

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: There will be the machinery clauses.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: But the Bill is so drafted that if we leave the machinery clauses, we shall be leaving a good deal more. The only machinery required is the substitution of "court of sessions" in regard to these licenses, for "the licensing magistrates."

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is very good.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That can be done in a one-clause Bill prescribing that whenever in the principal Act "licensing magistrates" appear, there shall be substituted the words "court of sessions." Such a one-clause Bill would save us from getting into a good deal of difficulty in striking out parts of clauses containing matter other than machinery. The course I suggest is that we should leave this Bill on the Notice Paper and bring down a one-clause Bill that would cover these machinery clauses. We could put up that Bill as a new Bill and then, under Standing Order 176, we could elect which Bill to go on with. That standing order provides that if more than one Bill dealing with the same subject is on the Notice Paper the Council shall decide which one shall be withdrawn.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Could not the Minister bring down the new Bill?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That would get over the difficulty, but I take it the Minister is a friend of this Bill and so would stand by it. I do not want to start amending this Bill when we could get all that we require by bringing down a one-clause Bill simply stating that wherever in the principal Act those words I have mentioned are used, the other words shall be substituted. Then we would have two Bills dealing with the same matter before the House and under Standing Order 176 we could decide which to go on with. I suggest that some member who has not yet spoken move the amendment of the debate in order that my proposal might be considered.

On motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.51 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 23rd November, 1927.

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

QUESTION (4)—RAILWAYS.

Trucks held up at Fremantle.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the loss, per day, to the Railway Department on the 400 wheat-laden trucks held up at Fremantle by the dispute which has arisen between the lumpers and the A.W.U.? 2, How many trucks, loaded, are being held up at country stations and sidings? 3, Are the department charging demurrage upon trucks so held up? 4, What is the estimated loss to the department to date? 5, What steps are the Government taking to relieve the present position? 6, In view of the position at Fremantle and the loss to the railways, will the Government consider the transferring of wheat by rail to other ports, say Albany, whose harbour will take the largest steamer afloat?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, It is not possible to estimate what the loss is, if any 2, None. 3, Yes. 4, Answered by No. 1. 5, The position is being carefully watched. 6, Wheat is conveyed to the destination to which it is consigned.

Brookton-Dale River project.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is the new survey of the authorised Brookton-Dale River railway completed? 2, If so, when will the Government construct the railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. Permanent survey is still in progress. 2, Answered by No. 1.

Revenue and Freight Reductions.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Railways: What was the loss to the State railways for the period from 1st July, 1926, to 30th June, 1927, as a result of the reduction in freight on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class goods?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The rates reductions made in 1925 were—1st, 2nd, 3rd Classes, 5s. per ton. Explosives from 3rd to 1st Class. Cyanide from 1st to "C" Class. Lubricating oils from 1st to "C" Class. Mining machinery from "C" to "B" Class. Flour for export 12½ per cent. 2, These reductions on the first year's operations showed a lesser earning of £45,000, which has increased with the greater tonnage carried. 3, It would take some considerable time to extract the result of the reduction in detail, but it is estimated that the earnings were affected to the extent of £56,000 during the last financial year.

Transport of Manure.

Mr. LINDSAY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will he supply the following information: 1, The tonnage of manure delivered during each individual month, 1926-27? 2, The total amount paid for carriage of manure? 3, The total tonnage and freight paid from December to March? 4, The total tonnage and freight paid during April, May, and June? 5, The amount of freight which, on last year's figures, would be received at ¼d. per ton plus 6d. per ton flat rate? The information is required only for districts which are outside the ¼d. per ton zone all the year.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, July, 1,909 tons; August, 2,133 tons; September, 3,507 tons; October, 1,052 tons; November, 1,965 tons; December, 10,844 tons; January, 34,709 tons; February, 41,108 tons; March, 38,331 tons; April, 35,865 tons; May, 15,332 tons; June, 4,142 tons; total, 190,897 tons. 2, £68,025. 3, 124,992 tons. £37,877 freight. 4, 55,339 tons. £26,477 freight. Superphosphate was carried up to 23rd April at manure rate. 5, If an extension of time is granted the surcharge will be applicable to all superphosphate. If the cheap rate applied throughout the whole year and 6d. per ton flat rate was imposed there would be a loss of approximately £8,000 on this traffic on last year's figures.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,363,500.*Standing Orders Suspension.*

The PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.39]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder): I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending 30th June, 1928, a sum not exceeding £1,363,500.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Committee of Ways and Means.

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder): I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending 30th June, 1928, there be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the sum of £550,000, and from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund £500,000, and from moneys to credit of the Government Property Sales Fund £10,500, and from moneys to credit of the Land Improvement Loan Fund £3,000.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Supply Bill introduced, etc.

Bill passed through all stages without debate, and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1927-28.

Report of Committee of Ways and Means adopted.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.*Council's Message.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion moved by the Premier—

That the following be sent in reply to Message No. 20 from the Legislative Council:—Mr. President,—With reference to Message No. 20 of the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly acquaints the Legislative Council that it accepts the suggestion to refer the matter now in dispute to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for decision. Meanwhile, the Legislative Assembly is prepared pending time to consider messages from the Legislative Council in which requests for amendments are pressed, and assumes that the same consideration will be given to messages from the Legislative Assembly in which requests for concurrence in Bills are pressed. The Legislative Assembly therefore presses its request for the concurrence of the Legislative Council in a Bill for 'An Act to impose a Land Tax and an Income Tax,' which is returned herewith."

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.52]: I have indicated on the Notice Paper that I desire to move an amendment to the motion. I listened to the arguments last evening, and I failed to see in them any justification for the attitude of another place. We heard the Leader of the Country Party set forth as a sound reason why the Council was right in its attitude the fact that a minority in this House desired a reduction of taxation. The hon. member held that as that minority had failed to secure such a reduction, another place was perfectly right in pressing its request, since the minority here desired the same thing. The hon. member never considered the Act that gives power to this House alone to determine taxation proposals. Another place is by statute debarred that right. You, Sir, have made it abundantly clear that you acted within your rights when you refused to accept from another place a proposal pressing their request. If I were to express my true sentiments on the matter, I would not hold out any olive branch to another place on this issue. For many years past we have been conceding to another place points in respect of money Bills similar to the one now in dispute. You, Sir, will remember that I bitterly opposed this House

whittling away its authority as against that of another place. I pointed out that we were giving a great concession to another place when we granted them a conference for the discussion of a money Bill. We had no right to do that. However, it was done, and it has been repeated on two or three occasions. No doubt this made another place feel that custom had become law. That would be the only possible justification for their action. Their constitutional appetite has increased on what they have been feeding during the last 10 years. In my opinion, they thought they would try it on once more. As I did when I occupied the honourable position you now hold, you, Sir, feel your responsibility, and you were not backward in accepting that responsibility when you gave your ruling the other day. You have ruled, and in my opinion your ruling is a sound one. As I say, I wish to move an amendment, but I really do not know exactly what position I am in. This is the first time, that I remember, that we have discussed a message from another place in full House. Invariably it has been discussed in Committee. Consequently I do not know whether I am in order in moving an amendment at this stage. If the Premier's motion be carried, the matter, it seems to me, will be finished. Will that be the procedure, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think so.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: And our message will go straight from here without going first into Committee. So it will be necessary for me to move my amendment now. I am reminded by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) that he desires to move an amendment to the Premier's motion, and that his amendment, coming earlier in the motion, should be taken before mine. The amendment I desire to move will come in after the word "decision" in line 5. It suggests the appointment of a select committee of each House with power to confer with the other in order to settle the exact question at issue. It is slightly different from what it is on the Notice Paper, but it will have the same effect. It is merely a suggestion and so cannot rightly be regarded as offensive, although I have no doubt the Council may so regard it. I think the question can be based on the summary of the Speaker's ruling, as embodied in the "Votes and Proceedings." The summary reads—

Mr. Speaker ruled that the Council in pressing its request for an amendment in the

Bill exceeded the powers given in Subsection (4) of Section 46 of the Constitution Act as amended, which gives power to the Council at any stage to return the Bill requesting by message the omission or amendment of any item or provision therein: that on the principle therefore of the legal maxim—the express mention of one thing implies the exclusion of another—to press a request was a violation of Subsection (2) of the same section, which provides that the Council may not amend taxation Bills; and that consequently it would be illegal to put to the House the motion moved by the Premier.

That is your ruling as shortly and concisely as is needed for the purpose of reaching a decision on the question in dispute. The summary continues—

With reference to message No. 13 from the Legislative Council, dealing with the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill, the Hon. the Speaker has ruled affirming the illegality of the further consideration of the request made by the Legislative Council. The Bill is returned herewith, and the concurrence of the Legislative Council desired therein.

The Minister for Lands: I thought you said the member for West Perth had a prior amendment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The member for West Perth has found that his amendment comes after mine. The method I propose is that a select committee be appointed by each House to confer on the question. If the reason on which your ruling is based be sound, there is no more to be said. That is what we shall have to find out. If a pressed request is beyond the powers conferred on the Council under Subsection 4, as you have ruled, it is illegal. That reasoning has not been dealt with by the President of the Council. Still, there may be an objection to it that has not been stated, and a select committee would readily elicit such objection and the arguments in support of it. The method of procedure I suggest would be that a committee of this House, having satisfied themselves that the Speaker's reasoning was sound, would propose at the first joint meeting that the question be referred to the Privy Council somewhat in this form:—"Was the Speaker's ruling, as summarised in the votes and proceedings, correct in law?" That is the question to be decided. If I were guided by my own instincts—I am afraid there is no possibility of getting my ideas carried out—I should not have deemed the question of sufficient importance to refer to the Privy Council. In a State like Western Australia

where we have laws to control the procedure between the two Houses, surely there is someone able to interpret the law! It is purely a matter of interpreting the law. All that would be necessary would be to put your ruling before a constitutional authority with the question, "Is that ruling sound in accordance with the Act?" In my opinion the law is perfectly clear and easy to understand. Unless we accept the first portion of the Council's message suggesting that the matter be referred to the Privy Council, we cannot consider the proposal at all, and there will be a deadlock. I should be prepared to meet the deadlock, but I am not responsible for the situation and so I am prepared to compromise and help to overcome the difficulty with dignity to this House and perhaps at the same time save the face of the Council. When the two select committees meet, the Council's representatives might not agree to the proposals I have outlined. They may prefer to reserve their defence, agreeing merely that proper steps should be taken to lay the appeal before the Privy Council. That matter, however, would be discussed by the two committees. It will be seen that the proposed message, with or without the amendment, will enable the question in dispute to be referred to the Privy Council in a dignified manner. But there will be no surrender; we shall not surrender in the matter. We want to find out whether your interpretation of the Constitution is right or wrong. There is very little reason to go beyond the few salient points contained in your ruling. The long statement of the President bringing in the question of other Bills to which amendments were pressed does not count. It is not material to the question how the Constitution Act Amendment Bill was decided. The point must be determined on the Act as passed by Parliament. Much extraneous matter has been introduced by the President and I fail to see that he has answered any of the points raised in your ruling. If the select committees are appointed, I suggest that obvious definite questions should be put and definite answers obtained. Those questions, as I have indicated, would be based on your ruling. If there is a flaw in your ruling, we shall be out of court. The whole procedure is governed by Section 46, Subsections 2 and 4, which allow the Council to request amendments but not to press them.

