

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 26th November, 1931.

Importations for Railways.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the tonnage of Newcastle or Eastern States coal brought into Western Australia during the month ended 21st November for use on the railways? 2, What was the price per ton in railway trucks at Fremantle? 3, Was the coal referred to for stock-replenishing or for immediate use in competition with the local fuel?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 4,254 tons. 2, 32s. 6d. per ton ships slings. 3s. 10d. Fremantle Harbour Trust charge, per ton. 6d. per ton handling. 36s. 10d. per ton. 3, Replenishment of stocks and to make up shortages consequent on failure of Collie mines to supply the full orders.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—COAL INDUSTRY.

Amalgamated Collieries, Ltd.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Mines: 1, On what date did the Amalgamated Collieries Ltd. apply for exemption from the "manning by labour" clause provisions of their coal mining leases in Western Australia? 2, Was the usual notice posted at the Mining Registrar's office at Collie notifying the public of such application? If not, why not? 3, When were the exemptions granted? 4, Is he aware that on the 11th November, 1931, an Arbitration Court case was pending between the Amalgamated Collieries Ltd. and the Collie Miners' Union? 5, Is he aware that the Amalgamated Collieries Ltd. closed down the Westralia mine on the 11th November, 1931, thereby depriving 50 men of their livelihood? 6, Will he cause an inquiry to be made into the above and not allow *ex parte* statements of one party to prejudice justice being done to the miners?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, 11th November, 1931. 2, The application was dealt with under Section 96 of the Mining Act, 1904, which does not necessitate the posting of any notice. 3, 12th November, 1931. 4, Yes. 5, I am aware that the Westralia mine has been closed down since the dispute arose. 6, It is not considered that any inquiry into the matter is necessary.

QUESTION—TIMBER, WORKERS, SUSTENANCE.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that between forty and fifty mill employees on half time finished work to-day at Pemberton? 2, In view of the fact that those men are destitute, will he issue instructions to the local constable who controls the Welfare Department, to place them on sustenance immediately?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Applications will be dealt with in the usual manner.

QUESTION—DALKEITH 'BUS ROUTE, EXTENSION.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he arrived at a decision as to whether or not the Dalkeith 'bus route should be extended to the Claremont railway station? 2, If so, what is the decision?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No, for the reason that no application has been received for an extension of the Dalkeith 'bus route to the Claremont railway station. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—MINERS' PHTHISIS ACT, AMENDING LEGISLATION.

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: Can he announce whether a Bill to amend the Miners' Phthisis Act will be introduced this session?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: I do not think it will be possible to introduce it this session.

QUESTION—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

Mr. COVERLEY (without notice) asked the Premier: In view of the fact that the House has agreed that Government business shall take precedence over private members' business on Wednesdays, will he give his assurance that business of which private members have already given notice, will receive full consideration?

The PREMIER replied: Yes. In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, I have already stated that private members' business will be afforded every opportunity for discussion.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Administrator received and read notifying assent to the Stamp Act Amendment Bill (No. 4).

BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Introduced by Mr. Sleeman and read a first time.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

HON. A. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [4.47], in moving the second reading, said: This Bill is a simple one and involves a single principle only. It deals with the section of the Arbitration Act that provides that the basic wage shall be adjusted quarterly according to the variation of the index figures, as supplied by the Government Statistician. In order to collect the information upon which to base the index figure, the Government Statistician has agents in important towns throughout the State, and those agents supply him with prices covering certain commodities that are specified. On the information so supplied, the Government Statistician bases his index figure

and as there is a variation in the prices submitted, so the index figure fluctuates. At present the basic wage is altered automatically each quarter on the basis of the figures supplied to the Government Statistician, and on the index figure he fixes. There is no discussion; no one appears before the court; the basic wage is altered merely by a declaration of the court that there has been such and such an alteration. Neither the unions nor the employers are heard on the matter, and they have no opportunity to state a case or argue the question out before the court. They are not informed as to the nature of the figures on which the order is based. From time to time, there has been considerable discussion regarding the basis upon which the statistician's calculation is made. There is no accusation against that officer, but it is suggested that the figures supplied are collected haphazardly; in effect, furnished by the office boy. It is suggested that those figures are not really authentic and that the whole system at its base is very loose. I have not heard anyone say that the calculations of the Government Statistician are at all open to question. No one will contend for one moment that the work in the Statistical Department is other than fair and above board, and the index figure calculated on a fair basis. It is at the root, the source of his information, that complaints have been levelled.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You are remembering my argument now?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: What argument?

Mr. H. W. Mann: When I endeavoured to secure an amendment that would have resulted in this being done in a proper schedule.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not know about that.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You opposed it for two hours.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not think the member for Perth (Mr. H. W. Mann) understands the point I am making. The hon. member's proposal that we opposed had nothing to do with the point I am making. Either I am involved in stating my case, or, on the occasion he alludes to, the member for Perth did not make me understand what he was driving at. My point is altogether different. The suggestion embodied in the Bill is that the representatives of the Government Statistician in each

important town from which information is sought—there are 12 or 15 of them, and there may be more now—shall, when they supply that information, furnish copies of it to the nominee of the Employers' Federation and to the A.L.P. in each town. That will enable the bodies concerned to look into the figures and make such representations to the Government Statistician as they may deem fit. The Bill provides that that officer shall take into consideration the representations made to him, when he supplies his figures to the court. That will give each side an opportunity to check the details upon which the statistician's index figure is based. If the figures supplied to him are disputed, the employers may argue in one direction and the representatives of the union in another. The Government Statistician will be able to investigate the position. It would appear to me that widening the basis of the source of information cannot but get nearer to the facts and the truth. All that should be sought is that the truth be laid bare, and that is what the Bill aims at. We have no doubt at all that if the figures supplied to the statistician are correct, his calculation, as supplied to the court, will be on absolutely unchallengeable ground. If that is done, it will obviate all argument as to the authenticity of the figures and inspire greater confidence in the decisions of the court. Each side will know that investigation has been made at the source, and that there has been opportunity to investigate and challenge and submit the respective viewpoints. The Bill asks that when a representation is made, the statistician shall take it into consideration before compiling the statement. That is not asking anything unreasonable. In most countries it has been the custom to treat figures supplied to statisticians as secret. The custom has grown up over many years, but only in recent years have the statistician's figures been put to the important use of calculating wages, and thus deciding the standard on which the industrial workers shall live and rear their families. In years gone by the statistician's figures were not used for that purpose, but they are now used to cover a wider and more important field. No country outside of Australia uses them for such a purpose. When it is a matter of fixing the standard of living for the industrial section of the community from one end of the country to

the other, the people so vitally affected, workers and employers, should be able to examine the figures previous to the court making its declaration. I remind members that from the court's declaration there is no appeal. Whatever may have been the reasons for treating statistical information as confidential, those reasons do not apply in this instance. We are not asking that the secrecy of the statistical law be abrogated, but we are asking that the figures supplied to the statistician for calculating the basic wage shall be open to investigation. Industry is governed by the court's decision: the standard of homes depends upon the figures, and it is only right that each side should have an opportunity to check the figures on which such an important decision is based. I cannot see that any harm can come from the proposal. It would be simple to name a representative in Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Albany, Narrogin, Bunbury and Katanning, for each representative to receive a copy of the figures, for the representative to communicate with the statistician, and for the statistician to consider the representations previous to supplying his figures to the court. The Bill does break new ground, but we are getting away from established customs. We broke away from an established custom when we decided to base wages on the statistician's figures. The decision of the court should be surrounded with safeguards that will create confidence and a greater sense of security, and this will be the result if the decision is based on sound and unchallengeable figures. The Bill involves only one principle, and I hope the House will agree to it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.50] in moving the second reading, said: This is a very small Bill, and one that should meet with ready approval. It does not affect taxation; indeed, it would be outside the province of any member to introduce a measure

for that purpose. The proposal is to allow deductions for money donated to certain charitable and public purposes, and to correct an anomaly as between the Federal and State Acts. Section 23 of the Federal Act reads—

1. In calculating the taxable income of a taxpayer, the total assessable income derived by the taxpayer shall be taken as a basis and from it there shall be deducted

(h) (ii.) gifts of £1 and upwards made out of the assessable income derived during the year in which the gifts are made to public charitable institutions in Australia

"Public charitable institution" means a public hospital, a public benevolent institution and includes a public fund established and maintained for the purpose of providing money for such institutions or for the relief of persons in necessitous circumstances.

The Bill provides for deductions as follows—

Gifts of £1 and upwards proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been made out of the assessable income derived during the year in which the gifts are made to any fund (subscriptions to which have been publicly invited) established for the relief of persons in necessitous circumstances.

