

# Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 22nd November, 1931.

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

## OBITUARY—HON. J. SCADDAN, C.M.G.

**THE ACTING PREMIER** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.33]: It came as a great shock to every member of this Chamber to learn, last evening, of the extremely sudden death of the Hon. John Scaddan, who for so many years played a prominent part in the public life of Western Australia. Personally I had known the late hon. gentleman for well over a quarter of a century. I had been associated with him in the Labour movement before either he or I entered Parliament, and afterwards I was associated with him very closely in the work of our organisation, succeeding him as the general secretary of the party in this State. Therefore I had the opportunity of knowing him intimately over a very long period. Although during late years we differed in politics, I believe it will be agreed by everyone that Mr. Scaddan gave unselfish and most valuable services to Western Australia. From the time that he accepted the responsible position of the leadership, and especially after he became Premier of the State, he had to face a strenuous, important, and rather serious public situation. We will all agree that Mr. Scaddan handled the affairs of office in a manner creditable not only to himself, but to the State as a whole. After coming into this House I had many a pleasant hour with him. We shall miss his breezy and jovial personality, which was outstanding among the public men of Western Australia. He made himself very agreeable to us all; yet when one came to discuss with him

the problems to be faced in the position which he occupied, one realised that beneath that breezy and jovial exterior there was a highly sensitive nature. In my contact with him I realised on more than one occasion how the strenuousness of public life was undermining his health. This fact should bring home to the community just how much sacrifice is made by men who have to carry the responsibility of the government of the State, what it means to shoulder those heavy responsibilities in the interests of the country and its citizens. Political life entails heavy sacrifices on the men engaged in it, and also on their families. We all regret very much Mr. Scaddan's passing, and especially that he should pass in such a tragic manner and at a comparatively early age. Every one of us thought him the picture of health, and believed that he had many years of useful service before him. He had the distinction of being the youngest man ever to succeed to the Premiership of Western Australia, and in that office he acquitted himself with credit to all associated with him and to himself as well. Therefore we can all join in expressing deep regret at his sudden demise and in extending to the widow and the bereaved family our deepest sympathy. I move—

That the House desires to place on record its deep regret and profound sense of loss sustained in the passing of the late Hon. John Scaddan, C.M.G., a former Premier of the State, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to the widow and family by the Hon. the Speaker.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM** (York) [4.38]: In associating myself with the remarks of the Acting Premier, I desire to pay my tribute to the life of one of Western Australia's great men, who passed away last evening. I have no doubt that the services rendered by the late Hon. J. Scaddan will be better appreciated as the years go by. It is not everyone who enjoys the wide opportunities that came to Mr. Scaddan. At an early age he stepped into the rôle where he was to play such an important part in the government of Western Australia. For 21 years he served the State in this Chamber in many capacities, from private member to Premier. He placed on the statute-book many pieces of legislation which have done much to improve the standard of living and will be of great benefit to the people. This

legislation will remain a monument to his memory. As a young man he was associated with the mining industry, and he realised the toll taken of the lives of those engaged in that industry. Many who to-day are working on the goldfields have much to thank him for. In conjunction with my colleagues in the last Ministry, I had ample opportunities of appreciating his sterling qualities and knowing his great worth in times of trouble. No matter what political views we hold, I am sure that those of us who had the great privilege of knowing our late friend valued highly his unswerving and loyal friendship. In debate he could give hard knocks and was always willing to take them, but any hard feelings engendered in debate he left behind him when he left this Chamber. Not only will he be missed in political circles, but also by the many friends he made in the varied interests with which he was associated. The State has lost a great man, and we are conscious of our own heavy loss. Our sympathy goes out to his widow and family, and I can only trust that the appreciation we are showing of his services and friendship may in a small measure assuage their grief. In conclusion all I can say is that Mr. Scaddan served his country well.

