

Hon. E. H. Harris: But the Arbitration Court president is not bound by the decision of his predecessors.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The registrar holds that he must register a trades union applying for registration.

Hon. J. Cornell: If their rules are consistent with the Act.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But the Act provides that it may be submitted to the president.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The registrar tells me he registers them without question. At present two officials are dealing with the registration of industrial unions, and it is possible for Mr. Bennett to register a society as a trades union and for Mr. Walsh to register a union under the Arbitration Act. That is a form of dual control likely to become confusing. Surely one channel of action should be sufficient. Then, as Mr. Kitson has pointed out, there is division of Ministerial control. Mr. McCallum, the Minister for Labour, is charged with the administration of the Industrial Arbitration Act, and the Registrar or Friendly Societies is under my control. This is an impossible position, and should not be permitted to continue. Parliament has authorised two Ministers to handle the same class of industrial matters, and there is divided responsibility. If I, as Minister, were to give the slightest provocation to either parties, there would be a first-class quarrel in a short time. Commonsense suggests that the administration of the Act should be under one Minister. A conference between representatives of the employers and of the employees was held on the 21st March, 1922, to discuss arbitration law. The then Acting Premier, Mr. Colebatch, presided, and the following gentlemen attended:—Employers' representatives: Messrs. R. O. Lav, president of the Employers' Federation; O. L. Bloxsome, Chamber of Mines; J. F. Allen, president of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce; F. S. Andrews, secretary Employers' Federation; and S. J. McGibbon, Primary Producers. Employees' representatives: Messrs. A. H. Panton, M.L.C., J. J. Kenneally, E. H. Barker, H. Symonds, and W. D. Johnson. They asked the Acting Premier to place the administration of the Act under the registrar of industrial unions. In accordance with the promise given by Mr. Colebatch, the Bill should have been introduced long ago. It is in fulfilment of that promise that the present Government have brought down the Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Does the Bill bring it under the one Minister.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, and the one officer; there is in the Bill no other amendment of the Act.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 6.8 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th September, 1924.

	PAGE
Questions: Land for closer settlement—	
1, Kojonup-Denmark: 2, Ongerup-Newdegate	867
Tammin Railway Station, compensation	867
Perth Markets Select Committee, admission of Press	868
Bills: Jury Act Amendment, recom.	873
Trust Funds Investment, 2s., Com. report	878
Bunbury Road District Rates Validation, 2s.	879
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment, 2s.	879
Fremantle Municipal Tramways, 2s., Com. report	892

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

QUESTIONS (2)—LAND FOR CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Kojonup-Denmark.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is the total acreage of land on the Frankland River, between Kojonup and Denmark? 2, How much of such land is held under lease for pastoral purposes? 3, Is such land suitable for closer settlement? 4, Is such land suitable for the cultivation of cereals or fruit?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 408,000 acres, (being a strip of land five miles on each side of the Frankland River from its mouth to the junction of Towerlup Brook and Gordon River. 2, 20,370 acres. 3, Detailed classifications have not been made of the whole area in question. 4, Portions only would be suitable for fruit growing.

Ongerup-Newdegate.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is the total acreage of agricultural land lying between Ongerup and Newdegate? 2, What is the total acreage already alienated? 3, Is such land suitable for closer settlement.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 1,080,000 acres. 2, 113,500 acres. 3, The classification discloses that the unalienated land is only suited for rough grazing.

QUESTION—TAMMIN RAILWAY STATION.

Compensation for Injuries.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: What amount has been paid in compensation for injuries received by passengers alighting from trains at Tammin station?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: All the information available in the department was given in reply to a similar question on the 10th instant.

Mr. Griffiths: They are very slack.

PERTH MARKETS SELECT COMMITTEE.

Discretion to admit Press.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [4.35]: I move—

That the Standing Orders having reference to the publication of the proceedings of a select committee be suspended so far as to permit of the select committee appointed to report on the establishment of metropolitan markets exercising its discretion in admitting the Press to its meetings.

The select committee find that a large number of people interested in this matter are not aware that an inquiry is being held. Yesterday we visited the Midland saleyards and got into touch with a number of producers of beef and mutton, but not until we met them did they know anything of the inquiry. By visiting the early morning markets, too, we found that producers are not aware of the inquiry. This is not an investigation into a Government department, nor is it an inquiry that might lead to reflections being cast upon any official or other person. The object is to obtain information that will be of value to the House, and the committee think the publication of such evidence as they consider it desirable to make known will have a beneficial effect in eliciting further evidence from interested parties. Last week we got into touch with a gentleman from Manchester, who is an expert on market matters, and obtained valuable evidence from him. If that evidence were published, it would arouse interest among people connected with markets, besides being of interest to members of the House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.37]: I oppose the motion. Only last session the then Government opposed a similar motion.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What was it? I do not remember it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was a similar request by the member for Collie.

Mr. Mann: That was quite a different matter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not always wise to publish evidence that is not given on oath, because wrong statements may be made.

Mr. Taylor: And very damaging statements at times.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. I am objecting to the principle. The framers of our Standing Orders laid down clearly

that the evidence taken by a select committee, and the documents presented to it, which have not been reported to the House, shall not be disclosed or published by any member of the committee or any other person. I have known of select committees that found it necessary to prohibit the publication, even to members, of certain evidence that was tendered, and it was notified from the Chair that if any member desired to see the evidence, he could obtain it from Parliament.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Could not the select committee take evidence on oath?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Under our Standing Orders there is no one empowered to administer an oath, though it has been done many times. The select committee is appointed purely to make inquiries on behalf of Parliament, so that members may be directed in their attitude when they consider the question. The member for Perth said it would be of interest to members to have the evidence published. When the report is submitted, the notes of evidence are also submitted, so that every member has an opportunity to peruse the statements of the various witnesses.

Mr. Mann: My object is to get further evidence.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is the duty of the committee to see that they get all the evidence obtainable, and to present it, together with their conclusions, to the House. It would be dangerous to permit select committees to open their proceedings to the Press. I do not wish to be egotistical, but the Press have never been represented at any select committee of which I have been a member. Standing Order No. 351 reads—

No strangers or members not being of the committee shall be admitted at any time to a select committee.

I know that a select committee have power to admit strangers while witnesses are being examined. However, the rules of evidence are not always complied with. Very few members understand the rules of evidence, and many of the questions put by members of a select committee are leading questions. There is always a tendency to lead a person to make statements, and a witness may find himself involved in an action for libel. At a select committee a witness is not protected in any way.

Mr. Taylor: He has to stand up to cross-examination, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but often statements are made because members of select committees are not experienced in taking evidence. In a court the judge protects a witness, and sees that he does not say anything that might involve him in an action for damages. At a select committee a witness has not this protection. Thus, by permitting the publication of the evidence, a person might lay himself open to libel—though that is hardly

likely in this instance—and at least might become involved in heavy law costs. I supported the previous Government in objecting to a select committee being open to the Press.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Which one?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Soldier Settlement Committee. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) also objected to admitting the Press to that inquiry. He realised the danger of it. Yet he is now asking for permission to do something which last year he recognised should not be allowed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.45]: I do not remember the case to which the Minister for Lands has alluded. One can readily understand, however, that each inquiry must in this respect be considered on its own merits. I could quite understand the House objecting to such a motion as this where a select committee was inquiring into the case of an individual. Similarly I have objected to the production of files relating to individuals. But this is an entirely different matter.

The Minister for Lands: A tale can be made up for any select committee that comes along.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I could not make up a tale for any select committee. The Minister wishes to judge me by himself. In this instance it would surely be of interest to the metropolitan area to have the evidence from day to day. If witnesses went before the select committee knowing that they could say what they pleased, whether it was fact or not, the evidence might be valueless and the position would be dangerous. Doubtless the chairman of this select committee does not know the law of evidence; but, having regard to the interest of the subject, we should help the committee, which is inquiring into a subject of public interest and importance. At Royal Commissions the Press is admitted and reports the evidence.

The Minister for Lands: Royal Commissions proceed under a different Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so.

The Minister for Lands: I object to this kind of thing in all cases.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then it seems hardly worth while to argue with the Minister. The reason for the motion, I understand, is that persons reading the evidence, and having other evidence to give, would be moved to do so. The circumstances of the case referred to by the Minister for Lands were probably quite different from those of the present case. I hope the Government will relax a little and agree to this evidence being reported in the Press. No harm could result to any individual from the publication of evidence relating to marketing.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [4.50]: The matter into which the select committee is inquiring is one of vital importance to all the people of the metropolitan area. My experience has been that a job which is everybody's business becomes nobody's business, and does not get done. I agree with the member for Perth that it would be advisable to give the subject of marketing all possible publicity, making everybody cognisant of what is going on, and getting all the people who should be interested, directly interested. In a matter of such broad public importance it is extremely difficult for the select committee to choose the people who should give evidence. If they make a selection, they are accused of not making the inquiry broad enough. If they do not make a selection, they get no evidence. The remedy is to publish the evidence, and thus attract the attention of people interested. The Standing Order which forbids the publication of evidence, also gives the House the right to say when the operation of the Standing Order should be suspended. On a previous occasion Parliament refused to suspend the Standing Order. Had I been in the House at the time, I would have voted against the motion, because everybody knew that during the investigations of the select committee in question, statements very unfair to individuals would be made, statements largely of no value to the select committee in its investigations. To my mind there is no comparison between the two inquiries. In the one case there was much personal feeling against members of a Ministry and against various officers. In this instance, however, there can be no personal feeling. The subject of marketing is one with which Parliament has attempted to deal for the last 10 or 12 years, and without getting any further forward. We want to call the public in and get everyone interested to lend a hand in solving the problem. Therefore I welcome the motion of the member for Perth. In the multitude of counsellors obtained through publicity we shall ultimately find wisdom, and the means of drafting a policy which Parliament will be able to put into operation. The question of marketing is all-important to-day. In my own electorate the position in that respect is deplorable. In my electorate we produce, but we cannot solve the marketing problem. That problem should be solved at the earliest possible moment. The greater the publicity, the better the prospects of success.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. M. F. Troy--Mt. Magnet) [4.56]: I also oppose the motion, and for the reasons given by the Minister for Lands. Some years ago I was responsible for the appointment of a select committee, and when it came to the taking of evidence I was advised that the publication of the evidence would lay witnesses open to actions for libel. Accord-

ingly I refrained from having the evidence published.

Mr. Taylor: But that was a good while ago.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. I have no doubt that the member for Perth is actuated by good intentions and would exercise every discretion; but what does he know about what is libellous and what is not libellous? The evidence is not given on oath, and the member has no idea whether it is truthful or untruthful. How is the hon. member to judge what is to be admitted and what is not to be admitted, and what is to be published and what is not to be published? Further, what would happen if a witness were sued or prosecuted for libel? He would look to the State for compensation. He would say, "You called me as a witness, and I gave this evidence, which I now learn is libellous. I was not protected by the select committee. Therefore I now ask the Government for compensation." The principle is dangerous in view of what may happen.

Mr. Mann: But the class of evidence in this inquiry does not bear on libellous matters.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some witnesses might reflect on those at present conducting the markets. That might be some of the most valuable evidence the select committee could get. I advise the hon. member not to proceed with the motion. If the evidence is to be published in the Press, then every witness will have to be informed that his statements before the select committee may lay him open to an action for libel.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [4.59]: I have a vivid recollection of a debate which took place some two years ago in this Chamber on an exactly similar motion. The question was thrashed out thoroughly on that occasion. While in agreement with the Minister for Mines as to the libel aspect of these inquiries, I am more concerned regarding the basis of operations of select committees. The essential thing is that the House, in order to obtain information for itself, appoints a select committee to inquire. The select committee would not be inquiring on behalf of the Press or the public or anyone else, but solely on behalf of this Chamber. Therefore it would be illogical for the select committee to publish the evidence broadcast through the Press, before presenting a report on the evidence to the House. Strange to say, on the previous occasion every member now sitting opposite who was here in those days, voted against a motion exactly similar to the present one. Indeed, the mover of this motion voted against that motion.

Mr. Mann: The circumstances were not the same.

Mr. CORBOY: The circumstances do not matter a scrap. So long as the inquiry is

being made by a select committee, the principle is still there. Is this a select committee to inform the House, or a select committee to publish a lot of stuff in the newspapers? I am reminded that the then Minister for Mines led the charge against the motion when a similar proposition was before the Chamber a couple of years ago. He said that there could be only one or two reasons actuating a member in moving such a motion. It was either to get undue publicity or to go scavenging for evidence. Neither of those reasons is sufficient to justify granting the permission sought by the member for Perth. On that occasion the whole debate hinged on the question whether the select committee, as a committee of this House, should report to us or to someone else through the Press.