The Minister for Lands: Your Bill goes further than does the Federal Act.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is different, but the Federal Act provides all that I ask under this Bill. The Federal Act allows deductions of gifts of £1 and upwards when provided for certain charitable institutions and particularly when provided for the relief of persons in necessitous circumstances. That phase is the one to which I specially direct the attention of the House. I have discussed the matter with the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation, and while he did not display any enthusiasm for the proposal, he agreed that a similar deduction under State taxation would not involve added expense, because the work of checking, etc., necessitated when dealing with Federal returns would suffice for the State returns. An important aspect is that by extending this consideration we shall be encouraging philanthropy. Charity is a sentiment that might properly be developed by such means. One outcome of the Bill should be that additional assistance would be provided for unemployed relief committees and thus the Government would benefit. It would be unreasonable to refuse the deductions suggested in the Bill, and I do not think any objection will be raised to granting them. On a previous oc-

casion I introduced a Bill for the same purpose, but there was a slight irregularity in it. During the second-reading debate, the Minister for Railways asked, by way of interjection, "Why tax anyone on voluntary giving?" I endorse the implication contained in that interjection. The measure is one which should receive the approval of every member. If it results in increasing the amounts made available to local unemployment relief committees, good will have been done. The Bill also contains a provision for deduction where the purpose of the contribution is for constructing, supporting or maintaining a public hospital in any part of the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—HOSPITAL FUND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Hannans) [4.58]: This is a very small Bill, containing only seven clauses in all. The amendments deal with three aspects, and to two of them I have no objection whatever. When the original Bill was under consideration, I mentioned that some encouragement should be given to people who were prepared to make donations to hospitals. I expressed the hope that the time had not come when the spirit of philanthropy would be killed entirely as a result of our imposing a tax for the maintenance of hospitals. Amendments proposed in the Bill make the necessary provision, and also provide for refunds being made. The Act gives to a person who earns not more than the basic wage the right to free hospital treatment provided he has paid the hospital tax. The amendment the Minister has embodied in the Bill wipes out that benefit. I admit he has left it to the discretion of the board to grant this benefit if

they so desire, but such discretionary power existed prior to its being made compulsory to contribute to the hospital fund. When the legislation was first brought down it contained no benefit of this kind, but the Minister subsequently amended the measure and gave certain benefits to those who were earning only as much as the basic wage. I am opposed to that portion of the Bill which affects those benefits. I know that in some cases hospital boards are imposed upon. That used to be the case in the old days. People were constantly getting off scot free, despite the hospital accommodation that had been given to them, simply because they told tales that they had not a penny in the world. Later on it was often discovered that patients were in a position to pay. Under existing conditions, no matter how much a man may earn either as a salary or a wage, he must pay the hospital tax. The Act gives few enough benefits to the taxpayers without their being deprived of what they have as is proposed by this Bill. The measure makes it quite definite that, even if the hospital board think that a man is eligible to come under Section 11 of the Act and is entitled to free hospital treatment, he can still be sued. That is going altogether too far.

Mr. Sampson: That would never be done in these circumstances.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Then why give the power to the board to do it?

Mr. Sampson: There is a lot of trickery going on amongst different patients.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That has always been the case. The Minister himself referred to a man who claimed that he had not earned the basic wage in 12 months, and later on was found to have an equity in a property to the extent of £2,000. One swallow does not make a summer. Because there are cases of this kind, there is no justification for turning the hospital committees and boards into public inquiry agents, so that they may find out everything possible about people's business. If the Minister will drop this particular amendment, I will support him in respect to the other two. We ought to give every encouragement to people to subscribe to our hospitals. Since the tax has been in operation, some persons have made donations to these institutions, although they have been paying the tax. The Bill provides that in such cases they can get a refund of the hospital tax they have paid, but not to a greater extent than the amount of

the tax they would be entitled to pay. The Minister ought to have explained why he wants to cut out the only benefit the Act provides. He wishes to delete the word "benefit" in both instances where it occurs and insert the word "exemption." The exemption comes in after certain proof has been obtained that a person is entitled to free treatment. The Minister ought to devise some other means whereby he can penalise people, who are discovered to have defrauded a hospital or have made a false statement concerning their earnings. In that respect I would be with him, but I am opposed to cutting out the only benefit now given by the Act. If the Bill goes through as it stands, a married man, who may have been earning nothing for two years and subsequently may be engaged on part-time work, can be sued for hospital treatment if it is found that either he or his wife has £25 put away. If the court is of opinion that this man can pay something, a verdict to that effect can be returned.

Mr. Sampson: If a man can pay, without suffering, should he not be called upon to do so?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I want to stop people from imposing upon hospitals, but I have a great objection to depriving everyone of any benefits contained in the Act because of the misdemeanours of a few. The Bill goes altogether too far. The benefits people get from the payment of this tax are not anything like what they ought to be. I oppose the second reading.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [5.10]: I congratulate the Minister, and the officers of the department upon the smooth running of the machinery established under the Hospital Fund Act. I am, however, disappointed that the Minister has not provided for the case that was brought under his notice some time ago in Katanning, and also under the notice of the Chief Secretary, who visited that centre. Members of the local road board, and the people generally, are of opinion that some consideration should be given to the district because of the fact that some years ago the local authority was induced to provide, on a fifty-fifty basis, for the construction of the Katanning public hospital. The Hospital Fund Act has since come into existence and provides for a dual contribution from the rate-

payers. The road board contend that a promise was made by the ex-Minister for Works that, if such a tax was brought in provision would be made for an exemption from or an allowance in the taxation in relation to the contributions from the local road board. A deputation waited upon the Chief Secretary some time ago. The Katanning Road Board contended that the ratepayers were unduly taxed to pay for the hospital building, when they also had to pay the hospital tax. The board did not begrudge paying a fair share of taxation, but the tax for the building was a special impost not borne by other districts which might have had similar hospital facilities. They trusted the Minister would give special consideration to the request, but, should the Government remain obdurate, it was requested that, as an alternative to any relief being given, a reduction of interest payable on the amount claimed from the board be considered. In his reply the Chief Secretary said the matter did not come within his jurisdiction. If it could be considered that a former Minister of the Crown had made a promise of the remission of half the cost of the building in the event of a hospital tax being introduced, although it was not in writing, his Government 'was in honour bound committed to that promise.' He thought the question should be submitted to the then Minister for Works (Hon. A. McCallum), and action taken in accordance with any statement that gentleman might be pleased to make. The most he could do was to bring the matter before the responsible Minister. I hope the Minister for Health has been able to go into this question. It seems most unfair that the ratepayers of districts where hospitals are provided should be called upon to contribute to the cost of such institutions, and receive no benefit from such contributions.

The Minister for Health: Although they have entered into an agreement to pay the interest and sinking fund.

Mr. PIESSE: At that time this legislation was not on the statute-book. I know of many instances of people in very poor circumstances who have had to pay this tax.

The Minister for Health: How much do they pay?

Mr. PIESSE: That can be discovered from the records of the department.

The Minister for Health: The amount would be very small.

Mr. PIESSE: At any rate, there is a dual tax; and I do not think it is the intention of Parliament that people should pay a dual tax, especially if they receive no benefit. I trust the Minister will look into the case put up by the Katanning Road Board, with a view to meeting the request made.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet) [5.16]: I also protest against the amendment, which takes away from people in receipt of less than certain incomes the right to treatment at hospitals. It amounts to absolute repudiation of the promise made by the Government when the parent Act was introduced. Apparently there is no obligation now on any member of the Government to respect a promise. There has been a process of repudiating one principle after another. When the original Act was introduced, members protested that a hospital tax was being imposed on the community without any corresponding benefit. The Act was a measure for the maintenance of hospitals and the creation of a hospital fund. One would think that people contributing to the upkeep of hospitals would receive some corresponding benefit, but it has been found that the majority of people derive no benefit notwithstanding their contributions. In the case of other institutions to which we contribute, we get benefits. We pay income tax because the administration of the country could not be carried on without it. This is the one piece of legislation which imposes taxation without any benefit. All the Act does is to relieve the Treasurer of responsibility for hospital finance. The principle of taxation without some personal benefit is strenuously objected to. If the ordinary taxpayer is to pay for his hospital treatment, why should he pay into a hospital fund as well? Why should he pay double? A married man in receipt of more than £230. and a single man in receipt of more than £156, per annum, must now pay the full cost of hospital treatment. The people were assured when this legislation was first introduced that they would receive corresponding benefits, without any question whatever; but now the opposite proves to be the case. The amend-

