can show you how they got over that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not see how they could do that, because as a rule they do not sell articles of their own manufacture.

Mr. Withers: They take orders and supply later.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, they sell goods that they have on their motor vehicles. For many years past hawkers have operated in the country districts and have been particularly useful during the shearing season. From my own experience, I know that towards the end of the season shearers frequently found it necessary to purchase new clothing, and they were able to procure their requirements from the hawkers, who thus served a very useful purpose. I can see no harm in the Bill, which will not prevent hawkers from carrying on their trade, but will serve to legalise that which has been illegally done in the past. A certain amount of responsibility will be placed on the local authorities and, of course, the police will enter into that phase as well.

The Minister for Works: The local authorities could deal with the phase from the health standpoint, particularly with regard

to foodstuffs. Only slightly extended powers would be required.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so, but I think the local authorities, with their present powers, could prevent hawkers from disposing of unwholesome foodstuffs. I support the second reading of the Bill.

The Minister for Works: It does not by any means contemplate prohibition.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No.

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 ONIONS.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 28th September. Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; Mr. Fox in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after Clause 1 had been agreed to.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Appointment and constitution of the board:

Mr. FOX: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to Sub-clause (3):—"and during the preceding growing season has planted and harvested at least a quarter of an acre of onions."

I am given to understand that the majority of those who are growing onions have at least a quarter of an acre under crop.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I also desire to amend the subclause, and my suggestion differs a little from that of the member for South Fremantle. I had hoped that he would have allowed his amendment to lapse in favour of mine. To make my point of view clear, a grower may have purchased an onion-farm after planting, and be responsible for the marketing of the crop. He will be a genuine onion-grower, and should be entitled to the privileges that the member for South Fremantle seeks to confer upon onion producers, which is to exercise the franchise for the election of the board. A man who bought an onion farm after the planting season had started would be debarred from voting should an election take place before the end of the season. If a grower has an area of land to the extent of

even a quarter of an acre from which he makes part of his living, he should be entitled to vote for members of the board.

Mr. FOX: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to Sub-clause (3):—"and is entitled to be enrolled as an elector for the Legislative Assembly."

Any grower claiming the privilege of voting for the formation of the proposed board should at least be a British-born or naturalised British subject. Therefore, before a grower can vote for a member of the board, he should be entitled to be enrolled as an elector for the Legislative Assembly. That is not asking too much. To be qualified for enrolment as such an elector, a foreigner must be a resident of the State for 12 months. No foreigner who comes to Western Australia would embark on the business of onion growing in the first 12 months of his residence in this State; consequently, no hardship would be inflicted by the exclusion of foreigners not entitled to be enrolled as electors for the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. SAMPSON: In my opinion, the amendment will weaken the Bill. A foreigner cannot be naturalised in Australia until he has been a resident of Australia for five years. The amendment would have the effect of preventing the orderly marketing of onions, because all the growers engaged in the industry could not be brought under the control of the board.

Mr. FOX: I oppose the amendment. The member for Irwin-Moore himself admitted that there was not much merit in the amendment, because he believed no grower in Western Australia did not possess the qualification for enrolment as an elector for the Legislative Assembly. Any grower who puts his onions into the pool should at least be given an opportunity to vote for the members of the board. We should not penalise foreigners further because they do not enjoy the privileges of our laws by not being naturalised. I know of one foreigner who has resided for many years in Australia. He did not become naturalised and at present has not the £5 to pay the necessary fee. That man has deprived himself of an old-age pension. From information I have received, at least 90 per cent. of the onion growers in the Spearwood area are natu-

lised. It is an axiom of British law that no subject shall be taxed without representation. The growers are to be taxed, whether or not they are naturalised.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I support the amendment. If foreign onion growers consider Western Australia to be good enough to live in, they should not hesitate to become naturalised British subjects. If they do not become naturalised, they should be debarred from voting.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I support the amendment. A great many foreigners come to Australia. They do not work for Australians, but for their own countrymen, nor do they work for wages. The newcomers are allotted part of the work that is going on. If it is clearing, they are sub-let a portion of the clearing work; if it is potato-growing, portion of the area is sub-let to them. When it comes to voting for a board such as is proposed, very often one of these men will have six or seven votes, probably more. As a matter of fact, we know of instances of this kind that have occurred at the Trades Hall.

Mr. Fox: This is the first time I have heard you speak against plural voting.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not favour that kind of plural voting. I will not encourage it. I will never pass over my franchise to someone else. I do not want anyone to exercise my vote for me. If we went to any other country, it would not be possible for us to become landowners until we had taken out naturalisation papers, and we would have no votes of any kind. Foreigners have to be here for only five years and they are then entitled to become British subjects. If a person does not wish to be one of us, why should we extend to him the privileges that we consider should be exclusively reserved to British subjects? Foreigners are not allowed, under our electoral laws, to elect members to this Chamber, or to any of the municipal councils or road boards. We tell them that they must show their bona fides by being citizens of the State for five years, at the end of which time, by payment of a fee, they may become naturalised. The payment of a fee is the last thing that worries them because any foreigner who desires to secure the money has no difficulty in finding one of his friends willing to hand over £5 for the purpose. There is a great deal more co-operation between foreigners in this country

than between our own people. I assure the member for South Fremantle that the advice of the Minister for Agriculture is very sound.

Mr. FOX: I still intend to oppose the amendment. I could understand it if the Government would not permit aliens to own land, but these foreigners are allowed to take up land and cultivate it. In spite of that, it is proposed that they shall have no say in the election of the board which is to be set up under the provisions of the Bill to dispose of their produce. That is not logical. Another reason why I oppose the amendment is that foreigners have to spend a long time in the State before they can become naturalised. Those who are not naturalised are already penalised by not having a say in the making of the laws of the State. All the Bill seeks to do is to give them a voice in the election of the board.

Mr. WITHERS: I hope the member for South Fremantle will not press his objection. The proposed amendment will not deprive a foreigner of his livelihood. He can look to his own compatriots for guidance in the first few years of his domicile in this State, and upon naturalisation he is entitled to all the privileges enjoyed by those born in the country. No hardship will be inflicted on these people and the adoption of the amendment may result in some of those who have been in the State for a considerable period and have not become naturalised taking steps to obtain naturalisation.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I assure the sponsor of the Bill that no hardship will be imposed on the people he represents as a result of the adoption of the amendment. There is another industry in this State the commodities of which are marketed under similar legislation. Britishers engaged in that industry are at a distinct disadvantage in competition with foreigners, for this reason: A habit in which the foreigners have indulged has been to market a portion of their crop under their own names, a portion in the names of their wives and a portion in the names of their sons who are over 21 years of age. In this way an individual grower has been entitled to two or three votes. That has been done here to the detriment of the genuine British producer and to the detriment of returned soldiers.

Mr. Hegney: Who taught them to do that?

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: That has occurred in the hon. member's electorate.

Mr. Hegney: There are no foreigners in my electorate. But who taught them to do that?

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: That practice is absolutely wrong. If the amendment is accepted, no hardship will be imposed upon the producer, who will still have the right to market his commodity through the board. All the amendment suggests is that foreigners shall not have a vote in the election of the board unless they comply with certain conditions.

Mr. MARSHALL: The amendment is not entirely without merit but the member for Irwin-Moore must confess it will not overcome the difficulty he has mentioned, because all foreigners can become entitled to have their names placed on the Legislative Assembly rolls.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Not unless they are naturalised.

Mr. MARSHALL: That does not make any difference. The hon. member said that a hardship was imposed on certain producers because foreigners marketed portion of their output in their own names, portion in the names of their wives, and portion in the names of their sons over the age of 21. If the amendment is agreed to and all foreigners are entitled to have their names on the Assembly rolls, they would still be able to operate in that way.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I was only pointing out what is done in another industry.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am pointing out that they will be able to do the same thing in this industry, even if the amendment is accepted.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Not unless they are naturalised.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so, but the difficulty mentioned by the hon. member is not overcome by his amendment. One objection to the amendment is that a number of foreigners is already engaged in the production of onions and even if they submitted their application for naturalisation now, in order that they might be qualified to vote for the board, they would be far too late to participate in the first election. A fairly long time must elapse before naturalisation could be secured, and therefore the amendment would probably deny the right for a considerable period to many engaged in the industry.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Most onion growers have been here for a number of years.

Mr. MARSHALL: The amendment would not apply to them because they would be naturalised. If we were assured that each grower could become naturalised, the amendment would not be injurious, but some people might be hard hit financially. I agree with the spirit of the amendment. People who make their homes in this country should be able to qualify for the rights of full citizenship. Some of these foreigners have large families, and the larger the family, the smaller would be the opportunity to pay for naturalisation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They can always get the money.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, it has to be provided from some source. My only regret is that Britishers are not as loyal to their countrymen as are foreigners to their nationals. Producers of onions have very little money in the way of profit and, as the Bill applies to them alone, I shall support the member for South Fremantle.

Mr. HEGNEY: I oppose the amendment for the reasons given by the mover. If, as he said, the amendment will not affect growers, there is no need for it. The Leader of the Federal Country Party recently returned from Europe where he invited Danes and Scandinavians to come to Australia and settle in the primary industries. Many such people would probably be careless in the matter of naturalisation, and if they became onion growers here, they would have no say in the election of the board. When seeking naturalisation, many foreigners are exploited and have to pay more than the Commonwealth charge of £5 to secure their papers. If they consult a solicitor, his fees must be added. I could quote instances of difficulties having been experienced in that direction. The amendment is quite unwarranted and certainly will not cure the objection arising from some foreigners in another industry obtaining three votes for the one family.

Mr. TONKIN: I should like your direction, Mr. Chairman. I foresee a difficulty that will arise if the amendment is carried. The subclause ends with the words "unless he is of the full age of 21 years." Those words will be superfluous if the amendment is passed. Yet, if we wait until the amendment has been added, we shall be too late to delete them. How should we deal with the matter?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot see that any difficulty would arise. The grower might be a Britisher under 21 years of age. The amendment deals with foreigners.

Mr. TONKIN: Then the Britisher under 21 would not be entitled to be enrolled for the Legislative Assembly, so that the other words are superfluous.

The CHAIRMAN: The grower would have to be a foreigner of 21 years and entitled to enrol. I see no difficulty.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Before seeing the amendment submitted by the member for Irwin-Moore I had drafted an amendment to fit this particular case. It was to add the words "and must be a natural-born or naturalised British subject." That would overcome the objection raised by the member for North-East Fremantle. It is important that in matters such as this, or in matters where the benefits of protection by legislation are enjoyed by those participating in the industry, the participants shall be British subjects. All who have had anything to do with legislation controlling other industries know the difficulties that have obtained in the past simply because this protection has not been included in the legislation. In all similar legislation in the other States, particularly when it comes to dealing with commodities respecting which boards have been appointed, this provision has been included. I suggest that the member for Irwin-Moore withdraw his amendment in favour of the one I have suggested.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: With the permission of the Committee, I should like to withdraw my amendment in favour of that suggested by the Minister.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to Subclause (3):—"and be a natural-born or naturalised British subject."

Mr. SHEARN: I should say that the amendment would meet with the approval of the member in charge of the Bill. It adequately covers the position, and I shall support it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not prepared to support the amendment. The Bill will not cover more than 100 or 200 people throughout the State. What I am concerned about is that there will be a small percentage of those engaged in the industry perhaps for

four years and eleven months, and those people will not be entitled to be naturalised, and so will be excluded from any right that the Bill will confer.