Mr. Taylor: That is right.

Mr. CORBOY: On a division the House by a majority of two to one decided against agreeing to the motion. It was decided that the select committee must first report to this House. The point was stressed during the debate that on one occasion only—the War Gratuity Bond inquiry—had any such permission been granted. It was then asserted that apparently the request was to become a common practice, that anyone moving for a select committee would also move for the admission of the Press. The House, however, on every other occasion has decided to stand by the Standing Orders. It seems to me that our Standing Orders have been framed in the best interests of all concerned. I may be reminded that I was one of the minority who voted for a similar motion. The Minister for Lands also voted in the minority.

The Minister for Lands: That was your fault: you kept me over there.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes, the Minister had indicated that he was against the motion and during the time the division bells were ringing, he was speaking to me. When the bells ceased he was on the wrong side of the House and his vote was recorded contrary to the way he desired. I have refreshed my memory by perusing "Hansard" to find out what took place. As a member of the select committee concerned, my colleagues had decided to ask that the proceedings should be open to the Press and I said on that occasion that I was not much concerned as to the fate of the motion but that I would stand by my colleagues. In my opinion there is a danger in admitting the Press to these inquiries.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.3]: I hope the House will agree to the motion on this occasion.

Mr. Corboy: You were one of the majority against a similar motion on the occasion I refer to.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so. The motion before us now sets out that the committee desire the admission of the Press subject to the discretion of the committee.

The Minister for Lands: That might be dangerous.

Mr. THOMSON: I have sufficient faith in the committee's discretion as to the admission of the Press. If the object of the committee is to be achieved and a report is to be furnished to Parliament and to the State generally that will be beneficial to all concerned, the publicity to be gained will be of advantage. It may be right in theory that select committees are appointed to gain information for and to report to, the House. In practice, however, select committees are appointed because of a desire on the part of an hon. member to accomplish some objective. There is no comparison between the select committee under discussion and the one for which permission to admit the Press was refused. The select committee dealing with the metropolitan marketing question is not such as to allow of much possibility of witnesses being charged with libellous statements.

The Minister for Railways: If a man says he has been robbed by a certain middleman, what about it then?

Mr. THOMSON: Should a man make such a statement, the committee would say to the Press representatives, "That statement must not be published."

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I had that experience. I instructed the Press not to publish something, and it appeared in the paper next morning in detail.

Mr. THOMSON: Should such a thing occur, the Press would not come to the committee meetings again.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That was what happened on the occasion I refer to. I brought the matter up promptly next morning.

Mr. THOMSON: I hope the Press will be admitted to the present inquiry, and we can rely on the discretion of the committee and of the Press representatives regarding the matter to be published. On this occasion the Press will have it clearly laid down that reporters will be able to attend the select committee meetings, subject to the right of the chairman and of the committee to say what shall not be published. As to the suggestion that the Press would publish the report of the committee before it was presented to the House, I have never heard of any such happening.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [5.9]: I oppose the motion. It is a serious matter to start juggling with the Standing Orders. I was struck by the remarks of the Minister for Lands and of the Minister for Mines. There is a good deal in their contention. There is no necessity for the committee to worry about the publicity standpoint, because they can always avail themselves of the Press in any particular district where the people are interested. If people are not sufficiently concerned with the subject under investigation, let them take the consequences. There is no necessity for a departure from the ordinary procedure regarding

select committees. I was struck by the flippancy with which some hon. members regarded the fact that they had voted in a different way on a former occasion. It appealed to me as extraordinary. It would almost appear as if those hon. members had voted in accordance with the circumstances at the time, and not in accordance with their principles.

Mr. Mann: Each case must be dealt with on its merits.

Mr. TEESDALE: No reason has been advanced for suspending the Standing Orders. If we agree to the motion we will open the door to other Rules of the House being set aside. We might also be asked to suspend the Standing Orders relating to disorderly conduct. We do not know where such motions will lead us.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [5.11]: The Standing Orders were framed by those who realised the necessity of this House being the first to know the result of inquiries by select committees appointed by this Chamber. Formerly when a member moved for the appointment of a select committee, he knew what he was after. All the assistance he had was from the Clerk of the House, who sent out notices to people who were asked to give evidence before the committee. Now select committees have a secretary from a Government department, a stenographer, and all sorts of paraphernalia, and they go skirmishing round for evidence. The only reason advanced by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) in support of the motion was that the people did not know the committee had been appointed, and that if some of the evidence was published it would interest those who were concerned in this most important inquiry. There is so much apathy about it that it seems to me there cannot be much necessity for the inquiry. If people who are concerned about the necessity for improved marketing facilities in the metropolitan area are so interested, they should be only too ready to give evidence. The member for Perth said only by putting the people wise to the fact that a committee was sitting, was it possible to get the evidence required. He said that the committee had visited the markets and the abattoirs during the early hours, and that the people there had been surprised to hear that such a committee of inquiry had been appointed.

Mr. Teesdale: It must be a very burning question.

Mr. TAYLOR: The object of the motion is merely to galvanise life into those who are supposed to be suffering from the need of metropolitan markets. It is dangerous to interfere with our Standing Orders for the purposes indicated by the member for Perth. We should not suspend them for the purpose of establishing an advertising medium. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) said that the people were

languishing and perishing for markets, and yet they will not give evidence. It is absurd. If the member for Perth had advanced some good grounds for his motion, and had indicated that it was not merely for advertising purposes, I would have supported him. I am opposed to the suspension of the Standing Orders in order to allow the Press to attend the select committee. The House appointed the committee to make inquiries, and the evidence and reports should be submitted to the House before being published.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.16]: I support the motion. It is necessary that the evidence should be published. The question of the admission of the Press to each select committee should be decided on its merits. Beneficial results can follow the admission of the Press to the proceedings of the Marketing Select Committee.

The Minister for Lands: A few days ago we had published in the Press evidence taken before a select committee of another place, evidence dealing with storm water rate, and it drove some Fremantle people nearly mad.

Mr. SAMPSON: During the last Parliament, when the Perth Marketing Bill was brought down, many growers were unaware of that measure until long after it had been considered by the House. Many of those growers are in a position to come along and give the select committee expert evidence if only they can be made aware of the existence of the committee.

The Minister for Lands: Let the committee advertise for witnesses.

Mr. SAMPSON: No injury can be done to anybody by the carrying of the motion. After all, the evidence given before an ordinary inquiry, if libellous, is equally dangerous with that given before a select committee. We have on the committee a solicitor in the person of the member for Claremont (Mr. North), and I take it assistance would be given to witnesses to ensure that nothing libellous should be said. The usefulness of the committee's inquiry will be very much limited unless the utmost publicity be given to the evidence taken. That publicity of evidence will bring other evidence, and thus in the end it will be competent for the committee to bring forward a practical recommendation in respect of marketing. I endorse every word said by the members for Perth (Mr. Mann) and for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson). The committee has an important work to do, and this House can assist it by permitting the Press to be present. I hope the motion will be carried.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [5.18]: I will not support the motion. We are going so far with these select committees and other inquiries that presently we shall be wondering what on earth we require Ministers for. If we go much fur-

ther than we have been going during the last few weeks, Ministers will be relieved of practically all responsibility.

The Minister for Lands: Say the last few years, not the last few weeks.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, the last few years. The point is emphasised in the publication of the evidence referred to by the Minister for Lands a few minutes ago. It is entirely improper to publish evidence taken before select committees, at all events before the report has been submitted to Parliament. The work of departments is being hindered and the objects of the Government thwarted. What for? For a fishing inquiry; nothing else. The argument used is that by publishing the evidence in the Press, the committee will get Tom, Dick and Harry to come forward and give their views. There is nothing to prevent the Press giving in their items of news notice that the inquiry is being made.

The Minister for Lands: The newspapers are willing to insert advertisements.

Mr. GEORGE: It is within the powers of the select committee to advertise. I ask the House to consider how far they are going to let this business proceed. To my mind it is stealing away the rights of hon. members. I am not complaining about the Press reports, but I say the very object for which these committees are appointed is that they shall inform other members of the Chamber of what they have discovered. But to broadcast the evidence taken before the select committee is entirely wrong. As to the publication going on day after day in the "Daily News," I can only think that people must be wondering what they buy newspapers for. No wonder some people say, "Hang your politics and hang your select committees." For my part I would hang somebody else. I oppose the motion. The House should be careful of insidious infringements of its privileges and rights.

Mr. Hughes: You have expressed your views on newspapers before.

Mr. GEORGE: The Press publishes from day to day news of what has taken place in the House. That is all right, but the publication of evidence before a select committee is quite another thing. I have the greatest respect for the gentlemen of the Press.

Mr. Marshall: Then you must have been converted since the last issue of the "Sunday Times."

Mr. GEORGE: So far as that so-called newspaper—"hash-wrapper" it might be termed—goes, I could not imagine the "Sunday Times" or anybody connected with it being able to do any harm to anybody at all. When I spoke of respecting the gentlemen of the Press, I was referring to big men. The Minister for Lands has put forward a good argument against the publication of evidence taken before select committees. I am sorry to oppose the mem-

ber for Perth, because I know he is very earnest in what he is doing.

Mr. Corboy: You are consistent anyhow.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not like these references to how a man votes. Some call me the oldest tory in the place. I am not a tory at all, but I say we have to keep up with the times. I try to keep up with the times.

Mr. Corboy: The "Sunday Times."

Mr. GEORGE: If, having given my views on a subject I subsequently discover other considerations, then I am only right in modifying my views. However, I will oppose the motion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	23

Majority against .. 7

AYES.

Mr. Barnard	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. North
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Thomson
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Mann	Mr. Richardson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munie
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Panton
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. George	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Heron	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Coverley
Mr. Marshall	

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [5.28]: I move:

That the Bill be now read a third time.

As to further Recommittal.

Mr. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.29]: I move an amendment—

That the Bill be recommitted so far as to permit of reconsideration of Clause 6 and consideration of the new clause appearing on the Notice Paper.

Members will remember what happened a few nights ago when I and others on this

side were debarred from voting on this question.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, you were not.

Mr. Taylor: You were not attending to your duty.

Mr. SLEEMAN: At the time there were a few who thought we were not attending to our duty. However, it is the time-honoured custom that the bells ring at 7.30. You, Sir, now know that the bells did not ring in certain parts of the building and so we arrived in the Chamber a few minutes late. The fairness of members will surely not permit them to raise any objection to the recommittal of this Bill, in order that those who may desire to vote in a certain way may do so. If they do raise any objection, I take it to mean they oppose the amendments I intend to move.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.31]: I endorse the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). By a mischance we lost an opportunity of recording our vote upon this particular matter. When I rose to tell members and the public generally the reason why we did not attend in order to vote on this question, and said the bells had not been ringing in that part of the House in which we were, my remarks were taken as a joke.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh no!

Mr. MARSHALL: It was thought I was trying to make the House believe something that was not true. It has since been ascertained that the bells did not ring, and that the statement of the member for Fremantle and mine were correct. We ask that the Bill be recommitted to enable us to vote in such a manner as will, in our opinion, improve the Bill. Anyone who opposes the recommittal must be hostile to money being taken as a qualification for a man to sit on a jury, and hostile to women serving on juries.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.33]: The remarks of the hon. member make it impossible to vote for the recommittal of this Bill, for, if we do so, we may be thought to be voting in favour of the amendments. Can this clause be again considered? Precisely the same clause was rejected here a few nights ago on recommittal.

Mr. SPEAKER: A Bill may be recommitted as often as the House desires.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When the Minister for Justice moves the third reading of the Bill on Tuesday next, will it be possible, if the attendance of members favours us, for those who disagree with this particular clause to move again for the recommittal of the Bill? I did not know that was possible.

Mr. Hughes: You recommitted the Taxation Bill last year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not recommit it time and again, and never to reconsider precisely the same amendments.

that had been proposed. We have said we do not want this amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member rising to a point of order as to the possibility of doing this, or is he only speaking to the question?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have accepted your ruling. It seems it would be advisable for every member to be in his place in the House at every sitting.

Mr. Taylor: For every third reading.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. I do not understand how the Committee, having voted out the clause, can reinstate it.