"Pressing" requests is something that has been introduced during late years. On the first occasion when the Council amended a money Bill, the amendment was insisted on, but there was nothing to justify insistence. It was not mentioned in the Constitution Act or in the Council's standing orders. The fact was pointed out to members of another place and they failed in their effort on that occasion. Since then they have introduced into their Standing Orders the word "pressed," a word that has the same significance and effect as "insisted" had in the first instance. It is desirable that the question should be cleared up and I think the House would be wise to adopt the amendment. I know that the present Premier is like other occupants of the office, and Speakers, too, seem to follow the lines laid down by their predecessors; they do not like to precipitate a conflict. The Premier wants the tax Bill and is prepared to make concessions in order to get it. When the member for Northam was Premier, he even moved for a conference on a money Bill, notwithstanding that it was constitutionally wrong to do so: he was so desirous of getting the Bill passed. That is why we find ourselves in this difficulty. It is due to a desire on the part of Premiers to get their money Bills through. I hope the amendment will be accepted by the Premier and will have the effect of overcoming the difficulty. I move an amendment—

That after "decision" the following words be inserted: "and to give effect to that suggestion proposes the appointment of a select committee of each House with power to confer with each other in order to decide on the method of approaching that body and the actual points to be submitted for its decision."

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—on amendment) [5.15]: I do not think the amendment is really necessary, because the method by which the case has to be presented for decision might best be left to each House according to its own judgment. I am afraid a Select Committee of both Houses would fail to agree upon any definite proposals to be submitted, and therefore we might not get any further forward. I take it that Mr. Speaker would prepare or submit the case from the Assembly point of view. The case has already been put forward in the House by His Honour and agreed

to by a considerable majority, without addition or variation. It would be for the Legislative Assembly to decide for itself as to how its case should be prepared. I do not know that we should arrive at any decision by a Committee of both Houses meeting and endeavouring to agree on the precise wording or the statement of the case to be submitted to the Privy Council. If the joint committee should fail to agree, what would happen? Would it not be competent, under this amendment, for each House to prepare its case separately? The amendment leaves us in doubt if the committee should not arrive at any decision, as to what the next procedure would be.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Committee perhaps might be able to prove that the circumstances did not warrant the case going to the Privy Council.

The PREMIER: In view of what has transpired between the two Houses over a long course of years I can scarcely imagine any committee appointed from the two Houses deciding that it was not necessary to send the case to the Privy Council. Each House has strongly insisted upon what it considers to be its rights, and each House has strongly resisted the other.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Premier forgets that a committee of both Houses did agree upon the line of action. We kept our portion of the agreement, but they did not keep their portion of it.

The PREMIER: A Joint Standing Orders Committee considered the question for three or four years.

Hon. G. Taylor: They agreed, and drafted a Bill.

The PREMIER: But they have not got anywhere, because they are virtually taking up the position they took up prior to the amendment of 1921. They are maintaining that position, although it was thought that the amendment to the Constitution in 1921 had overcome the difficulty. Another place is insisting, or practically insisting, upon amendments by merely describing their actions by some other term, namely, pressing a request." It does not seem to me to matter how the action is described; they are getting there just the same.

Hon. G. Taylor: It has the same effect.

The PREMIER: Yes. They are getting in the same points they were getting in prior to the amendment. If the amendment of the hon. member were carried, and another

place should refuse to come to agreement with our committee, what would our position be then? Suppose the committee did not function, and no agreement was arrived at? Might not another place assume that it would be entitled to depart from its decision to submit the question to the Privy Council? If another place should accept this amendment it might consider that its agreement to go to the Privy Council was consequent upon an agreement between the two committees as to the form in which the case should be submitted. In the absence of an agreement it might conceivably hold that it was not bound to go to the Privy Council. That is a contingency that might arise. Is it not a question for each House to submit its views upon the deadlock, untrammelled by any views that might be held by the other House?

Hon. G. Taylor: There can really be no danger in accepting my suggestion, because the committees would examine those they thought were capable of giving a decision upon the Speaker's ruling in accordance with the Act, and very likely that would induce both committees to recommend that something should be done.

The PREMIER: I am afraid it would have the opposite effect. I am afraid no three members of a committee of another place—I am not reflecting upon any hon. members of that Chamber—would freely and voluntarily, after consultation with the committee from this House, agree to retreat from the position the Legislative Council has taken up for many years.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Premier thinks no argument would convince them, and that they would stand steadfast.

The PREMIER: I think so. They have practically always maintained that attitude. I hardly think they would be likely to go back to their House and say, "We are very sorry, but the committee of another place has convinced us that the action of this House in the past is not justified in the terms of the Constitution Act; we do not think there is any question to submit to the Privy Council; and we are convinced that the Legislative Assembly has been correct in its attitude." I cannot imagine any committee of three members agreeing to that contention. We must therefore have regard to the probability of such a select committee being unable to arrive at any decision. We should then have to fall back upon the position of saying, "The Speaker, representing the Assembly; and the President, representing the

Council, will present the case in any form which commends itself to their judgment." That is the position I am afraid we should arrive at if the amendment were carried.

Hon. G. Taylor: The committee could not intensify the position. It must tend to save time and expense.

The PREMIER: Except that if the committee fail to arrive at a decision it might be taken by either House, or by another place, as being the end of the matter, that we can proceed no further in the direction of getting a decision from the body we desire to submit the matter to. It may be open to either committee to assume that. Parliament would most likely be adjourned before it would be possible for any such committee to go very far in the direction of examining the case.

Hon. G. Taylor: It would not last more than two sittings.

The PREMIER: It has been a subject of discussion and dispute for many years, and we have not overcome the difficulty yet.

Mr. Davy: The subject of this dispute has not been the subject of disagreement. Everyone has known what the dispute is about. All this proposes to do is to settle that.

The PREMIER: Everyone knows what the dispute has been about.

Mr. Davy: It is proposed that the joint committee should fight that out.

The PREMIER: Without reflecting upon members of another place, I can easily understand such a committee desiring to work in extraneous matters of all kinds, which have no bearing upon this one. It may be said, if that were so, the extraneous matters would be disregarded when the question reached the Privy Council for consideration. Inasmuch as the Council has virtually agreed to the motion as it stands, and apparently had in mind the idea of preparing and presenting its own case, we might adopt that attitude, and allow the motion to go without seeking further amendments.

MR. DAVY (West Perth—on amendment) [5.25]: Some motion of the kind is necessary. The two Houses have a dispute about a certain thing. What that is is plain to everyone. It has been suggested we should go to arbitration and that the arbitrator should be the Privy Council. If two people are going to arbitration, the first thing to decide between themselves is what they are going to arbitrate about. The usual thing is for them to draw up a refer-

ence setting out the matter in dispute. They then go before the arbitrator, the matters in dispute are before him, and each side states his case. Either House cannot go along to the Privy Council. That being so, it would be wise to follow the example of, say, a case stated before the High Court of Australia on a taxation matter. The parties on each side are both thoroughly annoyed with each other, just as annoyed with each other as this House could possibly be annoyed with another place and vice versa. The case for the Commissioner of Taxation is stated, and that for the taxpayer who thinks he has been unjustly treated. All matters in dispute and the respective contentions on each side are settled between the two parties. Either party can put up any contention he likes. All these points are then placed before the High Court and the argument takes place upon them. The member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) is merely proposing a method of getting the case before the Court. People cannot go before the Privy Council to have the matter worked out for them. They must go with their case fully prepared. It may be that there is better machinery for getting our case stated than the machinery proposed. It seems to me there can be no difficulty about both Houses meeting in the manner proposed. I should think that those members who form the committee would respectfully request Mr. Speaker and the President of the Legislative Council to place their respective arguments before them. These would then be read together, as well as the matters in dispute. The next thing would probably be to obtain the assistance of the Crown Law authorities as to the proper method of getting this case stated with the arguments on each side, and having it presented to the Privy Council. There would be no ordinary machinery for such a course laid down anywhere. It would have to be I imagine, a message through the proper channel to the King, who would then refer the matter for report and opinion to that portion of the Privy Council, which advises His Majesty upon such subjects. We cannot find it laid down in a text-book. I submit with all due respect that we need some machinery to enable what we desire to be done. The amendment merely provides for the reference of this matter to a select committee, so that a decision may be arrived at as to the method to be pursued in approaching the Privy Council. The committee will get the opinion of the Crown

Law Department and decide the actual points to be submitted for decision. As a matter of fact there is one point only, and that is what the words contained in Section 46 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act actually mean. We are positive that they mean one thing, and the members of the Legislative Council contend, as if they were positive, that they mean something else. That is the whole thing. I believe it is necessary to include the amendment in the message.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	27
				—
Majority against				18
				—

AYES.

Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Latham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Mann	Mr. North
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Maley	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Teesdale	Miss Holman
Mr. Richardson	Mr. Kennelly

Amendment thus negatived.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [5.35] : Naturally I am not entirely satisfied with the motion now before the House, but I hope it will not be rejected in toto. No one is likely to accuse the Premier of desiring to give away the privileges of this House. With the first portion of the motion no one will disagree. Here we have a quarrel between two bodies who are reputed to be sensible. We are quite sure we are right, and the members of the Legislative Council appear to be quite sure they are right. There is the whole thing.

Even some members of this House are not able to see our point. I believe you, Mr. Speaker, were perfectly right in your reasoning, but that does not matter. We have two bodies in conflict, and I have never met two litigants each of whom did not firmly believe that he was quite right.

The Premier: Or they would not go to law.

Mr. DAVY: Exactly. Even then, while each considered he was right at the outset, I have always found that after the dispute has been proceeding for some little while, the one litigant not only thinks that the other man is wrong, but that he is a rogue. We should realise that we are in the position of two sensible litigants desirous of letting someone else decide upon our quarrel, and in the meantime we are content to carry on. That is what the proposal of the Premier amounts to, and it seems to me that the only result of refusing to fall into line with his suggestion is that we will continue our squabble. I should not use that word because we are not squabbling. We are standing up for our rights. The members of the Legislative Council are doing the squabbling. While we stand up for our rights, the Council denies our rights. Where the solution will ever come from should we reject the motion, I do not know.

The Premier: The trouble will go on and on and on.

Mr. DAVY: Of course, and every now and again the business of the country will be held up because it is obvious that, after the firm stand you, Mr. Speaker, have taken, no succeeding Speaker will ever give way in future, and so there will be no end to this trouble. Although I do not like the second portion of the message, I would rather swallow it than lose the whole. I still think it would have been better to include some machinery for setting out the case, but the House has decided otherwise.

Hon. G. Taylor: We do not want any case put up; it is quite clear.

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps you, Mr. Speaker, may confer with the President of the Legislative Council, and in the end may arrive at the same position as we sought to gain by means of the amendment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The motion moved by the Premier—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has exhausted his right to speak.

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

BILL—LEIGHTON-ROBB'S JETTY RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 17th November.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.43]: If this were merely a proposal to build a railway four miles long, it would be a simple matter to decide. It means much more than that. I want the House to keep in mind that the Minister when introducing the Bill said, "This is a very small Bill but it involves a highly important issue and carries with it substantial expenditure." He pointed out that it would probably approach an expenditure of £3,200,000, but it may lead to an expenditure of many times that amount. The Minister also said that the Bill carried with it the acceptance by the Government of the Engineer-in-Chief's report. In other words, the Government have accepted the report furnished by the Engineer-in-Chief. Mr. Stileman. Everything the Engineer-in-Chief has recommended has been agreed to, and now the Minister asks the Houses also to agree to the proposals. I hope the House will realise what the position really is. The expenditure on the improvements to be carried out in the river will amount to £3,200,000, and goodness knows how much is to be spent on the outer harbour. The object of the Bill, the Minister told us, was to provide for the resumption and also to get a declaration from Parliament. The Government do not consider it would be right, even if it had the necessary legal authority, to go ahead with the scheme without Parliament first being asked to declare upon it. The Minister even regrets asking Parliament—

The Minister for Works: Regrets? Who said that? There is no such suggestion as a regret. We come here openly and frankly and lay our cards on the Table.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am talking about this scheme. The Minister is really simpler than he looks if he thinks he can get this House to agree to an enormous expenditure without the matter first coming before Parliament. Anyhow, I desire the House to keep in mind what is proposed. I venture to say that no scheme involving considerable expenditure will be sanctioned by the House in the dying days of the session. Big proposals are brought down here in the shape of a small Bill that

will involve this year the expenditure of £2,000.