ing Bill provides for exemption either in part or in whole. The cost of hospitals is now borne entirely by the community paying taxation on their incomes, salaries and wages. The Government have got from under. I repeat, the principle of imposing taxation without giving some corresponding benefit is wrong. It is utterly wrong now to deprive the poorest section of the community of the benefits of the Act. If they have £20 put away in the bank, they are deprived of those benefits. The Government were badly advised to introduce this Bill.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.20]: I hope the Bill will not pass in its present form. Its first part is especially unfair, doing away altogether with the maximum income a man may earn and still receive free treatment. If the Minister is after what he terms imposters, he should find some other way of doing it. If it can be shown that a person receiving free hospital treatment has a considerable amount of money, appropriate steps can be taken. Suppose a man earning less than the maximum, but having £40 or £50 in the bank goes into hospital for free treatment, what is to happen? From some Government departments a man cannot obtain any relief if his children happen to have a few pounds in the money box. The principal Act is on a wrong basis. The measure introduced by the ex-Minister for Health provided that every person taxed should receive some benefit. The present Minister for Health would do well to amend the Act correspondingly. The present Bill is more one for Committee discussion than for second reading debate. I shall do all I can to ensure that the first part of the Bill is not enacted.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.22]: I support the Bill. Having had a good deal of experience of hospitals, I know that hundreds of accounts are written off. They are invariably written off where there is distress. I have never known of a case where, distress having been proved, action was taken to secure payment. It sometimes happens, however, that a man who is not in receipt of the basic wage possesses a good deal of property, while his living costs are low. Such a man is quite capable

of paying something for hospital treatment. I look at this matter from the standpoint of those who are in distress and need hospital service. If that service is to be exploited by those who are able to pay for it, or partly pay for it, it will be a bad look-out for those unable to pay. I know the position as regards many committee hospitals. In connection with every committee hospital there has to be a band of hard workers striving to keep the hospital open and enable it to carry on.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The committee hospitals do not want this provision, by any means.

The Minister for Health: Yes, they do. They are asking for it.

Hon. M. F. Troy: No, they are not.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am amazed at the statement of the member for Mount Magnet (**Hon. M. F. Troy**), because I know something of committee hospitals. It would be improper to contradict the hon. member, but nevertheless I must express doubt as to the correctness of the statement that the committee hospitals do not desire any payment.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I represent quite a number of them, and I know. You do not represent one of them.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not represent one, but I am closely in touch with two. It is not necessary that a committee hospital should be in my electorate in order that I should appreciate the position.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You have no personal contact with them, either.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, I have very close personal contact with them. I believe this Bill will do a great deal for those who are sick. On various occasions I have inquired into cases, and I say that where a straight-forward statement is made there is no need for the patient or his relatives to have any fear.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I know of many cases where conscientious people on £3 a week struggled to pay hospital accounts at the rate of half-a-crown a month.

Mr. SAMPSON: Those who are straight-forward need have no fear. If a true statement has been made as to the circumstances, being necessitous, there is no danger of action by any hospital authority. The man who is honest need feel no apprehension as to the examination made into his circum-

stances, but there are many cases where attempts are made to put it over those in charge of hospitals. Some people have absolutely no consideration whatever, and the hospitals are struggling to provide services which are exceedingly expensive. Those who are sick in pocket as well as in body and go to a hospital must receive consideration, but if the Minister is not given this Bill many of our hospitals will suffer severely.

Mr. Wansbrough: The Minister has the necessary power under the present Act.

Mr. SAMPSON: As to donations, that suggestion will, I am sure, meet with a great deal of favour. I believe the Minister has given more thought to the first part of the Bill. The man who is indigent will not be injured by the measure, but the man guilty of trickery and misstatements should be required to pay. In the interests of those who are sick and unable to pay, that is essential.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) ([5.30]: I also will oppose the Bill. I know of a case where a person was written to and asked for his earnings. He gave a statement as to what he had earned in the period, I think it was £170 for the year. Then the department wrote back saying he would be expected to pay, and asking him in what instalments he could pay.

The Minister for Health: This does not interfere with that.

Mr. WITHERS: Yes, it does. In view of the manner in which the Minister put up the Bill last evening, one would scarcely recognise the Bill before us.

The Minister for Health: I merely want to leave them a few discretionary powers.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Your Bill cuts out the benefit altogether.

Mr. WITHERS: If one had not read the Bill, he would have taken the Minister's word as to the intention behind the measure. But the Bill does not show that intention. If it is intended to reach those people who try to get at the hospitals, the clause will require to be amended. I am not prepared to say that people with a fair amount of money in the bank should be exempt from the payment of hospital fees. But a person might have in the bank only a few pounds. Where are we going to fix the limit? Shall it be £25 or £30? I do not really know which person should be entitled to pay, and which should be exempted from

payment. How are we going to say what the liability shall be? It is not determined in the parent Act, nor in the Bill either; it is purely discretionary. I hope the Minister will not proceed with the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.32]: I am sorry the Minister is pressing the passage of the second reading. He certainly has not given members very much time in which to digest the Bill. From the reading I have been able to give it, I should say it is much more serious than most members appreciate. The Bill places in the hands of the authorities power, not to persecute a person in lowly circumstances who may have a few pounds of savings, but to take such a person to court and prosecute him to the end that he shall make contribution, even though it be only a small contribution. One need not have even £10 in the bank, and he may have been out of work for 12 months. Then he suddenly finds himself in hospital. The Bill proposes that notwithstanding the liabilities that have been accruing on that man while he was out of work, so long as the Minister can get him to court and show that he is now in receipt of £150 per annum, the unfortunate man will be made to contribute something to the hospital. That is the whole idea in the Bill, that a man may be taken to court.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: He may prove that he is entitled to go into the hospital.

Mr. MARSHALL: It makes no difference; they can take him into court and make him contribute to the hospital. No matter what his commitments may be nor to what extent he may be already in debt, under the Bill they can still make him contribute something to the hospital. The passage of the parent Act was secured on the pleadings of the Minister and the Government that benefits would be derived by contributors to the hospital fund. That was the principle in the parent Act, and the Government used it to the limit and led the people to believe that if they were compelled by law to pay the hospital fund tax, certain benefits would accrue to them. Now when the Act has been in operation only 12 months, the Minister comes along

with this amending Bill to deprive the people of even the benefits that they had. Had he contented himself with repealing the benefits under Section 12 of the Act, one would have been able to attack him on that point; but he has gone a step further and made it possible to persecute people if they are suspected by a departmental officer—some of whom are particularly officious and lacking in mercy—of being able to pay. That is the position. Those people will be called up simply because they are found to have been employed when taken to the hospital for treatment. No consideration will be paid to their commitments in consequence of their having lost their employment, and having had to get into debt and go short of clothes. The Minister can still drag a few pounds out of them for hospital treatment, a policy that would have precluded the passage of the parent Act had it been foreseen. Nor do I subscribe wholeheartedly to the second portion of the Bill, when we come committee-controlled hospitals, for I do not know that it is altogether just and fair. The second portion of the Bill provides for relief to those who make donations in cash to the hospitals, other than those who insure against payment for hospital treatment. I should like to know from the Minister why he has exempted those people. At Wiluna every man working in the mine subscribes £5 12s. 8d. per annum for hospital treatment.

The Minister for Health: It is a system of insurance.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but on top of this insurance payment, every man has to pay the hospital tax. You do not exempt him from that. Up there we have men maintaining families 715 miles from this capital city, and paying 2s. 2d. per week and so practically maintaining the hospital there.

The Minister for Health: Did you say we were not paying anything to that hospital?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but the insignificant contribution by the State would be entirely inadequate were it not for the contributions by the men. All over the goldfields the men pay into the hospitals. Do the people of York do it?

The Minister for Health: Yes.

Mr. MARSHALL: Do they pay as much as 2s. 2d. per week?

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course not. Under the Bill, if I were to pay £5 cash to a hospital I should get some consideration.

The Minister for Health: No, you have not read the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, perhaps I have got a little mixed there.

The Minister for Health: Yes, you have said enough, you have played to the gallery long enough.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not playing to the gallery, nor to the Minister, for all his smile.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister's smile is not in the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: Nor is it on the Bill. Provision is made for a rebate to those who have given donations to hospitals. I resent that. I represent an electorate where hospital contributions are liberally given. When first I came to the State, this system was in existence on the goldfields, but not in any other part of the State.

The Minister for Health: Yes, Collie has done it.

Mr. MARSHALL: And I believe among the timber mills they have a similar system. But the goldfields people inaugurated the system decades ago, and through it they practically maintain their hospitals. Yet they get no consideration whatever from the Government.

The Minister for Health: Why, some of the hospitals get up to £700 or £800 a year from the Government.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is all very well, but others of them get very little. In any event, I am talking of the hospital funds that are maintained by the people of the goldfields and those in the timber industry. The goldfields were the first to initiate this form of insurance; yet when this Bill comes along they are to get no consideration whatever, the tax is still to be imposed on them. And now the Minister says he proposes to cut out what benefits are given under the Act.

Mr. Sampson: This does not affect the goldfields people who are supporting their hospitals.