The Minister for Agriculture: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister knows that no foreigner can be naturalised until he has been here for five years.

Mr. Patriek: But foreigners will participate in the benefits.

Mr. MARSHALL: If they have no say, there will not be any benefits. I do not know that the principle in this case is worth enforcing, because we shall be penalising a percentage of those people.

Mr. SHEARN: We might say as logically that those who are likely to be disadvantaged by the clause would disagree with the establishment of a board. At this stage we have no chance of assessing the relative voting strength of those who would be naturalised immediately, any more than we might have the right to assume that there would be those who would be disfranchised through not being naturalised. As has been pointed out, if Parliament elects to give these people attention by way of a board, it is a fair thing to ask that they should be called upon to assume some sense of citizenship. One might reasonably assume that the majority of those engaged in the industry would be in favour of the creation of a board of this nature.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. FOX: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to Subclause (3) as amended:—"and during the preceding growing season has harvested at least quarter of an acre of onions."

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not satisfied with the representation on this board. There is no objection to the total number of members being five, but it is wrong that the board should be dominated in the proportionate way set out in the clause. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause (4) the words "three, all" be struck out, and the words "two, both" inserted in lieu.

Mr. Fox: I will agree to that.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by the Minister for Agriculture, clause further amended by striking out of Subclause (5) the word "two" and

inserting in lieu the word "three," and by inserting after the word "manner" the words "one of whom shall represent the consumers."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Dissolution of board:

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The Committee has decided that any grower requiring a vote for the election of the board shall have certain qualifications. For instance, he must be a British born or a naturalised British subject. The clause does not provide that the grower shall have these qualifications. I move an amendment—

That after the word "production" in line 2 of Subclause (1) the following words be inserted:—"and having the qualifications required to take part in any poll for the constitution of a Board or in any election under this Act."

Mr. Fox: I agree.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That after the word "business" in line 4 of Subclause (1) the words "and so qualified" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (2) the words "three years" be struck out, with a view to inserting the words "one year."

Three years is too long a period to allow for the taking of another poll. Although I admit that most boards, upon which Parliament has placed the responsibility of organising the disposal of any particular commodity, can be relied upon to do the right thing, marketing boards have not always comported themselves in such a way as to commend their actions to the general community. As a safeguard I wish to ensure that the onion growers shall have an opportunity to terminate the board when they so desire. Three years is too long a period to allow before they have the right to do this.

Mr. FOX: I oppose the amendment. Three years afford little enough time for giving the board a fair trial. Elections involve expense. This industry is not large, and to saddle it with the expense of electing a board every 12 months would be unreasonable. In three years the onion growers will

have learnt whether the board is to their interest.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I support the member for South Fremantle. The board should be given a chance to prove itself. For this a period of 12 months is too short.

The Minister for Agriculture: Fifty per cent. of dissatisfied growers are necessary to demand a poll.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am aware of that. The board will deal with a perishable commodity, and will have to be carefully nurtured for a while. With the assistance of the Minister for Agriculture and his officers, probably the board will prove a success. Certainly onions are not as perishable as many other vegetables, but they are perishable nevertheless.

Mr. BOYLE: I support the clause as it stands. The Bill is experimental legislation which is to be tried in a confined area and will encounter much opposition from middlemen. Three years' time is little enough for the board to develop a system of protection from insidious attacks.

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not know that that contention follows.

Mr. BOYLE: I do not like the 12-months provision. It is all too short. The board has to be constituted and built up, and has to get its business in order while subject to attacks of all descriptions. As the first 12 months in the life of a child are the critical 12 months, so the three years proposed will be the critical period in the board's existence. I am entirely opposed to the amendment of the member for Irwin-Moore. This side of the Chamber has consistently fought for legislation of this kind over many years. The Bill of the member for South Fremantle is well thought-out.

Mr. SAMPSON: A period of 12 months is impracticable. Queensland adopted three years because that State recognised that the usefulness of a piece of legislation could not be tested in a shorter period.

Mr. THORN: I definitely agree with the member for Irwin-Moore, whose amendment suggests a safeguard in the interests of the growers. To ask that three years shall elapse before any poll can be taken is to ask too much. Under the clause as it stands, however dissatisfied the growers might be they would have to put up with this measure for three years. I see no danger in reducing the period to 12 months. I am heart and soul with the principle of this legislation.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A compromise should be effected. The member for South Fremantle might do his growers an injury if the board should function badly, or if circumstances which were fully stated on the second reading should come to pass. Objections raised to the Bill in second reading speeches have substance. Many difficulties not anticipated by growers may arise, causing them to be glad to be relieved of the measure. The present proposal is that they shall be bound hand and foot for three years. In spite of aspects connected with the importing of onions, the board itself might request the sponsor of the Bill to ask the Minister for a poll. Two years might be the correct period.

MR. FOX: As a compromise I would be prepared to accept two years.

Opposition Members: Don't compromise! Stick to your Bill!

MR. FOX: One year is far too little. However, two years would afford ample opportunity if the measure is put into force for the present onion-growing season, as it would then operate during two onion-growing seasons within 18 months, and if at the end of two years the board is not acceptable to them they will have an opportunity to vote it out.

Amendment (to strike out the word "three" in line 1 of Subclause 2) put and passed.

On motion by Mr. Fox, the word "two" inserted in lieu of the word "three" struck out in line 1 of Subclause 2.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause (2) the word "three" be struck out with a view to inserting the word "two."

MR. SAMPSON: In this instance the issue is quite different. The first two years are provided to test out the practicability of the scheme. An interval of three years subsequent to that is little enough if the scheme proves satisfactory.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of Subclause (3) the words "a majority of the votes polled is" be struck out and the words "more than three-fifths of the votes polled are" inserted in lieu.

Clause 3 provides for more than three-fifths of the votes polled being required before the board can be constituted and it is merely logical and fair that a similar majority should be required before the board can be dissolved. To provide that the board could be set aside merely by "a majority of the votes polled," would not be right.

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

Clause 11—All onions to be delivered to board:

MR. NORTH: Clause 11 provides that anyone who deals in onions other than through the board shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £50. That penalty is very drastic. Would the member for South Fremantle be opposed, in principle, to allowing supplies of onions, after the growers had disposed of as much as possible of the crop at the most advantageous prices obtainable, to be sold cheaply to the needy section of the community, of whom something has been heard lately?

HON. P. D. FERGUSON: Are you not dealing with your motion now?

MR. FOX: The question is rather premature. The object of the clause is to prevent people from dealing in onions other than through the board.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12—Contracts for sale of onions:

MR. FOX: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of Subclause (3) after "four" the words "not dealing solely with onions under and pursuant to any exemption under the last preceding section" be inserted.

The amendment will protect any merchant who makes a contract dealing with exempted onions.

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

Clause 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Marketing powers, etc.:

MR. FOX: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided that if the Minister is of opinion that any action or proposed action of the Board relating to the sale of onions or withholding onions from sale is or will be to the detriment of public interests by unreasonably increasing the price or causing a scarcity of onions, he may by order under his hand from time to time direct the Board to provide for consumption onions held by the Board at such prices and in such quantities as the Minister deems necessary to reasonably supply the re-

quirements of consumers and the Board shall observe and give effect to the order of the Minister. On any wilful disobedience by the Board to any such order the offices of the members of the Board shall, if the Minister in writing so directs, be deemed for all purposes to have been vacated."

The amendment will provide the Minister with all the power required for the protection of consumers, who, in addition, will have a representative on the board. Should the Minister consider the board had done anything unduly to increase the price or withhold supplies of onions, the powers set out would enable him to deal with the position. I trust he will accept my amendment in preference to the one standing in his name on the notice paper.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The difference between the two proposed provisos is that one is general and the other specific. The proviso I suggest has a general application, and the veto is similar to that contained in legislation of the other States. My suggested proviso deals with the actions of the board as a whole, and that is necessary in legislation of this character. I inquired from Ministers for Agriculture of the other States what their views were on this matter, and they replied that not only was the power of veto necessary, but that it should have general application.

Mr. Fox: The provision is not contained in the Queensland Act.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is.

Mr. Boyle: And in the Victorian Act.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The reason is obvious. In the interests of the growers and of the public, it may be necessary to save the board from itself. My suggested proviso does not apply necessarily only to the acquiring and disposal of onions; the board may desire to do many things that would be detrimental to the growers, and if the Minister did not have the power of veto the board could put its desires into effect. The board conceivably might do something that would wreck the scheme and adversely affect the growers.

Mr. THORN: I am in agreement with the Minister. It is absolutely necessary that the Minister should have a complete power of veto. The board may desire to spend the producers' funds in a way objectionable to the producers. The member for South Fremantle should accept the Minister's proviso. I suggest, however, that the power proposed

to be given to the Minister, to nominate persons to advise him, is not required.

Amendment put and negatived.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided that the Minister may, by order under his hand, stop or prohibit any action or proposed action on the part of the Board which he considers is or would be detrimental to the public interests, or likely to affect the supply and distribution of onions at reasonable prices to consumers thereof, and may revoke any such order, and he may at any time nominate not more than three persons to advise him as to whether, in any particular case, it is expedient to make or not to make such an order or to continue or revoke any order which has already been made.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the words:—"and he may at any time nominate not more than three persons to advise him as to whether, in any particular case, it is expedient to make or not to make such an order or to continue or revoke any order which has already been made."

The Minister may request any person to advise him; there is no need to insert that provision in the measure.

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

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

Clauses 15 to 20, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 28th September. Mr. Sampson in the Chair; Mrs. Cardell-Oliver in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 5:

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the clause, as amended, be agreed to.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided that any female may by notice in writing addressed to the resident or police magistrate for the district in which she resides, indicate that she does not desire to serve as a juror, and upon receipt of such notice by the resident or police magistrate she shall be excused from any service whatsoever as a juror.

I do not anticipate any objection to this amendment, because it is a reasonable proviso and is what most women in the State desire. Thousands of women have no wish to serve on juries, and have a perfect right to be able to excuse themselves.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: In moving the amendment, the member for Fremantle doubtless had in mind the impossibility of the member for Subiaco's doing anything but accept it, as the Bill without the amendment would be totally unworkable. But the member for Subiaco has also in mind that the member for Fremantle has deliberately made the Bill totally unworkable—

Mr. Sleeman: That is not fair.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: —with the object of forcing the member for Subiaco to accept this monstrous measure which would react against her politically and against the women's movement generally.

Mr. Sleeman: The women do not think so.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: If the hon. member knows more about women than I do, and he probably does—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member imagines that because the member for Subiaco has taken the trouble to introduce a Bill which, if passed, would be helpful to humanity, she would be prepared to accept it in an altered form—even though it might be altered beyond all recognition—rather than allow the Bill to lapse. But the member for Subiaco is not made of that kind of stuff. She is quite willing to assist in the burial of a Bill which is no longer of service to humanity, although it would go to its burial in her name. She looks towards the day when a full knowledge of women and a spirit of tolerance will be the deciding factors in matters of this kind, and not individual ambitions, individual bias or party manipulations. To think that the member for Fremantle is other than kindly disposed towards women and towards the member for Subiaco would be entirely unjust. Consequently the surgical operation which took place on the Bill caused surprise and wonderment to the member for Subiaco. Those emotions, however, gave place to a calm review; and it was not until the member for Subiaco delved into the pages of political history that she discovered the reason for this unseemly treatment of a perfectly normal Bill, the aim of which was to allow women to sit on juries

on an equal footing with men. The reason for the hon. member's extraordinary treatment of the Bill is that he has an obsession about women sitting on juries. He imagines it is his prerogative to allow women to do so but only on his terms. His obsession has lain dormant for 14 years; and very often when an obsession lies dormant, it gathers strength. In 1924 the Labour Government introduced a Bill containing provisions similar to those of the Bill introduced by me, and the member for Fremantle amended and mutilated that Bill as he has done this Bill.