Mr. Lutey: The scheme has been talked of for 20 years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The matter is brought down in this way and without any substantial argument other than the words used by the Minister, quoted largely from Mr. Stileman's report.

The Minister for Works: You had not even read it, and the report had been on the Table for months.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course I had read it.

The Minister for Works: You displayed your ignorance of the report when you interjected the other night. You did not know the smallest thing about it; you scarcely knew the report was there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister knows full well that I had read the report.

The Minister for Works: You had not read it when I spoke the other night and the report had been here for some time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I had read it then, and I have again read it carefully since.

The Minister for Mines: Well, let us refer the matter to the Privy Council.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When there is an election taking place at Fremantle we will discuss it then, I suppose. This proposal of Mr. Stileman's involves the scrapping of previous ideas. All those can go by the board and the Minister and the Government now pin their faith to Mr. Stileman, and ask us to do likewise. I do not go quite so far. Mr. Stileman's proposal means scrapping the river harbour at 15,890 feet of wharf space—adding one-half of the existing space. It will mean utilising space to the extent of a half of that already in existence, and apparently during the next ten years constructing, or at any rate making a start on the outer harbour. The cost of this great work is not given. Not a word has been said about the cost of the outer harbour. Then on top of the enormous expenditure involved in making these improvements at Fremantle, there will be the cost of completing the Geraldton harbour and extending the Bunbury and Albany harbours, to say nothing of the cost that will be involved in making a harbour at Esperance. The scheme we

are now considering suggests centralisation at Fremantle.

Mr. Panton: Centralisation with the work that is going on at Geraldton, Bunbury, and Albany? I do not agree with you.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There must be no centralisation. The map that has been presented to us is informative and, I hope, correct. It sets out the areas serving the various ports. Members will see that Fremantle serves a tremendous area of wheat-growing country, and therefore a big proportion of the traffic must go to that port. Then the imports generally come, and always will come, for the most part to the port of Fremantle. But there is a very large area of the territory of this State served by the port of Geraldton. As members know, the railway line runs east of Geraldton to Meekatharra, and now goes on to Horseshoe, and in all probability Geraldton will be the port for Wiluna. There are also a number of railways from wheat centres that run to Geraldton. Those wheat centres will grow and the exports from Geraldton will increase. Albany also has considerable territory to serve and so has Bunbury. A harbour at Esperance has yet to be made. We have a large area of land to serve the port and the expenditure there must be considerable. The estimates of production and trade expansion supplied by Mr. Stileman I think are reasonable. My opinion is that the present average yield can be maintained, though, with the high price of wheat, a good deal of inferior land will be cropped. I wish I could believe that we are going to increase our average yield, as Mr. Stileman suggests, to 15 bushels. Notwithstanding all this, the House should pause before approving of this great scheme without first getting further professional opinion. Sir George Buchanan advised the carrying out of the river scheme. Mr. Stileman rejects it and advises an outer harbour scheme.

Mr. Panton: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member says "Hear, hear."

Mr. Panton: Let us maintain our one beauty spot, the river. Some people will never be satisfied until the big steamers come up to Perth.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: To my mind Mr. Stileman's outer harbour scheme will be far more costly and more uncertain than the river scheme. If one can judge by the work it is proposed to do at a cost of £3,200,000, the outer scheme will cost

not less than £10,000,000. The new bridge will cost £1,200,000, and the extension of the harbour to that bridge another £2,000,000.

Mr. Thomson: What about the cost of resumptions?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In these proposals we must contemplate spending not less than £13,000,000, and probably more.

The Premier: The amount appears big, but it must be remembered that the expenditure will be spread over many years. We are spending nearly £100,000 a year on the Fremantle harbour now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: For repairs and deepening the channel?

The Premier: Yes, and new wharves and additions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have no estimate of the outer harbour scheme.

The Minister for Works: It has only been suggested; it is not yet within the realm of practical politics.

The Premier: It is pointed out that there is a limit to the distance we can go up the river. The outer harbour scheme will eventually be necessary.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we can provide at Fremantle only half as much again as the existing accommodation, that will not carry us over an unlimited number of years.

The Premier: Quite a number of years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not many. If Mr. Stileman's figures are correct, the increase in tonnage will be tremendous, and that in a very short time. I suppose the Premier will agree that it is hardly likely we shall remain 370,000 people, with trade at anything like its present level.

The Premier: No; but the increase of both will be gradual.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not many years since we built the harbour, nor many years since we began to have such considerable shipping. Mr. Stileman's report shows the increase in tonnage. I feel pretty certain that we shall have a million tons of wheat this year, and naturally a great deal of that will be shipped from Fremantle. The proposed expenditure cannot be faced without our having regard to future harbour extension. If it were a fact—which God forbid—that this extension will last for an unlimited number of years, from that particular aspect all would be well; but judging by the increase of Fre-

mantle tonnage during the last few years, that does not seem at all likely. We ought to look ahead a good deal, and make a start on outer harbour extension. Mr. Stileman's report is an excellent one, clear and easily understood, and has been most carefully prepared; it must have involved a great deal of work. But we are asked to agree to Mr. Stileman's proposals, to confirm them as right. I have not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Stileman, and I do not suppose many members of this Chamber have; but the Minister, of course, knows him. However, I am not prepared to agree that Mr. Stileman is right and Sir George Buchanan and the other engineers concerned are wrong. We should not, in my opinion, be asked to endorse Mr. Stileman's views. Rather should we see to it that another opinion is obtained. Mr. Stileman himself, before coming to this country, was a consulting engineer, engaged in advising on works of this nature himself, advising as to the wisdom of plans submitted by other engineers; and I am sure that if he were consulted he would agree that we ought to have another opinion. The member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) objects to the extension of the harbour up the river because he wants to keep that beautiful watercourse free from shipping for all time. Then he ought to disagree with the extension proposed.

Mr. Panton: I am prepared to go that length, but it is far enough.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Other members are prepared to go a little further.

Mr. Panton: I do not agree with them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member is illogical. If he does not want the shipping in the river, he should not permit any at all. Let me point out that it is necessary to go very much further than now proposed, in order to get all the accommodation that will be needed for an indefinite time. If it is merely a matter of sentiment that prompts hon. members to desert the river scheme, then one can admire the sentiment whilst wishing that one could keep the river a thing of beauty for ever, and not allow factories and other establishments of that sort on its banks. However, that cannot be done.

Mr. Panton: It can be if we insist it shall be.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It cannot be. We have to be sensible in the matter.

Mr. Panton: Let us commercialise everything!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know that the wonderful ships at Fremantle disfigure the water there very much. If the hon. member tried to remove the shipping from the river at Fremantle, he would get a cold reception from Fremantle people.

Mr. Panton: Now you are going to the other extreme.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No. Even the Minister agrees that the harbour is all right as it is. The accommodation afforded by the outer harbour scheme can easily be provided without going much further up the river; and, after all, it is a question of what the country can afford. I do not know whether hon. members realise what the expenditure of such an enormous sum of money within a few years will mean. It will mean a good deal more to the country than is now realised. Undoubtedly we have to improve harbour facilities at Fremantle, and undoubtedly there must be a new bridge; but we must also bear in mind the cost of those works and see where the money is to come from—not only where it is to be borrowed, but how we are to pay interest on it, because we shall not be earning a great deal as the result of the expenditure.

Mr. Lutey: What shall we do? Stop development until the harbour is ready?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Certainly not; but we shall not be earning a great deal more because of this proposed expenditure. We shall have to spend large sums of money quite apart from the present proposal, in order that the wealth of the country may be increased.

Mr. Lutey: If we keep on developing, we must have more harbour accommodation.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course; and a harbour will have to be built at Esperance. Does not the hon. member want a harbour there? Does not the member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough) want expenditure on the harbour at that port? Those hon. members do not desire that harbour expenditure should be centralised at Fremantle.

Mr. Panton: A large amount of money will have to be spent on the bridge, in any case.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is the point. The bridge will be so great, and such a barrier across the river, that once it is built it will settle any further extension up the river.

Mr. Panton: That is what I am pleased about.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member takes the matter light-heartedly.

Mr. Panton: I take everything light-heartedly.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The expenditure of £1,200,000 on a bridge will mean that future extension of Fremantle harbour must be outside. I do not know whether the present proposal is right or wrong. All I know is that the Minister produces a Bill and tells us very frankly that if we approve of the measure, although it is for but a small amount and really only wanted in order that land may be resumed, we shall be approving the scheme set out in Mr. Stileman's report. There is no doubt about what the Minister wishes us to understand. I should have no objection whatever to the resumption of the land if that were all that was needed; but I have a great objection to agreeing to the proposal generally, not because of the two millions sterling which will have to be spent in the river, but because the proposal involves a very considerable expenditure before long on an entirely new harbour.

Mr. Panton: That objection of yours will be noted.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member will not remember the cost of the bridge to-morrow morning.

Mr. Panton: Do not worry about that, the member for Fremantle will keep me advised.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is an admission. I daresay the member for Fremantle himself will not recollect.

Mr. Sleeman: Do not bet on that!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We have to proceed with extension of harbour facilities, and the thing is to do what is right and best. After all, it comes to this, will the House accept Mr. Stileman's recommendation without question? Will the House scrap all previous ideas as to harbour extension? Will the House scrap all ideas held up to the present regarding a river harbour? Those are the things hon. members have to do if the Bill is carried. I am always pleased to support necessary works. I have to remember that the Minister tells us it will take till next June to prepare the necessary plans: apparently the bridge cannot be started before then. June next year is a long way off, and in the meantime the Minister might get Mr. Stileman to obtain the views of some other engineer on this great question generally. That ought to be done. Sir George Buchanan is an eminent engineer, though of

course his stay here was not long. His opinion on a subject of this kind should not be lightly discarded.

The Minister for Mines: He spoke more about politics than about engineering while he was here.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know anything about that.

The Minister for Mines: I do.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Many people who come here think seriously about things in Australia: but that does not concern me, and I hope it does not concern the Minister. Why should we trouble about what people think?

The Minister for Works: Can you tell me why Sir George Buchanan's name does not appear on the list of the London Institute of Civil Engineers?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know that it does not.

The Minister for Works: I tell you it does not.

Mr. Panton: Probably he is not in the union!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Has it never appeared there?

The Minister for Works: I believe it did at one time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know Sir George Buchanan, and I do not think the Minister need belittle him in order to exalt Mr. Stileman's opinion: that is not the way to do it. All I suggest is that, if not Sir George Buchanan, some other eminent engineer should be got to advise before we set out on the heavy expenditure proposed.