Mr. Panton: It was voted out when 13 members were in the Chamber.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It was open to 50 members, and we are not responsible for the absence of the others. I have accepted the statement that the bells did not ring.

Mr. Sleeman: It has been proved since.

The Minister for Lands: That is the reason for the recommittal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That may be sufficient reason in the mind of the Minister. It is possible that many members who opposed the clause the other night are not here to-day, because some duty has called them away for the moment. We thought we had finished with the Bill.

Mr. Sleeman: The amendment was on the Notice Paper last night.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not see it.

Mr. Sleeman: Were you asleep all night?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do sleep sometimes. If my mind was as dull as the hon. member's, I would go to sleep for ever. If I was so stupid as not to know when the House met, I certainly would not come to the House and apologise for my ignorance. I trust this will not become a practice amongst members.

The Minister for Railways: I hope not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If it is not convenient for members to attend to their business, all they need do will be to ask for the recommittal of a Bill after we have considered the very questions they want to deal with again. It may suit a few members to be away when a Bill is being considered in Committee.

Mr. Hughes: It was an accident that certain members were away the other night.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I accept that statement but I do protest against this method of doing business. We shall be sitting for 12 months if we have to consider the same questions time and again.

Mr. Sleeman: This is provided for by the Standing Orders.

Mr. Teesdale: Let us vote against it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope members will see that it is not made necessary to recommit a Bill a second time for the purpose of considering pre-

cisely the same amendments that have already been dealt with, and that they will reject these particular amendments if the motion is passed.

Point of Order.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I rise to a point of order. I am not doing this in any hostile spirit, because I am in sympathy with members for the position they were placed in through the bells not ringing. The point is of considerable importance to the House for the future. I understand the member for Fremantle moved an amendment, and through his unfortunate absence it was defeated. Can the same amendment be moved again to-day?

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member will refer to page 383 of "May's Parliamentary Practice," twelfth edition, he will find that a Bill may be recommitted as often as the House thinks fit, and that Bills have been recommitted twice and even six and seven times. There can be no question as to the power of the House to recommit. The point the hon. member is raising is as to the consideration of a clause which, he says, has already been considered. The whole Bill has been reconsidered and the House is now ordering—if the motion be carried—that it be reconsidered in Committee. This is the only stage when that can be done.

Mr. Taylor: So far as this clause is concerned.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. Reconsideration is limited to the scope set out in the motion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	21
Noes	..	..	..	17
Majority for ..				4

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Munster
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Panton
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. A. Wan-brough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lutey	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. North
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Brown	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Davy	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Denton	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. George	Mr. Thompson
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Richardson
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Latham
Mr. Troy	Mr. Stubbs

Recommittal.

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

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 11:

Mr. SLEEMAN: 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.

Mr. NORTH: Judging by the interjections we heard the other night, I am sorry to find that the members of the Ministry have altered their views.

The Minister for Justice: We have not. We merely wanted to give members an opportunity to vote.

Mr. NORTH: If the Bill becomes law in the manner now proposed it will mean a lot of hard work for the officials, and will prove expensive. No benefit can be gained from the hon. member's proposals. I am sorry to think that at the eleventh hour the Bill is being hawked about in this fashion.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: My opinions have not changed in any way; I am going to stick to the Bill. The member for Fremantle was unfortunate in not being able to test the feeling of the Committee the other night and I have no desire to deny members the opportunity of expressing their opinions in regard to the clause. There is no need to debate the matter all over again, because the opinions of members have already been freely expressed. The member for Claremont seems to think that I am in favour of the amendment because I voted for the recommittal of the Bill. That, however, is not so.

Mr. PANTON: I hope the clause will be struck out. The Opposition have almost invariably opposed giving women the right to sit on juries. Now we propose to give them the opportunity to give practical support to the wishes of the member for Fremantle.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Speak for yourself.

Mr. PANTON: The Leader of the Opposition is opposed to women jurors.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I said it was a clever way of getting out of the trouble.

Mr. PANTON: I was under the impression that the hon. member was opposed to women jurors. For those members who do

not believe in women jurors here is the opportunity then to assist to keep them out. I do not think it is a fair proposition to call upon women to make application to be placed on the jury roll. It is a humiliating position in which to put a woman. A woman should be given the same right as a man or she should not be placed there at all. We know that every woman enrolled will be called upon to answer all sorts of questions as to how she got there. The Minister knows as well as I do what human nature is.

Mr. Taylor: You are not far out.

Mr. PANTON: There you are, support now coming from the member for Mt. Margaret, who said he was going to vote against it! I am not prepared to support a clause that will place the women in the humiliating position that will be bound to follow if the clause is not struck out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: To be consistent the proviso should not find a place in the proposed new clause. If we are to have women on juries, why have the proviso? There is a way of keeping them off. The hon. member's proposal will cost the State a considerable sum of money.

Mr. Hughes: In what way?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Putting their names on and taking them off. If it was a question of principle I could understand the remarks of the member for Fremantle, but it is not a question of principle, it is a matter of the manner in which the thing is to be done.

Mr. HUGHES: The Bill grants women the concession of getting on a jury if they so desire. What is the difference in principle between the concession of being on and the concession of being off? The Minister considers that we are not standing to our guns for sex equality, just because we want to give women the concession to be off, and he wishes to give them the concession to be on.

The Minister for Justice: Nothing of the kind. That is only your opinion.

Mr. HUGHES: I told the Minister last night that I have my opinions and he is not now going to browbeat me.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are doing the browbeating.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister proposes to give women the right to sit on juries if they so desire. The proposed new clause will give them the right to be excluded if they so desire. From the point of view of granting a concession, there is no difference in principle between the two proposals, except that we are not prepared to submit women to the indignity of having to apply for enrolment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What about the indignity of applying to be excluded?

Mr. HUGHES: There is no indignity in that. Rather than compel women to apply, I would have the clause struck out. Members of the Opposition declared themselves against giving women this right. Let them therefore assist to delete the clause, and

then they will be able to assist us to attain our desire.

Mr. DAVY: There might well be a valuable function performed by women on juries. There was a definite view among women's organisations that when women were being tried for certain offences it was right that their sex should be represented. If women were given a place on juries, it would be well to recognise that principle. If we have to choose between the clause and the proposal of the member for Frimantle, we would emphatically favour the clause. There is no greater indignity involved in having to apply for enrolment than in having to apply for exclusion.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister tried to make out that he had adopted a clause giving equality to the sexes. There is no equality in it.

The Minister for Justice: There is no more equality in yours.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The clause provides for proof of qualification.

Mr. Chesson: That also applies to men.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, but what percentage of women would be eligible? Only a very small percentage.

Mr. Thomson: The bulk of the working men's homes are in the names of the wives.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The clause means that the wife of the rich man would be able to get on the jury list, while the wife of the working man would not.

Mr. Davy: You speak as if serving on a jury was a pleasure.

The Minister for Justice: Is the hon. member in order in discussing the qualification, which is dealt with in a separate clause?

The CHAIRMAN: The clause deals with the qualification, and while the hon. member sticks to that, he is in order.

Mr. SLEEMAN: My proposal will permit of men as well as women serving on a jury. There are many men who have not the qualification, and under the present economic system never will have, and they will be precluded from getting on the roll.

The Minister for Justice: If the hon. member is allowed to continue discussing the qualification, I shall feel inclined to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Chairman. The qualification is set out in another clause, of which the hon. member has given notice of amendment, and when that clause is called on, he will be entitled to discuss the qualification.

The CHAIRMAN: This clause deals with the qualification and the hon. member is in order in dealing with it. We cannot deal with the other clause at present.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the qualification stands, it will amount to class legislation. I would much rather have this clause deleted and my proposal defeated than have this clause retained.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Clause 6 merely provides a method by which women can get on the jury roll. The quali-

fication is set out in another part of the Bill, and equal qualification is provided for men and women. The question is not one affecting the qualification, but whether we shall place women in exactly the same position as men.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	8

Majority for .. 14

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Chesson	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Davy	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lambert	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)
Mr. Munster	

NOES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Corbooy
Mr. Marshall	(Teller.)
Mr. Panton	

Clause thus passed.

New clause:

Mr. SLEEMAN: I move—

That a new clause be added as follows:—"Section 5 of the principal Act is hereby amended by striking out the word 'man' in line 1 and inserting the words 'person, male or female,' in lieu thereof; and by striking out all the words after 'colony' in line 3 down to 'shall' in line 6."

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The first part of the new clause is consequential, but the second part will entitle anyone over the age of 21 to serve on a jury.

Mr. North: Under the original Act the word "juror" is interpreted as confined only to the male sex.

The CHAIRMAN: The Act has been consequentially amended.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Unless another member wishes to speak, I am quite prepared to let the new clause go to the vote.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am compelled to oppose this new clause.

Mr. Hughes: Surely you have no objection to this?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have.

Mr. Latham: We all object to it.

Mr. DAVY: The first part of the new clause will conflict with what the Commit-

tee have already done in rejecting the attempted amendment of the member for Fremantle. If "man" is struck out and "person, male or female" is inserted, the section will read—

"Every person male or female between the ages of 21 years and 60 years residing within the Colony shall be qualified and liable to serve as a common juror in all civil and criminal proceedings."

We have already decided that only those women shall be liable to serve as common jurors who give in their names. Thus in carrying this new clause we shall be nullifying a provision which has already been passed.

The CHAIRMAN: There certainly seems to be a conflict, and I should like to hear argument on it.

Mr. CORBOY: Although there appears to be a conflict, Clause 6 of the Bill qualifies the alteration now proposed. We might overcome the difficulty by inserting in this new clause such words as "subject to the provisions of Clause 6."

Mr. Davy: Why amend the clause at all? Clauses 5 and 6 stand side by side, one imposing a liability on men, the other imposing a liability on women.

Mr. CORBOY: The two clauses will not operate in the same direction with regard to the sexes.

The Minister for Justice: Yes; Clause 6 provides for that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The fact of Clause 6 having been passed renders it necessary that the limitation of Section 5 of the Act should be relaxed. That section, as it stands, provides for men only.

The Minister for Justice: But in this Bill we have inserted another clause providing for women.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Bill, however, does not provide for the consequential amendment to Section 5.

Mr. CORBOY: On reflection, I think the Minister is right. The first part of the new clause should be dropped.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Section 5 of the Act says that every man with certain qualifications shall be placed on the jury list. The Bill says that every woman, provided she has the same qualifications as are required of a man, shall be placed on the jury list if she applies to be placed there.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am prepared to withdraw the first part of the proposed new clause. However, I am astonished that any member on this side of the Chamber opposes so democratic an amendment as the abolition of the property qualification for jurors. Every person on the electoral roll should have the right to be on the jury list.

Mr. NORTH: The effect of carrying the amendment will simply be to punish those whom the mover seems desirous to help. Let the property qualification stand, and thus we shall free members of the community

not possessing that qualification from the arduous duty of serving on juries.

Mr. DAVY: Some members seem to regard it as a pleasure and a privilege to serve on juries. At the beginning of every criminal session someone comes to me complaining bitterly or having been put on a jury, and asking me to get him off.

Mr. Hughes: That is pretty hot, jurors getting in touch with counsel. You might be pleading a case in front of a man who had pleaded to you to get him off the jury.

Mr. DAVY: The hon. member misunderstands the position. These people come to me because I am a solicitor, not because I am in the case; I might not be in the case at all. If the hon. member can see anything "hot" in that he has an extraordinary mind. To serve on a jury is a very onerous duty, which is imposed on citizens, and which every citizen whom I know detests performing. The talk of depriving anyone of a privilege in this connection is simply rubbish.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the wording of the amendment of the member for Fremantle should be—

"Section 5 of the principal Act is hereby amended by striking out all the words after 'Colony,' line 3, down to 'shall,' line 6."

Otherwise I would suggest that progress be reported in order to permit of the new clause being redrafted.

Mr. CORBOY: The member for West Perth has put up the best case to-night for carrying the amendment. He said that serving on a jury was an onerous duty, and then he pleaded for exempting from that duty a large proportion of the people of this State.

Mr. Teesdale: It is a very objectionable duty.

Mr. CORBOY: When one remembers what has happened in recent years, the argument that it is an objectionable duty should appeal to members of the Opposition, because they are the people who attempted to force the position.

Mr. Latham: We say we will not force the duty upon women.

Mr. CORBOY: The member for York shows by that interjection his ignorance of what we have been discussing this evening. If it is an objectionable duty, and I agree that it is, then we should spread that duty over the whole of the people instead of over a section.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot understand why so much discussion has taken place on this amendment.