Mr. Fox: He is consistent, anyhow.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No, the difference is that in 1924 he did not discriminate against all women. He magnanimously allowed women equal privileges with men. According to "Hansard" of 1924, page 586, he said—

I shall move during the Committee stage that women be placed on an equal footing with men.

On page 635 he is reported to have said—

I am going to do my best to see that, in respect of the jury list, women are placed on a level footing with men.

What does he say in 1938? His obsession has progressed a step further. He no longer wants equality between men and women; he seeks to put women on juries at any price whatsoever. In 1938 he demands that all women shall be on the list and all not wishing to serve shall apply for exemption. Women who find it absolutely impossible to serve will be forced to write and seek exemption. Fourteen years ago the Labour Government proposed that women should have the right to sit on juries on an equality with men but without compulsion, without asking for exemption, as the amendment proposes, as a democratic principle. The then Minister for Justice, who is now Premier of the State, said—

I do not intend to force anyone to undertake specific functions they do not care for. The principle is democratic. Women, if they desire, should have the right to sit on a jury without compulsion.

The very amendment put forward by the member for Fremantle was opposed by the present Premier and other Ministers in 1924. Now the member for Fremantle no longer belongs to the democratic class, of which the Premier spoke, but belongs to the dictator class. First of all, he has

taken away the right of equality. He has compelled all women, young and old, rich and poor, to sit upon juries.

Members interjected.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: If I am to continue, I must draw comparisons between the Bill as it stands and what it would be if the amendment were agreed to, in order to show how weak the amendment is. The Bill as amended provides that the wife of a relief worker, whose husband is probably hundreds of miles away in the country, a woman with a young family and with no means to pay for assistance in the home, shall be forced to serve on a jury, but not so the man. The wife of the sustenance man who receives 7s. a week, emaciated, ill and having poor food, would be forced to serve on a jury, but not so the man. Under the measure the domestic helper must leave her employment for one or more days to serve on a jury. How is she to know that she is responsible to serve on a jury? How are other young girls to know? Not so the man in the same position; he is not forced on to the jury. The shop girl, the factory girl, women in offices, typistes, charwomen, have been automatically forced on to juries. Now the hon. member goes a step further and says that if they want exemption, they must write to somebody in authority and ask for it. Not so the man. If he has not £50 realty or £150 personality, he goes free. Yet this hon. member dares to talk about equality! Bankers, solicitors, military men, railway servants, schoolmasters, justices of the peace, ministers of religion, parliamentarians, all go scot free; and the hon. member who gives us so many orations on British justice dares to put this sort of tosh before the Chamber. The hon. member, in my opinion, would impose upon women, under the guise of giving them a privilege, one of the most unjust and wicked measures that has ever come before this Parliament, a measure that in my opinion outwits in subtlety of cruelty even our conception of cruelty in the Oriental mind. First of all, he has taken away the equal right of property qualification; secondly, he has taken away the right to apply to serve. He has compelled all women to go on the jury list. Now he intends to impose a further penalty. I ask, is the hon. member sincere or

is he blinded by prejudice, or is he ignorant of what women want? If he is sincere, he has had 14 years in which to bring down an amendment to the Jury Act. If he is sincere, why did he vote for the second reading of the Bill? If he is sincere, why has he sought to destroy the Bill by these iniquitous and ludicrous amendments? I will tell members why. I wish to be kind in my remarks.

Members: Oh, oh!

The Minister for Mines: That would be hard to prove.

Mr. Marshall: God help him if you became otherwise!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member is obsessed with the idea that no woman shall sit on a jury except on his terms. Therefore he gives his support to the second reading of the Bill. Members all know what an obsession is; it is a terrible thing, a ghostlike thing that catches on to one's head. The hon. member supports the second reading and then amends and amends with Dracularian cunning until the Bill becomes a monstrous Frankenstein, an outrage upon women.

Mr. Needham interjected.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The property qualification was some protection to the poorer section of the women as it is to the poorer section of the men. To show the sincerity of the hon. member, he stated during the second reading that the reason he would do away with the money qualification for women was that women had no money. Do members think he believed that to be the truth? He cannot believe it, otherwise he would not have been elected to Parliament. Thousands of women in this State have £50 in realty or £150 in personality. Suppose we give him the benefit of the doubt and say it is true that women have no money. Would not the honest method be to attack the cause and not the effect? Why penalise them because they have no money, then deprive them of the right of application? That right was a national safeguard. It meant that only those women who were able and physically fit to serve on juries would make application, whereas the amendment would compel those who might not want to serve on juries, or were unable or unfit to do so, to serve or be fined because they had neglected so to serve or write and object. Members opposite have supported the amendment because they have not studied its consequences.

On the surface it appears that it will give women a loophole by which they may avoid service on juries. In reality the hon. member has said, "I have made all women jury women, whether they want to serve or not. That is my idea of democracy. Realising that it may be physically impossible for some women to serve, or after talking it over with my confreres my conscience began to prick me, I have decreed that all such women who do not want to serve shall write and say so. If they do not know the law exists they will be fined." To women generally he would say, "Whether you or your husband, or your son or your father pays the fine to save you from your negligence or your ill-health or your inability to serve, the fine will be imposed. This is the punishment you and those connected with you will pay because of your sex. The women of Western Australia have dared to ask for the opportunity to serve on juries; I will give it to them but not in the way they think." There are 110,000 women in this State eligible to serve on juries under the Bill as it now stands. The hon. member in effect says, "I will place them all on juries, but if only 100 of them wish to serve upon a jury, the other 109,900 women must write letters, without any provision being made for stamps, paper, envelopes or education." He has not thought of the hundreds of women who are foreigners, naturalised in this country, who can speak but little English but who would be forced to serve. In 1924 the hon. member said that women should not be called upon to send a written requisition to a resident or police magistrate to be placed on the jury list. Now he would have them write in a requisition to say they should not be placed on such a list. Of all the mad, illogical amendments that have ever come before Parliament, this is the worst. The amendment will cost the State a considerable sum of money. I did not know that a private member could bring down an amendment that could be regarded as a money measure. The amendment will cost the State thousands of pounds. If the Chairman allows this to go through, he will be taking a considerable risk. Before I brought down the Bill I asked the framer whether, as a private member, I could introduce something that might involve the expenditure of a certain sum of money. As no one said anything about it, I let the matter go. In Sections 9, 10 and 11 of the Jury

Act certain costs are provided, and members will be able to calculate what the amendment will mean to the State. The amendment is unfair because it will place an unjust burden upon women. Fourteen years ago that was recognised by the Premier, the Minister for Lands, the Minister for Works, and other members who voted against the proposal. It is the antithesis of the intention of the mover of the Bill. It should not be possible for any member so to distort and re-cast a measure as to make it unrecognisable from its original state. If the hon. member had been sincere in his desire to place women on juries, he would have brought down a separate Bill and allowed this to go through. He knew full well that the Bill would have passed another place, and he knows that with his amendment in it the Bill will not pass. The amendment will mean expenditure to the State, is undemocratic and unfair, and is sex legislation in its most spiteful form.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Bill is as spiteful as is the hon. member who has just sat down, it must be spiteful indeed. She says the amendment is undemocratic. Is there anything else "un" about it?

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Yes, it is ungenerous and unwise.

Mr. MARSHALL: When the galleries were filled with women the hon. member had very little to say about this.

Mr. Sleeman: Not a word!

Mr. MARSHALL: She was not so brave when the women were about. I would point out to her that, when a measure is introduced, no individual member can do anything about it but express his opinion, and subsequently move amendments. Until the House or the Committee has given its decision, nothing can be done. Let that be known to the hon. member.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is not news to me.

Mr. MARSHALL: Where lies the difference between the amendment and the Bill as it stands? The member for Fremantle, J. and other members have on every possible occasion denounced wealth as giving its possessors the right to any particular concessions or privileges. The member for Subiaco has heard me say that in this Chamber.

Mr. Sleeman: She has never said so.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, she cherishes wealth.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must speak to the motion.

Mr. MARSHALL: So the Deputy Chairman has just awakened.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Subiaco talked wide of the mark. Realising that women have handicaps, the hon. member by his amendment provides that any woman who finds herself incapable of serving on a jury shall apply for exemption. What does the Bill propose? It proposes to debar everyone.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee is discussing a proposal to add a proviso.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am comparing the amendment with the Bill, and think such a comparison is relevant to the subject matter before the Chair. The member for Subiaco complains of the deletion of certain words and the insertion of others. She complains because we did not give to narrow-minded, inquisitive, wealthy individuals alone, the right to sit on juries. It is equality of sexes to say to men and women, "You shall all sit on juries." Why in this matter should there be conscription for males and merely voluntary service for women? Working-class women should sit on juries, but who are the women that would apply for the right to sit?

Mr. Sleeman: The ones carrying poodles.

Mr. MARSHALL: Those who are interested in other people's misfortunes. Could those women guarantee that they would be able to sit on juries? How do they know what might happen to them? We contend that women should have the right to sit on juries in the same way as men.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But you go further than that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even under the Bill ladies will have to sit on juries unless they apply for exemption, and—I am sorry to add—every person will require the property qualification. Women are put on the same footing as men,¹ and then the member for Subiaco objects to our taking her at her word.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: In your way.

Mr. MARSHALL: Is the hon. member to get all her way in this Chamber? Is she alone to prevail here? She is most abusive because we give effect to what women have always been fighting for, equality of sexes. This champion of sex equality wants men

castigated because we do what she always demands.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is not true. I object to that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MARSHALL: I withdraw. I will withdraw anything objectionable to the hon. member. I am not like the member for Subiaco who speaks venomously and vindictively. I make a 100 per cent. withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: Then no further exception can be taken.

Mr. MARSHALL: What is wrong with the amendment? It places both sexes on an absolute equality. If a lady finds her domestic obligations too great, she can obtain exemption. But what right have we, or the member for Subiaco, to say, that only such women as write expressing a desire to sit on juries, shall sit on them? A little combination of sticky-beaks always prying into other people's affairs!

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That statement is 40 years old.