Mr. MARSHALL: They have to pay the hospital fund tax, and make their own local contributions as well. Under the Bill, no relief is to be given to them. The intention behind the Bill is to compel every person, no matter what his liabilities and commitments may be, to pay for his hospital treatment.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. C. G. Latham—York—in reply) [5.45]: Hon. members seem to have taken a wrong view of the Bill. The idea is to try to clear up anomalies that have been found to exist, and to equalise the fund. When I moved the second reading, probably I did not give instances that I might well have quoted. Take two patients that are side by side in a hospital, one in receipt of £230 a year, and owning a house, and the other on £250 a year without house property. The man on £250 a year is worse off than the man in receipt of £230, in that he has to pay the tax whilst the other does not pay. One man receives free treatment and the other does not. I am surprised at the member for Hannans, who has administered the Hospitals Act of this State longer than anyone else in this Chamber, saying that he knows of many instances where there has been unfair treatment by hospital committees. The only instance I know of is that of the old-age pensioner who died and left a small property to his daughter. I consider that the department is the most sympathetically conducted in the State. That is no credit to me; it reflects credit on the system.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I never had a case of hardship before me whilst I was Minister that did not get relief from the department.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I do not think the hon. member knows very much of the difficulties. This is what Section 12 of the Hospital and Act says—

Every person claiming hospital benefit under Section 11 of this Act shall produce a certificate from the Commissioner of Taxation or the department; or a certificate in a prescribed form from an employer or paying officer, in cases where contribution is collected pursuant to Section 9, or such other means as may be prescribed.

These people must get certificates. Probably they have been working for a dozen employers. We want to give authority to the local committees to say whether a man can pay or cannot pay. We have laid down a hard and fast rule that a married man in receipt of £230 shall be excluded from payment and the man on £250 shall pay. A single person on £150 is excluded from payment, but the man drawing £151 must pay. We want to say to the committees that so long as they manage the hospitals well the Government will not interfere with them, and will provide them with the difference between their revenue and expenditure. I

do not know of any place where fairer or better treatment is meted out to patients in hospitals than is the case in this State. I do not like the suggestion that there is an ulterior motive behind the Bill. In all probability the hon. member opposite may again be administering the Hospital Fund Act, and I would not suggest that anything was likely to be done that was not perfectly honest.

Mr. Sleeman: You want to stop the man on £230.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Nothing of the kind. There are many people paying to-day who might be excluded from coming under the operation of the Act.

Mr. Sleeman: Then liberalise it.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: We are trying to give the committees discretionary power to do so.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You compel people to pay when they are entitled to free treatment.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The hon. member said, when we included the £230 and £150 class, that that would be giving the worker nothing. If we are giving them nothing, why all this opposition?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Because the basic wage has fallen about 13s. since then.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am sorry that has happened, but it has nothing to do with the position.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You fixed it under the basic wage.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: We could have used the words "basic wage" if we had desired to do so.

Mr. Sleeman: You know that the workers on part time are taxed?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, we collect 1½d. from them, but I have heard more complaints in this House than I have from outside.

Mr. Sleeman: Have you had any applications for refunds?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, and I have tried to make it easier for them. There have been two requests for refunds, and I have given instructions that they shall be made. But under the Act as it is we cannot make refunds.

Mr. Sleeman: The Act provides for refunds to be made.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Nothing of the sort. Read the clause, and see whether that is possible. All the same I am anxious to do the right thing. Consider-

ing the trying period that we have gone through, I venture to say that the hospitals of the State have given satisfaction far in excess of what was ever expected. The member for Katanning raised the question of dual taxation in his electorate. Some misunderstanding did arise between the then Minister for Health and the people of Katanning. I have had the opportunity of perusing the notes taken of the speeches made by Mr. McCallum, who was then Minister for Works, and Mr. Munsie, who was Minister for Health, and in no instance did they give any undertaking. If such had been given I would have done my best to carry out the undertaking. Some misunderstanding I believe did arise, but to-day the people of Katanning want to throw the responsibility on the fund, and the fund is not in a position to meet any financial responsibility. The Government of the day were very lenient to the Katanning people, inasmuch as they actually found the cash to enable Katanning to build a hospital there.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And other towns had to find half the cost of their buildings.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, all Katanning had to find was interest and sinking fund to be spread over a period of years. If it had not been for the generosity and the interest displayed by the people, the Government would never have built hospitals in many country towns. Generally speaking, we are extremely lucky to be able to maintain the hospitals as satisfactorily as we are doing. I repeat that I went through the notes and the Press report, and was unable to find anything to hear out what the member for Katanning said. If such a contract had been made, the Government would have honoured it, but so far as I can see no such contract was made. The only contract was that the people of Katanning would accept liability for half the cost of the hospital. Otherwise the hospital would not have been built. The question has been raised that we are taxing everybody so as to provide hospital accommodation, and that we are not able to give everyone the benefit of free treatment. I have looked through the notes that the member for Hannans used when he made a speech, in introducing his Bill, under which he was going to provide 6s. a day for every person using a hospital. I am glad that the House did not pass that Bill.

If it had been passed, we would have been in a hopeless mess.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: We were not taxing the people to benefit the revenue.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I do not hesitate to suggest that the Treasurer of the day was as careful in getting in all the money he could as anyone else who might have been occupying that position. At the present time every penny-piece goes towards the maintenance of the hospitals. The money is not spent outside the hospitals as the balance sheet on the Table of the House will show.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Your income has not come up to expectations.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It has not. The money is not being diverted to any other but hospital use. Of course there are many who are taxed without getting any benefit. All this taxation that has been imposed, most of us will agree, is well expended when it is devoted to looking after those who are not able to look after themselves. I know the member for Bunbury has not read the Bill at all, because he made certain suggestions which are not in accord with the proposals before the House. I give members an assurance that it is proposed to extend the benefits so that they may be made easier for the worker.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	23
Noes	..	..	..	16
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	7
				—

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Parker
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Brown	Mr. Piessie
Mr. Doney	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Latham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Thorn
Mr. J. I. Mann	Mr. Wells
Mr. McLarty	Mr. North
Mr. James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Stoeiman
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Troy
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Warsbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Raphael
Mr. McCallum	
Mr. Millington	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—DEBT CONVERSION AGREEMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Order of the day read for the resumption from the previous day of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, so much of the Standing Orders suspended as to enable the Bill to pass its remaining stage at this sitting.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—SECESSION REFERENDUM.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Issue of writ for referendum:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 1, after "ballot" the words "on a compulsory basis" be inserted.

The Minister for Railways: That will necessitate quite a number of other clauses being inserted in the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister need not worry about that. I saw the Parliamentary Draftsman with a view to having the necessary clauses prepared, so that the vote might be taken on a compulsory basis. Unfortunately, that officer was extremely busy and was not able to get the clauses ready. I suggest that I move the amendment and if the Committee approve of a compulsory vote being taken, the other clauses necessary can be inserted when the

Bill is before the Council. I do not know that much argument is necessary to explain what I desire. If we are to have a vote, it should be such as will command respect. Unless voting be made compulsory, no doubt enthusiasm will be displayed by the secessionists, but those who oppose the withdrawal of the State from Federation will not take any active part in the ballot. Propaganda and meetings will be indulged in by the Dominion League, but there is no organisation to prepare the case on behalf of those opposed to secession. People who vote at general elections know that their votes will be effective, but so many people realise that votes cast on the secession question will have no effect, and they ridicule the whole idea.

Mr. PIESSE: I do not wish to speak to the amendment, but I would like to ask the Premier if he will give his assurance that the referendum will be held at an early date and before the Federal unification referendum.

The PREMIER: I cannot give that assurance. Regarding the amendment, I should welcome the suggestion of the member for Guildford-Midland, seeing that he is an opponent of the Bill.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: If a referendum were taken under the Federal law, the voting would be compulsory. As I am a supporter of the Bill, I do not see how I can object to the voting being made compulsory.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is the sensible view.

The PREMIER: I am prepared to accept the amendment.

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

Clause 6—Question to be submitted to the electors:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have several amendments on the notice paper, but only one principle is involved; the rest of the amendments are consequential. I move an amendment—

That there be added to the question to be submitted to the electors the following question:—"Are you in favour of a convention of representatives of the Australian States being summoned for the purpose of proposing

such alterations in the Constitution of the Commonwealth as may appear to such convention to be necessary?"

The Government can hardly oppose the putting of this additional question.

The Premier: We have asked for a convention often enough.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have, but we have not been able to ascertain the views of the people on such a question. I consider that the method of obtaining relief proposed in the Bill will not afford relief, and my suggestion is an alternative.

The Minister for Railways: Difficulty would arise if people voted for both.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think anyone who voted "Yes" on the first question could consistently vote "Yes" on the second question.