Mr. Thomson: Then why discuss it?

The CHAIRMAN: Then if you sit down I will put it to the vote.

Mr. MARSHALL: Every Opposition member has said that the property qualification of £150 is of no importance. If that be so, why oppose the amendment? Even the wives of those who do possess the

necessary qualification will not be able to sit as jurors.

New clause, as altered, put and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	15
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	5
				—

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Wilcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Davy	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Denton	Mr. Taylor
Mr. George	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Sir James Mitchell	Mr. Richardson
Mr. North	(Teller.)

New clause thus passed.

Bill reported with a further amendment.

BILL—TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [8.13] in moving the second reading said: The Bill merely provides that trust funds may be invested in debentures of road boards, thus placing road boards that are authorised and certified to by the Minister on the same footing as municipalities. At present trust funds cannot be invested in road board debentures.

Mr. Sampson: The condition regarding Ministerial approval is not expressed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This provision has been asked for by the road boards through their recent conference and through their executive. There was a period when exception was rightly taken to trust funds being invested in this manner; because the road boards were then in their infancy, and for a time had no power to borrow at all. However, they have now developed to such an extent that their responsibilities and securities are considerable. Even if there were any doubt as to the securities, in the final analysis the debt would come back on the Government. In some instances road boards have gone out of existence and the Minister has expanded the boundaries of contiguous road boards to

include the areas of the defunct boards, or, alternatively, has appointed Commissioners to administer those areas. As I say, finally it comes back on the Government to accept the liability of the defunct road board. The Bill will apply to only road boards in a substantial position, boards that have developed past the stage where they should be treated differently from municipalities.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What demand have you had for the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have had a request from the recent road board conference and from their executive. They have urgently requested me to bring down the Bill early in the session. They assure me that quite a lot of money is available for investment in road board securities, if only authority were given for such investment. All road board borrowing is done locally, the boards having to go on the market in competition with the State, the Commonwealth and other borrowing authorities. It is small amounts such as trust funds that would be invested in this class of security.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What about the second clause?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That merely provides that the debentures may be lodged at the Treasury, as in the case of municipal debentures. It places road board debentures on the same footing as municipal debentures. It does not affect the recent law under which insurance companies have to lodge cash with the Treasury. At present municipal debentures are accepted at the Treasury, and the Bill merely places road board debentures on the same footing.

Mr. Sampson: There is no provision here limiting the amount.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This does not deal with their liability; it merely opens the road to them to secure money.

Mr. Taylor: To permit trust funds to be invested in road board securities.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so. It is a simple little measure, and there is urgent necessity for it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [8.20]: The Bill proposes to bring road boards into line with municipalities in respect of the investment of trust funds. In some instances municipalities have been supplanted by road boards. I do not know whether the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) sees any objection to the Bill, but on the financial side I can see none.

Mr. Thomson: It is a very wise provision.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This does not compel trustees to invest their funds in road board securities but merely gives permission. Some road boards, of

course, could not offer sufficiently good security.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of them have but a couple of bentwood chairs and a box of stationery.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I see no objection to the Bill.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray - Wellington) [8.22]: Provided the debentures cannot be issued without the consent of the Minister, the Bill is all right. I should not like to give all road boards power to issue debentures, with no controlling hand over them. The Minister, no doubt, has already found that dealing with road boards is not easy going. When it comes to a question of investment, the Minister should have a controlling power. When a road board not in sound financial position proposes to issue debentures, the Minister ought to be able to say, "I want to know all about it before giving you permission." Many of the boards require to be carefully looked after. Road boards represent a delegation of power from the Government, and when they propose to borrow money by the issue of debentures the Minister, representing the Government, must have controlling power. Given that, I have no objection to the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle—in reply) [8.24]: The point raised by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) is dealt with in the concluding lines of Clause 2. In other words, the Bill applies only to road boards nominated by an order of the Governor in Council published in the "Gazette." There is the necessary safeguard.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—BUNBURY ROAD DISTRICT RATES VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [8.28] in moving the second reading said: This is a tale I do not like telling. It is not too pleasant. Nevertheless it is one that frequently the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) has had to tell the House. It is another of those Bills that have for their purpose the legalising of an illegal act in order to get a road board out of a difficulty created by one of its officials. The position disclosed is that the audit of the accounts of the Bunbury Road Board revealed the fact that rates had been levied at a meeting never held,

the minutes of which were inserted in the board's minute book, dated on a Sunday—on which day the meeting, if held, would have been illegal—and advertised as having been held on a Sunday. The matter was brought to light by a Government auditor during his annual audit, and his inquiries elicited from the chairman of the board that the meeting reported in the minutes had never been held. Those minutes had been written up by the board's secretary and the usual signature appended thereto. Following on that, some of the rates levied had been collected. The Bill is to validate that collection of rates and allow the balance to be collected. The members of the board were not aware of what was done, and the secretary, who was responsible for the proceeding, is no longer a servant of the board. The Bill is necessary to straighten out the position.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Has the rate been fixed since?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is the usual rate and there is no dispute about it. It is the rate that would have been struck had there been a proper meeting. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. George, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 16th September.

Mr. NORTH (Claremont) [8.32]: A great many points have been raised regarding the details of the Bill that possibly are not suitable at this stage of the State's history, but most members are agreed upon the principles involved. It is only a question of how far the economic condition of the State will permit of their being carried out in practice. The Bill appears to provide for two evils that have arisen under the principal Act, first the congestion of the Court, and second the cost of living, which has always overtaken any advance in wages approved of by the court. This difficulty has occurred all over the world.

Mr. Pantou: The court never got anywhere near the rise in cost of living.

Mr. NORTH: That is the hon. member's way of putting it. Even where awards have been issued the employees have felt that the cost of living was also rising, so that they obtained no benefit. I believe quite a number of union secretaries would be prepared to say the workers are in a worse position to-day than they were 10 or 15 years ago, having regard to the purchasing power of the sovereign.

Mr. Pantou: Quite right.

Mr. NORTH: That being so, the Minister is advocating a new and important principle and that is payment, not by wages, but virtu-

ally in kind. That is what I take the basic wage provision to mean. In future the court will fix a rate that will ensure for each employee a five-roomed house, and for his wife and three children to live in reasonable comfort. So far as that is an original attempt to overcome the difficulty of previous arbitration systems, it is very praiseworthy. The only question for us is whether it is advisable to interfere with certain economic laws, with the management of businesses, and with matters that really concern employers and not us. In so far as the present system has failed I am partial to those who come forward with new ideas, even though they lead to temporary failure. The fact of new ideas being brought forward and discussed will in the long run lead employers to adopt better methods and better machinery, which otherwise they would never have thought of doing. The Bill contains three other important provisions: the first affects domestics or, as the member for West Perth termed them, house helpers. I see no objection to bringing house helpers within the ambit of the Act, and in that I differ from some members of the Opposition. It has been noticeable during the last few years that domestic service has been a diminishing vocation. Before the war many houses had three or four maids where now they have only one, and thousands that had one now have none. However, electrical labour-saving devices are coming into vogue and taking the place of domestic servants, and there is this great advantage, that they can be adopted in every household and not alone in the few homes where domestic helpers are found. If this provision of the Bill be passed, it will certainly lead, as the member for West Perth suggested, to a decrease in the number of employees in that capacity. For this I should not be sorry because it is not a pleasant occupation, even with short hours. With the latest inventions available, householders should try more and more to compass their own work. This is now a practical proposition that is receiving the attention of the Government. Mr. Taylor, while in England, will endeavour to purchase a great number of labour-saving devices that may be hired cheaply to the people and so provide an outlet for some of the cheap current generated at East Perth. Again I cannot see any objection to bringing insurance agents within the scope of the Bill. I had a few months' experience of that work some years ago—

Mr. Thomson: Did you make a living?

Mr. NORTH: Yes, a good one.

Mr. Corboy: You were very fortunate.

Mr. NORTH: But it did not last long. It is best at the start, because one can go round and insure all one's friends. It is a very hazardous business, and in view of the anxiety involved, it is advisable that the court should be able to prescribe conditions so that when a man has honestly done his work, he shall be provided for. On

the question of preference to unionists I cannot see that there is much to argue about. We have delegated this power to the court, and if we cannot trust the court in that matter, how can we trust it at all?

Mr. Corboy: The court is fixing very much more important things than that.

Mr. NORTH: I have heard employers use good arguments in support of the extension of unionism. If all those people who support members opposite were unionists, we should be back to the stage of free competition once more. There would be nothing more to argue about. At present, however, it is not so. My remarks on this question have no bearing on the admixture of unionism with politics. That is another matter. As to the 44-hour week, a few days ago it was stated by one of our water supply engineers that the alteration from 48 to 44 hours would mean an increase of £83,000 in the cost of constructing certain dams. That indicates the difficulty with which the Government will be confronted.

The Minister for Works: He was talking through his neck.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not at all.

Mr. NORTH: I do not wish to say anything to harass the Government in their endeavours to reduce hours, but I cite the engineer's statement as something concrete that the Government will find difficulty in combating. I have every sympathy with the Government in their attempt to reduce hours. Their desire that workers be paid in kind and not in cash and that hours be reduced is admirable. When we seriously consider the hours of labour and the enormous improvements and inventions of the last 50 or 60 years, it is strange that so little has been done to reduce hours and improve conditions. In Alison's "History of Europe" some interesting remarks were recorded 80 years ago by an old gentleman who was dealing with the same problems that we to-day are dealing with after the advent of machinery. He said—

A new set of perils has been developed, and the historian finds himself overwhelmed with the constant survey of the terrible evils of democratic oppression. The causes which have been mentioned have at length given such an extraordinary and irresistible weight to the popular party that the danger now sets in from another quarter, and the tyranny which is to be apprehended is often not that of the few over the many, but of the many over the few. The obvious risk now is in all the states with a popular form of government, that the influence of knowledge, virtue and worth will be overwhelmed in the vehemence of popular ambition, or lost in the turbulence of democratic power. This evil is of a far more acute and terrible kind than the severity of regal or the weight of aristocratic oppression. In a few years, when fully developed, it destroys the whole frame of

society, and extinguishes the very elements of freedom by annihilating the classes whose intermixture is essential to its existence. It is beneath this fiery torrent that the civilised world is now passing; and all the efforts of philosophy are therefore required to observe its course and mitigate its devastation.

He was evidently fearful of the evils with which we are faced to-day, but then came the inventions of the early forties and fifties, and whatever fears he entertained were staved off. Behind this Bill is the fear that we are all the time pressing upon the limits of subsistence. There must be good reason why the Government come forward with a Bill to compel industries to pay a wage and grant conditions that will permit a man to have a home and keep a wife and three children. There must be some good reason for it. The reason is the same one that worried Mr. Malthus a hundred years ago in England when he put forward a most interesting contribution to civilisation, that at the time was ignored, but has now come before the public again in a new work which reached Australia this week. That is the question of the pressure of population upon subsistence, and the secondary question of how it is to be controlled. By the Bill the Minister proposes to control the population to some extent by saying that if a working man has more than three children he will not under the award have sufficient money to pay for them.

Mr. Panton: That has been going on ever since we had arbitration, and ever since wages have been wages.

Mr. NORTH: He goes further in this case.

Mr. Panton: We will help you to amend that and make the number six children.

Mr. NORTH: The economic question is whether we can provide even for two children; otherwise there would be no reason for the Bill. This question of pressure of population upon subsistence is the cause of the trouble.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It should not be the trouble in so empty a country as Western Australia.

Mr. NORTH: No, but it would not matter if Western Australia comprised 20,000,000 square miles of country. All that matters is the existing and possible industries, the mechanical means of carrying them on, and whether the market is sufficient to enable us to deal with them. We have before us exactly the same question that exercised the mind of Malthus so many years ago, namely, that there was not quite sufficient to go round. Mr. McDougal has written a work which reached Australia last week and in it these words appear—

The brain-workers, whose salaries have not risen proportionately to those of the hand workers, have had to retire from the competition; in other words, to go without the goods which they have not suffi-

cient money to buy. An aggravation of the evils produced by legislative interference with the natural laws of supply and demand, is threatened by a new movement, which proposes that a man should be paid, not according to his work, but according to the size of his family. Work is not to be paid for as work, but only according to the requirements of those who perform it. Equal pay for equal work is no longer to be the guiding principle, but a line is to be drawn between the unmarried or the childless married man and the man who has indulged more freely in the delights of parenthood. The man who has foregone parental privileges and responsibilities is to undergo the same strain, mental and physical, as paterfamilias, but is to be rewarded on a lower scale.