Mr. MARSHALL: Just those few women who are to be found in motor cars with poodles or pomeranians on their knees! In introducing the Bill the hon. member said that if there was any person qualified to sit on a jury it was a mother who had reared a family, had had experience of domestic trials and tribulations, and thus had acquired a broad outlook and worldly knowledge. To how many of those who would write stating their willingness to serve on juries do those words apply? How many of them are mothers? The medical profession knows how many of them could be mothers.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: There is no chance of their being mothers with your amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: There would be just a chosen few of "my" class sitting on juries, because they are the women who would write expressing readiness to do so. But to place all women on an equal footing in this respect is highly objectionable to the hon. member. If ever I find an opportunity to deal with the property qualification, I shall deal with it in no uncertain language. The possession of wealth gives no title to any privilege, but means only that its possessors have luck. I resent the attitude of the member for Subiaco. I raise no objection to her placing her views before the Chamber, but I take strong exception to her getting annoyed with others whose view of life is different. I support the amendment, which will make allowance for the position of women who,

in certain circumstances, will not be able to serve on juries. We provide that, while granting equality for the sexes, recognition shall be paid to disabilities under which women labour from time to time, and they will be able to claim exemption from service on a jury. They will be able to notify those concerned that they do not desire to serve on the jury. That consideration is greater than is extended to males, who must leave their work when called upon to serve on juries.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Not unless they have £50.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have said what I think about the property qualification, which is absolutely wrong in principle. The Juries Act was passed in 1892, in which period it was considered that whiskers went with wisdom.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: On that score, there is not much wisdom in this House.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member is barren of intelligence, if she is to be judged from the standpoint of whiskers. I respect her opinions, but I take exception to her vilification and abuse when members dissent from her views.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am pleased with myself after the few bouquets thrown at me by the member for Subiaco, who asserted that the Bill had experienced a surgical operation. If the Bill has had a surgical operation, the women of Western Australia will feel all the better for it, because we propose to give them what they desire. The Bill, as introduced by the member for Subiaco, was one of the most class-conscious pieces of legislation I have ever seen. She spoke about women who had money. She thinks only of women who have the property qualification, and proposes to prevent other women from sitting on juries. When mention was made of domestic helpers, factory girls and shop assistants, the member for Subiaco brushed them aside as not worthy to sit on juries.

Hon. C. G. Latham: She did not say that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Leader of the Opposition does not know what she said.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes, I do.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The more the Leader of the Opposition keeps his nose out of this, the better it will suit me. The member for Subiaco asked me how I would like to be tried by a jury of shop girls. I would

rather be tried by a jury of that type than by one composed of women who drive round in cars with pekinese pups on their laps. I would get greater justice from the former jury. The hon. member would deny that section of her sex the right to sit on juries. She talked about the wives of relief workers and said we wished to penalise them. We do not; we wish to give them as much right—if they so desire it—to sit on a jury as the wife of a man receiving £10,000 a year. The trouble is that "everyone is out of step except Patsy," and the member for Subiaco does not know the views of her own sex. Many women were in the gallery the other night, but she did not stress her desire in this matter. She sat dumb while allowing amendments to go through that concerned women and their right to sit on juries. Why did she not speak of the views of women then?

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I have to-night.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hon. member was silent the other night when women were present. As a matter of fact, she does not know the viewpoint of women. She does not even know the views of her own organisation, of which I shall say something more in a few minutes. The hon. member quoted what I said on a former occasion when dealing with the Juries Act Amendment Bill in 1924. On that occasion I said—

It is my intention to ask members to vote against this clause and to assist me later on in inserting the new clause appearing on the notice paper. It is not necessary for me to take up the time of the Committee. My views were expressed at a previous sitting. I am strongly against women serving on juries as proposed in the clause. My amendment proposes that the property qualification shall be abolished, and if we are successful in deleting Clause 6 and inserting the amendment, the provision then will be that the property qualification will go and practically every adult male and female will be eligible for enrolment on the jury list.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Whose Bill was that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: It was a Government Bill.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Yes, a Labour Government, and the Bill contained my provision.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We did then what the member for Subiaco threatens she will do if she should happen to sit on the Government side of the House. When dealing with

non-party questions, members on the Government side of the House talk and vote as they think fit; not so the member for Subiaco, who sticks to her party all through. She is so party-ridden that she will not act contrary to party requirements.

The Minister for Employment: If she is not always with the party, she is always against the Labour Government.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Most decidedly she is against the working class, both male and female. As for inconsistency, I moved in 1924 as I move now. Furthermore, I moved for the exemption of the property qualification. The member for Subiaco proposes that women should write in and say, "Please, Mr. Magistrate, may I sit on the jury?" Was anything more undignified ever heard of in this House? Fancy expecting women to do that! I have never heard anything so preposterous before. Let us consider the women's viewpoint. Here is the opinion of Miss C. Shelley of the W.A. Organisation of Labour Women—

Women should not be asked to solicit access to the jury box.

Then we have the viewpoint of Mrs. Edith Cowan, who was at one time a member of this Chamber—

Mr. Sleeman's amendment meets the case. This entitles women to be placed on the same plane as men so far as juries are concerned—

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I am quite well aware of that, and I—

Mr. SLEEMAN: Will the member for Subiaco listen? When any points are made against her, she squeals and squirms and objects. Mrs. Cowan said—

This entitles women to be placed on the same plane as men so far as juries are concerned with the proviso that "any female may, by notice in writing, addressed to the resident or police magistrate in the district in which she resides, indicate that she does not desire to serve as a juror. That upon receipt of such notice, the magistrate shall excuse such woman from any service whatsoever as a juror."

That sets out a provision almost identical with my amendment now before the Committee. Mrs. Cowan had quite as much ability as the member for Subiaco, and probably had a better appreciation of the viewpoint of her sex, because she resided in Western Australia for a much longer period. Next we have the opinion of the Women's

Service Guild, the State President of which said—

She thought that women should be eligible to sit on juries in exactly the same way as men, but they should have the right to register their objection to sit, and should then be relieved of the duty.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: They did not say that the other day.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is what the Women's Service Guild said before, and I have not been notified of any change in their viewpoint. They must have known what I promised to do when I spoke on the Bill, and I should have thought that the guild would have dropped a line to the member for Fremantle or the member for Murchison advising any change in their opinion. At any rate, I have quoted the published views of the Women's Service Guild, which leads us to believe that the organisation is behind us. I shall not stop there. I understand the member for Subiaco is a member of the National Council of Women. The following is a report of what the then president of that council had to say on this matter:—

Mrs. Trouchet, President of the National Council of Women, said she certainly thought that women should be eligible for admission to juries, provision being made for the excusing of those who for reasons of principle, domesticity, etc., decline to act. She felt sure, however, that if women were called upon to register their names for inclusion on a jury list, there would be many competent women who would not submit themselves to selection.

I agree with those remarks. I also agree with what the member for Murchison has said. If it were left to women to write requesting that their names be registered for inclusion in a jury list, the women who would apply would be those having free time, who ride in motor cars and have Pekinese puppies. A hard-working woman would not dream of making application and thus the services of some very competent women would be lost. We did right in deleting the property qualification; and the least we can do is to give women the right to decline to sit on a jury. I hope the member for Subiaco will realise that she is not the only champion of women's rights in this State. Probably she thought she was bringing forward something new and thus was springing a surprise on the people of Western Australia; but this matter has been before the House on other occasions. We are

doing just as much for the women of the State as is the member for Subiaco. If the measure is to be made workable, the amendment must be passed. Threats have been made that the other House will be lobbied, with the result that the Bill will be thrown out. That may be so, but it will not be my fault.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am sorry the discussion has become so heated. The member for Fremantle adopted an unusual attitude when dealing with interjections.

Mr. Sleeman: I did not interject during the debate.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That may be so. Many interjections are made in this Chamber, but members do not get annoyed about them as the hon. member did. He pointed out to the Committee, quite rightly, that under the old Bill it was proposed to treat men and women alike. That was the intention of the member for Subiaco when she introduced her Bill, but she provided that women could make application. Despite the fact that the member for Murehison has said that the property qualification will apply to women, I have my doubts. The point is a debatable one.

Mr. Sleeman: The Crown Law Department says that it will not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No doubt some lawyers will say the opposite. The point is one for legal interpretation.

Mr. Sleeman: It may lead to litigation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, because persons may be summoned to attend a jury and, on refusing to do so, be fined. I do not know how the amendment proposed by the member for Fremantle will work. True, the member for Subiaco said that women between certain specified ages must apply to have their names registered. Some women employ domestics, others do their own domestic work, and they will have to apply to the magistrate. Very few workers' wives could afford to be away from home on a jury case.

Mr. Sleeman: They do not desire to be away.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Many would not desire to serve on a jury. The proposition put forward by the member for Subiaco is sensible: any woman who desired to act on a jury should be permitted to apply. I do not object to the removal of the property qualification, so that other women, who may be working in factories or shops, or be engaged in domestic work, may apply. Their

social standing might be better than that of those who do employ labour; I would make no discrimination at all. The member for Fremantle went too far with his amendments, but as the Committee has agreed to them I shall not raise that point. The present proposal means that the Minister for Justice will have to employ a large staff to enrol the names.

The Minister for Justice: I understand from the member for Fremantle that very few applications will be made.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the Bill passes, few women will wish to serve on juries. I desire to ask the member for Fremantle to delete the word "female" in the first line and insert in lieu thereof the word "woman." I do not like the word "female."

Mr. Sleeman: I have no objection.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word "female" in line 1 and inserting the word "woman" in lieu.

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

MISS HOLMAN: I have no desire to cast a silent vote on the amendment. I am in agreement with the member for Fremantle. I was surprised to hear the member for Subiaco chastise the member for Fremantle for having kept silent for 14 years, especially after the spectacle we had the other night of amendments going through without one word from the member for Subiaco. I thought she was in favour of the amendments, because she did not even raise her voice to say "No" when the vote was called, although she did vote with the Noes in the division. It was not quite fair for her to chastise the member for Fremantle when no opposition whatever was raised the other night. The amendment is quite a good one. I believe in equality of the sexes and that women should have the same citizenship rights as men. As a matter of fact, the Labour Party platform includes full citizenship rights for women. Men should not require property qualification in order to be able to vote at Legislative Council elections or to be entitled to serve on juries. The amendment constitutes a step forward. Women are to be given the right to sit on juries if they so desire, but those that do not wish to seek that publicity have the right to refuse to serve. I expect that the Minister for Justice will have notices printed and all that will be required will be that women who object to sit on juries will

merely have to sign their names to such notices. The member for Subiaco mentioned that some women might not be qualified to sit on juries on account of their lack of education or their nationality. I resent the slur implied in the remarks of the hon. member. She suggested that a person with £50 in cash or in property might for that very reason have sufficient education and ability to sit on juries. The possession of money does not imply a good education or ability, and many a woman who has not a penny to bless herself with might have more education and more ability to sit on a jury than a woman with £50 in the bank or £50 worth of property. There is no more inconvenience involved in a woman's signing her name to a form stating that she does not wish to sit on a jury than there is in her casting a compulsory vote at a Federal or State election. The Leader of the Opposition said that there was no discrimination in the original Bill of the member for Subiaco, but there was discrimination. A woman was not entitled to sit on a jury unless she had £50 in money or £50 worth of property.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That applies to men to-day.

Miss HOLMAN: It should not. That disability has been removed from women.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But there is discrimination now.

Miss HOLMAN: There will not be so far as women are concerned, and that is progress. The hon. member's discrimination went further. She suggested that even with the property qualification, a woman was not to serve on a jury unless she wrote and said, "Please let me sit on the jury." The member for Subiaco said that thousands of women with the property qualification had asked for this privilege, but what of those with no property? No member has any right to come to this House and state that lack of money or possessions means lack of education and ability and I am surprised at the member's pretending to speak on behalf of equality of the sexes. She is doing nothing of the kind. She is pleading for equality of the sexes if they have equality of money and property.

Mr. Cross: She got those ideas from a Turkish harem.

Miss HOLMAN: Any woman is fit to serve on a jury if she so desires.

Mr. Marshall: Working men are eligible.