Mr. Keenan: Why not?

Hon. P. COLLIER: How could he?

Mr. Keenan: A second string.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A voter could take the view that he favoured separation as a way out of our difficulties, but there is another way and that is to amend the Constitution.

Mr. Keenan: If we cannot get the first, get the second.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Some people might vote "Yes" on both questions.

Mr. Keenan: Then how would you count the votes?

Hon. P. COLLIER: A large number of people who could not conscientiously vote "yes" on the first question might still be dissatisfied with Federation and its effects on Western Australia. They would vote "no" on the first question and "yes" on the second. There is a big section of public opinion between the secessionists and the anti-secessionists, and should not they have an opportunity to express their view? They could indicate that they did not approve of breaking away from the Federation but that they were dissatisfied with the Constitution and desired amendments.

Mr. Keenan: If we do not get a convention, what is the alternative?

Hon. P. COLLIER: What is the alternative for the people who vote "yes" on the first question?

Mr. Keenan: A convention.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No.

Mr. Keenan: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If a majority of our people favoured a convention, I am certain that a majority of the people of South Australia and Tasmania would also urge a convention, and I believe Queensland and Victoria would also favour it. With three States or more requesting a convention, who would deny it?

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: What guarantee is there that we would get a convention?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Undoubtedly South Australia and Tasmania would support a proposal for a convention.

The Minister for Railways: So would Queensland.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and I believe Victoria also. With a majority of the States favouring a convention, we would get it. How can members consistently oppose the amendment? They want the question of secession submitted to the people, and they cannot logically deny the people the right to express an opinion on some other method of overcoming the State's disabilities.

The Minister for Railways: If I were an ardent secessionist, I would say I would either end or mend it, and would vote for both. A man who voted "yes" on the first question and "no" on the second would be a madman.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But many people could vote "no" on the first question and "yes" on the second. The yea or nay of the people is the governing factor, and we should submit the alternative method.

The PREMIER: I do not see that even an ardent secessionist could object to the second question being asked. If the people voted "yes" to both questions and a convention was denied to them, that would strengthen the cause of secession. Those who are secessionists would vote "yes" to the first question, and probably "no" to the second. By means of compulsory voting we shall get a fair expression of opinion from the people. I do not see how we can object to the amendment. Time and again we have asked for a convention, but have not been able to get it. I believe we shall get Tasmania and Victoria with us, as well as South Australia. I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH: I should like to have a ruling as to whether this amendment is in order and in conformity with the Title of the Bill. The Bill contains no reference to a convention.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is quite in order. If it is carried, it will be necessary to alter the Title of the Bill.

Mr. KEENAN: I regret I cannot support the amendment. It would lead to a lot of confusion. Many electors may vote in the affirmative on both questions. If that is so, how is the vote to be counted from the point of view of the question of secession?

The Minister for Railways: One is not a negative of the other.

Mr. KEENAN: How will the vote be counted? The electors may be divided into three sections, one wanting separation, another being dissatisfied with Federation and wanting a convention, and the other made up of persons who are satisfied with existing conditions.

The Minister for Works: And there is a fourth, the unificationists.

Mr. KEENAN: They may be left out for the moment. I cannot imagine any Western Australian being a unificationist unless he is ordered to be one.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It would not be difficult to count the ballot papers of those in Western Australia who might vote for unification.

Mr. KEENAN: There are people who do not think a convention would be of any use, seeing that it would be made up of representatives appointed on the population basis and this State would be in a minority. If the vote is affirmative on both questions, will it be said that the people have voted in favour of secession? The object of the Bill is to get an expression of opinion on the subject of secession. If we submit another question which defeats that object we shall be spending money for nothing. Evidently the Leader of the Opposition is dissatisfied with Federation as it has worked out to-day. If he could not get a convention on the lines that would suit him namely with equal representation for all States but got one that was swamped by the Eastern States what would his position be then? Would he say, "If I cannot get any good as a result of the convention I will go for secession?" If that is his frame of mind will he write "yes" to the second question and add "If the 'yes' is not effective I will cancel my vote and write 'yes' for the first question." If he gets no redress from a convention, is he going to allow things to re-

main as they are? He would be the last man to confess that any difficulty could not be overcome. He would say that if the convention was of no use he would adopt some other means to overcome the difficulty, namely, secession.

Hon. P. Collier: I have never gone so far as that.

Mr. KEENAN: I hope you will.

Hon. P. Collier: I will not.

Mr. KEENAN: The Leader of the Opposition is progressing and is getting nearer to it. If the amendment is carried we shall be placed in a position of hopeless obscurity as to the opinion of the people on secession. Many will vote "yes" to both questions. What will the returning officer say is the result of the referendum? We ought not to incur the expenditure if we are not going to get the results we want. If we are going to spend the money, let us do so in such a way that we can get a definite answer. I hope the Premier will reconsider the matter.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The member for Nedlands is illogical to-night. It would be possible to submit a number of questions to the electors in such a way that if they voted "yes" on all of them each would be treated as a separate matter. Many persons holding prominent public positions in this State have not declared themselves on the question of secession. They do not feel that the time has arrived when the State should take such a strong stand as to refuse to remain in the Federation. If the member for Nedlands could get behind a secret ballot he would find that a number of returned soldiers are ardent Western Australians but would not vote for separation. The issue cannot always be decided by noise. Aggrieved people will always make the most noise.

Hon. P. Collier: It generally comes from the minority.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Many people will vote "no" to secession, but will be glad of the opportunity to express their disagreement with Federation as it operates to-day. If both questions are submitted to the electors we shall not get the majority that some people anticipate in favour of secession but we should get such a large number of votes for a con-

vention as to encourage the other States to take a similar step. By this means it may be possible to have the Federal Constitution so amended as to maintain our right to govern ourselves within our own spheres. I cannot see anything in conflict between the two questions. I doubt whether we are likely to get what we are aiming at by a severance from the rest of Australia. At the same time I am very dissatisfied with the treatment we have received from the Commonwealth. But if I get no other opportunity, I will vote for secession in order to put on record my disagreement to the manner in which Western Australia has been treated under Federation. If we cannot get secession, I will join with, I believe, 95 per cent. of the rest of this community in asking for some alteration. I fear that if we submit to the people merely the question of secession, there will be a tremendous upheaval. However, by the method I suggest there need be no upheaval. Ardent secessionists need not be afraid of obtaining a vote on the question of a convention. Why not give the people an opportunity to express their opinion on that point? I doubt strongly whether we can achieve secession, and I am not satisfied that the only method of seeking relief is to disunite Australia. In the direction I have suggested, I believe, the other States will join with us, and we shall get something, although not all we desire. The Senate can never be a States' House, because no question can arise on which Western Australian senators can effectively vote for the State of Western Australia without some senators representing other States giving up something. I want to get the right for this Parliament to control matters that are essentially local, or even parochial, leaving the Federal Parliament to control matters that are essentially Australian, affecting the whole of Australia. There are Australian questions which the Federal Parliament has not touched for 30 years, simply because they are difficult.

Mr. ANGELO: I shall vote for the amendment. I can do nothing else, because for the last twelve years I have urged that the Government of the day should demand a convention as promised by the framers of the Constitution. But I would like that amendment to be put in a dif-

ferent way. I would like it to precede the other clause, and I would like to add the words "If the holding of this convention is refused, then are you in favour of secession?" When the member for Katanning moved a motion in favour of secession last year, I urged the Premier to approach the Federal Government and the other State Governments for the holding of a convention. That being refused, I would go straight for secession. We should then be able to tell the people, "We have exhausted every constitutional method of getting redress, and it is refused us; and therefore our only course is to cut adrift." I would much prefer the amending of the Federal Constitution to secession. I move an amendment on the amendment—

That between "Representatives of" and "the Australian States" in line 2 of the amendment, there be inserted "equal number from each of."

Otherwise the Commonwealth and the States will tell us, "Yes, we will give you a convention, but on the representation of each State." Such a convention would be absolutely useless: we would have only four or five representatives out of 60. The convention that framed the Constitution had equal representation from each colony.

Hon. P. Collier: I have no objection to a convention on the basis of equal representation of the States.

Mr. ANGELO: Twelve years ago the then Premier asked Mr. Hughes, the then Prime Minister, to arrange for a convention. Mr. Hughes agreed, and even introduced a Bill for the purpose into the House of Representatives; but for some reason never explained he suddenly withdrew the measure and announced that a special constitutional session of the Federal Parliament would be held to suggest amendments to the Constitution. Why was that done? So that Western Australia would have to be satisfied with five representatives out of 75. Moreover, that special session has never been called.

Mr. PIESSE: Would I be in order, Mr. Chairman, in moving an amendment to insert after "Add," in line 1 of the amendment, the words "Unless a convention of representatives of the Australian States be summoned before the 30th June, 1932, for the purpose of proposing such alterations in the Constitution of the Commonwealth

as may appear to such convention to be necessary?"