**HON. N. KEENAN** (Nedlands) [4.41]: Speaking for myself and those associated with me in politics, I desire to endorse all that has been said by the Acting Premier and everything that has been said by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to our late friend, the Hon. John Scaddan. All of us appreciated his work as a politician; but to me personally Mr. Scaddan was far more than a politician, because he was one of my old goldfields friends. He was a man I knew as long ago as 35 years. On the goldfields perhaps more than in any other part of the world, ties of friendship were created irrespective altogether of political opinions or any other matters of difference. My friendship with Mr. Scaddan lasted down all the years, and so I especially feel his death. I respectfully join in tendering to his widow and family the tribute which the Acting Premier has so ably proposed.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [4.42]: I was very closely associated with the late Hon. John Scaddan for several years, and sat with him in Cabinet. In the circumstances

I feel that I may be permitted to say a few words in respect to his memory. I can pay an unreserved tribute to Mr. Scaddan's character. He was a big-hearted and lovable man, a man with the outstanding qualities of capacity, geniality, tolerance, and more particularly generosity. His generosity, indeed, knew no bounds save those imposed by caution. Raneour was quite unknown to him. He was warm-hearted and helpful, no matter how humble the position those seeking his assistance might occupy. John Scaddan's was indeed a beautiful character, and his memory will live long among those who had the privilege of knowing him.

I knew our brother; his mate dust I honour,  
and his living worth:  
A man more good and kind and just was  
never born into this earth.

Question passed, members standing.

The ACTING PREMIER: As a further tribute of respect to the memory of the late Hon. John Scaddan, I move—

That the sitting be suspended until 7.30 p.m.

Question passed.

*Sitting suspended from 4.45 to 7.30 p.m.*

#### QUESTION—TRAMWAYS, WEMBLEY PARK SERVICE.

Mr. CROSS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that hogie trams Nos. 106 and 110 met on the Wembley Park tramway single line at Northwood-street (between the Kimberley-street and Tate-street loops) at 5.42 p.m. on Friday, 16th November. 2, Is he aware that the tram travelling towards Wembley passed a white light at the Kimberley-street loop, and after meeting the other tram shunted back to the Kimberley-street loop and then proceeded to the Tate-street loop, where a red light was showing, and after waiting for several minutes at the Tate-street loop behind the red signal proceeded westwards and discovered that there was no tram in the next section? 3, Will he seek information why cars Nos. 106 and 110 met on a single line in the circumstances outlined in the previous question? 4, Will he seek an explanation why the car at the Tate-street loop was delayed for several minutes behind a red light when later it was discovered that there was no tram

in the western section? 5, Will he supply information as to the number of times that the tower wagon rendered attention to the Wembley Park tram signals for the year ended 20th November, 1934?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, No; the car travelling to Wembley passed a signal set at "danger"; it met another car in the section and shunted back to Kimberley-street loop. 3, See reply to Question No. 2. 4, The motor-man of the car mentioned reported that the signals were in order. 5, 60.

### QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

#### *Maddington Crossing.*

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will he give consideration to the installation of a pole, boom, single stick baulk, or any other type of mechanical protection for those who have occasion to use the Albany-road at the Maddington railway crossing? 2, Would it be possible to operate these or any other efficient type of protection from either Gosnells or Maddington railway station? 3, Alternatively, will he give consideration to the care of the Maddington crossing by members of the Limbless Soldiers' Association or other approved attendants?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes, at very great expense. 3, No.

### QUESTION—YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SCHEME.

#### *Acquisition of Trades.*

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Employment: 1, Has he read the criticism by Rev. A. C. Nelson, of Port Adelaide, as printed in yesterday morning's paper, in which the West Australian Youth Employment Scheme is referred to as "dead-end"? 2, As there are many boys who would prefer to learn a trade but who, on account of limitations imposed by awards and agreements, are prevented from doing so, will he give consideration to a review of the position and endeavour to secure more opportunities for boys desirous of learning trades?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: 1, Yes. 2, The provisions in the

awards and agreements governing apprenticeship are in themselves constituting safeguards against boys being led into the dead-end mentioned by the itinerant visitor referred to. As the conditions of apprenticeship are functions of the Arbitration Court and free from political control, I do not propose to interfere.

### BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Third Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR MINES: During the Committee stage the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe raised a point in regard to Clause 3, namely as to whether it was complete without the proviso that is attached to Clause 2; and asked would those suffering from silicosis and losing their employment be entitled to a refund of the contributions paid. I have found it necessary to have an amendment framed, and I have arranged that it shall be moved in another place. I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—BUILDERS' REGISTRATION.

Report of Committee adopted.

### BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

#### *Council's amendments.*

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Acting Premier in charge of the Bill.

No. 1: Clause 2, subparagraph (iii) of paragraph (a) of the proposed new Section 285A.—Delete the word "or," in line 3, and substitute the word "and."

The ACTING PREMIER: This is in order to bring the paragraphs together, and as I propose to accept the Council's other

amendments, this one will be necessary. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. : Clause 2.—After subparagraph (iii) of paragraph (a) of the proposed new Section 285A, insert a new subparagraph, as follows:—

(iv) the amount of the rates in respect of which the said order was made remains unpaid after the expiration of notice in writing by registered post of not less than one month or more than three months given by the Crown Solicitor to every person appearing by the records in the Office of Titles, or the Registry of Deeds, or the Department of Lands and Surveys, to have any legal or equitable estate or interest in the said vacant land at the address of such person appearing on the records aforesaid, that unless the amount of the said rates is paid within the period specified in the notice the said land is liable to become vested absolutely in His Majesty, or.”

The ACTING PREMIER: This provides that the notice must be despatched by registered post to those concerned, prior to the land reverting to the Crown. It is only a safeguard and it may be useful. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3: Clause 2.—Insert at the end of the proposed new Section 285A a paragraph, as follows:—

For the purposes of this section and of sections two hundred and eighty-five B and two hundred and eighty-five C of this Act, the term “vacant land” means land of any tenure which has not been improved (other than being enclosed with a fence) or cultivated and used for any purpose, or which, after being improved or cultivated and used, has ceased to be used by the proprietor thereof or by any person acting for, under, or through such proprietor in such a manner as to indicate that the said land has been abandoned by such proprietor.

The ACTING PREMIER: This is merely a definition of vacant land. The point

was raised in this House by the member for Nedlands, and I had it looked into so that the amendment should be made in another place if necessary. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

## **BILL—GOLD MINING PROFITS TAX ASSESSMENT.**

### *Council's Amendment.*

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

### *In Committee.*

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Acting Premier in charge of the Bill.

Amendment—Clause 7.—Delete the word “fourteen,” in the third line of the clause, and substitute the word “twenty-eight.”

The ACTING PREMIER: This is just to extend from 14 days to 28 days the period after the assessment is served till the payment is made. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

## **BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK.**

### *In Committee.*

Resumed from the 20th November.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 31, Staff not under Public Service Act, 1904.

Mr. DONEY: I hope the Committee will vote against this clause. I have not yet heard anything to alter my conviction that the change of control from the Public Service Commissioner to the Bank commissioners is other than a retrograde step. The Minister should show that the benefits to be derived from the change will be greater

than if the staff remained under the control of the Public Service Commissioner; and should show that the staff will have the same measure of appeal rights as if they were in any other branch of the service. Merely to say it is desirable that the commissioners should have the power of engagement and dismissal and the fixing of terms and conditions of service, is not sufficient. I suppose similar arguments could be adduced by all other heads of departments. But if complete departmental control of staffs is desirable, why should we have a Public Service Commissioner at all? The Public Service Commissioner is very highly regarded, both for his ability and his sense of justice, yet inferentially we have the Government taking up the attitude that he does not know his job as well as will the three commissioners, who probably will have no specialised knowledge of staff control.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the clause be struck out, with a view to inserting the following in lieu:—

31. All officers engaged by the commissioners as in the next section mentioned or hereafter engaged by the commissioners shall remain and be public servants within the meaning of the Public Service Act, 1904, and the regulations made thereunder and the Public Service Appeal Board Act, 1920, and be deemed to form a branch of the Public Service, and the terms and conditions of their employment shall be governed by the said Acts and regulations.