Miss HOLMAN: It was ridiculous for the hon. member to say that most women have

money. The working man has his wages, but the working woman or mother seldom has money in the bank or property. The member for Subiaco spoke about people being tried by a jury of working girls. I would as soon be tried by such a jury as by any other body of men or women. The hon. member also said that the member for Fremantle had been unfair and ungenerous and that he absolutely destroyed the intention of the mover of the Bill. What counts is not the intention of the mover of a Bill, but the intention of the members of this House. I deplore the fact that discrimination has been shown against working women and those that have not wealth and property and I support the amendment.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I join with the Leader of the Opposition in deploring the fact that a great deal of unnecessary heat has been introduced into this debate.

Mr. Hegney: It is a very cold night anyway.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If any person might be excused for showing some heat, surely it is the member for Subiaco and not those who after all are not nearly so concerned about this measure as she is.

Miss Holman: We are all concerned.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Not to the same degree as the member for Subiaco who brought forward the matter, which has been very close to her heart. She found the measure treated in a manner that she resented. The only amendment before us is the amendment by the member for Fremantle dealing with the right to be given to women to obtain exemption from serving on juries. There is no question before the House of any qualification and I cannot understand how you, Mr. Chairman, having a very intimate knowledge of the Standing Orders, allowed the debate to wander so far from the proper limits.

Mr. Marshall: That is a reflection on the Chair, and I ask for a withdrawal.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am merely expressing surprise.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may proceed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The only concern of any person not involved in this extraordinarily heated controversy is as to the best method of giving effect to the desire to afford women the right to sit on juries. In the first place it was proposed by the member for Subiaco that women should apply

for permission to sit on juries. The other proposal is that women should be regarded as available to serve on juries unless they object. In the end, if the women take action, the result will be the same. The point is, which is the more convenient method? That can best be answered by indicating what has been done in other parts of Australia where similar legislation has been passed. In every other part of Australia the same method is in operation as is suggested in the Bill. In Queensland and New South Wales—I am not sure about Victoria—women who desire to sit on juries apply.

The Minister for Mines: Very few of them.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is a reason why the procedure should be in that form because it would mean economy of work. Therefore I find myself in sympathy with the proposal of the member for Subiaco; it is the more convenient. There is no question of insulting the dignity of womankind, or doing anything such as some members have suggested. It is simply a question of convenience and cost. If a large number of women wrote to ask for exemption, someone would have to be appointed to deal with the applications, and that would entail cost; but if a small number, as I believe would be the case, applied for the right to serve, the cost would be minimised.

Mr. Rodoreda: It is not worth bringing in legislation if the number is so small.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not agree. Let us give them the right, and if they do not choose to exercise it, any grievance will be entirely removed. I hope that the member for Fremantle, whom I acquit of doing anything hostile to the interests of the female sex—if I may adopt his language—will see his way to allow this portion of the measure to pass.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I understand the member for Nedlands suggests that the amendment be not passed. Does he realise that, in that event, all women would be compelled to serve? I am sure the hon. member does not desire that. I think he wishes to do the fair thing by women, and give them the right to decline to serve.

Mr. Marshall: How would he like his cook to be locked up on a jury for a week?

Amendment, as amended, put and passed: the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' IMPERIAL LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA, W.A. BRANCH INCORPORATED (ANZAC CLUB CONTROL).

Second Reading.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [8.46] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is designed to give certain power to the Western Australian branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League. Members are aware that the head office of the league in Western Australia is Anzac House, St. George's-terrace. I wish to mention the objects of the league, and to connect them with my remarks on the Bill. One of the objects laid down in the constitution of the league is—

To provide for the sick and wounded and needy among those who have served, and their dependants, including pensions, medical attention, homes and suitable employment.

Soon after the building was erected, an application was made to the Licensing Court and a license was granted for a club. The league provided the club-room furniture, and found all the necessary money for the club, which is licensed and conforms to all the requirements of the Act.

Mr. Marshall: Has the license always been at Anzac House?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes.

Mr. Marshall: But the league had the license before moving into the new building?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No; this is the only license the league has held. The purposes for which the club was established are—

To afford persons who saw active service in the great war 1914-18, and past Empire wars the means of social intercourse and mutual helpfulness and recreation.

Rule No. 5 stipulates—

No person shall be eligible for election as an ordinary member of the club unless he shall have resided in the State for at least three months, and shall be eligible to become a member of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia.

Thus, the only persons who may become members of the club are those qualified to be members of the league.

The Minister for Justice: But such a person may not be a member of the league.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. The Bill proposes to allow every person who becomes a member of the league to become a member of the club without having to pay

the subscription provided in Section 184, paragraph (c), of the Licensing Act. The section reads—

In order that any club may be eligible to be or to continue registered, the rules of the club shall provide—(c) that there shall be a defined subscription of not less than £1 per annum payable by members quarterly, half-yearly, or annually in advance.

The first principle contained in the Bill is one requesting authority for every member of the league to be a member of the club. The present position is that if a person desires to become a member of the club, he must be qualified for membership of the Returned Soldiers' League, and according to the Licensing Act, pay £1 a year.

The second principle of the Bill is that the whole of the assets of the club will be vested in the league. In the first place, all the funds requisite for the establishment of the club were found by the league, and I am not asking more than that organisation is entitled to when I suggest that the whole of the funds should be vested in it.

The Minister for Justice: There is also the money the club itself has found

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If money has also been found by the club it has, in effect, been found by members of the league, or those qualified to be members. This could hardly make much difference to the proposal. The Bill also provides that any profits made by the club shall be vested in the ordinary funds of the league. The Licensing Act, No. 32 of 1911, sets out that—

The club must be established for the purpose of providing accommodation for the members thereof and their guests, upon premises of which such association, company or body are the bona fide occupiers, and not for the purpose of making profit divisible amongst the members or any of them, or in support of any object other than the accommodation of the members, or the members and their guests.

The accommodation must be provided and maintained from the joint funds of the club, and no person shall be entitled under its rules or articles to derive any benefit or advantage from the club which is not shared equally by every member thereof.

I am quoting from Section 183 of the Act.

Mr. Marshall: What does "accommodation" mean there? This is not a residential club.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No. The accommodation, in this case, means refreshments

and other requirements of a club. The Bill proposes that the profits shall go into the ordinary funds of the league. One of the objects of the league is to help financially those who stand in need of assistance, a very worthy object. If a club makes a profit it is usually disbursed by means of an annual dinner, cocktail parties, and the like. Members will agree that it would be much better that the profits of the Anzac Club should be paid into the funds of the league and used for the purpose for which such funds are generally used. Some few years ago a Bill was introduced and passed by both Houses to provide for aged sailors and soldiers, who will be able to benefit from the fund in question in the year 1940. Every year the Returned Soldiers' League adds to that fund in the hope that some day a substantial sum will be available to enable it to derive an income from which to assist necessitous cases amongst aged sailors and soldiers. So that members may understand that ample safeguards exist, I would state that three trustees have been appointed, namely, the Minister for Mines, the President of the League, and—

The Minister for Mines: Colonel Denton.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, Colonel Denton.

Mr. Marshall: You do not need to elaborate that point?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The league in this State has always stood for good government. I do not mean good government in the sense that we understand it in this House, but good government of its activities. This matter can safely be left to the league. We can be sure that the conduct of the club will be of the highest order, and that it will be managed for the benefit of its members. The Bill will mean that every person who pays 10s. to the league, thus becoming a member of that body, will automatically become a member of the club. For a long time complaints have been made that although Anzac House was built for the benefit of returned sailors and soldiers, many of them were not permitted to use the club premises in that they could not afford to pay the £1 a year that would enable them to join the club. It is a departure from existing practice to ask for such a privilege for any section of the community, but I would point out

that in other States of Australia, as well as in Western Australia, some preference has always been given to returned soldier organisations. The Prince of Wales Hotel in Adelaide was presented to the South Australian league, and an Act was passed enabling it to run a club on the payment of 12s. per annum per member. Provision was made in the Act that, in the event of the club ceasing to exist, the Prince of Wales Hotel would have its license renewed without any further application being required. We are not asking for that privilege here. The Bill is plainly drafted and contains nothing ambiguous. It sets out clearly what is proposed. I assure the House that the club will at all times be conducted according to the Licensing Act. The measure does not deprive the Licensing Court of any control over the club, except that the £1 per annum required for ordinary club members will be dispensed with, and the funds of the club, instead of being used for the benefit of club members, will be used for the benefit of the whole of the league members. The Bill vests in the league the whole of the assets of the club, the money for which was originally found by it, and sets out what shall become of the proceeds should the club cease to exist. It provides further that the club premises cannot be removed from the premises of the league except by the authority of a resolution carried by a three-fifths majority of delegates to an annual or special congress of the league. Rules 35 of the "Rules, by-laws and standing orders of the Western Australian Branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia," states—

The W.A. Branch shall not be diverted from its original purpose, nor dissolve, unless nine-tenths of the sub-branches so resolve at a special congress convened for that purpose. Should any special congress so resolve, it shall, if there remains any surplus after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, further resolve that such surplus shall not be paid to or distributed amongst members of the W.A. Branch, but shall be given or transferred to—

(a) Some other institution or institutions having similar aims and objects as the W.A. Branch; or

(b) Some one or more charitable objects.

Should such special congress fail to agree on the distribution as aforesaid of any surplus, then the Chief Justice of Western Australia shall be deemed to have acquired full and authoritative power to make such distribution in accordance with paragraphs (a) or (b) herein set out.

If at any time there should be an accumulation of funds, and the league went out of existence, any funds then available must be set aside for a charitable purpose having ideals similar to those for which the league exists. Failing that, the Chief Justice of the State shall dispose of the money as he thinks fit, having regard to the rules of the league. Members can, therefore, be satisfied that the funds will be used for charitable purposes. I do not desire to stress the great advantage the league has been to returned sailors and soldiers in Western Australia. Members know all about that already. Not only has the league found employment, but has found food and clothing for a great many people. It has cared for the sick and provided for the education of fatherless children, and has done everything that any charitable organisation could be expected to do. I ask that those who desire to use the club premises may be given the opportunity to do so on lines similar to those found in the Eastern States. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, debate adjourned.

MOTION—LIGHT AND POISON-INFESTED LANDS.

Royal Commission's Recommendations.

Debate resumed from the 12th October on the following motion by Mr. Nulsen (Kanowna):—

That in the opinion of this House, the recommendations of the honorary Royal Commission on light and poison-infested lands should receive the earnest consideration of the Government.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [9.1]: The member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) is deserving of commendation for having brought this subject forward. It would be a thousand pities if after all the labour devoted by the Royal Commission to the preparation of its report, the recommendations contained in it were simply to go by the board. Much energy has been expended on the investigation, a vast amount of evidence has been gathered, and a great deal of thought is embodied in the report. Moreover, extreme care has been used in framing the recommendations. You will understand, Mr. Speaker, the difficulty confronting the Commission in recommending any

big forward movement towards the development of any of our agricultural lands at this stage, when commodity prices in the markets of the world are at so low a level. Had prices of commodities such as wheat and wool and other primary products been at payable levels, or even at levels 50 per cent. higher than those prices are to-day, it would have been a simple matter for the Commission to wax enthusiastic over the further development of the light and poison lands of Western Australia. However, we were faced with the position that no matter how Western Australia's production was increased, on present prices the cost of the products was likely to be as great as, if not greater than, the value placed upon them in the markets of the world. Therefore, if the report seems to members somewhat conservative in some respects, I ask them to bear in mind that fact.