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I cannot accept that amendment on the amendment. It appears to me as being more in the nature of a proviso than of a question to be asked. I must rule it out of order.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The amendment on the amendment is just as futile as the Bill itself. The member for Gascoyne says that if we do not pass this proposal, the Eastern States will not give us due representation on the convention. Does not the hon. member realise that we cannot force our will on the Eastern States?

Mr. Wells: We can tell them what we think about it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The whole thing is utterly futile. The hon. member does not trust the other States.

Mr. Wells: I should not think he would.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yet he is simple enough to think that if we vote for a convention they will agree to it. Nothing we can say will have any avail with them. The hon. member's proposed amendment is like his own pompous simplicity. What does it matter to the people of the Eastern States what we may put in the Bill? The whole thing is stupid and futile and valueless. We can afford to ignore it, for we cannot impose our will on the Eastern States.

Mr. Wells: They have imposed theirs on us for long enough.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Eastern States have never given any serious thought to this question. There has been no agitation for it over there.

Mr. Sampson: Yes, there is great dissatisfaction in Tasmania.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Bill itself is a mere waste of time, and this amendment is utterly stupid and pompous.

Mr. Parker: The Leader of the Opposition moved the amendment, to which the member for Gascoyne has moved a further amendment.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Leader of the Opposition was compelled to move the amendment because the Government have carried the second reading of the Bill, which means an expenditure of thousands of pounds without any result. We have been told the people of the Eastern States are hostile to us, yet now we are invited to tell them what we want them to do. Fancy discussing a Bill that can get us nowhere, and

will mean nothing but an enormous expenditure of money by a Government whose finances are £900,000 behind on a few months' operations.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not desire to dictate to the other States. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that a second question should be put to the electors, and I want to make that question easily understood by them. The moment the ballot papers are opened the electors will be asking what sort of a convention it is we are providing for. My amendment will answer that question. The member for Mt. Magnet was trying to throw cold water on the Bill, but the rest of us are very serious about it.

Mr. SAMPSON: The House has agreed to a vote being taken on the question of secession. I hope that question will not be clouded by the submission of a second question.

The CHAIRMAN: At the moment we are discussing only the amendment moved by the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. SAMPSON: I propose to vote against both amendments. I am sure the inclusion of the amendment on the amendment will have a most disturbing effect, will embarrass the position, and will cloud the issue.

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

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Forms of ballot paper:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have on the Notice Paper two amendments to this clause. I assume they will be taken as consequential.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, they will be taken as consequential.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11, 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Method of voting:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added:—
“(2) A separate ballot paper for each question shall be supplied to every elector desiring to vote.”

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

Clauses 14 and 15—agreed to.

Clause 16—Counting of votes:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added to stand as Subclause 6:—"The provisions of this section shall be made use of for the ascertainment and publication of the result of the voting on each question separately."

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

Clause 17-18, Schedule—agreed to.

Title:

On motion by Mr. Parker, the Title was amended to read as follows: "An Act to submit to a referendum questions in relation to the State of Western Australia and the Federal Commonwealth established under the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution (Imperial)."

Bill reported with amendments and an amendment to the Title.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT
(No. 6).

Second Reading.

Debated resumed from the 24th November.

MR. PARKER (North-East Fremantle) [8.37]: From what we have heard this Bill apparently has been brought down to meet certain individual cases. That, in my opinion, is wrong. I would point out that as regards one license a provisional certificate was granted for a building in close proximity to another licensed house within about a quarter of a mile. That certificate was granted mainly on the ground that there was not sufficient bar accommodation in the existing licensed house, and the provisional certificate was granted for six months. The landlord of the other house decided to effect the necessary improvements in order to avoid the possibility of opposition coming along from another applicant. I am informed, and I believe correctly, that something over £1,000 is being spent in improvements at that particular hotel to meet the requirements that the bench apparently considered were necessary when they granted the provisional certificate for the other hotel which is not yet erected. If we take into consideration the question

of the money that is lost, or is likely to be lost, that aspect of the case should be presented.

Mr. Millington: Do you consider it professional etiquette, having failed before one court, to continue your advocacy here?

Mr. PARKER: No.

Mr. Millington: I consider your conduct positively indecent.

Mr. PARKER: I dare say you would.

Hon. P. Collier: It looks like special pleading for a client.

Mr. PARKER: Perhaps it is. I do not think we should legislate for an individual.

Hon. P. Collier: You are speaking for an individual now.

Mr. PARKER: I am, and the reason I am doing so is because the argument tends that way.

Hon. P. Collier: You are not suggesting that case as being typical? Anyway, you are now speaking not for the public but for an individual.

Mr. PARKER: I am speaking for the public.

Hon. P. Collier: Just now you are speaking for an individual.

Mr. PARKER: For both the public around that quarter and the individual. I was not engaged to appear by an individual, but by a large number of people who were opposed to the granting of the provisional license.

Hon. P. Collier: And the one individual for whom you are speaking has since enlarged his bar.

Mr. PARKER: I believe he has.

Mr. Corboy: Do you not suppose that the public would welcome competition?

Mr. PARKER: The people around that quarter do not want competition.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Can you explain why the applicant for the new license was able to get such a majority for his petition?

Mr. PARKER: Yes, I can.

Hon. P. Collier: You are speaking for a publican who, since the granting of the provisional license, has enlarged his bar.

Mr. PARKER: What I said was that as the argument was drifting in a certain direction, it was right to let the House know something about the other side.

Hon. P. Collier: The other side of the individual.

Mr. Corboy: You have already told us we should not legislate for individuals, and now you are putting this up.

Mr. PARKER: I am stating the other side of the question. Members opposite can vote whichever way they like. It is only right to bring up the matter here. We have been told what it has cost these people to make an application for a provisional license; therefore it is only right and fair that members should know what amount was paid to oppose a particular license.

Mr. Corboy: The man you are speaking for has his pub and his license and the other men have not.

Hon. P. Collier: And to retain his license he had to spend another thousand pounds. He engaged you purely in the interests of his license, not in the interests of the people.

Mr. PARKER: It was a public body that engaged me. One of the individuals is well known to the Leader of the Opposition; I do not wish to mention his name. It is only right that the House should know there is another side to the personal question, and that is all I wish to advance. I am opposed to the Bill on the ground that it is retrospective legislation.

Hon. P. Collier: You have voted for retrospective legislation over and over again.

Mr. PARKER: That may be.

Hon. P. Collier: You voted for retrospective legislation in cutting down wages.

Mr. PARKER: I voted for the emergency legislation.

Mr. Millington: The emergency legislation is inevitably retrospective.

Mr. Corboy: The Bill we are discussing is emergency legislation. You would inflict hardship on thousands, whereas this Bill will inflict a hardship on one.

The Minister for Railways: Is this a football or a cricket match?

Mr. SPEAKER: I really must ask members to keep order.

Mr. PARKER: I have made the points I wish to make and I shall oppose the Bill.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.45]: I regret that I have to oppose the Bill. Although it represents an improvement on the previous measure introduced by the member for Perth (Mr. H. W. Mann), it has the same objective and affects the same people. The debate has not been a particularly dry one, and most of the interjections have been regarding interested persons. There have been a great number of persons

interested in these licenses, involving 1,000 or more! The Bill will amend one of the most important pieces of legislation on the statute book and will conserve the interests of four individuals only. Thus, it is quite a personal matter.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you object to that?

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course I do. I object to piecemeal amending of legislation.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Even when individuals suffer an injustice?

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no injustice about it, although I regret that certain people have lost on their investments.

Mr. Patrick: They were only gambling with their investments.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. They have been permitted to hawk their provisional licenses for 12 months and now the member for Perth wants, by the Bill, to permit them to hawk those licenses for a further 12 months. Perhaps at the end of that time we will have a similar Bill introduced again, and so we will have perpetual motion until the time comes when they can find buyers for their licenses.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You are not justified in saying that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member said nothing to convince me to the contrary. He talked about the number of men who would be employed on the work; carpenters, joiners and journeymen of all descriptions were to be engaged on the erection of four hotels.

Mr. Pantou: There are 40,000 boys leaving school.

Mr. Corboy: There will be jobs for them as stewards.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, everyone will have a job. The Licensing Act is far too important to be tinkered with in this way. This is the sixth amending Bill that we have had this session, and the member for Perth has been responsible for four of them.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That shows how accurate you are.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is near enough to accuracy, having regard to the inaccuracy of the hon. member. As a protest against this sort of legislation, I shall move that the Bill be read this day six months.

Mr. Corboy: Don't do that. Let us defeat it at the second reading stage.

The Minister for Mines: Why six months? We may not be here.