This is really suggesting the same line of argument that was before the people all those years ago. We cannot get away from the fact that in trying to provide sufficient remuneration for everyone in each industry there is some unwritten law following Western civilisation, under which population is always pressing upon subsistence. The effect of this question, raised by Malthus a hundred years ago, is coming before us again now with greater force than ever, and shows that we have to review our general conditions, and inquire as to how we can overcome the difficulties that confront us. When we say we are anxious to see shorter hours, and are asked to provide a 44-hour standard, we have to ask ourselves, in view of the concrete instance of the extra outlay of £63,000 on one works alone, what will happen if the hours are reduced to 44. One view is that more money will have to be found. A possible alternative would be for more machinery to be used, and for the population not to increase proportionately. No one here suggests that possibility. We all admit that if population does not increase and machinery does, we can work shorter hours and get the same results as we get to-day without any difficulty. But that is not contemplated. The Bill merely says that by Act of Parliament in future new conditions will provide us with a five-roomed house, the possibility of a wife and three children, and with four hours of work less per week. I am aware that considerable pressure is being brought to bear upon the Government to bring this provision forward. I know there is a tornado in the world that is spreading. Even in the Eastern States there is a political hurricane, known as communism, that will overtake us if we cannot satisfy the workers in existing industries. If it is impossible by Act of Parliament to realise the ambitions of the Government, can any other solutions be offered? It is hardly the province of this House to say what employers should do. No one would be so worried as the present Government if the Bill did become law in its present form.

The Minister for Railways: We will take the risk.

Mr. NORTH: Does the Minister think even at this late hour that by the passing of this Bill the results expected will follow?

Mr. Holman: They have the 44 hours in New South Wales, and the place is not doomed.

Mr. NORTH: We do not live in New South Wales. Is any Minister confident that the passing of this Bill will not interfere with any industry in this State to any extent, but will automatically give us the 44-hour week and those conditions we are all so anxious to see in every home? If so, I have a suggestion to make that will suit both the Government and the Opposition, and will be the means of letting this Bill go through comfortably. The suggestion is that in the provision that deals with a five-roomed house, a wife and three children, and that which deals with the 44 hours, there shall be inserted in each case these words, "as far as practicable." This will not in any way interfere with the wishes of the Government, or the working of the court. It will direct the court to do that which the Government wish. Where the court sees it is impossible to carry it out, and it is a question of throwing hundreds of employees out of work, it will have power temporarily to hold back that provision so that it will apply slowly and reasonably, and not in a hurley-burley fashion.

Mr. Holman: You do not argue that any industry should be kept going irrespective of anything.

Mr. NORTH: Is it not wiser to apply the principle slowly and within reason, rather than sacrifice any of our industries?

Mr. Heron: You sacrifice the lives of those working in them.

Mr. NORTH: The question is full of difficulties. One hundred years ago the question of the pressure of population on subsistence existed, and under worse conditions than we have to-day. Standards have improved, but not sufficiently to justify the immense advances in the way of machinery and science. I have asked myself why. I do not give the reason that members opposite might give, namely, that there are capitalists with great hoards of booty tucked away. If one studies statistics one finds that wherever there have been great inventions an influx of surplus people, and not surplus wealth has followed. I know of no country where that principle does not apply, except those that had already reached their natural limits, such as China. In China the babies are thrown outside for several days and those who survive are kept, while those who cannot stand the exposure go under. We know that war, sickness, famine and other things, keep population down, but as we increase our hospitals and our science grows our population is all the time increasing. As soon as new inven-

tions arrive, instead of great surplus wealth being produced, large numbers of people flock to the place.

Mr. Panton: Population would be a great thing for this country.

Mr. NORTH: Even if the Bill goes through and achieves those things that the Government think it will achieve, it will not solve the great question that the leader of the Opposition has in his heart, namely, that there is never quite enough to go round. In no country that I know of has there been sufficient for all, and has the existing civilisation been perfect. There is no reason to say that the Bill will in any way solve that difficulty. I know of only one exception.

Mr. Lutey: Where was that?

Mr. NORTH: Malthus, when going into the question of population, made a number of investigations. In Otaheiti he found a great country of 200,000 people. He said all the young men were handsome, and all the young girls were beautiful.

Mr. Lutey: Where did you say that was?

Mr. NORTH: They had no working hours. There was sufficient for all, sufficient of the fruits of the earth, and they lived in idleness and pleasure. He said there was not even marriage there. It appears that the population did not increase, but that the wealth was sufficient, that they not only did not work 44 hours, but did not work at all, and perhaps they lay under the trees until the coconuts dropped into their mouths. It may be said that if the Bill goes through it will force certain industries to reconsider their position. Two or three years ago Henry Ford had to reconsider his position, for he nearly went bankrupt. He thought a long while, and was able to reduce the cost of his products by about a third, and to increase production with eight hours once more. It may be said that by the standardisation of commodities that are not now standardised, a great saving of hours might be effected. That is not the business of this House, but purely that of the employers. There is no saying that this Bill will force the employers to do anything to improve the position or standardise their products. It appears to me it would have been wiser if the Minister had dealt with the question more as suggested by army methods. I do not suggest regimentation. When in the Air Force I found that a sergeant or a corporal drew the pay for his rank. If he had a wife and child, by some means unknown to him money trickled from a separate fund into the wife's pocket, to provide for herself and child. The N.C.O. did not lose his job because his wife had the money.

Mr. Hughes: That is a socialistic proposition.

Mr. NORTH: I wonder the Minister did not go into that question which is now mooted in New South Wales. It is suggested there that there should be a

common fund, contributed to by employer and employee, from which those who are married shall draw an allotment. That would overcome the difficulty contained in this Bill, namely, that there is apparently not sufficient money to go round to achieve the desire of the Government and of us all. If, then, there is not sufficient money to provide for every man with three children, or the possibility of three children, there may be sufficient money in industry, though I do not say there is, to provide for those who are married an extra sum above the basic wage, which wage could be considerably less to suffice for a single man living in a five-roomed house. I would rather have been here to-night considering a Bill of that nature, because I think such a step will be the solution of the problem. With present methods and present machinery, it appears quite impossible for industry to provide sufficient money to allow every employee to have a wife and three children and live in a five-roomed house. I commend the New South Wales suggestion to hon. members.

Mr. Hughes: How is the single man going to get married if he does not get sufficient wages to permit him to put by a few pounds?

Mr. NORTH: The money will be in the fund I have referred to. I am opposed to State enterprise, but I am ashamed, as a citizen, to think that industry cannot to-day provide what this Bill requires. What is the solution of the whole question? I do not say there is one, but I know that on a sheep station the manager acts differently from the way in which we act as a community. The manager carries on the station sufficient flocks to absorb the grass and water there. Probably he increases his stock at some period, but he soon reaches the point when, no matter how efficient his labour, no matter how efficient his water supply, the stock on the station is kept constant and he sends his surplus ewes to the market. If conditions remain normal, he can have a constant flock on his pastures for years and years. That has not been the case with industry. I have endeavoured to follow the figures with regard to new inventions overtaking existing populations, and it seems to me that the introduction of each labour-saving device has invariably increased population. That is the reason why I think we cannot reduce hours very much. If we are to adopt an old illustration of the "dismal science" of political economy, which bids us take a small island and start with four or five persons, we shall soon see how hours here can be reduced. Suppose the four or five men on the island engage in fishing and so forth, and that presently they invent a machine to do half their work. Their hours of labour will be reduced correspondingly, but very soon three or four other men will flock to the island because of the improved conditions obtaining there, and speedily all the

inhabitants of the island will be as badly off as ever. That seems the reason why the worker is to-day no better placed regarding real wages, as opposed to money wages, than he was years ago. I do not say the cause is that the employers are piling up great bank balances. The banks say it is not so, and the Taxation Departments could show that it is not so. As soon as wages are raised, prices follow and, as has been suggested, even exceed the rise in wages.

Mr. Marshall: Be fair and tell us which comes first, the rise in the cost of living, or the raising of wages by the Arbitration Court?

Mr. NORTH: Arbitration may have prevented a great many strikes, but it has not increased the purchasing power of the worker's sovereign.

Mr. Marshall: Do you understand that the worker cannot get an increase of wages until he has proved that the cost of living has gone up?

Mr. NORTH: But the wage suggested is to be a real wage, providing for a standard house and the maintenance of a wife and three children. As things are to-day, modern civilisation is not much to be proud of, especially when we think of the anxious faces of all members of the community, everyone trying to make ends meet. Conditions in France show that a large increase of population is a very doubtful advantage in modern civilisation. The population of France stood at 31 millions a hundred years ago, and it is now about 38 millions. For a hundred years France has held a population fairly constant. That is an example to the world. In view of the fact that we do not want any more wars, the great increase of population should be checked. If that aspect were more emphasised in arbitration, probably the workers and also the Governments would find it of great benefit.

Mr. BROWN (Pingelly) [9.10]: At the outset let me say that I am not opposed to industrial arbitration. Still, with certain clauses of this Bill I do not agree. I hold that it is impracticable to settle all disputes by arbitration. Recent history shows us an arbitration court at the Hague, followed by a brute-force struggle in which some of the most intellectual nations of the world flew at each other's throats, by way of settling their differences. Therefore the time is not yet ripe for all-round arbitration. If we could only enlighten the people, we could settle all our differences by arbitration. On this subject I speak very feelingly, because the measure would affect me. In a weak and misguided moment I put some cash into a factory. A short time later there was a rise in wages, a retrospective rise, and our little factory had to pay £100 for which no allowance had been made. The same thing happened in the second year and in the third year. There have been three increases in wages in that industry

since I embarked on it. When the men got the rise in wages they knew nothing about it; they were surprised to get the money. When and how was the rise engineered? Certainly it was engineered in some way. I have been a unionist myself. For three months I was a great unionist. I joined the Shearers' Union long before there was a Labour Party in existence, but no sooner had I joined that union than I was involved in a big strike. It was the tactics adopted by our leader that made me turn my back on unionism for ever.

Mr. Panton: Are you sure your leader was not the member for Mt. Margaret?

Mr. BROWN: If I had my deserts, probably I would be eating hominy for breakfast, and breaking stones.

Mr. Panton: What was it you did?

Mr. BROWN: I will not tell. I was drawn on by a leader, and in those days, when industrial arbitration did not exist, there was no alternative to direct action. The Minister provides by this Bill for preference to unionists. If only unionists are to be employed, how can the Minister say that he is paying regard to the interests of the community as a whole? I have been told that some of our unions are so conservative that to join them is almost impossible.

Mr. Panton: Your leg has been pulled.

Mr. BROWN: I have been told that by one man not so many miles from here.

Mr. Holman: Why, you told us you yourself got into a union once!

Mr. BROWN: But I had to get out of it. Some men take advantage of a union by obtaining the advantages secured by the union.

Mr. Lutey: A non-unionist is the very first to come and look for the benefits obtained by the union.

Mr. BROWN: As regards our secondary industries, let us beware lest we kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Mr. Panton: The non-unionist does not lay many golden eggs.

Mr. BROWN: As regards the constitution of the Arbitration Court, the Bill provides for three members. I often wonder whether it would not be better to have just the one judge, a man thoroughly understanding arbitration matters. That, I think, would expedite hearings. The larger the bench, the longer will the cases take. It is just the same in this House. I begin to think that if we had 20 members instead of 50, we would do a great deal more business.

Mr. Panton: Now you are not likely to be popular in this Chamber.

Mr. BROWN: Let us consider the effect the Bill is likely to have on our local industries. I know full well that many of our mechanics are leaving Western Australia and going to the Eastern States. Why is that so? We are not encouraging people to engage in secondary industries here because of the conditions they are asked to observe. In Narrogin they had a

magnificent doll factory. To-day it is defunct.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Not quite.

Mr. BROWN: It is very nearly so.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It has not got its former output.

Mr. Panton: There are not enough babies to buy dolls for now, because of the wages that are paid.

Mr. BROWN: From my own short experience I know it is impossible now to manufacture the same class of articles that we were turning out 10 years ago. The explanation is that we cannot compete with the big manufacturing firms in the Eastern States. What with big concerns in the Eastern States like that run by Hugh McKay and many others, with inter-State free trade, and so on, it is possible for them to turn out goods and, after paying freight, sell them here at a profit, at a price at which we cannot make them locally.