The Commission travelled extensively over the rural areas of Western Australia, inspecting many thousands of acres of light and poison lands which, as you, Mr. Speaker, know, are interspersed with heavy forest country throughout the State. We confined our investigations as nearly as practicable to areas situated within reasonable distance, about 25 miles say, of existing railway facilities. Throughout the areas having railway facilities available may also be found many other facilities provided as the result of governmental activity over the years. Water supplies, roads, police protection, postal services, schools and so forth have been established in nearly the whole of the country I refer to; and it is a great pity that all that country cannot be utilised for the production of wealth for the benefit of the State. Any recommendations made to bring into production the idle country already possessing those facilities are, as the member for Kanowna has urged, worthy of earnest consideration by the Government.

Amongst the Royal Commission's recommendations are several of a far-reaching nature, but others have been in existence for some time past. One is that in order to facilitate settlement, district land boards should be established in various centres throughout the State; and the powers proposed to be given to those boards are enumerated. From time to time various Governments have appointed boards to deal with applications for land; but in order to put the matter on a more satisfactory and more stable basis the

Commission recommends that there should be certain light land districts and that in those districts light land boards should be established, consisting of an officer of the Lands Department, a member of the Public Service having a knowledge of the particular district in which the land proposed to be thrown open may be situated, and a local resident possessed of ample local knowledge. That is amongst the most important recommendations as to the powers to be given to the boards. There is a dozen of those recommendations set forth in the report, and I need not detail them at this stage. However, I do suggest that they should receive serious consideration from the Government, and from the Minister controlling the Lands Department on behalf of the Government. My opinion is that if such boards are established and are vested with the powers recommended by the Royal Commission, they will prove a means of facilitating the settlement of a great deal of the State's idle land to-day. I believe this will be one means of giving a good deal of satisfaction not only to settlers already established on our light and poison lands and endeavouring to wrest a living therefrom, but also to prospective settlers, and further, to established settlers who desire to extend their holdings by the acquisition of more areas of light land.

In my opinion the best prospects for the settlement of any of the light lands remaining on the hands of the State to-day, are to be found in the country situated along our southern shores. In that country, extending from Albany to Esperance, an excellent rainfall is spread over a longer period than is the case in any other part of the State. Records kept over a number of years indicate that the rain falls during 11 months out of the twelve—in itself sufficient to indicate that any reasonable land in that area is capable of producing good fodder crops. For the production of fodder crops there can be nothing better than a rainfall extending over practically the whole year. Along our southern shores we have that wonderful rainfall provided by bountiful Nature, and it is the greatest of pities that we should not be taking more advantage of that rainfall than we are now doing. The sparse settlement between Albany and Esperance is no credit to Western Australia. Hundreds of thousands of acres of unoccupied country there are capable of profitable settlement, given reasonable prices for commodities the

land is capable of producing. I believe that area is fitted by Nature to produce many hundreds of thousands of lambs suitable for export. The growth of subterranean clover and other pastures there is truly marvellous and has to be seen to be appreciated. In view of the pasture growth, no reason exists why several hundred settlers could not make a profitable living in the production of fat lambs, given anything like present-day prices. In fact, the prospects for fat lamb raising are better than in connection with any other form of rural production, and in that part of the State there is the greatest extent of suitable unoccupied Crown land.

The Commission's recommendation that a road should be built from Esperance to Albany has been productive of some criticism. That recommendation, which was made as the basis of any forward move to settle those areas for the purposes I have indicated, did not contemplate the construction of a costly highway or main road, but merely a pioneering road to meet requirements until such time as the fat lamb production there attained proportions that would warrant private enterprise, possibly with the assistance of the Government, constructing freezing works at Esperance. Freezers are operating profitably at Albany where the number of lambs treated is between 40,000 and 50,000 per annum. Not many years would be required to bring fat lamb production in the Esperance district to a much higher figure than that. If the Government were to provide finance to place 100 settlers in that area, I believe it could be done at from £1,000 to £1,500 per settler. The Government could supply each settler with 500 crossbred ewes to start with, and they would quickly provide sufficient fat lambs to warrant private enterprise constructing freezers at Esperance. When that stage was reached, there would be no necessity for the road through to Albany, but until then some outlet must be provided for over-landing the lambs. Railing them to Fremantle seems to be out of the question, and, in my opinion, it would be much more economical to travel the lambs by road to Albany, where the required freezing facilities are available.

As to the policy of the Lands Department in pricing light lands, evidence furnished to the Royal Commission made it abundantly clear that no satisfactory or regular basis exists in that respect. Many anomalies were brought under notice. That land should, in

some instances, be sold at below its value and yet an adjacent area of similar country should be priced at a figure many times its real value is distinctly unfair. Little or no method seems to have been followed by the Lands Department in arriving at land valuations. The Commission expressed the belief that most of the light lands in their virgin state have little or no value. As a matter of fact, the price charged by the Crown for such land is not of vital importance. I would not care whether the Government gave away such land to prospective settlers, but we know that is not the policy of any Government when dealing with the assets of the Crown. That is all right so far as it goes, but members of the Commission felt that some definite method should be adopted by which the pricing of land would be effected on a more reasonable basis satisfactory to the Crown and settler alike. At any rate, the Commission came to the conclusion that land of the type under discussion has little value in its virgin state. Until such land is developed, fertilised and worked along scientific lines, it is of no value to the State or to the settler. We felt that such land ought to be made available to suitable settlers, under strict improvement conditions, at a very nominal figure.

The question of survey fees occupied the attention of the Commission. A most unfair method has been adopted in assessing the prices to be charged for survey fees. Members will be surprised to know that the fees cost as much for the survey of a block of land where the scrub is one foot high as for the survey of an area in the heavy jarrah forest country. That seems utterly absurd. Had the heavily timbered country been made to bear some of the cost of the survey of the light land, there would not be so much cause for complaint, but when we found that the less productive sandplain areas were saddled with some of the cost of the survey of forest country, no justification for the practice was apparent, and we felt that the procedure should be altered.

Mr. Doney: There is no heavy work entailed in the light lands.

Mr. Boyle: But the cost of survey fees was £57 a block.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The question of soil erosion came prominently before the Commission and while not charged with the investigation of that problem, we regarded it as of importance in view of the evidence

tendered. In consequence, recommendations were attached to the report for consideration in connection with the further settlement of our light lands. In my opinion, the Road Districts Act should be amended to give local governing bodies authority to deal with areas of light land selected in future where it would seem that the country was likely to drift. In many parts of the world enormous sums are being spent in attempts to overcome this problem and at this early stage in Western Australia we should not allow further huge areas of light land to be cleared on the face and thereby become a menace to settlers and a cause of annoyance and considerable expense to road boards. In one instance the Royal Commissioners were shown a road the surface of which had been covered with sand to a depth of 2 feet no fewer than three times in the last three years. That was due entirely to drift. In addition to that, there was the cost entailed in the erection of fences on top of the drift. Another problem closely associated with the settlement of light lands—a considerable area of which is required by a settler to make a living—is the cost of fencing. The Commission urges the Government to obtain Federal assistance to supply prospective settlers with cheaper rabbit netting and fencing wire. I am aware the Minister for Lands will say that he has made repeated efforts to obtain such assistance from the Federal Government, and I commend him for making those efforts. The matter is of such vital importance to Western Australia, however, that the efforts should be renewed. I believe so strong a case can be put up to the Federal Government that eventually it will see the wisdom of assisting the States in this direction. If wire-netting manufacturers are to be protected as the result of Federal policy, the authority which reaps the benefit should assist the States to secure cheaper supplies of wire-netting and fencing wire. Such action would facilitate to a very great extent the settlement of the large areas of light lands in this State awaiting development. That development is being held up at present because of the excessive cost of fencing. Cheap land, with adequate water supplies, is available; but the greatest item of cost to bring it into production is fencing. All Governments concerned ought to pull together and endeavour to secure a cheaper supply of fencing wire.

Another recommendation of the Commission is that pasture experimental plots should be established. The Commission is of opinion that light and poison lands are suitable mainly for the production of stock by the growth of pastures; and not for the production of cereals, for the growth of which there is very little inducement at present. The Commission feels that extensive experimental plots in every light-land district of the State should be established under the direction of the Department of Agriculture. In my opinion this is of vital importance. The Department of Agriculture employs expert officers, who could give advice and assistance to experimenters in the various districts. Several farmers in every district would be willing to undertake this work under the guidance of those expert officers and every encouragement should be given them to do so. The small expense that would be incurred by the Government in supervision and advice, and perhaps in the provision of some seed and super for the carrying out of the experiments, would be amply justified.

The Commission recommends that a considerable area of country to the north of Dandarragan, between the Midland Railway and the coast, should be classified. This area contains some of the best land in the State. Unfortunately, it is situated some distance from the railway line; but, because of its productivity, it is, in my opinion, worth developing. It is not sandplain; it is a hard clay plain which the few farmers who occupy it have clearly demonstrated is extremely productive. Given facilities for development, I believe it will be selected and developed in the not far distant future, so I recommend the Minister for Lands to give serious consideration to the recommendation of the Commission that his officers should undertake the classification of that area. All that country—at least the portion of it that belongs to the State; some of it is owned by the Midland Railway Co. but most of it is owned by the State—will amply repay the State for any expense incurred.

When the members of the Commission were in the vicinity of Miling, in my electorate, they inspected an area of country that the Leader of the Opposition, who was the Chairman of the Commission, described as the roughest bit of farming he had ever seen. I think he left the district feeling very doubtful whether any crop would be har-

vested. I do not think he wanted to be pessimistic; but, reading between the lines, I gathered the impression that he, and possibly some other members of the Commission, felt despondent about the way in which that land was being farmed. But the position is this: About 18 months ago two young men selected 4,000 acres north of Miling. The land was virgin light country. Within 11 months of selecting it, those young men had 2,000 acres in crop. I agree the crop was sown in a rough and ready way; but I have just received information from the owners that an insurance agent, after inspecting it last week, insured it for 16 bushels to the acre. Insurance companies are usually conservative in their estimate of crop yields, so I believe the crop will probably yield more than 16 bushels to the acre; but until the harvester goes into it, one cannot say. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of similar land north of the Toodyay-Miling railway terminus; and if in years to come we are justified in further extending our wheat and lamb-raising areas, the Toodyay-Miling railway line should be extended a few miles further north to tap this area.

As is pointed out in the Commission's report, the Midland Railway Co. is the largest land-holder in the State other than the Government. Of the 2½ million acres conceded to that company, nearly three quarters of a million acres remain available for selection. The Commission desires to urge upon the Government the necessity for impressing upon the company the advisability of making this land available for selection on terms and conditions similar to those imposed by the Lands Department. At present, the price charged by the Midland Railway Co. is about 100 per cent. higher than that charged by the Crown. I have never been able to understand why the company cannot realise the fact that if this land were sold, the company would effect considerable saving in interest, land tax, vermin rates and local government rates. The land would be developed and so would bring grist to the Midland Railway Co.'s mill. If the Government could use its persuasive eloquence to induce the company to get this land settled in the way I have suggested, a good service would be rendered to the people of Western Australia.

The Premier: Why does not the company do that of its own free will?