Such officers shall, however, as regards engagement, control, and dismissal be under the immediate supervision of the commissioners in lieu of the Public Service Commissioner, and so far as the said officers are concerned the commissioners mentioned in the said Acts and regulations shall be deemed to be the commissioners appointed under this Act.

Officers in the service of the commissioners shall be eligible for appointment to other branches of the public service, and officers in other branches of the public service shall be eligible for appointment in the service of the commissioners, but no officer shall be transferred from the service of the commissioners to any other branch of the public service or from any other branch of the public service to the service of the commissioners except with the concurrence or on the recommendation of the commissioners and the Public Service Commissioner.

My idea is to retain to the men employed in the Bank their rights under the Public Service Act. In order to give effect to the

wishes expressed by the Minister, I have made provision that the control of those men shall be entirely under the commissioners themselves. The officers will not be subject to the Public Service Commissioner, but they shall have the same rights as they have under the Public Service Act. Government supporters believe in unionism; this will give the Bank officials the right to retain their union. The amendment will overcome the objection raised by the Minister that the present trustees had no control over the staff in that they could not dismiss officers. It will give the commissioners all the power required, and will retain for the officers of the Bank their rights under the Public Service Act.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I oppose the amendment. It does not meet with the views of Cabinet, and it will not achieve what the hon. member desires. The Royal Commission recommended that the commissioners should control their officers. The Commission discovered a lack of discipline, particularly in the country. The member for Williams-Narrogin must know of it. Last year certain officers paid the bonus to men who were not entitled to receive it, contrary to the instructions of the general manager. The Royal Commission reported that a majority of the inspectors did not know their work. I have already mentioned in the House the case of an officer who recommended advances to his wife, and the manager admitted that improvements for the money advanced were not there. Yet that officer remained in the service for two years. Another officer was under the "dog Act"; he did not know what was going on and was not particularly concerned. Apparently the general manager did not know what was going on, but when the Commissioners told him, he promptly sacked the man. If the general manager is overwhelmed with work, he is not able to give attention to the discipline of the staff. I could give further instances. Could members imagine anything worse than having men collecting interest who themselves owe large amounts? Is it not necessary to have a clearing up? The license and latitude enjoyed by those people should be stopped. I was responsible for assisting to pass the Public Service Act, and I say that it, more than anything else, has led to lack of discipline in the service. I have known men

in one department who were guilty of corruption and who appealed. It would not have been possible for men possessed of moral sense to appeal. In one instance four officers had to be dismissed because they had been accepting bribes, and they would have won on appeal but for the overwhelming evidence of the Criminal Investigation Branch. The Leader of the Opposition said that the clause would interfere with the policy of unionism. The officers of the Bank could join the Bank Officers' Association and go to the Arbitration Court. Civil servants are asking for permission to go to the Arbitration Court and to set aside the classification of the Public Service Commissioner. I believe a big majority favour going to the court. The officers of the Bank could join the Bank Officers' Association and I understand that a majority of the present staff would prefer that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Well, they voted for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They voted in favour of going to the Arbitration Court. There is no principle of unionism at stake. The amendment provides that the officers of the Bank shall remain and be public servants within the meaning of the Act and the regulations. The hon. member has explained his intention that they should remain under the Public Service Commissioner in the matter of engagement, control and dismissal.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not the Public Service Commissioner.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, that is the meaning of the first part of the amendment. Regarding paragraph (2) of the amendment, the Public Service Commissioner does not appoint any civil servant. He recommends the Governor to appoint. There is a further weakness that the hon. member probably has not noticed. If he substituted the commissioners for the Public Service Commissioner, the commissioners would not only suspend officers but would hear the charges against them.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Under your proposal there will be no appeal.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The proposal in the Bill is clear. The officers of the Commonwealth Bank and of the Associated Banks have been able to obtain very good conditions from the Arbitration Court, and we do not hear of their being penalised.

They do their job and we do not find the want of discipline that has occurred in the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. C. G. Latham: How do you know that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I know that many bank officers have been dismissed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When they did not do their job. I know of very few bank officials who have lost their jobs.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I know that three not far from where I live were pushed out in one year.