Mr. MARSHALL: Six months is good enough for me.

Mr. Raphael: Have you got six months?

Mr. MARSHALL: It won't be too long before the hon. member will get six months.

Mr. Raphael: Then I will have what you have had already.

Mr. MARSHALL: The outlook in this State does not warrant the granting of any further liquor licenses for some considerable time to come. There are quite sufficient already and the Licensing Court should not be allowed to grant any more.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a matter for the Licensing Court.

Mr. MARSHALL: I agree that the decisions regarding the provisional licenses were for the Licensing Court to determine, but the court has determined many matters contrary to my opinion.

Hon. P. Collier: This is not a matter for the Licensing Court.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not care a continental for anyone. I will have my say. I am not here to be talked about as to whether this is a matter for the Licensing Court or not. If I had my way the Licensing Court would not be in office for 24 hours. If hon. members had taken the trouble to inspect some of the sites where provisional licenses had been granted, they would agree with me that there was no necessity for them. I mention particularly the license granted for a hotel on the North Beach-road. Last week I inspected the site and found that it was less than a quarter of a mile from another hotel in one direction, and about a mile away from another hotel in the opposite direction. The block was hardly big enough to erect a decent hotel on.

Mr. H. W. Mann: What is the size of the block?

Mr. MARSHALL: I should say scarcely half an acre.

Mr. H. W. Mann: It has a frontage of 190 feet by 200 feet in depth.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not big enough to provide the accommodation necessary.

Mr. Corboy: But the block is larger than the one on which the Savoy Hotel is built.

Mr. MARSHALL: That may be so, but that is a different matter altogether. Even if the block were large enough, there is the

additional fact that it adjoins a reserve with numerous intersections at that point. That is where it is proposed to erect a hotel that is not warranted at all. I do not want anyone to die of thirst. I do not think they will do so between that site and the hotels on either side. I am sorry that certain individuals have invested money in these proposed hotels and have lost it. That is in accordance with ordinary business. Some people speculate and make money, while others lose. It is their misfortune. My regret in that regard, however, will not influence me respecting my attitude towards the Bill. No further hotels are warranted, and I shall oppose anything of the sort until the State is verging on prosperity once more. I have already expressed my opinion regarding the Licensing Court. I have followed the operations of the court and in many respects they have done good work. On the other hand, the members of the court have done very badly.

Hon. P. Collier: That has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: At Kalgoorlie a week or two ago there was an insignificant, crumbling structure—

Hon. P. Collier: What has that to do with the Bill?

The SPEAKER: I am afraid the member for Murchison is transgressing.

Mr. MARSHALL: I may be.

The SPEAKER: I would like the hon. member to confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: I apologise, Mr. Speaker. I intended to show that the Licensing Court have been undeniably wrong in some of their decisions.

The SPEAKER: That is not under discussion.

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall not pursue it. I am opposed to giving the Licensing Court power to grant these provisional licenses.

Hon. P. Collier: The Bill does not give the court any power.

Mr. MARSHALL: The court can extend the provisional licenses.

Hon. P. Collier: No, not the court.

Mr. MARSHALL: The other Bill provided that the court should have power to extend the licenses, but the Bill before us provides that we shall extend them. I ob-

ject to that, and as a protest I move an amendment—

That "now" be struck out and "this day six months" added to the motion.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.56]: I hope that the good sense and common instincts of justice of members will enable them to agree to the Bill. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) objects because it affects four or five men only. I do not know of any member who has taken up more time in advocating and fighting for the interests of one individual than that hon. member. I can recall one occasion last year when he held up the House for two and a half years—I mean hours.

Mr. Parker: It seemed like years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was done in the interests of one man. If the member for Murchison is known for one thing more than another it is for his fights for individuals. He believed that an injustice had been done. He never hesitates to advance his claims in this House when he believes injustice has been done to an individual. But now the hon. member objects because the Bill affects four or five individuals. It has been urged by some that the Bill represents special pleading for a few individuals. On the other hand, I suggest that there has been some special pleading for a few individuals who are financially interested in the defeat of the Bill—publicans, who do not want competition, but desire to maintain the monopoly they enjoy and do not desire to see another hotel erected within reasonable distance of them. There has been some regard for special pleading in that direction. What does it amount to? Those concerned are citizens of this State, and I do not hesitate to say that I know some of them. I am not speaking in their interests, but I know them to be good citizens and prominent business men for over 30 years. They made application for a provisional license and the court granted it, and the question whether they ought or ought not to build their hotels, mentioned by the member for Murchison, does not arise at all. This is not the place to decide that question: it has been decided by the Licensing Court that a provisional certificate should be granted. The men who applied for the certificates have spent considerable sums of

money, as mentioned by the member for Perth, £1,000, £2,000 or £3,000, in all good faith and in the belief and assurance from their bankers that the money would be available. Members know that the bottom dropped out of everything in a night. Those men found themselves unable to obtain the money which they were assured would be available to them, and so they could not go on. Are we to say in cold blood that they should lose £2,000 or £3,000 through no fault of their own? They complied with the law of the land, except to the extent that the money was not available to them. What have we been doing during the last three or four months but passing Bills to give relief to sections of the community who are unable to meet their financial obligations? If in normal times men contracted to erect certain buildings within a specified time and were not able to fulfil their contracts, we could understand the attitude of some members, but these are not normal times. They are abnormal and absolutely exceptional times, and because individuals find themselves in the same difficulty in which the State finds itself and in which nearly every member finds himself, are we to say that they shall lose £2,000 or £3,000 because they are not able, for the time being, to comply with the statute? Are we going to deny to them, although they are only a few, an opportunity for twelve months to find the money necessary to fulfil their obligations? For months we have been passing legislation giving concessions to everybody.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are under penalties in many cases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It may be said that they can apply again, but they have no guarantee of preference. Surely we must have regard for the fact that those men in all good faith have spent several thousands of pounds, perhaps all the money they had, in the belief that they would be able to carry on, but everything went upside down and prevented them from carrying out their undertakings. If we are going to deny consideration to men of that kind, then we have been hypocrites for the past two or three months in giving relief in all directions—to the Government and to all sections of the community. There is nothing unreasonable in the Bill. It merely

asks for an extension of time for 12 months. Surely that is fair in view of the legislation we have been passing in the last few months. I hope the House will never give a vote that will practically rob good, honest citizens, although they may be few in number. It is no case against them because they are few in number. The rights of one individual in the community are as sacred as the rights of a thousand. Because those men are few in number, we must not deny them a reasonable measure of protection. I am sure the House will pass the second reading of the Bill.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [9.5]: I support the amendment. I am rather surprised at the Leader of the Opposition, who usually is at least consistent. He has dwelt at considerable length on the legislation that has been passed this session to relieve the Government particularly, but he fought practically every clause in those Bills.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say the Government.

MR. PANTON: The hon. member distinctly said we had been legislating all through the session to relieve people and particularly the Government. There is no escaping from what he said. He fought almost every clause of those Bills.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not fight every clause.

MR. PANTON: There were very few that he did not fight, and if he did not fight them, his supporters did, ably and eloquently led by him.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not.

MR. PANTON: If there was any clause he did not fight—

MR. PARKER: It was the short title.

MR. PANTON: It was some clause not worth worrying about. Yet, all of a sudden, when relief is sought for someone else, he makes an eloquent speech, a speech so eloquent that my only regret is it was not devoted to a more worthy cause. What is the position? The law of the land states definitely and decisively that if a provisional certificate is granted to an applicant, he has to comply with the conditions in 12 months.

Hon. P. Collier: Are not you breaking laws every day?

MR. PANTON: Speak for yourself; I am not.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course you are.

MR. PANTON: I object to that. The hon. member has no right to say that I am breaking laws every day.

Hon. P. Collier: The conversion Bill, for one.

MR. PANTON: I did not break it.

Hon. P. Collier: You voted for it.

MR. PANTON: That may be breaking a promise, with the making of which I had nothing to do. I was not interested in the Bill, because I had nothing to convert. The law of the country provides that provisional certificates shall be granted for 12 months. The applicants knew of that. I do not know what took place when the case was heard—I was not sufficiently interested to be present—but the applicants must have convinced the court that they were able to carry on. Evidently they failed to do so. Why? There is only one logical reason; they had not the money to fulfil the conditions of the provisional certificate.

The Minister for Railways: Every mortgagor convinced the mortgagee that he could carry on, and yet we had to give relief.

MR. PANTON: The applicants either did not have the money or failed to obtain it from those whom they expected to provide it.

MR. H. W. MAUN: That is the point.

MR. PANTON: That being so, are members optimistic enough to believe that when the trade has not warranted the expenditure of the money during the past 12 months, it will be warranted during the next 12 months?

MR. CORBOY: Yes.