The Minister for Mines: That is all right. Keep to that and you will not do too badly.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose I have no right to question Mr. Stileman's report, but I suggest that the Government, before undertaking this very great contemplated expenditure, should get a second opinion on the scheme. I hope the Premier will agree to that, and that we shall be allowed to pass the Bill in order that the required resump-tions may be made, without necessarily committing ourselves to the adoption of the recommendations in full of the Engineer-in-Chief. That would avoid all delay, for the plans cannot be ready much before the House meets again next year, when the matter can be further considered. Of course we shall have further opportunity

to discuss the scheme when a vote is asked for so that the next section of the work may be carried out. It is altogether wrong that we should be asked to consider so great an undertaking in the closing days of the session. I suggest that we pass the Bill merely in order that the necessary resump-tions may be made, and that before the House meets again the Government should get confirmation of the scheme embodied in the Engineer-in-Chief's report. We do not know the Engineer-in-Chief as well as the Minister does, and this is a very big undertaking and ought not to be lightly approved by the members of the House. Of course the Engineer-in-Chief's report is a most excellent report in every detail; but it is possible to have an excellent report without the scheme being the best that can be adopted. We know that there is no shipping accommodation scheme quite as satisfactory as a river scheme. If necessary we could devote two miles of our river to harbour accommodation, and would then have quite a considerable area of water untouched. I hope the Minister will agree to the suggestion that the passing of the Bill shall not be construed to carry with it approval of the whole work. If the Minister puts his bridge across the river, it will for all time bar any further extension up river. The Engineer-in-Chief does not approve of a turn-table sort of bridge to let the boats through. He is emphatic in saying it would be wrong to have such a bridge over our river. At any rate, no great harm could come of the suggestion I have made, and the Minister would get all he wants for the moment. I hope he will agree that all we can be expected to do just now is to pass the Bill before us.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [7.36]: The Minister, when moving the second reading of the Bill, said it was a small one, but that it involved highly important issues. I agree with him in that. There is no gain-saying the fact that if we pass the Bill we practically pledge ourselves to the main scheme embodied in the report of the Engineer-in-Chief. I want it to be clearly understood that I am not opposing any harbour extension, nor the construction of a bridge at Fremantle. Certainly something is long overdue in that respect. But when we come to the proposed scheme we find it is totally different from what we had been led to expect would be the future harbour extension at Fremantle. It is something

like 25 years since I was a resident of Cottesloe Beach, when land was resumed by the then Government with a view to deviating the railway along the other side of Buckland Hill. The Government had tests made in the middle of the river to see whether the foundation would warrant the construction of a bridge. In facing such an important undertaking as the extension of the Fremantle harbour, I should have liked to have the views of the Harbour Trust Commissioners. I do not suggest the Minister is withholding any information, but it would have been better if we had had the views of the Harbour Trust Commissioners.

The Minister for Works: How do you know they have discussed this question?

Mr. THOMSON: Since the extension of the Fremantle harbour has been for so long discussed, if the Harbour Trust Commissioners have not discussed it they are not a very far-seeing body of men, and it is time we replaced them.

The Premier: It is for them to administer the harbour as they find it, not to consider extension schemes.

The Minister for Works: You don't mean to say you are criticising the Engineer-in-Chief!

Mr. THOMSON: The fact that those commissioners have been administering the harbour since its inception—

The Premier: Several of them are quite new on the Trust!

Mr. THOMSON: — their opinion should be of as much value as the opinions of members of Parliament and of outsiders. The House is entitled to know the opinions of the Harbour Trust Commissioners.

The Minister for Works: Some of them have not been in Fremantle nearly so long as I have.

Mr. THOMSON: That does not justify the Minister in putting up his opinion against theirs. We are entitled to know the views of the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners on this extension scheme.

The Minister for Works: There is not an engineer amongst them.

Mr. THOMSON: That does not matter. We are entitled to know their views. How many engineers are there in this House?

Mr. Lutey: At all events we all realise that harbour extensions are necessary.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, and we realise that in passing the Bill we are practically pledging the State to an expenditure of over three millions in the construction of a bridge and the extension of the wharves as far as the

site of the new bridge. Since we have a Harbour Trust composed of practical common-sense business men—I assume that is why the Minister and his colleagues selected them for their positions—

The Premier: They were not selected on account of any special knowledge of harbour extension.

Mr. THOMSON: But they were selected because they were business men. After all, the extension of the Fremantle harbour is the extension of a very large business concern. The House should have the views of those gentlemen. Then I should like to know the views of the Chief Harbour Master before we commit ourselves to a scheme costing £3,200,000, plus the cost of resump-tions. We had a scheme submitted by Sir George Buchanan. Yet that scheme is dismissed by the Engineer-in-Chief with a few remarks to the effect that there were not adequate approaches, and that in his opinion it was not desirable to go any further up the river. Here we have two men occupying eminent positions in the engineering world, and they are at variance on this subject. I recognise that the Government must have a very decided leaning to the opinion and scheme placed before them by their Engineer-in-Chief. But here we have two authorities holding divergent views.

Mr. Lutey: One was here only about ten minutes.

Mr. THOMSON: The fact remains that he was an engineer of high standing and certainly he must have been considered to be fully qualified, or the Federal Government would not have asked him to come out and report on the harbours of the Commonwealth. I do not claim to be qualified to express an opinion when it comes to sanctioning a scheme involving the expenditure of such a large sum of money, and there are few members of the House qualified to express an opinion on such a scheme.

The Minister for Works: We have appointed a highly qualified professional man and are you going to turn his recommendations down?

Mr. THOMSON: No. But in all big schemes it has been considered advisable to get a check upon the estimate and the scheme submitted. The Minister for Railways, when speaking on the Estimates, told us that a mistake had been made years ago when the contract was concluded for the Government Electricity Department to supply the Perth City Council with cur-

rent. The Government acted on the report of an engineer, and the result of that contract has been a serious loss to the Government. If we had had a check by another engineer we would not have entered into such an agreement. On the same basis, we are justified in asking for a check on the Engineer-in-Chief's proposals at Fremantle. Years ago the construction of a dock was authorised at Fremantle, and I believe the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) was in the unhappy position of having to scrap all the work that was done because it was impossible to get adequate foundations to carry the structure. In that instance an eminent engineer made a costly mistake.

The Minister for Works: I think there was more politics in that than there is on this occasion.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not wish to enter upon that phase. Let us deal with the matter as an engineering scheme and in the light of what is best for the State. If, when the Minister introduced the Bill for the construction of the Fremantle dock, I had been in the House and had requested a check report, I would have received the same reply that the Minister for Works is offering to-night. The Minister would have said, "We have engaged one of the most eminent engineering authorities and we are acting upon his opinion." When the member for Guildford was Minister for Works it was proposed to expend £60,000 on the construction of a jetty at Albany. No provision was made for any facilities. I organised one of the biggest deputations that ever waited on a Minister in the Great Southern. The deputation suggested that instead of constructing a T-head on the existing jetty, sheet piling should be adopted so that, by dredging, the adjacent land could be reclaimed and the Government could be recouped for the expenditure incurred. The then Minister replied in effect, "It is like your impertinence for you laymen to set up your opinion against that of an expert engineer." If our request had been adopted, the port of Albany would have been a different proposition from what it is to-day.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That work could not have been done for the £60,000.

Mr. THOMSON: Anyhow, the idea of the laymen was the more practical and would have returned better value to the State. Those illustrations should be sufficient to make us pause. The report of the Engineer-

in-Chief certainly indicates careful preparation and investigation. Still, Parliament is being asked to sanction a scheme the details of which we had no opportunity to examine closely until the report was tabled a few days ago. It is the policy of the Country Party, a policy in which I strongly concur, that all works involving large public expenditure, such as many before us to-day, should be referred to a public works committee to obtain the information that I have asked for to-night. We should be exceedingly careful before we come to a decision on this question. It is hardly necessary to pass the Bill if the Government merely wish to resume the land. The Government already have sufficient authority to resume the land. The Minister has told us definitely that the Government are pledged to this harbour extension scheme, and they would have been quite justified in acting as the Government of the day did 25 years ago when they resumed land for harbour extension. They would probably have got it at a lower price than they will have to pay now. However, the Government have decided to adopt this course, but I maintain that the House is entitled to have a check report. Not only are we dealing with a proposal to extend the Fremantle harbour, but we are dealing with a scheme that embraces the construction of certain roads. True, it is merely a suggestion by the Engineer-in-Chief, but when we look at the map we cannot but view the position with a certain amount of concern. If the scheme is adopted it will be essential to link up Robb's Jetty with the railway system, and construct a branch line to the Fremantle station. I would have liked a few more reasons from the Engineer-in-Chief and from the Minister as to why the original scheme was scrapped.

The Minister for Works: What was the original scheme?

Mr. THOMSON: The scheme that we have always regarded as the accepted scheme for harbour extension.

The Minister for Works: There has been no accepted scheme.

Mr. THOMSON: Mr. Angwin indicated to the House on more than one occasion that in his opinion the bridge should be constructed higher up the stream than is now proposed. It was in the minds of the public that when the existing bridges were removed, another bridge to take their place would be constructed where the borings have been put down. I understand that those

borings proved quite satisfactory. In support of that we have Sir George Buchanan's report on the utilisation of the river.

The Minister for Works: Sir George Buchanan's was the only definite proposal put up.

Mr. THOMSON: Quite so. I can only conclude that the data supplied to Sir George Buchanan influenced him sufficiently to recommend the extension of the harbour upstream. Although Sir George Buchanan spent only a short time in this State, he drafted an excellent report. In his recent report the Engineer-in-Chief of Western Australia said—

In his recent report Sir George Buchanan recommended extension of the harbour in an up-river direction, and he divided this extension into four sections giving the following additional lengths of quay:—Section No. 1, 4,100 ft.; Section No. 2, 3,200 ft.; Section No. 3, 4,700 ft.; Section No. 4, 16,300 ft. Section No. 1 would involve the removal of the existing railway bridge, and the extension of the wharves up to the existing road bridge.

That is practically what the Engineer-in-Chief has adopted.

The Minister for Works: Not quite.

Mr. THOMSON: To all intents and purposes he has accepted the first section of Sir George Buchanan's recommendation. Although Sir George was here for a matter of 10 minutes only, the Engineer-in-Chief seems to have thought that portion of the scheme was sufficiently good to justify him in recommending to the Government that it should be carried out. That justifies me in saying that the people are very much concerned about getting a check opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief's report. With regard to the proposed railway extension, the Engineer-in-Chief says there is provision for a south river railway, which is to come in near Guildford. The Minister stated that the construction of the Armadale-Brookton was one of the reasons why it was necessary to have an extension from Robb's Jetty, so as to relieve the pressure upon the bottle-neck through which so much of our wheat traffic passes. There is one portion of the Engineer-in-Chief's report that surprises me. He has a line drawn connecting Kondinin with Salmon Gums. I do not say we will not get a further report from him, but we must judge the position as we have it before us. On the information available I am disappointed that in outlining his comprehensive scheme, he seems

to have been governed by the zones served by the present railway system. I am not antagonistic towards any port. It is the policy of any party that all railways must have as their objective the carriage of produce to the world's markets by the nearest and shortest route. The Engineer-in-Chief has placed the zone for Bunbury entirely parallel to Lake Grace. The member for Albany gave some illuminating figures when he entered this House. He submitted a report showing the load drawn by "F" and "FS" engines between Wagin and Bunbury and Wagin and Albany over the ruling grades. He said on that occasion—

He submitted a return showing the load of F and Fs engines between Wagin and Bunbury, also between Wagin and Albany, over the ruling grades. The return showed that the ruling grade on the Wagin-Bunbury section to be: F, 235 tons; Fs, 266 tons. The load over the ruling grade between the Wagin-Albany section was: F class 380 tons; Fs 426 tons, or a difference in favour of Albany per train of 145 and 160 tons.

This shows that whilst the Engineer-in-Chief has gone carefully into the question of railway construction and harbour extension at Fremantle, he has not considered the simple fact put up by a practical man like the member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough). That hon. member showed that some engines are able to carry 120 tons more on another road than can be carried through the zone that the Engineer-in-Chief has marked out.