Mr. Panton: They are paying better wages and working shorter hours than we are doing here.

Mr. BROWN: I cannot say that that is so, but I do know that we cannot turn out the goods that we were able to do 10 years ago. I do not know that any firm in Western Australia is manufacturing ploughs to-day apart from the State Implement Works.

Member: Are they not good ploughs?

Mr. BROWN: I will not say anything about the work turned out at the State Implement Works. I hope the ploughs are good ones. If we turn to the balance sheet of that concern, however, we will find that it went to the bad last month to the extent of £5,000.

Mr. George: Last month alone?

Mr. BROWN: That is how I worked it out from the returns.

Members: That is not so at all.

Mr. BROWN: The State has to pay that loss. Again I issue the warning to the Government that they should not kill the goose that lays the golden egg. The provisions regarding apprentices should be made as liberal as possible. It is hard to find mechanics to-day. If a man has a good mechanic in his employ, he has to look after him as well as possible, because he does not know where to put his hand on another mechanic should that man leave him. No encouragement is given to persons to become mechanics in these days. As for the basic wage, how is that to be determined? Can we differentiate between single and married men? I know that a married man with a wife and five children—most men have five children—cannot maintain his family on less than £5 a week. At the same time how can we provide for such a wage? An employer may have to pay £5 a week to a man who may not be worth more than £2 a week.

Mr. Panton: That sort of man would not be kept on for long.

Mr. BROWN: But the man must be paid that wage under the provisions sought to be

established by the Government. In our little factory we have to pay to a lad of 21 a minimum wage of £1 8s. 6d. a week and mechanics a proportionately greater wage. It will be hard to determine the basic wage. Undoubtedly a mechanic living in the country areas will have a better chance of living well, because house rent will be lower and water and firewood much cheaper. If that mechanic lives on the outskirts of a country town, he may be able to keep a cow, some fowls and pigs. Thus he has a much better chance of making a good living than the mechanic in the city. When we take cognisance of the constantly increasing standard of living, how will it work out? We know that nowadays people look for more amusements, and so on, and how can a poor man with a family get along? I have heard workers say many a time, "I will not make a mechanic of my boy. I will educate him so that he may work without taking his coat off." That is what is happening. The youths of to-day will not consent to follow the occupations that their fathers did, but they want to be lawyers or something like that.

Mr. Clydesdale: What are you doing with your own boy?

Mr. BROWN: As time goes on, we will find the basic wage increasing. To-day people are no better off at £5 a week than they were years ago when they were paid £3 a week.

Mr. Taylor: The purchasing power of £5 is about £3 10s. now.

Mr. BROWN: I admit that. The cost of living must continue to increase, because the employer who pays his man £5 a week has to pass it on. Unless he does so, how can he get along? In my factory we did not pass it on. I can show my books to prove that I have drawn less from that factory than the boys employed there.

Mr. Clydesdale: I would like to have your photograph.

Mr. Panton: You are unique.

Mr. BROWN: If I had not more money than I put into the factory, I would have died of starvation. As to rural workers, how are we to get on? When a man has worked his 44 hours, he has done his week's work. The result will be, if the Bill be agreed to, that the rural worker will have to be paid time and a half for the extra hours it is necessary for him to work. It is impossible for farmers to pay such an exorbitant wage.

Mr. Lutey: What if you get 6s. a bushel for your wheat?

Mr. BROWN: The farmer may only get five bushels to the acre! He has to pay dearly for superphosphates and machinery, and he has to pay high freights as well. Taking everything into consideration, the farmer gets very little out of it and the worker will be better off than his employer.

Mr. Panton: Yet we see them riding about in their motor cars!

Mr. BROWN: They mostly get them on tick. Take the single man on a farm. To-day there are many migrants from England who are engaged on farms. We have men working for 25s. a week and keep. We have some married men who are getting that. When they take the cost of their clothes and tobacco from their wages, what is there remaining to be sent to their wives and children! Practically nothing! But 25s. is as much as those workers are worth at the start. If farmers are to be compelled to pay such men the basic wage, they will not employ labour. The result will be that no employment will be available for those men. The Government will have to find work by pulling up trawlines in order to put them down again. Under such conditions we will see men flocking to Perth, where the Government will have to look after them. Rural work is not suitable for married men, because they do not get sufficient pay to enable them to maintain their wives and children. That work should be done by single men. The full wage with keep is about 50s. a week. It is impossible for a married man to provide for his wife and family out of such a wage, and he has to look for other avenues. How, in the name of goodness, are we to carry out the proposals regarding domestic servants? Girls work in the house while the men warm their feet and read the newspaper. It is impossible to determine the hours that a girl shall work. The only way to get over the difficulty is to have double shifts, or, possibly to arrange it so that a girl shall have so many hours off during the day. It has to be remembered that the girl is on the premises the whole time, and if that is so, there is not very much enjoyment to be derived from this proposal.

Members: How do you know?

Mr. BROWN: I fail to see how we will be able to carry out the provisions of the Bill regarding domestic servants. Then, again, what will the 44-hour week mean to many of our industries? Some people say that they can do as much work in 44 hours as they can in 48 hours. My experience shows that it is an impossibility. I have been a worker all my life, and I know that I cannot do as much in 44 hours as I can in 48. Take the position of a man on a farm. He has to look after his horses and he must attend to them from about 5.30 a.m. He may have to put in a couple of hours with the horses before he goes to work. From the time he starts work until he leaves off, he will work about 12 hours. No man on a farm with horses works less than 12 hours a day. On that basis the farmer would have to pay four hours' overtime per day. Farmers cannot pay overtime rates on those lines and will not do so. The result will be that they will not employ farm hands. I am satisfied that our local industries will dwindle down to a man and his sons, or a man and a boy.

Mr. Richardson: But they will come within the scope of the Bill if it be agreed to.

Mr. BROWN: I am interested in a mill, and until recently we were working three shifts. If men are to work 44 hours a week, it will mean that some will be idle. We will have to provide for overtime and all the men are anxious for that. They are anxious to get the overtime payment. We will require four shifts in a day. I predict that the time will come when the unions will advocate a six-hour day.

Mr. Hughes: The sooner the better.

Mr. Sleeman: We have that in some places.

Mr. BROWN: How can we go on here with a 44-hour week when they have a 48-hour week in Victoria?

Member: They don't have a 48-hour week.

Mr. BROWN: It cannot be done. I have had experience, and I know that this is what it is coming to. If they get the 44-hour week the men who are directing the unions will say, "We must have a 6-hour day."

Mr. Holman: Don't put such naughty ideas into our minds!

Mr. BROWN: To-day unions come under Federal awards because they consider Federal organisations are stronger. When they become dissatisfied with the Federal union they ask to come under the State Arbitration Court. Later on they may endeavour to get to the Federal court again, and so it goes on.

Mr. Panton: If you could get a better price for your products in Victoria, would you not avail yourself of the opportunity?

Mr. BROWN: Of course I would, but I am studying the interests of the State.

Mr. Hughes: When you put up the price of bread, were you studying the interests of Western Australia?

Mr. BROWN: I know our party stands for free trade, but I am not altogether a confirmed freetrader, for I want to see secondary industries here. Then, perhaps, we shall have prosperity all round. But rather than see a lot of these clauses go through, I would subscribe to international freetrade.

Mr. Lutey: How would you get revenue to pay for the war?

Mr. BROWN: I ask, will the workers abide by this decision? The workers have two weapons denied to the employers. The workers can never get away from direct action. They know that all they have to do is to strike, in order to paralyse industry. The railway unions are controlling Western Australia. Let them go on strike in sympathy with some other union, and the whole trade of the State is paralysed.

Mr. Panton: I wish you meant it.

The Minister for Railways: How often do they do that?

Mr. BROWN: We should pass another law making it illegal for the workers to

refuse to comply with the conditions laid down in the Bill.

Mr. Taylor: What good would that be?

Mr. BROWN: This is not legislation for the community as a whole; undoubtedly it is class legislation from beginning to end.

Mr. Hughes: Have we not always had that in Western Australia?

Mr. BROWN: I will not oppose the Bill in its entirety, but I do hope that some of the clauses will be amended in a way satisfactory to us all.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.32]: It was only in 1912 that the present arbitration laws were passed. At that time one of the most prominent Labour leaders in the State, the Attorney General in the Scaddan Administration, described that measure as the best Arbitration Act in the world at that time.

Mr. Heron: We have had a war since then.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is so, and now we have the Minister for Labour bringing down a 67-clause amending Bill varying that legislation that was described as perfect at that time. One of the principal defects in the arbitration system is that, owing to delays in the court, our existing legislation is not having a fair trial. As far as the amendments brought down by the Government will have the effect of doing away with those delays, I am pleased to see them introduced. Of course I did not expect from the Minister for Labour much less than has been brought forward; because, having known him for many years as one of the industrial leaders of the State, one with every ramification of the arbitration laws at his fingers' ends, I expected that when he brought forward a measure it would be all that those associated with him at the Trades Hall desired. Whether those desires will be agreed to by both Houses of Parliament has yet to be seen. We have had lengthy speeches from the Minister and from the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) in support of this legislation. They took us touring all over the world. We were told all about the hours of labour obtaining in Brazil, in Ecuador, in Peru, in Uruguay and in a number of places whose industrial conditions are very different from those of Australia. Some of those countries alluded to, I think, are low wage countries. Even then those hon. gentlemen, in pointing out that certain industries in Ecuador and other places work only 44 hours per week, did not attempt to prove that those conditions applied to men in the agricultural and rural industries of those foreign countries. I listened to the speech of the member for Menzies with attention, and I have since looked through it, but I fail to see in it any suggestion that the cowboys and those engaged in rural industries in foreign countries have been brought under the 44-hour system. Yet it is proposed that every employee in our rural

industries shall be brought compulsorily by the court under the 44-hour week. I say unhesitatingly that the illustrations given by the hon. gentlemen in that interesting tour through the States of South America and elsewhere are not at all applicable to the industries in sunny Australia. We are proud of the fact that Australia is a high-wage country, not a low-wage country as are many of those places touched upon. We certainly desire to keep higher wages and better conditions than those existing in many of the foreign countries mentioned. Even when those hon. gentlemen told us that the 44-hour week had been applied to industrialists in certain of those countries, I failed to see any statement that it had been done by legislation. I take it that in the main it has been done either by arbitration or by conciliation. The hon. member quoted instances in Queensland of the court, although having power to award 48 hours, has awarded 44 where special conditions of the industry warranted it.

Mr. Panton: All those I quoted from Queensland were given by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is it! I am in favour of the Arbitration Court having complete power to deal with the hours of labour. The trouble is that the Minister proposes that our court shall not have a free hand to fix the hours of labour. The Government seek to lay compulsion on the court that it shall give no award in which the hours exceed 44 weekly. The Minister might well reconsider that, and leave it as it is to-day, permissive in the court to fix the hours of labour. I want to see wages maintained. I do not want to see the Government put the court in the position that, because it cannot give an award covering longer hours than 44 per week, even for the rural industry, consequently the wages for the week's work will be reduced correspondingly with the reduced hours of labour. I hope the Government will make the power of the court in this respect permissive, and will not shackle the court with a hard and fast rule concerning the hours of labour. This is a country of primary production and every member knows how sadly we are handicapped in competition with the Eastern States, particularly in respect of the establishment here of secondary industries. We are handicapped owing to our comparatively small population; we are handicapped owing to the fact that, during the war period, under a policy of high protection secondary industries were firmly established in the cities of the Eastern States, and under the Federal Constitution we have no power to give protection to the man attempting to establish secondary industries in Western Australia against the competition of established secondary industries in the Eastern States. Also, any man attempting to establish secondary industries in Western Australia is further handicapped by the knowledge that if his industry be

successful he will have to pay here the highest income taxation in the Commonwealth; whereas Victoria, with a view to establishing further secondary industries is keeping her income taxation down to a minimum and so attracting capital. Yet in face of these facts we find the Minister for Labour, actuated by a desire to give the best possible conditions to unionists, amongst whom he has spent his life, introducing here more extreme legislation than is in operation in Queensland; because in Queensland it is entirely at the discretion of the court to say what hours of labour shall be awarded. The member for Menzies quoted some Queensland industries working 48 hours by direction of the court.