MR. PANTON: What does the hon. member know about it? I do not suppose he knows 25 yards of Wembley, and yet he says "Yes."

MR. MARSHALL: If he ever saw it, it was at night time, from a motor car.

MR. CORBOY: I lived there for 16 years, so I know more about it than the member for Murchison. Then I left the district.

MR. MARSHALL: That is why it is making progress now.

MR. PANTON: Since the hon. member left the district, there is room for two more hotels. Is any member optimistic enough to believe that the expenditure on those hotels will be warranted in 1932? That is what the Bill provides.

Hon. P. Collier: There will be lots of changes in the next 12 months.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. Amongst other things a Federal election is coming on. This Bill is to operate till the end of 1932. If trade does not warrant the expenditure of the money on hotels to-day, I do not think there is any possibility of its being warranted next year. Money for the building of hotels can be obtained only from financiers. Obviously the Bill would not be before us if the individuals had the money. I venture to say that the financiers will be as careful in the next 12 months as they have been in the last year.

Hon. P. Collier: Look at the improvement in wheat and wool prices.

Mr. PANTON: I do not think that will have much effect on Mt. Hawthorn or Wembley. I live in the centre of Leederville, which numerically is the largest electorate in the State, and I venture to say that anyone acquainted with the number of unemployed there—the Minister knows how many there are—

The Minister for Railways: Do not bring me into it.

Mr. PANTON: There is not likely to be much improvement in the number of unemployed in the Wembley, Leederville and Mt. Hawthorn districts during the next 12 months.

The Minister for Railways: The building of these pubs would make a difference.

Mr. PANTON: It would provide work for a few men, but the financiers who are to provide money to build hotels will want to know the prospects of being paid their interest and capital.

Mr. Corboy: The wowsers out there will keep them going, once they are built.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member can speak for himself. He is handy at interjecting. Like a lot of other members, he voted against the previous Bill. I wish to congratulate the member for Perth on his organising ability. Not during this Parliament has he put in more work than during this week. I congratulate him. It is marvellous how many members have swung round from the view they held a week ago. I am like the member for Murchison; I have no interest in any shape or form. I do not know any of the men concerned except Mr. Monaghan. I know him very little and I do not suppose he knows too much good about me. The individual is not worrying me one iota. If we pass this Bill we shall establish a precedent for which we shall be sorry.

There is not a shadow of doubt that at the end of 1932 the member for Perth, if he is consistent and does his job as well as he has done it this week, will be here pleading for another 12 months for those people.

Hon. P. Collier: Not necessarily.

Mr. PANTON: Undoubtedly that is what will happen if he is consistent.

Hon. P. Collier: Not at all.

Mr. PANTON: If there is one thing we can say of the member for Perth, it is that he is consistent and tenacious. He has proved it in regard to this matter. Only a week ago he was so well trounced that he was left with only the short title of the Bill, but he has succeeded in getting the matter once more before the House.

Hon. P. Collier: Trounced in a House of 22.

Mr. PANTON: No, 26; the voting was 13 on each side. If the Leader of the Opposition does not know it, let me tell him there have been more important resolutions carried in this House in the last 48 hours on a smaller voting strength than that. The occasions when it is possible to get a full House are when there is a discussion on the liquor trade or on a trotting meeting.

The Minister for Railways: That is not fair; it is like mixing oil and water.

Mr. PANTON: I hope members will stick to their guns.

The Minister for Railways: It will cost them a license fee of 5s. if they stick to their guns.

Mr. PANTON: That would be cheaper than this business. I hope members will not set a precedent for which they will be sorry. I have no axe to grind. I do not know the licensee of the Oxford Hotel, or the other person. A member of this Chamber last night told me that the owner of the Oxford Hotel had explained to him that she had spent £1,000 on her place since the Mt. Hawthorn Hotel had been put out of existence. She spent this money to bring her hotel up to date.

Mr. H. W. Mann: The license only expired on the 30th of last month.

Mr. PANTON: Are we going to legislate to help this lady get back the £1,000 she has spent? If the member for Perth is so anxious about his clients, let him bring down a motion that in the opinion of this House this money should be returned to the lady in question. Members must not forget that a Royal Commission travelled throughout the

country for weeks dealing with the liquor traffic, but, notwithstanding the work that was done then, the member for Perth comes down with this tiddlywinking amendment which will interfere with legislation that is of the utmost importance to the State.

Hon. P. Collier: But the Commission sat 10 or 15 years ago.

Mr. PANTON: I do not care how long ago it sat. I understand that those things which make up the trade improve with age.

Mr. H. W. Mann: The Act has been amended every year since then.

Mr. PANTON: No. Never before have efforts been made to amend it six times in one short session, and three of these times by one individual. I hope members will stick to their guns. I am prepared to go to any length to see that justice is done to these people, and that they have their money refunded to them in the circumstances, but I am not prepared to go to the length of amending important legislation by the means proposed.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.17]: I am prepared to support any endeavour that is made to secure a refund of a portion or the whole of the money paid by those to whom provisional licenses were granted, and have no desire to be a party to estreating that money if it can be shown that, through no fault of those individuals, the buildings have not been gone on with. We have been told that the Oxford Hotel has been improved and that additional accommodation has been provided.

Mr. Corboy: A thousand pounds has been spent in three weeks, it is alleged.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the hon. member will give the House the facts, I will listen to him without continually interrupting him. The position indicated by the member for North-East Fremantle has thrown a new light on the question. He has given reasons why the Bill should not be passed. When the question of the issue of a provisional license for Mt. Hawthorn was being considered by the Licensing Bench, a great deal of local feeling was engendered.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not the subject matter of discussion.

Mr. SAMPSON: The people of that territory would probably be glad to have an opportunity of considering the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: That cannot be discussed now.

Mr. SAMPSON: This is the first time I have spoken on this question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not proceed along those lines.

Mr. SAMPSON: When the board were dealing with this proposed hotel, a statement was made in the Press that it was possible to walk from another hotel to the site in four minutes. If that is so, there is no need to go any further into the matter.

Hon. P. Collier: The court decides that.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know.

Mr. SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. SAMPSON: I should like to reply to the interjection.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not do so.

Mr. SAMPSON: The amendment is an excellent one for, if carried, it will mean the killing of the Bill. It has been shown there is no great public need for an hotel at Mt. Hawthorn. In Victoria Park there are two hotels that are well conducted.

Mr. SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. SAMPSON: There is great justification for the carrying of the amendment as far as Victoria Park is concerned. In view of the accommodation that is available there, and the excellent way in which the hotels are conducted, I hope this extension will not be granted. We have been urged to have nothing to do with retrospective legislation.

Hon. P. Collier: You have always voted for it.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You ought to be the last one to talk about that.

Hon. P. Collier: If any attempt is made to cut down wages, you will vote for it.

Mr. SAMPSON: This Bill stands for retrospective legislation.

Hon. P. Collier: That is what you always say when it suits you.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not stand for it now.

Hon. P. Collier: If you had any money in it you would.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Bill is bad in principle. I am prepared to consider refunding the whole or portion of the money paid by these people, but I think it would be bad for the State if we supported a measure like this. I shall therefore vote for the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	21
				—
Majority against	..	10		
				—

AYES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Panton	Mr. Wells
Mr. Parker	Mr. Doney
Mr. Sampson	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Barnard	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brown	Mr. Millington
Mr. Collier	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Raphael
Miss Holman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Lamond	Mr. North
Mr. H. W. Mann	

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Walker	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Wilson	Mr. Teesdale

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; Mr. H. W. Mann in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 62:

Mr. PANTON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of proposed Subsection 3, the words "thirty-first day of December" be struck out, and "thirtieth day of June" inserted in lieu.

There has been much talk as to the unfortunate position of the gentlemen concerned. Let us test how they stand. Their time ran out months ago. My amendment proposes a fair compromise, giving them seven months beyond the time the law allowed them originally. I should like to know whether the wording of the clause means that some of the gentlemen obtained their provisional certificates in 1930, which is going back a long way.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I hope the amendment will not be carried. The hon. member must realise how impracticable it would be to do anything under the amendment.

Mr. Panton: Seven months.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is not a matter of six months merely to get the money; the building must be completed in six months, and nothing can be done this year owing to the approach of the Christmas holidays. I am sure the hon. member does not desire to be unfair, and is not moving the amendment out of sheer cussedness. As I mentioned in my second reading speech, two of the provisional certificates expired last month, and one expired in May last.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it insisted on its amendment No. 1, to which the Assembly had disagreed, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

The PREMIER: I move —

That the Assembly continue to disagree to the amendment made by the Council.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Request for Conference.

The PREMIER: I move —

That a conference be requested with the Legislative Council on this Bill, and that at such conference the Assembly managers be Mr. Millington, the Minister for Railways, and the mover.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 9.42 p.m.