The Minister for Works: It is a question of regrading.

Mr. THOMSON: I must leave the Minister to discuss that question with the hon. member. I quote that illustration to show that in the preparation of his scheme the Engineer-in-Chief has not been supplied with sufficient data. It is the accepted policy of the Country Party that 12½ miles from a railway is the limit upon which farming can be successfully carried on. Even if a railway is not further away than that, many farmers may have to carry their produce anything between 15 and 20 miles to reach the nearest siding. I was very pleased to find that the Agricultural Bank trustees and the Railway Advisory Board were of opinion that, under present conditions of transport, this policy should continue. Let me take the red line between Kondinin and Salmon Gums. I may be out just a mile or two one way or the other,

but I think the figures I am going to quote are nearly correct. The Engineer-in-Chief has indicated that Esperance is the port to which the produce within the zone which commences at Kondinin should go. On my calculation, the distance from a point 25 miles west of Kondinin to Esperance is 220 miles. From the same point to Albany is 160 miles, which effects a saving of 60 miles of haulage. I hope it will be understood that I am not in any way desirous of preventing the much-needed development of the port of Esperance. Albany, however, is a natural port, and is practically landlocked. It seems to be the desire of the Engineer-in-Chief to overlook the claims of Albany. That town has recently celebrated its centenary, and that really means the centenary of Western Australia, for the first settlement of the State took place there. Until Fremantle was opened up and developed Albany was one of the busiest ports in Australia. Apparently there is no provision for the utilisation of this natural port, which is capable of development at a minimum of cost. I have no desire to take away from other ports that to which they are justly entitled. In Katanning we have the Pingrup-Magenta Railway Extension League, which held a meeting last week. This league is urging the extension of the line from Pingrup to Lage Magenta. The following resolution was adopted:—

That this meeting approves of the policy being laid down by the Government, namely a comprehensive railway scheme, but points out that any scheme for the development of our eastern areas which does not link up with Albany, the natural port of our southern areas, would not be in the best interests of the southern portion of the State.

If the linking up of Albany with these areas is neglected grave injustice will be done to a section of the State, and a similar injustice will be done to the producers in those areas if they are compelled to pay an additional 60 miles of freight upon their produce that goes to the world's market. I am certainly in favour of the development of the port of Esperance, but I say that any scheme which does not also provide for the development and utilisation of the port of Albany, I cannot look upon with favour. We as a party stand for the development of the outports, having regard to the carriage of our exportable goods. The Minister has clearly indicated that the passage of the Bill is desired to give the Government au-

thority to proceed with the necessary resumption of land and that next year when the financial position is being considered, the Government will announce to Parliament what they propose to do at that juncture. It is a great pity that the Minister was not able to bring such an important Bill before the House in the earlier stages of the session. Members would then have had an opportunity to go carefully into the question and perhaps we might have appointed a select committee to inquire into the two schemes. The Government would be wise if they withdrew the Bill in order to obtain further reports. I have given three illustrations, which, I think, would justify the House in asking for further consideration. We are asked to incur an expenditure of £3,200,000, but we know that that is merely an estimate. It is necessary that something should be done regarding the Fremantle bridges. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) has, in season and out of season, stressed the point that in his opinion the railway bridge is not as safe as it should be. Even with the repairs that have been carried out, the statement of the member for Fremantle has been borne out by the report the Minister read for the consideration of the House. We are asked to agree to a large scheme and we should have more information made available to us, or at least we should have a check report upon such an important undertaking as the extension of the Fremantle harbour. I would like to know something more about the statement made in the Engineer-in-Chief's report that if we extend the harbour, we are going to flood the low lying land on the river frontages in the Perth area. I would like to have that confirmed. I would like to know whether other engineers will confirm the report that we have received from the Engineer-in-Chief. Another phase about which we could get further information is as to the extension that will give the best results to the State for the next 40 or 50 years. We all agree that as the State develops we must provide increased harbour accommodation. I hope to see every port filled with shipping, for that will mean increased work for our people and increased produce to be conveyed to the ports to the ever-increasing number of ships that will visit our shores. As a layman I would like to know what estimate was submitted by Sir George Buchanan in connection with the scheme for extending the harbour up river.

Hon. G. Taylor: That information was included in the Votes and Proceedings for that year.

Mr. THOMSON: But the information should be submitted here for the purposes of comparison. Then, again, what will the scheme cost for extending the harbour outside the moles and along the foreshore at North Fremantle. The bridge that is to be built will cost £1,200,000. It would be unfortunate if after it had been erected for a number of years, we found that it was necessary to pull it down and re-erect it elsewhere. In the opinion of experts, is the outer harbour, to be erected in the future outside the North Mole, really practicable? I do not say it is impracticable, but I want to know. I admit that the provision of a suitable bridge is much needed, but £3,200,000 is involved in the construction of that bridge and the extension of the harbour in accordance with what I may call Section 1 of Sir George Buchanan's scheme. It is possible that we may find a mistake has been made and in the interests of the shipping we may have to face future extensions that will involve the demolition of the bridge to be erected now. We are entitled to more information than we have at present. I cannot bring myself to vote against the Bill because it is certainly looking ahead. I realise that the Minister intends to spend £2,000 only in connection with boring and the preparation of necessary plans that the Engineer-in-Chief proposes to submit for the consideration of Parliament next session. A large area of land will have to be resumed. Has the Minister any estimate of what that will cost?

The Minister for Works: That is included in the Engineer-in-Chief's figures.

Mr. THOMSON: I have not been able to find that in his report.

Mr. Sampson: It is shown on page 12 of the report.

Mr. THOMSON: I had not noticed that reference. In view of the point I have made regarding the necessity for further information, I consider the present Bill provides an example of how advantageous it would be if we were in the same position as the Commonwealth Government, and a standing public works committee were in existence to consider the scheme and justify the measure to the House. Undoubtedly the Minister has to be guided by the decisions and reports submitted to him by his Engineer-in-Chief. I presume no member occupying the position

held by the Minister for Works would feel justified in opposing the advice of his expert officer, but I still claim that, in view of the enormous expense to be incurred, more information should be available to the House than has been submitted by the Minister.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [8.27]: I welcome the Bill, which is many years overdue. Governments in the past have shelved the problem of constructing new bridges for Fremantle. We need only go back to the 14th October, 1926, when the Engineer for Ways and Works submitted a report on the railway bridge and said that he could not undertake to maintain it in safe working order for more than three years. One reason why this work should be speeded up and no moment lost, is that 12 months have elapsed since the engineer made that report. Another 12 months will have elapsed before work on the bridge will be commenced and that will leave less than 12 months for the Engineer-in-Chief to complete the new bridge. It will be gambling with the safety of the public if something is not done to provide a new bridge before the lapse of the three years mentioned by the Engineer for Ways and Works.

Mr. Thomson: While we accept the engineer's statement, I do not think he really means that the bridge will fall down at the end of that period.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think so either, seeing that the bridge has been re-piled and practically reconstructed quite recently.

Mr. Thomson: It is in a better condition now than it has been for many years past.

Mr. SLEEMAN: On the other hand, if in the course of one of the yacht races, a boat should strike the traffic bridge, communication between Perth and Fremantle will be cut off. The traffic bridge is in a rotten state of repair. I have talked to many men who have worked on the bridge and they all bear out that statement. While some may claim that engineers should make reports, I am satisfied to take the word of men who have been working on that bridge and have an intimate knowledge of its condition. I can state definitely that the condition of that bridge is far more serious than some people imagine. One portion of the Engineer-in-Chief's scheme should be reviewed and that is his proposal to narrow the width of Fremantle harbour to 800 feet. It is sometimes said that laymen have no right to criticise the report of an engineer like Mr. Stileman. On the other hand, nautical men have a

knowledge of the working of a harbour and I have spoken to many nautical men at Fremantle, but have not yet found one who has agreed that the Engineer in Chief is right in his proposal to narrow the harbour down to 800 feet. It is common property at Fremantle that the Harbour Trust Commissioners have submitted a report on that point and they are men who have some knowledge of the working of a harbour. Then again, it is stated that the members of the pilot service at Fremantle have also submitted a report. If the pilots have done so, I am prepared to take their word just as much as I am prepared to accept the word of the Engineer in Chief. When the actual building of the harbour comes into question, the views of the engineers must be taken, but when it is a question of the actual working of the harbour and a doubt is expressed about the wisdom of keeping it down to the narrow width of 800 feet, then we should accept the views of those associated with the operations being carried on in the harbour itself. Something should certainly be done to review the position before that part of the scheme is actually started. I am sorry that only £2,000 is to be devoted to the scheme for the present. I believe more should be allocated because I consider that the work would be completed in quicker time if more money were made available. I presume that nothing will be done until such time as the Estimates have been brought down next year, and it may be October or November before any further money is voted for the construction of the bridge. I suppose that most of the material, as is generally the case in such undertakings, will have to be imported. I wish that were not the case, but that we could produce it in the State, or at any rate in Australia. History, however, will repeat itself and we shall find it necessary to go outside Australia for the materials that will be required. If we have to wait until the material is ordered, I can see that the bridge is not going to be built within three years—the period mentioned in the report of the Engineer for Ways and Works; it will be nearer five years. I hope that the opinions of nautical men—captains, ships' pilots, and others—opinions worth taking into consideration, will be obtained before it is definitely decided to keep the harbour down to the suggested width of 800 feet. While the Engineer in Chief does not propose to carry the harbour to a depth equal to that of the river nearer the mouth, at the same time it will always be possible

to dredge it to a greater depth, but once we widen it a certain distance, it will be a difficult undertaking to increase that width. Therefore I hope that that part of the scheme will receive further consideration.

MR. LATHAM (York) [8.34]: I sincerely hope that the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and others who have spoken will carry some weight with the Minister. I am more than ever convinced, since hearing the speech of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) who is in intimate touch with men whose opinions we cannot afford to ignore, that there has not been sufficient investigation carried out in connection with the proposal. The Minister has told the House that he requires only £2000 to enable him to carry out preliminary work. I am sincerely hoping that he will drop the Bill and expend £2,000 just the same in the investigatory work. This sum can be voted in the usual way. I have only to look at the plan that has been submitted with the report and it occurs to me that I should like to ask the Engineer in Chief this question: why not build two railways, one on each side of the river, and use the harbour facilities on either side of the river for the transport of our goods?

Hon. G. Taylor: And do away with the bridges?

MR. LATHAM: We have a waterway that runs to the city and there are good roads. I have not had the opportunity of perusing Sir George Buchanan's report but there is no doubt to my mind that he must have made provision for a bridge over the river not, however, to involve the State in the expenditure that is proposed by the Bill.

The Minister for Works: Much more.

MR. LATHAM: We have not his figures.

The Minister for Works: Yes, you have had them.

MR. LATHAM: One cannot always keep figures and details in mind. I am sorry that the Bill has been introduced so late in the session. I am trying to absorb the report of the Engineer in Chief. It is comprehensive and deals extensively with the harbour project, and I am convinced that it requires more consideration than it has been given by this House in the short time it has been before members. There is no doubt that we shall have to build another railway on the south side of the river to carry the wheat traffic to the port, and I cannot for the life of me see why we should spend so much money on a bridge that in the near future

may not be required to the same extent as it is needed at the present time. I ask the Minister not to commit the House to the expenditure of the whole amount of money that has been mentioned.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Minister has told us that the Bill will do that.

The Minister for Works: I did not say that.

Mr. LATHAM: I want the Minister to assure us that it does not. If it does I shall vote against the Bill.

Mr. Thomson: It ties us down to a million pound bridge.