Mr. Panton: Nurses there work 48 hours, whereas here they work 52 and more.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: One of the things I intend to urge upon the Government is that before compulsorily laying down the 44-hour week for all workers they should bring the 48-hour week into operation. Let us make a start by giving nurses and others working more than 48 hours per week the benefit of the 48-hour system before we put the court in shackles in respect of hours to be worked. At any rate, our secondary industries are comparatively small, and I fear that if we put them under more stringent conditions than obtain in the Eastern States it will be very difficult for those industries to grow to the extent we desire. We have a very active immigration policy in operation. It is the policy of the country, approved by all parties, to try to fill up the State and bring labour to our shores. I have accompanied representatives of the Ugly Men's Association in visiting parts of my electorate where they have gone from farm to farm and said, "We have a fine batch of young fellows arriving, good, honest workers whom we can recommend."

Mr. Marshall: How can they recommend men whom they have never seen?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They know the type of men arriving.

Mr. Marshall: So do we.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Sometimes these men are in the depot at Fremantle at the time.

Mr. Marshall: That is all balderdash.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I approve of the actions of the Ugly Men and applaud their work. An officer of the association went from farm to farm urging the farmers to take a man or two extra as a patriotic duty, even if they were not requiring additional labour at the time. The wages offered to these men, who were raw, inexperienced, and unfamiliar with local conditions, though anxious and willing to work, ranged from 25s. to 35s. for a start.

Mr. A. Wadebrough: Do you consider that to be the duty of the Ugly Men's Association?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was valuable assistance rendered to the Government.

The farmers made a splendid response to the requests. If we are going to have an award stipulating a high rate of wages, and permit these raw inexperienced farm workers—

The Minister for Lands: But experienced farm labourers are coming here also, and are being put on the same level.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Even if a farmer gets a highly experienced farm worker from the Old Country, the conditions here are very different.

The Minister for Lands: There is too much of that sort of thing.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have met men who have worked in nurseries in the Old Country, and we can imagine that however excellent a nurseryman he may be on a block of perhaps five or six acres, he would experience very different conditions and different machinery on a wheat farm in this State, and have a good deal to learn before he became accustomed to our conditions, however smart he might be.

The Minister for Lands: They are all put in at the minimum wage, no matter what their experience.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At any rate the farmers have done good work in absorbing labour as they have, and I hope it will not be interfered with by the more drastic conditions now brought forward.

The Minister for Lands: Do not class them all as inferior, because they are not.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I say they are inexperienced and do not understand local conditions, and that it is necessary for them to learn.

Mr. Latham: Many of them to-day are our best farmers.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Many of them started with little money and to-day are successful farmers, able to drive about in their own motor cars. We have our group settlements going on and the men there are working more than 44 hours.

Mr. Panton: They are working for themselves.

Mr. Latham: Do you propose to control them under the Bill?

Mr. Panton: You know very well we do not.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Then consider the position of many small farmers in this State. They employ one man who lives with the farmer, works with him and is treated in every way as one of the family. Such a man is quite content with his conditions. He shares the farmer's lot, being well paid if there is a good crop. In the drought year many of them stayed with the farmer when he was not in a position to pay any wages at all. I hope the Government will not place the farmer under conditions that two or three years later may result in his being billed with a big amount for retrospective pay, which the employee does not desire and has never asked for. We know how early employees in the dairy industry have to start, and a six-hour week for harvest time is impossible.

The Government should exempt rural industries from the compulsory 44-hour limitation. "Home workers" is the best term to describe young women who work in other people's houses. At present they are exempt from the operation of the Act, and there is such a demand for them that it is difficult to get such help.

Mr. Panton: Owing to the conditions of labour.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The present exemption should continue, and the homes of our citizens should not be subject to visits by the inspector or the union secretary. There are other phases of the Bill with which I propose to deal in Committee. The Minister has a great knowledge of arbitration legislation from the Trades Hall point of view. There are reforms of value proposed for the trained worker in the well established secondary industry, but they are quite impossible of application to the broad spaces of this State, where the real work of developing Western Australia is being carried on. I hope the agricultural, pastoral and rural industries generally will be exempted from the operation of the measure, at least in respect to the limitation of hours of labour. Such work as boundary riding is very light, but the men engaged in it start out early in the morning and finish late at night, and it is quite impossible for some of the agricultural and rural industries to be carried on under the conditions proposed in this Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.52]: I do not wish to traverse the whole of the ramifications of this Bill, but I compliment the Minister upon the efficient and detailed consideration he has given the measure. Still, I am not altogether in favour of the Bill, and I do not yet know whether I shall vote for it.

Mr. Latham: But we do.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know why we should limit the hours, wages, and conditions of one section of the community, while the Shylocks of London and the captains of industry enjoy unlimited incomes. Why should we say to one man, "You shall work 48 hours at a given rate," and then turn to the other chap and say, "Yes, sir, all you can secure is yours." I do not know whether the Bill goes far enough. Let me try to enlighten the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown). He said secondary industries were closing down and mechanics were going to the Eastern States. He also said that if we desired to start secondary industries, we would not be able to get the mechanics to start with. I know that carpenters, bricklayers, engineers, and all sorts of skilled men have gone to the Eastern States, but why? Simply because they could get better remuneration for their labour and better and healthier conditions under which to work.

Mr. Thomson: Bricklayers, carpenters, and plasterers?

Mr. MARSHALL: That reminds me that the member for Katanning, in speaking the other day, referred to the increased cost for constructing a five-roomed house; and said that 90 per cent. of the increase was solely due to wages.

Mr. Thomson: And I repeat it.

Mr. Hughes: That is not so.

Mr. MARSHALL: I had a cockatoo, and once I had taught him anything he would repeat it. The hon. member did not try to enlighten us as to the profits made by the contractors. In order to guard against any such disclosure, he was careful to mention that in no circumstances should a board be permitted to divulge any such information.

Mr. Thomson: You are at liberty to see my figures.

Mr. MARSHALL: One-half of the population of the State is concentrated in the metropolitan area, and everywhere may be seen colossal buildings.

Mr. Hughes: At colossal rents.

Mr. MARSHALL: Absolutely. Hundreds of thousands of pounds produced annually by our primary producers is being absorbed in city structures and land values. The member for Katanning did not deal with that part of the argument. No; he participates in the erection of buildings in the city.

Mr. Thomson: No, he does not.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is why he did not mention it.

Mr. Hughes: He builds churches.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is the best form of exploitation he could take on. The hon. member said it would be utterly impossible for secondary industries in Western Australia working 44 hours a week to compete with those in Victoria working 48 hours a week. The most flourishing and progressive State in the Commonwealth is Queensland. Do members deny that?

Mr. Latham: Yes.

Mr. MARSHALL: Let us compare Queensland with the other States in respect to the hours worked and the wages paid. In the furniture trade the hours in Western Australia are 47, but in Queensland they are 44, and in the engineering trade they are 47 and 44 respectively.

Mr. Brown: Queensland is the heaviest taxed State in Australia.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member stated that if we had shorter hours in this State we could not compete with the other States. What about Queensland? In that State a higher average rate of pay is given.

Mr. Panton: And the cost of living is lower.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes.

Mr. Panton: That is the crux of the matter.

Mr. MARSHALL: I wish members opposite would talk intelligently on this matter. They make wild and weird statements that they cannot prove about the effect of reduced hours on the cost of living. No one

has more regard for the primary producers than I have. They work from morning till night, and deserve whatever they may secure as a result of their labour, but they should at least be acquainted with the facts and should not be misled.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Where are the facts?

Mr. MARSHALL: They do not come from Northam. The figures prove what I say.

Mr. North: Mr. Theodore went on figures.

Mr. MARSHALL: He went on sound reasoning.

Mr. Taylor: His reasoning was not appreciated.

Mr. MARSHALL: He was like the hon. member in 1891, he had a bad reception for the time being. The question of preference to unionists has been raised. I do not know that this would rob a man of his freedom, as has been suggested. One influential section of the community has no desire for preference to unionists. Only one man out of a thousand can get into their union, and competition is by no means keen. Every member of the medical profession pays into his union; there is no desire for preference there. It is the same with the barristers. When we come to the ordinary workers there is a different story to tell. The workers organise themselves and contribute huge sums towards obtaining awards from the court. They are placed under great humiliation. Their private affairs are paraded before the tribunal, and their wives are compelled to reveal all their domestic worries. Members opposite say the man who does not participate in all this expenditure and trouble, and gives no assistance towards securing an award has every right to declare, "You won the award, but I shall have it." The man who looks for that sort of thing is worse than a garrotter. There is some chance of catching a garrotter, but the non-unionist is not caught.

Mr. Lindsay: It is not long before you do catch him.

Mr. MARSHALL: There are some persons who will not contribute towards the funds of the union but are the first to ask for the benefits obtained by means of those funds. Parliament should see that those who pay and labour for the concessions they get should receive them, and that those who stay outside should be denied them. Would any member of the Opposition cross-benches care to pay for others to get the fruits of his labour? They say that because it is only an ordinary worker in question it does not matter. Domestic service has been referred to. Many of my relatives have been employed as domestics. Either members opposite have no conception of what domestic labour means, or they are remarkably good employers themselves.

Mr. Richardson: It must be the latter.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know the hon. member is a good employer when he employs

anybody. I regret there are no statistics available to show the causes that have led up to so many female patients being sent to the Perth Public Hospital. I should like to know what their occupation was before they reached the hospital. For years my wife has been in bad health because she was a slave in the homes of other people. It is no good talking to me about the attractions of domestic labour. These unfortunate girls are not treated as well as some of the poodles the ladies carry about with them. I know of one influential man whose wife employs a girl from half-past five in the morning to half-past seven at night. The girl was told she could have only one night off in the week, and must work on Sundays. At the breakfast table half a pound of steak is provided for the husband, the wife, the two children, and the girl.

Mr. Holman: What do they give the dog?

Mr. MARSHALL: Members talk about the wonderful conditions under which the girls in domestic service have to work! If those people who employ girls would treat them reasonably there would be no trouble in securing service of that kind. The ladies of the house, however, treat their girls in this way, "Cissy, do this or that," and when she has done it they say, "Do the other." Their treatment of the girls is most degrading, sickening, and humiliating. I have four sisters who are employed as domestics, and six sisters-in-law employed in the same way.

Mr. Latham: I am sure they will make good wives.

Mr. MARSHALL: Better than the hon. member would make a husband. I know all about the treatment meted out to these girls. Another member objects to the secretary of the union going into private homes to inquire as to the welfare of these girls. People do not want the union to know what they are doing. There is one big establishment in this city, the proprietor of which is forcing girls, because of the economic pressure, to sign for a lower minimum than the award provides. If I were sure that this was the only establishment responsible for this sort of thing I would disclose the name of it now.

Mr. Richardson: If you know it is going on, why not do it?

Mr. MARSHALL: I might throw a greater amount of custom into the other houses, and this may be going on to a worse extent there.

Mr. Richardson: They may have to pay the full award.

Mr. MARSHALL: They may not be doing so. What chance would the secretary of the union have if he did not possess the right to enter private homes? I object to this system of giving a concession with one hand and taking it away with the other. There are two girls who are afraid to leave this establishment. They cannot get work elsewhere, and the proprietor knows it. He says, "I have got them here, they dare not

leave me because there is too much competition, and I will squeeze a few shillings a week out of them." I do not know how many more girls he is treating like that. If I get full proof of this I will disclose the name of the establishment. It is scandalous that persons should be able to take advantage of a loophole in the Act to inflict such hardships upon others. To my mind the Bill does not go far enough. I object to one section of the community having the amount of its remuneration measured by Act of Parliament, while another section is free to procure as much as it can get. Let me tell my friends opposite that in my opinion the greatest burden the primary producers have to carry to-day is the amount of money which is being absorbed in the increased value of land and buildings in the cities. I have mentioned repeatedly in this House that we find Perth establishments serving customers in Fremantle, and Fremantle establishments serving customers in Perth. That applies generally to butchers, bakers, grocers, and other traders. It is easy to appreciate the over-lapping, the excessive rents, and the unnecessary labour involved. The labour, in especial, could be used for more productive purposes. One has only to walk along the street to see shops selling the same commodity next door to one another. Is that necessary? Of course it is not. There is a very faulty feature in our methods of distribution. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are eaten up in over-lapping, in unnecessary rents, and in unduly high land values. If my friends opposite would make an effort to adjust matters from that aspect, the wages and hours of rural labourers would not concern them. Again, look at the motor cars in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Taylor: They are not all for the farmers, though.