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I have just mentioned that I have never been able to understand why it does not do so. The company is still paying all the taxes on the land that other landowners in Western Australia have to pay. It is paying Federal land tax, the State vermin rates and road board rates. The company would benefit by disposing of the land. Production would be increased and the railway would profit by the additional haulage of produce from the farms and haulage to the district of the requirements of the individual settlers. The policy of the company, however, has been to obtain as much as possible for the land irrespective of the interests of the settlers.

Mr. Lambert: Was the total amount paid in taxes and rates revealed?

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Not to the Commission.

Mr. Lambert: The Commission could have secured that information.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: It would not have helped the Commission very much. Side by side with the question of production, which the Commission investigated very closely, is the problem of transport. The Transport Board seems to be performing a very excellent service in some districts at present, as was indicated in the Press recently. East of the Great Southern where railway communication was promised, which it was not possible to provide, the Transport Board seems to be putting the settlers on an excellent basis. The most recent proposals of the Transport Board will have the effect of placing settlers east of the Great Southern, miles away from a railway, in a better position from the point of view of transport than many settlers on the Midland line. Recently the board visited the Lakes district and later submitted proposals for the haulage of wheat and super from that district to the railway. The settlers in that area, therefore, will be served extremely well. They will have their produce carted to a Government railway, and will thus be able to have it marketed on a more equitable and satisfactory basis than that which is available to those whose produce has to be carted over the Midland Railway. Thus there is not likely to be any great measure of satisfaction on the part of the people

who will be selecting land from the Midland Railway, unless they can obtain it at a more reasonable price.

It was an education to have had the privilege of being a member of the Commission. I have seen a great deal of my native State during my term in Parliament, but never so much as I saw during the recess when the members of the Commission visited so many districts. I believe the tour was an education to the other members of the Commission, and that the inquiry will prove of benefit to the State. I would like to pay a tribute to the members of the Commission for the enthusiastic manner in which they devoted themselves to their task. My only complaint is that the chairman of the Commission was such a nigger-driver that he gave us very little breathing space and kept us hard at work all the time.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 12th October. Mr. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. Sampson in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Prospectuses of foreign companies:

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I cannot understand why the member for Swan desires to persist with the Bill. The clause deals with foreign companies, and it imposes upon them absurd restrictions that I think will be detrimental to the interests of this State. A similar provision in the South Australian Act has been detrimental to the interests of that State. The hon. member did not say anything in support of the clause. All his attention was confined to the share-hawking clauses, but there are other clauses in the Bill, and this is one of them.

Mr. Lambert: What about newspapers hawking shares?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If, under this clause, a prospectus had to be published in a newspaper it would occupy a whole page.

Mr. Cross: That would be good for the newspaper.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Probably the only difference between the prospectus as published in the newspaper

and the prospectus itself, would be that the objects of the company would be published in a more limited form. While it is proposed that these restrictions shall be imposed upon foreign companies, there is no suggestion in the Bill that they shall be imposed upon local companies, as is the case with the English legislation. A foreign company might be formed in South Australia to establish a factory in this State. A company already operating in some other State of the Commonwealth might propose to extend operations to Western Australia and form a separate company for the purpose. Perhaps there might be a feeling that insufficient subscriptions could be obtained in this State to form a local company, or there might be other reasons for having the company in the original State. Still, there might be a desire to encourage local subscriptions in order to create local interest, but this clause would impose such hardships and restrictions as would probably prove to be the last straw against the adoption of that course. Western Australia's position is different from that of the other States. In New South Wales, with its larger population, a company might be able to rely upon local subscriptions. Under a Bill we considered yesterday, we are trying to encourage companies from the other States to establish enterprises here, and yet the hon. member's Bill differentiates between local and foreign companies and seeks to impose various restrictions. Of course a company might succeed in circumventing those restrictions, but there is the difficulty attached to doing so. Company provisions are often evaded in some way or other. The other night, when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking, I mentioned a man in the Old Country who was ordered seven years' imprisonment for share-pushing. He used the post office in the country where that legislation operated, but this measure could not prevent anyone from using the post office and probably being relatively as successful as was the person in England. Thus restrictions might be imposed upon a genuine company seeking to get local subscriptions for a local enterprise, simply because in a few instances people have subscribed to companies that ultimately prove to be fraudulent. The member for East Perth put up a case that sounded like a statement for some client in London who wanted information about a local flotation. Everything of which the hon. member complained was done in

England under the legislation dealing with the formation of holding companies.

Mr. Seward: The companies referred to by the member for East Perth are exempt from this measure.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: They are not mentioned.

Mr. Seward: They are exempt on account of being on the Stock Exchange.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: This provision exempts the person who underwrites the shares; he can do as he likes with the shares. Thus a company that was fraudulent in character could appoint some snide broker to underwrite the shares or make pretence at so doing, and then he could do as he liked.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Could he make a house-to-house canvass?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That has nothing to do with this question.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I say he could not.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not know, but there would not be all the restrictions regarding the prospectus. If that is not so, I should like the hon. member to explain the point. In fact, we need more explanation of the Bill as a whole. This is only tinkering with our company law. Members are entitled to know what is proposed and the member sponsoring the Bill should offer some justification for it.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is not lawful for any person to issue in Western Australia any prospectus of a company incorporated outside Western Australia unless certain conditions are fulfilled. Those conditions are specified in the Bill. Before the prospectus is issued, a copy certified by the chairman and approved by resolution must be delivered for registration to the Registrar of Companies. That is important from the standpoint of protecting people who may invest in a foreign company.

Mr. Lambert: That provision is absolutely meaningless.

Mr. SAMPSON: Further, the prospectus must contain various protective statements stipulated in the Bill. The clause is designed to protect the public who intend to invest in the shares of a company incorporated outside of Western Australia, so that investors may be advised of the constitution, objects and assets of the company. That protection should be afforded the public is essential. Only yesterday I received a copy of one of Blennerhasset's lectures deal-

ing with private and proprietary companies in Australia, their law and practice. The publication states—

Western Australia is now the only State that is lagging behind with respect to up-to-date company legislation. The Companies Act at present in force in that State was enacted in 1893 and is hopelessly behind the times.

The clause referred to by the Minister is taken from the Imperial Act. Tasmania, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia are also indebted to it for their company legislation. Part VIII. of that legislation sets out what shall be done in the case of foreign companies, powers of attorney and so forth. A foreign company must appoint by power of attorney a local gentleman who may on behalf of the company sue and be sued in our courts. This clause improves the position and provides necessary protection for the public. It relates to the circulation of prospectuses of foreign companies inviting people to take up shares in them. Subclause 1 does not apply to underwriters who agree to take up shares prior to their being offered for public subscription. Underwriters would make all inquiries before they embarked on business of this nature. People who are regularly dealing in shares do not require protection, because they are well able to look after themselves. The Minister is acquainted with every detail of company law.

The Minister for Justice: I know as much about it as you do.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is time we amended the Companies Act as it relates to the selling of shares, the lodging of prospectuses, the fulfilment of promises made by directors, and the hawking of shares for sale. Subclause 3 relates to the exemption of directors from liability in certain circumstances. Such a provision is contained in the Companies Acts of all States that have legislated along the lines of the Imperial Act of 1929.

Mr. SEWARD: I am pleased, Mr. Chairman, that you have allowed members a fair amount of latitude. This Bill certainly covers a multitude of subjects. I have found great difficulty in ascertaining what is in it, and what has been left out of it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The clauses in Bills are often too long.

Mr. SEWARD: The member for Swan has not explained why the Bill refers to companies incorporated outside Western Australia, but excludes any company, doubtful

or otherwise, that might be incorporated within Western Australia. I can see no reason for the differentiation. The provision to remove any liability from a director for signing a document, the contents of which he does not know, is not satisfactory to me. It is playing up to a company that is formed for doubtful purposes. Directors should be held responsible for everything they sign. I was surprised that the member for East Perth was allowed to make the speech he did. The Bill excludes any company that is listed on the Stock Exchange, so that the mining companies to which the hon. member referred are not dealt with by this measure. If the public stand in need of protection, they require it against bogus mining companies.

MR. SAMPSON: I would not be competent to embark upon the colossal task of framing a Bill to amend the whole of the Companies Act. My sole object is to protect those who might be victimised by share hawkers, go-getters, and others who tout for the sale of shares that may be of little value. The member for Pingelly wants to know why emphasis is laid on foreign companies. Clause 3 is designed to protect the public against bogus foreign companies. At present there is not the protection that is essential. Foreign companies are dealt with in Part VIII. of the Companies Act, 1893; but that of course is out of date. In the case of private companies it is now necessary to register the company, lodge a prospectus, and do certain other things. That is the distinction so far as I am able to explain it.

MR. SHEARN: Having listened to the member for Swan I more than ever incline to the opinion I formed after hearing his second reading speech. According to the report of a select committee, the matter is hedged in with technicalities; and from the explanation just given by the hon. member it is obvious that he himself does not understand some of the provisions of his own Bill. How can he expect us to support a clause which he himself is unable to explain clearly? Had I been present when the second reading debate was about to be concluded, I would have pointed out that there is sufficient evidence that the whole substance of the Bill is such as should be subjected to full technical investigation and recommendation. I feel totally unable to decide whether the Bill will carry out all it purports to do. Until the

hon. member can give a much clearer explanation of the clause I must oppose it.

Clause put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	15
Noes	20

Majority against 5

AYES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Doust	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Hill	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Latham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Welsh
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Doney
Mr. North	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Seward
Mr. Cross	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hawke	Mr. P. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Miss Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Needham	Mr. Wise
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Withers
Mr. Rodoreda	Mr. Fox

(Teller.)

Clause thus negatived.

Progress reported.

BILL—BUREAU OF INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Sleeman in the Chair: the Minister for Employment in charge of the Bill.

Clause 27—Powers and functions of bureau:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 27, to which Mr. Sampson had moved an amendment as follows:—

That after the word "methods" in paragraph (e) the words "including the question of increasing the quota or numbers of apprentices in any trade or industry" be inserted.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	22

Majority against 10

AYES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Hill	Mr. Seward
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Welsh
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Willmott
Mr. North	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cross	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Doust	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Fox	Mr. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Miss Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Needham	Mr. Raphael

(Teller.)

AYES.	PAIRS	NOES.
Mr. J. M. Smith	Mr. Leahy	
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Collier	
Mr. Stubbs	Mr. Troy	

Amendment thus negatived.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT:

I move an amendment—

That the following new paragraph be inserted:—“(k) To co-operate with the Public Works Department of the State in the development and planning of a long range programme of public works and to inquire into and report upon the economic side of any works included in such programme.”

If the paragraph be agreed to, the members of the bureau will have the right to co-operate with the Public Works Department for the purpose of developing and planning a long range programme of public works, but without power beyond that. The co-operation of the bureau should be valuable, and I am daily more convinced of the necessity for the development of a long range programme of public works.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What sort of public works?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Such as may be considered necessary in the best interests of the development of the State.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you mean water supplies, extensions of railways, and so on?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Yes, public works that the department has power to undertake. In addition, the bureau will have the right to inquire into and report upon the economic side of any such works. Members will agree upon the desirability of having a much more extensive inquiry regarding the economic side of public works. For years short-range programmes of public works, regarded mainly from the standpoint of necessity and engineering considerations, have been adopted, and certainly no long-range programme has been considered.