Mr. LATHAM: It certainly does. A very nice plan has been prepared for us and presented with the report, but there is no desperate hurry for the work and the Minister might take the advice offered by members on this side of the House. The money required for the work of investigation will be money well spent. The members will have a better idea of what is being done and it will be possible to advise the people in the country whether the work is justified. If I were asked to-morrow whether the work is justified I should have to reply that I did not know. I ask the Minister to let us have time to consider the proposal. I heard the Minister's speech but I have not been able to grasp all that it was intended to convey. I ask him again not to bind us to the expenditure of £3,200,000 which is the estimate that has been given, and which might be more, even £5,000,000.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.38]: I support the request voiced by different speakers in regard to the desirability for further consideration being given to the matter. There is no reflection upon the professional ability, sincerity or knowledge of Mr. Sleeman. We have heard the arguments advanced by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) in favour of having the harbour a width greater than the proposed 800 feet, and we learnt from that hon. member that he had obtained the views of those who had a knowledge of harbour requirements. It is realised that the amount asked for immediately is only a small sum but, after all, the approval of that amount means approval being given to the big scheme. Hon. members realise that added space in the Fremantle harbour is necessary. Shipping is cramped because of the need for space, and until facilities are provided the difficulties must increase. The

percentage handling of imports and exports is greater at Fremantle than at all the other ports put together. From 1920-21 to 1925-26 the percentage of imports handled at Fremantle was 93, and exports from 75 to 87.7. It is clear that the position in regard to increased accommodation is becoming increasingly severe. With the area under wheat every year increasing rapidly, the existing difficulties will be added to in the not distant future. It is very important that the work should be done and since we have no body such as a public works committee, we might refer the matter to a Royal Commission.

Mr. Sleeman: With the idea of delaying the work.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, only to ensure that the right course was decided upon. It is very easy, particularly in the closing hours of a session, for a serious error to be made. It would be improper on my part, being a layman, to criticise the scheme.

Mr. Sleeman: Who would you have on the Royal Commission?

Mr. SAMPSON: That would be a matter for the consideration of the House. I believe that accumulated wisdom focussed on this subject would result very probably in the saving of a good deal of money and possibly in a better scheme being provided. The Minister will agree that not infrequently Bills, after being considered in this Chamber and being sent to another place, the House of second thoughts, are returned with various amendments which often are accepted almost without question. And who would say that a Bill introduced into this House by a Minister and discussed by members has not received serious and thoughtful consideration? Yet, following the debate here, the Council has been able to advance other ideas, and in many cases the result has undoubtedly meant the placing of a better-working measure upon the statute-book. I have frequently pointed out the need for added harbour accommodation at Fremantle. I have urged the importance of the establishment of a refrigerator there for pre-cooling of fresh fruit to be sent overseas.

Mr. Sleeman: We will have that at the top end.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope that such scheme as may ultimately be adopted will include pre-cooling stores erected in the position most convenient for our advancing industry

of apple and pear production for oversea markets. Further, I am indeed pleased that serious consideration is being given to the extension of harbour accommodation at Fremantle. Nevertheless I repeat that it would be better, before deciding definitely upon this big scheme, to refer the matter to a Royal Commission, so that the fullest evidence may be obtained with a view to securing not only the best scheme, but the best scheme at the most economical cost to the people of Western Australia. That scheme should, of course, have in view, as the scheme now before us has, the provision of future accommodation to meet the increasingly large requirements of Western Australia as regards the added production of wheat in the years that are to come.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	..	22

Majority against .. 6

AYES.

Mr. Davy	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Mann	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Sir James Mitchell	Mr. North

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Millington
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Heron	Mr. Rowe
Miss Holman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Corboy

(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [8.53]: The main point involved in this Bill is the site of the bridge to be built across the river. Naturally, no layman likes questioning the professional opinion of a gentleman of the very high attainments possessed by Mr. Stileman;

neither do I propose to do so. The main point, however, is that when committing the country to a bridge that will cost over £1,200,000, and also committing the country to an outer harbour scheme that may cost anything between £10,000,000 and £20,000,000, we want to be very careful to know that we are putting the new bridge in absolutely the right place; and it is on that ground I am addressing myself to the Bill. Mr. Stileman's report is in every way a most comprehensive and valuable document, both in regard to his proposals for harbour extension, which he makes perfectly clear, and in regard to his desire to open up the country by means of railways to the various outports. It appears to me, however, that we should be most careful before deciding on an outer harbour scheme. If the bridge is built at the point proposed in the Bill, opposite East-street, Fremantle, only a very small addition can ever be made to the present inner harbour. This small addition is shown on the plan submitted by Mr. Stileman, whose report evidences his desire to build a big outer harbour scheme on the north side of the Mole at Fremantle and on the north side of the river. To my way of thinking, it is surprising that if an outer harbour scheme is undertaken at Fremantle, it should be on the north side, because the north side of the river is certainly much more exposed to gales and the roughness of the ocean than is the south side. At Port Samson we have already had experience of harbour improvements and jetties constructed in the ocean, and exposed to the strength of the waves, being entirely swept away. The fact that a big breakwater would have to be built as part of the outer harbour scheme is clearly shown in Mr. Stileman's report; and the huge expenditure involved in that great breakwater represents, in my opinion, one of the objections to building the bridge on the site proposed, without the report disclosing any estimate of the cost of the huge outer harbour scheme. I speak purely as a layman in saying that if we are going to have an outer harbour scheme, it could be constructed much more cheaply on the south side of Fremantle, where there is Cockburn Sound, so well protected by Garden Island, and where a good deal of work was done in connection with the Naval Base, and where, moreover, possibly a little of that work could now be utilised.

I do not know whether it could or not, because what we would visualise if an outer harbour scheme were adopted would be to have it a good deal closer to the town of Fremantle than was the work at the Henderson Naval Base. All I say now is that before we put the bridge in the proposed locality, which will mean no further extension of the harbour up the river, we should have another professional opinion besides that of Mr. Stileman. If the matter were referred to him, I should imagine he would reply that he would like to see another opinion from an engineer of high standing before the country puts the bridge at this point. Particularly is this so when we remember that there are at least two high opinions from competent engineers in favour of extending the harbour further up the river. I believe it has always been accepted as this country's policy that that is where further extension should take place. I am not one of those who would wish to see the shipping ever brought far up the river: I would not like to see it come right up to Perth, or even as far as Freshwater Bay. However, I do recall plainly that in the time of the James Government, on the recommendation of the Engineer in Chief of that day, a large area of land was resumed between Blackwall Reach and Rocky Bay, recommended by that Engineer in Chief as the site where the new bridge should be erected. I know also that subsequently to the resumption of that land a good deal of work was done by the Public Works Department in testing the ground to see whether it was a fit and proper place in which to build a big bridge of the nature of that now proposed to be put opposite East-street in Fremantle. Looking at the plan one sees that if the bridge were placed at that point, it would leave all the river, from the existing bridges right up to and including Rocky Bay, available for harbour extension. That, I believe, was the idea of both the James Government and the Engineer in Chief of the day. At the time of making those large resumptions in that locality they had that idea in mind. That is also the proposal that Sir George Buchanan made in his report. I commend the Government on their desire to deal with this question of properly linking up the two sides of the river by a substantial bridge. There is no doubt the existing bridges are antiquated and should be replaced. I do not wish to see the matter unduly delayed, but it is the duty of the House to make sure, before the bridge is built, that it is put in the proper place. If

I were to offer an opinion as a layman, I would say that at this early stage in the development of Western Australia, when we are only just beginning to show the world what we can do in wheat production, we should not put the bridge where it will stop the harbour from being further extended up-river, unless we have the highest expert opinion that the bridge is being put in the proper place, having due regard to the great expansion we can all foresee in shipping and commerce at the port of Fremantle. If we have not that expert opinion we would be wise in taking the opinion of the ex-Engineer in Chief and of Sir George Buchanan, and putting the bridge further up the river between Rocky Bay and Blackwall Reach at the point the Public Works for years had it in their mind that it would be built, at the point where land was resumed for the purpose, at the point where thorough tests have shown is a good spot for the bridge, at the point where it will leave any amount of room for expansion of the harbour up the river should it be found that this scheme for building an outer harbour will prove unduly expensive. If the Minister puts this Bill through the House to-night, as he has the power to do, I hope that with the sound judgment he has shown as an administrator he will give the House at least the assurance that the bridge will not be put at the proposed point until another opinion has been obtained from an engineer of very high standing—we ought to be able to get one here long before the plans are ready—so that no mistake will be made in building this bridge at a point where it will block further extension of the harbour up-river if, later on, we find that is the proper thing to do. In any case, it appears to me we should not let the construction of the bridge be commenced until we know beyond all doubt that an outer harbour can be constructed at Fremantle at a reasonable cost. In the meantime the Minister is right in saying he desires to resume the necessary land before the end of the year. But he has ample power under the Public Works Act to resume all the land he requires. I am sure the House would approve of his doing that. And even if the land were not wanted, he need never fear that in that part of the metropolitan area, even if the bridge were put higher up the river, the State would lose anything on the land resumed. No doubt some of it would be valuable later on with the ex-

pansion of the harbour up the river if we decide to put the bridge at the other site. There is another point in Mr. Stileman's report, which I am surprised has not received more attention and indeed action at the hands of the Government. That is the construction of the South Swan railway. It is an extraordinary thing that for all these years we have been bringing all our wheat from the agricultural districts down to Midland Junction and then right through the bottleneck at Beaufort-street, and right through the metropolitan area, where the traffic is so very heavy, to reach Fremantle. Even before the session closes the Government might well carry the other part of this report into operation by bringing down a Bill for the construction of the South Swan railway, and by building that railway very quickly in order not only to relieve the congestion in the metropolitan area, but also to open up a good deal of fresh suburban land where a great many people are living, but where there is no railway to serve them. It seems to me that an important feature of Mr. Stileman's report is the construction of the South Swan railway. I think that would do a great deal to relieve congestion and facilitate traffic. It is something that should have the attention of the Minister at the very earliest date. In the meantime I am glad the Government are taking up energetically the question of harbour improvements at Fremantle to meet the needs of the future. I hope they will consider those needs very thoroughly before they risk putting the bridge at the point where, in a few years' time, we may be told the only thing to do is to remove it higher up the river in order to give room for further expansion of the harbour.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [9.7]: I have no desire to delay the Bill. The Bill in itself is about the simplest we have had before the House for some years. But we have also the Minister's statement that, largely, it commits us to very heavy expenditure. On the 22nd of this month there was this paragraph in the "West Australian"—

Fremantle Harbour Extension. The decision of the Government to proceed without delay with the replacing of the present railway and road bridges at Fremantle by a modern structure with a view to the extension of harbour facilities, was commented on before the meeting of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce yesterday.

I do not know where the Chamber of Commerce got its information that the Government intended to do this.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: From the report, of course.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not prepared to rush the passing of a simple Bill committing us to support, later on, a very heavy expenditure. If we could pass the Bill and know that was the end of it, it would be all right. But it is necessary, in the first place, to see if the bridge is in the very best position, and all that kind of thing. I do not want to have to support something afterwards. I remember that in 1908, when we were discussing the construction of a dock for Fremantle, I got the idea that it was not going to be quite a success. I spoke at great length against it and went to a lot of trouble to collect data. I convinced most people that the dock would never be built for the estimated amount. Nor was I satisfied that the class of dock proposed was suitable for the harbour. We were told by a very eminent engineer that it could be built for £325,000. Parliament rushed on with it, just as we seem likely to rush on with this scheme. I remember the then Minister for Works standing up in his most authoritative and dignified manner and saying, "I take the responsibility for this expenditure, and I will take the responsibility for the estimate." I remarked that his responsibility counted for nothing. We spent £200,000 on that dock, and we never got anything at all for it. When dealing with harbour extension—of which this bridge is the forerunner—we require to see that we are on sound ground, and to make sure that we are not going to lose another £200,000. I know that harbour extension at Fremantle is absolutely necessary. This State is going to be a great wheat producer, and no doubt the harbour facilities will need to be doubled within the next 20 years. But we require to be sure that we are going on right lines. I am not sure that it is wise to put in a bridge at all. I am reminded by my chief that it will cost an immense sum of money to put a railway down the south side of the river.