Mr. MARSHALL: No; because they are for the sewerage workers, to drive them to work in the mornings. They are not for farmers, or pastoralists, or captains of industry. It is too late to give the figures showing the increase in registration and increase in purchase of motor cars. Yet my friends opposite are somewhat hostile to giving the working man, who has interests in common with the farmer, a reduction of hours, and such an increase in wages as will raise him to a standard of comfort. They object to these things while hundreds of thousands of pounds are deliberately wasted before their eyes. I tell my friends that they are barking up the wrong tree, that they are starting reform at the wrong end. When they wake up, I shall be prepared to give them all the assistance in my power towards rendering conditions of life in the country all that they should be.

Mr. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [10.20]: I am indeed pleased that at last one member opposite recognises the fact that the producer will have to bear the burden of this legis-

lation and will not be able to pass it on. I listened a week ago to the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton), who gave us a trip round the world and also gave us a multitude of figures. I thought he was earnest and believed in the figures he gave. When one repeats a thing often enough, one comes to believe it. The hon. member said that elsewhere production had increased because the hours of work had been reduced to 44. I have taken a few of his figures and examined them, and to me it is remarkable that although the total output did increase, it increased in only one respect. In 1920-21 the value of the raw materials used in manufactures was £205,866,000, and in 1922-23 the corresponding value had been reduced to £186,083,000. The value of the output in 1920-21 was £323,093,000, and in 1922-23 it was £326,497,000. Therefore, the value of the raw material had been reduced by £21,000,000, while the value placed on the completed articles had increased by £3,000,000. It was not a question of greater production or less production, but a question of higher selling prices. It is quite true that Eastern States manufacturers can keep on increasing wages and reducing hours so long as the policy of protection enables them to keep out oversea goods. But we of the primary industries are not concerned so much with Australian prices, because when we sell we have to sell at the prices ruling in the world's markets. Many references have been made to the price of wheat and the price of bread. It seems to be the impression here that the person who grows wheat is a profiteer. The Minister for Lands just recently interjected to the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) that in 1913 the price of bread was 3d. per loaf, as against 5½d. to-day. I cannot say much about the price of bread, but I can speak for the price of wheat, during those years. Higher wages and shorter hours undoubtedly reduce production. I have a few figures relating to the farmer's cost of production—the price of a seed drill, 16 disc or hoe, in 1914 was £47 10s., and in 1922 £87, an increase of 83 per cent.; a harvester, 6ft. McKay woodring, in 1914 cost £97 10s., and in 1922 £155, an increase of 59 per cent.; reaper and thresher, in 1914 £135, in 1922 £230, an increase of 70 per cent.; binder, Massey-Harris, 1914 £43, 1922 £97, increase 125 per cent.; plough, six-furrow, 1914 £48, 1922 £99, increase 106 per cent.; plough, four-furrow, 1914 £36 5s., 1922 £77, increase 112 per cent. We have State timber mills in Western Australia, established to keep down the price of timber. In 1914 the price of scantling 3in. x 2in. x 15ft. was 13s. 6d. per hundred super, and in 1922 the price was £1 6s. 6d. per hundred super, an increase of 95 per cent. I will not quote all the figures I have available, but will add that the average increase in the price of farmers' requisites is something like 78 per cent. The Minister for Lands said that in 1914 the price

of a loaf of bread was 3d., as against 5½d. at the present time. I do not know what the prices were, but I have gathered that an impression exists to the effect that the farmers are gaining greatly from the higher price of bread. Now, I have here the prices ruling for wheat from 1905 to 1914, prior to the war. Allowing 6d. per bushel for freight and handling charges the average price for the 10 years was 3s. 4d. per bushel.

Mr. Taylor: The price has been lower than that.

Mr. LINDSAY: Yes. In only one year have I myself received less than 3s. per bushel, and that was before the war. I have received as much as 4s. 6d. Last year, with the greatly increased prices of farmers' machinery and requisites, the growers who put their wheat into the pool received only 4s. per bushel. The reason for this was that the pool had made an agreement with millers to supply a certain quantity of wheat for the year and that on the 17th April the millers gave notice to the pool of their wheat requirements for the year, and that the pool kept the wheat for the millers. Unfortunately for the growers, the price of wheat at that time was very high. If we had sold the pool wheat then, we should have received 4s. 6d. per bushel. But after that came the slump, and the millers were not able to take the wheat reserved for them by the pool. This inability arose from the fact that the Melbourne millers were able to raise the price for local consumption and decrease the price for export, and our millers could not compete at the latter price. Consequently the pool had to accept a much lower price for the wheat which had been reserved. The Western Australian public got the benefit of 6d. per bushel, and the growers lost 6d. per bushel. As to preference to unionists, I have no objection whatever to it, and my only regret is that the principle cannot be applied to the industry in which I am engaged. It is estimated that the average price the farmers will receive for their wheat this year will be 4s. 3d. per bushel. To-day 4s. 3d. is not a whit better than 3s. 4d. was before the war. This House has declared that the working man shall receive a living wage, but the 2,800 men on the Industries Assistance Board do not receive the minimum or basic wage. Their wage is 9s. per day, and in order to gain it they have to do contract work.

The Minister for Lands: The man on the I.A.B. does not get wages at all; he gets advances.

Mr. LINDSAY: The Minister can put it that way if he likes. But if the I.A.B. settler fails to perform a certain amount of labour, his sustenance is reduced. In some cases it has been reduced to 4s. 6d. per day.

The Minister for Lands: Some men getting 9s. do very little.

Mr. LINDSAY: Some wages men getting 9s. do much less. As an employer of farm labour—being here I have to engage a man to take my place on the farm—I greatly fear that if the rural worker is brought within the scope of the Arbitration Act it will be a very bad thing for the primary industries of Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: The rural worker is under the Arbitration Act now.

Mr. LINDSAY: But the rural workers have not been brought under it as an organisation. Let me illustrate to the House the unreasonable demands occasionally made by the unions which hon. members opposite represent here. It was the rural workers' log that practically brought the farmers' organisations into existence in 1911. Under that log the hours of work were to be 48 per week, with a stipulation that work should cease at noon on Saturday. The wages ran from £2 10s. per week upwards and keep. I shall not go through the entire log, but I wish the House to realise the difference between the conditions of to-day and those of 1911. I have the latest demands made upon the employers in Tasmania who have been served with the rural workers' log. Those Tasmanian farmers are being served with demands for wages for harvest hands up to £7 a week and keep. From £3 to £6 a week is claimed for dairying hands and up to £6 for market gardeners. Up to £5 a week with keep is sought for hop pickers and for employees under 17, £4 a week with keep is demanded. Stack builders (hay or grain) and thatchers are, if the demands be agreed to, to get 30s. a day and keep; drivers of reaper, thresher header, stripper binder, and harvesters, £7 a week with keep. For sheaf pitchers, stockers, and general harvest hands £6 per week with keep is asked and for plough and drill drivers and general farm hands £5 per week with keep. Employees sewing wheat bags are, according to the demands, to get 3d. per bag and keep with a guarantee of £6 weekly and keep. I will not go right through the whole of the log, but here are some of the other items: millet cutting and threshing, £5 10s. weekly with keep; potato digging, 1s. 9d. per bag where the crops exceed three tons per acre or 2s. a bag where the crop is less than three tons per acre; pea pickers, £5 10s. weekly with keep; tobacco workers, £5 10s. weekly with keep; onion pullers, £5 10s. weekly with keep; general dairy hands, £5 weekly without keep. The conditions provide for a 44-hour week, with not more than eight hours work in a day, without overtime, from Monday to Friday, with four hours on Saturday. It is possible for manufacturing industries to pay high wages because they can pass them on. If I want to buy an article from any of those concerned, I have to inquire about the price and pay it or go without. When I have something to sell, however, I have to dis-

pose of my product in the world's market and take what price I can get. Personally, I do not mind the wages so much as I do the limitation upon hours. If the 44-hour week is to be applied to the agricultural industry, it will mean a great reduction in the acreage under the plough. Many men will follow the line of least resistance and put their land under sheep. Many of the primary producers in the eastern districts cannot run sheep and they will have to walk off the land. It goes without saying that the Bill will be passed in this Chamber. Although it is provided that the 44-hour week shall obtain, one point has been overlooked. The Arbitration Court has provided a maximum of 48 hours per week. There are some trades in connection with which 44 hours a week are worked. The decrease in hours was granted owing to the trying conditions or the unhealthy nature of the industries concerned. The effect of the proposal in the Bill will mean probably a reduction to 40 hours a week. If the hours in industries having 48 hours are reduced to 44 a week, it is likely that those industries having a 44-hour week now will have those hours reduced to 40. When the Bill is dealt with in Committee, I hope consideration will be extended to the agricultural industry and that that industry will not be brought within the scope of the measure.

On motion by Mr. Holman debate adjourned.

BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 9th September.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.35]: Members will agree that the proposal embodied in the Bill is a step in the right direction. The Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board are taking steps to provide facilities that the people in that locality desire. It is well known that tramways alone are not sufficient to cope with the necessary transport of passengers. Trams are slow moving and therefore do not cater adequately for passenger traffic. It is necessary to provide a remedy that is so essential in these days of quicker transport. The Fremantle Tramways Board desire to provide motor buses and they are to be commended for doing so. In leading countries and in congested areas the necessity for providing additional transport facilities has been recognised and motor buses are being introduced more freely. They are more efficient and rapid and the Fremantle Tramways Board are taking a lead that should be an example to other districts.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Power to provide omnibus services:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understand the municipalities have consented to the necessary expenditure of money. I know also that the tramway board will not have a monopoly in the bus services, but will have to accept competition.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think you need fear that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Bill will give the board power to run omnibuses anywhere.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have down there a number of districts where we cannot supply tramway services. We run trams to Melville Park and to North Fremantle. We do not propose to run motors out there. These buses are required to act as feeders to our tramways. For instance, we run a tramway service to the Fremantle cemetery every quarter of an hour. Beyond the cemetery is a large population. We want the right to run buses in that district as feeders to our trams. If we neglect to do that, private buses will be picking up the passengers out there and running them right through to the town.

Mr. Thomson: The Bill will not debar any private company from running buses?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, we merely ask authority to run buses in addition to our trams.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What about the Minister for Railways?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have no railways at all in those districts. Under our Act the local authorities have to borrow money for the construction of tramways, and no capital expenditure can be made without their consent. The Bill, however, will empower the tramway board to purchase buses out of revenue.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are taking power to inflict fines.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We must have power to make by-laws to govern the use of buses by the passengers. It has nothing to do with running operations or with the roads. In those respects we have to comply with the Traffic Act.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am glad the Bill has been brought down. It may furnish a lead for the Government to consider similar action in respect of the tramway service in Perth. If there be necessity for feeder buses to the Fremantle tramway system, there is greater necessity for similar feeders to the tramway service in Perth and even to the railways. I applaud the sagacity of the Minister and his board of management in getting in early with these buses, having in view what is happening in Perth, where buses are becoming very popular.

Tramway employees in Perth are becoming much concerned about this latest development, and are making overtures to the Minister controlling the tramways to do something to minimise the possibility of buses entirely superseding the trams. Fremantle is doing the proper thing. It is the outcome of the Fremantle trams being under a board of management. If it be good for Fremantle, it must be still better for the larger system in Perth.

Mr. SAMPSON: I support the argument of the member for Mt. Margaret. A big principle is involved, and Fremantle is to be congratulated upon having given a lead to the Government. We have the assurance of the Minister that the attitude of the council is not that of the dog in the manger. The object is to give the people a service that they have not at present. The council realise that motor buses can be run more economically than trams, and that the flexibility of the internal combustion engine renders it eminently satisfactory for passenger traffic.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The people of Perth and surrounding districts served by trams are in an entirely different position from those at Fremantle. They have not to pay the same statutory charges that the Fremantle people are by law compelled to pay. The lowest amount we have to provide on loans raised away back in 1905, including sinking fund and depreciation, is 11½ per cent., and on loans which have been raised since, we have to pay as high as 16 per cent., including sinking fund and depreciation. If we allowed motor buses to come in and take traffic from the trams, it would mean a direct charge on the ratepayers, and we wish to avoid that.

Mr. Thomson: Then the Perth people are not responsible for their trams.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They have not to pay the same statutory charges. We shall have the pleasure of handing over to the council to provide roads for motor buses a sum of £4,200 surplus profit after meeting all our heavy expenditure. We want to convey the people to the trams. No private person could compete against the trams, because it would pay us to run passengers from the outskirts to the tramway termini in order to maintain our tramway traffic.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.