Mr. SEWARD: The amendment seems to bear out the contentions of the member for Guildford-Midland when he said that

the bureau would take control out of the hands of Parliament. One would think that the consideration of a long-range programme of public works involving perhaps millions, should be the duty of Parliament. The bureau will have to report to the Minister, but I see no reference to the necessity to report to Parliament. Here is an illustration of Cabinet Government, and we should be very careful before granting the suggested powers to the bureau.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The amendment will involve no alteration in the existing practice regarding decisions to be arrived at before public works are commenced. The decisions will still remain with the Government and subsequently with Parliament as heretofore. The amendment will merely give the bureau the right to co-operate with the Public Works Department in planning the works programme. The acceptance of the programme will be at the discretion of the Government, and it will be the duty of Parliament to decide whether it will vote the loan funds necessary for the works.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know what the Minister for Works will say about this amendment. The Minister for Employment will tell the bureau to investigate some works contemplated by the Works Department, but unless the members of the bureau include highly qualified experienced engineers, possessing higher qualifications and greater experience than those of the departmental engineers, the bureau could hardly be expected to render helpful advice to them later. To what extent will the bureau be able to advise the Government on the economic side? If we had an economist to advise us upon what might happen in the future, the probabilities are that nothing at all would be done. An economist in England once said that a mathematician could determine, by figures what an ultimate result would be; but that if all the economists in the world were brought together in conference, one would have as little knowledge when the conference ended as when it started, because they would not agree. Our agricultural areas can never be developed to their fullest extent unless some permanent water scheme is provided. The Minister tells us that if a proposal is made to build a railway from Esperance to Albany, the bureau will in-

investigate it. We have already provided in our Transport Act for the Transport Board to investigate such a proposal. Now the bureau is to investigate; the Railway Department will investigate; and the Public Works Department will investigate. Parliament will soon have nothing at all to do.

The Minister for Mines: And a select committee will be appointed to investigate.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: And the Government will take no notice of the finding of the select committee. The Bill is a useless piece of legislation. It will take away from Parliament the little control that it now exercises. Every public work that I can recall was started without the consent of Parliament; group settlement was started without the consent of Parliament and extended without its authorisation; the drainage works in the South-West were started without parliamentary authorisation.

Mr. Marshall: But not railways.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some railways have been built without parliamentary authorisation.

Mr. Marshall: The only one I know of was the Lake Clifton railway.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The company paid for that railway, which was afterwards pulled up. The company paid for the construction of it, and the Government got the rails and sleepers. The Minister will say, "I did not start this work until the bureau of economic research investigated it; on the strength of its investigation, knowing I had a majority in the House, I proceeded with the work." The Minister smiles, but members have found that out long ago. I am sorry the Minister is taking away power from the Public Works Department.

The Minister for Employment: That is unfair and ridiculous. I am not taking any power away from the department.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In what way can the bureau assist the department? I do not desire to delay the passage of the Bill, but we should not let it pass without some protest.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot understand the necessity for the amendment. Why should a clause be inserted in the Bill authorising the bureau to co-operate with the Public Works Department? Why should not the bureau also co-operate with the Railway Department, the Education Department—in fact, with all other departments?

Should we not have a long-range programme of railway construction? People who pose as authorities argue that our network of railways is wrong, expensive and uneconomical. If that is so, why should not the bureau co-operate with the Railway Department? There may be friction between the engineers of the Public Works Department and the members of the bureau over the method of co-operation. Will the Minister instruct the bureau to interview his engineers or the Under Secretary of the Public Works Department? Will the Minister adjudicate between the bureau and the department? The engineers of the department would probably be unwilling to confer with the members of the bureau, who have no engineering knowledge. I am afraid that such co-operation will result in the Government undertaking public works of which Parliament may ultimately disapprove. The Government will shield itself behind the bureau, and so override the better judgment of Parliament. I agree with the Minister that a long-range programme of public works is essential.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The trouble is that we change our Governments.

Mr. MARSHALL: Would the co-operation of the engineers of the Public Works Department with the bureau lead to better results in the Public Works Department? I do not know. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that our progress with the work will be determined by the finances available. If we had a programme for the Public Works Department extending over 20 years we could proceed with it only to the extent to which the finances permitted.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The member for Murchison touched on the all-important part of the amendment when he spoke of the desirability of a long-range programme of works. Our experience has been that it is far more difficult than most people imagine to have a programme of that description developed. The Public Works Department is mentioned because 90 per cent. of the works carried out by the Government is carried out by that department. The bureau will undertake special investigations in regard to our industries. In making those inquiries, it will acquire a good deal of information about works already established and about works that could perhaps be established with benefit to industry and to the State generally. Co-operation between the bureau and the Public Works Department would therefore be extremely helpful.

The Public Works Department would still be supreme in the matter of recommending to the Minister for Works just which programme should be forwarded to the Government for its approval, and the Government, as now, would still make the final decision. The acceptance of this proposal would protect Parliament against the danger feared by the member for Murchison who said that in the past works have been put in hand by Governments without Parliament having been consulted and that if Parliament had had an opportunity of making a decision in regard to some of those works, they would never have been commenced. That is a sound opinion, with which I agree. Had there been a close investigation of the economic aspect of those works, many of them would probably have never been begun. Consequently it is provided that the bureau shall have the right to investigate the economic phase of any proposed work so that the Minister for Works and the Government shall be fully informed.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NORTH: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be inserted:—“(n) To inquire into and report upon practicable means of organising the distribution to needy persons of unsaleable surpluses arising under any marketing legislation.”

I think these words have the approval of the Minister for Employment and if agreed to, will obviate the necessity of our passing another motion on the Notice Paper under my name referring to added powers for marketing boards.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I do not propose to accept the amendment. The Bill already provides quite a number of important and heavy duties for members of the bureau and to impose this particular task upon them would be to overload them and give them a problem that would involve much worry and confusion. If they capably handle the duties allotted to them in the Bill they will do a particularly good job and indirectly tackle the problem referred to in the hon. member's motion. The Committee would be well advised not to accept the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be inserted:—“(q) To investigate any inventions submitted and, in approved cases, to recommend the

granting of such financial assistance to inventors as may be deemed advisable.

The Minister for Employment: I am prepared to accept the amendment down to the word “submitted.”

Mr. SAMPSON: The amendment is not mandatory.

The Minister for Employment: The bureau would do that.

Mr. SAMPSON: An inventor often suffers failure through lack of money with which to develop his invention.

The Minister for Employment: Under the general powers, the bureau would be able to recommend assistance.

Mr. SAMPSON: And if the amendment were passed in the abbreviated form suggested by the Minister, funds could still be provided for the purpose?

The Minister for Employment: The bureau could recommend the Government to grant assistance.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister's proposal would not go very far. I should feel nervous if the whole of the phraseology were not accepted.

The Minister for Employment: Presently you will talk me out of agreeing even to the abbreviated amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: After the bureau has investigated, what will be done?

The Minister for Employment: If the invention is considered worthy of assistance, the Government will be recommended, through the Minister, to grant assistance.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister will agree to nothing more?

The Minister for Employment: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the Minister will give more thought to the amendment as a whole. The bureau would not be committed to doing anything unless convinced that the invention was in the interests of the State. No reasonable objection can be raised to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am prepared to agree to the first part of the amendment in order that the matter may be set out in a separate paragraph. The additional words are not necessary because sufficient provision is already made in the Bill.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Where?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Under paragraphs (k) and (q) particularly. Inventions would affect the industrial

welfare of the State as provided in paragraph (q).

Mr. SAMPSON: As provision is made in other paragraphs, I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be inserted:—“(q) To investigate any inventions submitted.”

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added:—“(2) It shall be competent for any member of the bureau, who has been co-opted by the bureau in compliance with the provisions of subsection (4) of section six of this Act, to furnish to the bureau reports prepared by him personally in relation to any matters within the scope of the powers and functions of the bureau, and, whenever any such reports are so furnished, the same shall be submitted to the Minister and may be published either wholly or in part as the bureau shall think fit.”

This deals with the co-opted member of the bureau, who may be an economist. Any reports on special subjects by him should be given recognition, and whenever he presents such a report within the functions of the bureau, it will be submitted to the Minister and may be published, wholly or in part, as the bureau may decide.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope the amendment moved by the Minister will be rejected. Information supplied by economists could not have any great effect on the welfare of the State. Why should we bother to publish the knowledge, or supposed knowledge, furnished to us by people of that kind? Three or four years ago one of our economists was loaned to the Bank of New South Wales. Of what benefit was that to Western Australia? I hope all extraneous matter connected with the establishment of the bureau will be eliminated. It should not be the function of a small bureau like this to delve into economics.

Mr. MARSHALL: Why should not the Minister himself have power to publish either wholly or in part the reports referred to? I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word “bureau” where it last occurs, and inserting the word “Minister” in lieu.

Mr. McDONALD: I presume that the amendment on the amendment moved by the

member for Murchison will be in keeping with another subclause dealing with a similar subject.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The subclause to which the hon. member refers provides that the bureau may, with the approval of the Minister, do certain things. In principle the two subclauses are alike.

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Amendment, as amended, put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added:—“(3) For the purpose of facilitating the proper and effective exercise and performance of its powers and functions by the bureau or any sub-committee of the bureau appointed under section twenty-eight of this Act, the bureau and any sub-committee of the bureau, as the case may be, may summon persons to give evidence and produce documents, and may require that evidence be given on oath or affirmation, and for the purposes of this subsection the bureau and every sub-committee of the bureau aforesaid shall have and may exercise all the powers of a Royal Commission under the provisions of the Royal Commissioners’ Powers Act, 1902.”

In the course of its investigations the bureau will be obliged to obtain a good deal of information, and will require to be assured that such information is both accurate and reliable. Unless it has power to obtain evidence on oath it may be misled, and arrive at undesirable decisions.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This amendment will give great powers to the bureau in a general way. I am not prepared to agree to that. We do not know who will be members of the bureau or what subjects will be investigated. The Minister might in his discretion give the powers of a Royal Commission to the bureau when the necessity arises, but should not do so in a general way. Any sub-committee that is appointed by the bureau will also possess this power. Should a scientist happen to be dealing with one of the matters referred to in Clause 6, he can publish the information received with the consent of the Minister.

Mr. McDONALD: I must oppose the clause. The powers are extremely wide ones to give to a body having such far-reaching authority to investigate. When a Royal Commission is appointed, it is something in the hands of a Government; and

a Royal Commission is given authority to obtain evidence regarding specific matters set out in the commission.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [11.3]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I desire to refer to a question raised by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member raising a question of privilege? The motion for the adjournment of the House is not debateable.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I thought that on a motion for adjournment I could seek some information.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.4 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 20th October, 1938.

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Public Works Act Amendment, 2R.	1521

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

QUESTION—"UGLIELAND," FREMANTLE.

Purchase, Date and Price.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, In what year was the land known as "Ugliestland, Fremantle" purchased? 2, What price was paid for the property?

The **MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE** (for the Minister for Lands) replied: 1, The land known as "Ugliestland," was a portion of the Phillimore Street block fronting Market, Short and Pakenham Streets, Fremantle, that was resumed on the 23rd December, 1903, for Railway purposes. 2, The total compensation paid, with costs, for the block, including several buildings thereon, was £51,734. The amount that should be apportioned to "Ugliestland" from which the original buildings had been removed, is not readily available.

QUESTION—WORKERS' COMPEN- SATION ACT.

Appointment of Woman Medical Officer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM asked the Minister for Employment: 1, Has any person been selected to fill the position of Medical Officer (Workers' Compensation Act), for which applications were recently invited? (2) If so, who was the successful applicant? 3,