Mr. Latham: We could do it cheaper today than ever.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is not wise to be bringing the whole of the wheat through the Perth railway station to take it to Fremantle. It should go down the south side of the river. It might involve a big cost, but the building of that railway on the south side

would be more than justified. We have had several estimates as to what the proposed bridge will cost. Whatever its cost, it could go to the construction of the south-side railway. For given the South Swan railway, I do not know why we should have an expensive bridge across the Swan. If the people of North Fremantle wanted to go to Fremantle, they could cross the river in the ferry, as other communities in other parts of the world do. I have only this small Bill before me. I have not yet read the Engineer-in-Chief's report.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is worth studying carefully.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have not read it with sufficient care to pronounce judgment on it, but before the larger scheme comes on I will know more about that report. The Minister would be wise in holding his hand in respect of this Bill and, if necessary, giving us some more information about it. It has been said that the Minister proposes to put the Bill through to-night. Of course, if it should go to a division, we know the result already. But let us use common sense, instead of numerical force to carry the Bill. I warn the House to be careful in passing a Bill that involves the expenditure of millions of money.

MR. ROWE (North-East Fremantle) [9.15]: Having grown up with the Fremantle harbour, I am in a position to speak on it with some accuracy. I have been, am, and will be concerned about the outcome of this proposal. Having been associated with the harbour for 25 years I have seen some wonderful changes there. A few weeks ago I attended a representative meeting in the Fremantle Town Hall composed of merchants, ship owners, architects, engineers and harbour trust commissioners, and all present were well pleased and satisfied with the report made that night by the Engineer-in-Chief. Their only anxiety is to know when the construction of the bridge will be commenced. I hope it will not be long before it is commenced. Apparently it will be three years, if not more, before we shall be able to berth a steamer further up the river than at present. I recollect the time when the Fremantle harbour was in such a condition that one could walk across it from the south to the north side. I also recollect when the first steamer entered the harbour and when the first German mail boat berthed there. I

had the pleasure of working on that ship and the captain and officers were loud in their praise of the excellent accommodation. Not long ago the number of men engaged on the waterfront was 400. To-day the number is 1,200.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are not doing much at present.

Mr. ROWE: They will do more later on.

Mr. Latham: I hope they will start soon.

Mr. ROWE: Notwithstanding that 1,200 men belonging to the organisation were employed last year, there were not sufficient to cope with the work. Therefore we can picture what the future will be when the harbour is extended upstream to the point suggested by Mr. Stileman. I am satisfied that this is the only solution of the difficulty. Members have asked to-night for the reasons why the Engineer-in-Chief does not recommend extension of the harbour further upstream. I am sure the Minister will be able to explain that to the satisfaction of all concerned. I support the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle—in reply) [9.17]: The request made by the Leader of the Opposition and other members that more information should be obtained is not a fitting one when we have this report under discussion. I think I can show without fear of being successfully challenged that a report has never been presented to Parliament that has shown such wide vision, contained such a mass of information or revealed such a thorough examination of the question as has this report. The statistics given and the wonderful grip of the whole economic position displayed by Mr. Stileman is amazing, considering the comparatively short time he has been in Western Australia. Anyone who reads the report carefully and studies the points he has made must admit there is no necessity to look for further information.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The statistics are available to anyone.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But it is a question of collating the statistics and pointing the moral they teach. The Engineer-in-Chief has unquestionably established a case for the extension of the harbour. He has not invented the statistics; he has merely arranged them in such a way that they tell the tale simply, clearly and conclusively. That makes his report much more valuable than it otherwise would have been. I think the House will agree that

no report presented in the past has been so complete or has dealt with the points so clearly.

Mr. Latham: The report also deals with very heavy expenditure.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I shall allude to that in a moment. The expenditure we are asking Parliament to authorise immediately is a sum of £2,000.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is hardly worth worrying about.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think the House would hesitate about passing that sum because the plans have to be drawn up, the borings made, and the necessary inquiries regarding plant instituted.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You can do that without the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The object of the Bill is to give notice of resumption in order to save the extra cost in which the State would be involved if the measure were not passed this session. If the Bill is not passed this year and notice is not given before Christmas, we shall have to pay for the land resumption on next year's values, and those values will be calculated in the light of this scheme having been propounded. Thus the value of the properties required will be considerably enhanced.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are willing to go that far, but not to commit ourselves to the scheme.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When moving the second reading I stated that the Bill carried with it the acceptance by the Government of the Engineer-in-Chief's proposals, but we do not propose to proceed with the whole of the work immediately. The Engineer-in-Chief has stated that he cannot begin the construction of the bridge before June of next year.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then it will take two years to complete it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, two years after the work is started, and perhaps it will be nearer three years before it is built. Before we proceed with the construction of the bridge or with any work connected with the extension of the harbour, we must obtain Parliamentary sanction for the expenditure. All that this Bill will authorise is the construction of the railway.

Mr. Thomson: And the site of the bridge.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The construction of the railway will fix the site of the bridge, but we are not asking Parliament to vote money for the bridge. We are merely asking Parliament to authorise the construction of the railway, and before the bridge is built or the harbour is extended Parliament must sanction the expenditure. It appeared to Cabinet that the right thing to do was to introduce this Bill, instead of giving notice to land owners and proceeding with secret resumptions and doing as was done previously, namely pledging the State without Parliament having been consulted.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was many years ago.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, but the law would have allowed us to do it on this occasion. However, we thought the right thing was to come to Parliament and inform members of our proposals. Then the people would know just what was intended. The open-handed way of dealing with public matters is the best way; it leaves no room for suspicion that everything was not clean and above board. Consequently the Government have declared to Parliament just what their proposals are. To submit the Engineer-in-Chief's report to some other engineer for examination might result in his differing from Mr. Stileman and still another would have to be called in to act as umpire.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Mr. Stileman was a consulting engineer before he came here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Most engineers at times act as consulting engineers. If a third engineer differed, who would decide? The opinion on which we are acting is the opinion of a man whom the Government selected owing to his high professional qualifications, and to obtain whom we searched almost every country. He was selected after a very exhaustive examination of many applicants for the position.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We know all that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would be a poor lookout for the State if the Government, as a body of laymen, pitted their views against those of their chief professional adviser.

Hon. G. Taylor: No one would suggest that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the Government did that, they would have to take the full responsibility for their action.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Parliament would soon bundle them out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I hope they would. The suggestion now is that further investigation should be made.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is usual.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But how many investigations have there been already?

Mr. Latham: All who have reported have differed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Stileman has had the advantage of considering all the investigations that have been made before. He has had all the data and all the knowledge that the previous reports disclose and, after making his own examination, he has submitted these proposals.

Hon. G. Taylor: Which differ in some respects from the others.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But not in every respect. Mr. Stileman considers that if the State during the next ten years makes progress equal to that of the last decade, the extension up the harbour will be fully occupied within that period. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that during the ten years, further facilities will be discovered that will make for the quicker handling of cargo and the quicker despatch of vessels, and that in turn will make the accommodation at the wharf much more valuable than it is at present.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We may get bulk handling of wheat.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At present we are widening the wharf and the cargo sheds of Victoria Quay. That will allow us to use the quay to much greater advantage than in the past. Mr. Stileman deals with the tonnage per foot of wharf and the use made of it in Fremantle as compared with other ports. By the widening of the Victoria Quay sheds and wharf he is confident—and so are the trust officials—that we shall be able to make a greater tonnage use per foot of wharf than heretofore.

Hon. G. Taylor: That will not affect the berthing at the wharf.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the shed is only narrow and becomes blocked with cargo, another ship cannot be pulled into the berth because of the shed being full. If the shed were widened to hold more cargo, one ship's cargo might not fill it, and there would then be room

for another vessel to pull into the berth and unload without delay.

Hon. G. Taylor: It will not extend the berthing on the wharf, though it will facilitate ships getting loaded quickly.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They cannot use the berth in front of the shed at present because it may be full of cargo. Until the cargo is shifted it is no use putting another ship in there, but if the sheds will hold more cargo, other ships can set about discharging their loading. This is being done now, so that we may cope with the existing trade of the port. No doubt within 10 years some means will be devised for the quicker discharge and better handling of cargo. The probability is that the up-river proposals will suffice for half as long again as ten years. If it is found that the scheme propounded by Mr. Stileman is wrong, and it is considered advisable to go further up river instead of outside on the north shore as he suggests, arrangements can be made for that by the construction of a bridge that will permit of an opening span. That was in the recommendations of one or more of the engineers who reported on the matter. Mr. Stileman is opposed to that suggestion. Other engineers differ from him on the question of a bridge across the navigable water. It may be that their view can prevail, and that a bridge can be constructed with an opening span, if it is found later on advisable to go further up the river.

Mr. Thomson: It would mean the construction of a new bridge.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. The bridge could be re-arranged with a central span to open.

Mr. Thomson: The Engineer-in-Chief advocated short spans.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, it is possible to do it, and it can be done now. The design of bridge has not yet been decided upon.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then how was an estimate made of the cost?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think engineers work on a certain standard, and are able to get out these estimates. I feel confident from my discussions with the Engineer-in-Chief that he has stated definitely that it will be more economical to construct a harbour outside, and cheaper than to do so up river. He pointed out that the cost of building a harbour in Rocky Bay would be more expensive. He said that

everywhere engineers object to building a harbour around which the land is high, such as is the case at Rocky Bay. They always like flat country. If the harbour were extended to Rocky Bay, it would mean that all the wharves and railway communications would have to be over the water instead of on land. The cliffs come down almost sheer to the water. All railway tracks, sheds, etc., would have to be built over the water, which would mean great expense in construction. The outer harbour could be built on reclaimed land, which would be very much cheaper.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Reclaimed land is not cheap.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The sand which would be pumped up by a dredge would be used to reclaim the outside harbour. The opinion of Mr. Stileman is that this would be the most economical method of construction. All the proposals that have been made for up river construction have been criticised by the Harbour Trust Commissioners. They point out that a harbour three miles in length, with access between the two sides of the harbour only at the two ends, would be a difficult and expensive harbour to administer. The Trust have always been against that. It would mean the inauguration of a ferry service which they do not want, and would make the harbour very difficult to handle. On the North Wharf it is possible to work from both sides. The marshalling yards for the railways will be handiest for both the outer and inner harbours if placed on the north side. This embraces one of the most economical propositions for working and administration. The work on the outer harbour is many years ahead, and I do not think at this stage we need go minutely into the details of the finances. It is so far ahead that no estimate would be at all reliable by the time the work was likely to be put in hand.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: There is more shelter at South Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I discussed that with the Engineer-in-Chief, but he dismissed it without hesitation. The hon. member may think I am keenly interested in the south side because it is in my electorate. The Engineer-in-Chief gave an effective reply. He said that before a harbour could be made there it would be necessary to dredge a new channel and have an entirely new entrance to the harbour, whereas on the north side no further expenditure on an entrance

would be necessary. The existing facilities would operate. On the south side big banks would have to be removed and heavy expenditure incurred. A harbour there would also spoil the residential area along the South Beach. Marshalling yards for the railways and masses of wharves would have to go in front of the residential portion of the town. I do not think the present proposals mean scrapping all ideas of harbour development that have so far been put forward. They will do nothing of the kind. The idea of going outside was put forward by Mr. Ramsbotham when he was brought out by the State to make a report. That was one of the suggestions he put forward, and one that has been canvassed in the Department for many years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He was brought out to work.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. He was afterwards given charge of the construction of the dock. He was subsequently taken over by the Commonwealth and is today consulting engineer in London. It has been suggested that Mr. Stileman's report should be referred to consulting engineers for their opinion. I would point out that the record of the Engineer-in-Chief shows that he has had special training in harbour works. He has held important positions for the London Harbour Trust and has carried out big works for them. He told me that the harbour suggested here is on similar lines to that at Seattle, where I believe he was consulting engineer for the British firm that built the harbour. He dealt in his report with the different harbours with which he has been associated. He has been actively connected with a number of works in America, and has reported upon them for the English firms by whom he was engaged. His training has been largely connected with harbours. There is no man in the Commonwealth whose opinion could be pitted against his. He stands out as a man who has had sound training and whose judgment should also be sound. I disagree with the idea that we should call in laymen to pronounce judgment upon the engineering features of the scheme. I would not like to be a member of a public works committee which would pronounce judgment upon a scheme of this kind.

Mr. Thomson: The Federal Public Works Committee have shown that hundreds of thousands of pounds were squandered upon the Naval Base.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: They showed that after the horse had bolted. No doubt many millions of money have been squandered here and there. I think in this particular case the trouble was due to the fact that no comprehensive and detailed report was put up before the base was established. The site was selected by Henderson, but I do not think any detailed report on the harbour was ever submitted. No body of laymen would be qualified to pronounce judgment on a report of this kind. I am surprised at the Leader of the Opposition saying that the proposal means centralisation at Fremantle. If there was one thing that struck me about the report it was when Mr. Stileman said he was catering only for the zone for which Fremantle was the natural port. He set out the areas which are contributing to each of the other ports. He dealt with tonnages, went into statistics, and never in one instance did he say that the trade which belonged to other ports should be brought to Fremantle.

Mr. Thomson: He took into consideration the lines already constructed.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: He gives a plan and marks out the zones in colours and goes fully into detail. To say that this means centralisation in Fremantle is not fair, considering the information and declarations that are made in the report. They are all contrary to that viewpoint. The policy of the Government is as I proclaimed it to the business men in Fremantle. That policy is not one of centralisation, but one of giving each port the trade to which its geographical position entitles it. We do not wish to engage in expenditure at Fremantle to cater for business which other ports in Western Australia should be doing. We want each port to get its own share of shipping. I do not think it can be said, as was inferred by the member for York, that this Bill was delayed.

Mr. Latham: I do not say it was delayed purposely.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: We hardly had the report for a fortnight.

Mr. Latham: We did not have it either.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: I do not think any member of the Government had read the report before it was placed on the Table. The Government were, in fact, considering the report while members had a similar opportunity of also considering it. Now we are asked, even after the report has been circulated so that members may know

what the scheme is, why we have not provided more information. It cannot be said that we have brought this Bill down late. We tried to do the fair thing and had the report presented as early as possible. We cannot take seriously the proposition that no bridge will be required. All the authorities agree that to have a long harbour without any communication from either side is a very expensive and a very awkward harbour to administer. There must be means of access between the two sides of a harbour so that the work may be done economically.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But is that not done largely by boat now?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: There is not only that phase of the question. We have to consider the handling of cargo. Very frequently ships are unloaded on one side of the harbour and the cargo has to be carted to the other side. The whole of the wool is loaded into ships on the north side, and if ships have to be shifted about the harbour in order to deal with cargo, it will cause delay and increased cost. There must be means of quick communication between both sides of the harbour. Criticism has been indulged in regarding the attempt to build a dock at Fremantle. I want it to be clearly understood that the site chosen for the dock was not decided upon as the result of the advice of the Engineer-in-Chief. I took the trouble to examine that position after I assumed office, and I found that the Engineer-in-Chief was not consulted as to the best site for a dock but merely as to the best site south of the bridges. He was not allowed full discretion to select the most suitable site.

Hon. G. Taylor: I was not aware of that when I opposed it.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: Mr. Angwin, who then represented North-East Fremantle, made that clear, and the former Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Thompson, was most careful to make his position clear to me. He said that the site was not one he would have selected and that he was not given a free hand to choose the best site. He said he was asked to select a site south of the bridges and that in all probability the best site there had been chosen.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will you let us see the file?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: Certainly I have no objection to hon. members perusing the file. I have not the least doubt that the Leader of the Opposition has seen the file before. However, the fact

remains that the decision regarding that work was not the result of the advice of the Engineer-in-Chief. Nowhere on the file will it be found that the Engineer-in-Chief committed himself to a recommendation of that site.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I don't suppose so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is what made me careful when it came to a report upon harbour extension. Although questions were repeatedly put to me in the House, and there was a controversy in the Press, as well as some talk in the corridor about the length of time the Engineer-in-Chief was taking in the preparation of his report, I saw to it that there was no interference on my part to hustle him or to influence his judgment. It was left entirely to him, and there was no interference of any description on my part.

Mr. Thomson: That has never been suggested.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Engineer-in-Chief's report was produced in his own time and in his own way. It expresses his views without influence from any quarter whatever. It appeared to the Government that having engaged a professional adviser, it would not become us as laymen to criticise his report from a professional point of view. He has dealt with the position exhaustively from the commercial aspect.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is not what we are concerned about.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no question about it; he has provided a mass of information for the guidance of members.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are concerned only about the engineering aspect of the matter.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think we can say that he is wrong.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We want to be sure he is right, that is all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Leader of the Opposition said he was not prepared to say Mr. Stileman was right and Sir George Buchanan wrong. Will he put it the other way and say he is prepared to say Mr. Stileman is wrong and Sir George Buchanan was right?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would be just as reasonable to say that as to say the other.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course, and if we brought in some other

engineer and he differed from Mr. Stileman, then the Government would have to choose between the two or——

Hon. G. Taylor: Bring in still another engineer.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And where will it all end?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Parliament would have to be consulted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And who would decide?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Parliament could decide.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The present Engineer-in-Chief has had the advantage of all the reports presented previously, and all the information that has been collected. He has been able to work on that basis. I do not want to say anything about those who have presented reports previously; it would ill-become me to do so. I believe the Stileman report is sound, and I do not think any other report has been presented to Parliament with such a mass of detail and reasons backing up the conclusions arrived at. I hope the House will agree to the second reading of the Bill. It will involve no expenditure beyond the £2,000 to which I have already referred. Before the work of building the bridges is put in hand or the extension of the harbour undertaken, we must come to Parliament for the necessary authority, and if, in the light of information that is available then, further consideration is necessary, there will be the opportunity to give it this consideration.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That the consideration of the Bill in Committee be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

Mr. THOMSON: I was on my feet before the Minister spoke.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat?

Mr. THOMSON: But, Mr. Speaker——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will resume his seat. I will put the question.

Mr. THOMSON: On a point of order. I desire to move that the Bill be referred to a select committee so that we may obtain information.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will have another opportunity of doing that.

Hon. G. Taylor: You can do that at the next sitting.

Question put and passed.

BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Mr. Latham in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 5:

Mr. DAVY: How does the proposed new Section 5 differ from the original section?

Mr. LATHAM: I intend to move an amendment to delete Clause 3 to overcome objections that have been raised by members, and in order that the measure may read sensibly it is necessary to include the proposed new Section 5 so that it shall be unlawful for any person to keep an unregistered dog. As we propose to give the local authorities certain powers to refuse registration, it is necessary to amend the existing section so as to make it unlawful to keep an unregistered dog. Under the existing Act, all that is necessary is for a person to bring a dog along to be registered, and it has to be registered.

Mr. CHESSON: It is intended to exempt owners in the metropolitan area from the obligation to register dogs? That may be the effect of the amendment.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not intended at all. For instance, it has been pointed out that many sheep are paddocked at Guildford and Midland Junction pending stock sales, and that much destruction is caused by town dogs there. The amendment I will move will make the position quite clear.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Registration may be refused:

Mr. LATHAM: I move—

That all the words after "6a" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"The local authority may on its being proved to its satisfaction that a particular dog is of a savage or destructive nature and that it is not being kept under proper control, refuse to register or renew the registration of such dog. Provided that there shall be an appeal in the prescribed form from the decision of the local authority to the nearest Local Court."

Formerly objection was taken to the local authority having discretion to refuse the registration of a dog and to appeals being made to the Minister. The amendment will get over that difficulty and the appeal will be to the nearest local court. That will mean that two justices will be able to decide whether the local authorities have reasonably refused registration.

The Premier: Are you excepting the metropolitan area?

Mr. LATHAM: No.

The Minister for Works: You said you were willing to do so.

Mr. LATHAM: In the next clause I propose that the local authority may make by-laws for the protection of sheep owners.

The Minister for Works: What about the provision with which we are dealing now?

Mr. LATHAM: The proposed amendment is a very mild one that will afford some protection but inflict no hardship.

Mr. DAVY: I confess my gorge rose when I read Clause 3 in its original form. However, we can be satisfied with the amendment. If it be proved that a particular dog is of a savage or destructive nature and is not kept under proper control, registration or renewal of registration may be refused. The difficulty is to deal with dogs that chase sheep.

Mr. Coverley: What would become of such a dog subsequently?

Mr. DAVY: If it is not registered it cannot be kept. There is machinery to deal with that situation and, if it is not enforced, it is not the fault of the Legislature.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 4—Local authority may make by-laws for certain purposes:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of the proposed new section the words "and other persons" be struck out.

That will permit of by-laws being made operative in areas only where sheep are kept. It will not exempt the metropolitan area because by-laws may be required in parts where sheep are kept.

Mr. SAMPSON: The words should be retained. There are districts such as old timber mills where dogs are to be found in sufficient numbers that they are a menace. There would be ample protection since the by-laws would have to receive the approval of the Minister.

Mr. DAVY: The member for York said he would confine the operation of the clause to the metropolitan area, and he will more or less effect that object by striking out the words. If the words were retained the City Council might restrict the number of dogs to one dog per man, whereas many people keep two or more dogs. I venture to say that these dogs are not registered, and do not come into consideration in this clause. If the amendment is not accepted I shall vote against the whole clause.

Mr. SAMPSON: Aborigines are allowed one dog each.

Mr. Latham: We are not interfering with the present law.

Mr. SAMPSON: These dogs constitute a menace. I think the words should remain.

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

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 22.

Mr. LATHAM: If a man shoots a dog belonging to another he is liable to pay compensation for the loss of that dog. Some years ago a decision was given on the point by Mr. Justice Heusman. This clause is intended to put the whole position right.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 27:

Mr. LATHAM: When the Act was amended in 1923 a mistake was made. The year was changed over from January to July. This is merely a consequential amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 24th November, 1927.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the under-mentioned Bills:—

1, Loan and Inscribed Stock (Sinking Fund.)

2, Mental Treatment.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE WATERSIDE DISPUTE.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister: Will the Honorary Minister, the Hon. J. W. Hickey, as the State president of the Australian Workers' Union of Workers, make a statement regarding the existing industrial paralysis at Fremantle, which is causing incalculable loss to farmers owing to members of his union refusing to handle the season's wheat?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: The question is quite unusual, and indeed, so far as I know, unprecedented in this Parliament; but I just desire to say that the existing dispute at Fremantle has been referred to what I hold is the most competent body to handle a dispute of that description—the State Disputes Committee. I consider that at the present juncture any further remarks on the matter would rather prejudice than advance the prospects of a settlement.