The Minister for Mines: Their dismissal might have been justified.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Quite so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: On one occasion I received an anonymous letter about an officer and threw it into the wastepaper basket. The general manager asked to see it, saying "That is how we get most of our information." The charge made in that letter was found to be true, but the officer is still in the service. I think he profited by the experience. I do not want to make charges against field officers, but I have always been convinced that they have had too much licence, and the member for Williams-Narrogin knows it.

Mr. Doney: I am not disputing it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The clause is essential, and I think a majority of the officers of the Bank would welcome it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister has not made out a case for the retention of the clause. He wants the commissioners to have the power of dismissal. Under my proposal they will have that power. I did not say that the Public Service Commissioner had anything to do with the appointment of staff. I said that men in the Public Service might be transferred to the Bank, and that officials of the Bank might be transferred back to the service. What I desire to ensure is that the officers shall still be able to remain in their union or organisation. On his left the Minister has one of the greatest forces for getting people into unions, but he himself is now driving men out of a union, as the Civil Service Association may be termed. The Minister says the officers can form a new bank union. If it is desired to weaken a union, the best way to do so is to break it

into small sections. I am indeed surprised to hear this suggestion.

The Minister for Employment: He did not suggest anything of the kind. He said they could join the existing Bank Officers' Association.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This institution is not a bank. On the same argument, why do not all civil servants join the Bank Officers' Union? If ever a volte face was perpetrated in this Chamber, it has been done by the Minister for Lands. I hope members on the cross benches will see that these officers are allowed to maintain their rights. I am prepared to give the Minister the right to have these men dismissed and have others appointed, but they in turn should have the right to remain under the Public Service Act if they carry on in their employment. The excuses of the Minister are so weak that they are not worth while taking seriously.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister is unfair in his attempt to remove officers from the public service because some have not been all we would like them to be. It is a new principle to say that instead of penalising those who deserve it, we are going to deny privileges to all who now enjoy them. It is not correct say that the men have voted for this themselves. We are taking the responsibility of denying to these officers that which Parliament has created for their protection. The doctrine is a new one in the industrial world. I am not going to worry about the Bill any longer. It contains the most extraordinary provisions. The Minister has been carried away by the reports he has received, and has been unduly influenced by the Royal Commission. He has lost all sense of proportion. Royal Commissions should not influence us to do those things we would otherwise refrain from doing. I cannot stand for this kind of thing, but the majority must rule. This is contrary to everything I have understood until now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member, as well as the Leader of the Opposition, is quite wrong. This does not take away any privileges from the officers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It takes them from the protection of the Public Service Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They retain all the privileges they have enjoyed under that Act.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But it takes away their rights.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. The officers will not be penalised.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then why remove them from the protection of the Act?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am maintaining all their privileges, but bringing them under the control of the commissioners, where they ought to be. Under the rural bank system of New South Wales, the officers are all under the control of the commissioners.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That does not make it right here.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Is the hon. member complaining that these officers are a little better off than members of workers' unions? The shearer has no privileges. He can be put off at a moment's notice.

Mr. Patrick: You cannot do that with a shearer.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The commissioners will need the staff of the institution. They will not think about getting a new staff, because the present officers know their job, but they will insist upon discipline. Nothing unfair towards these men is being done.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are taking these men away from the protection of the Public Service Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Let me tell the hon. member that 90 per cent. of public servants have no confidence in the Public Service Commissioner. They have said that by their votes. The hon. member is out of step. The officers do not require what he says is necessary. These particular men are asking for a change. Because the discipline is wrong in this country, I desire to see the system altered. In the case of this institution there has been too much liberty, too much latitude, and too much freedom. It requires disciplining. It is essential that the commissioners should have power to discipline the whole staff. They will then get the work done.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	21
Noes	..	..	..	..	19
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	2
					—

## AYES.

Mr. Clothier  
Mr. Coverley  
Mr. Cross  
Mr. Hawke  
Mr. Hegney  
Mr. Kennecally  
Mr. Lambert  
Mr. McCallum  
Mr. Millington  
Mr. Moloney  
Mr. Munsie

Mr. Nulsen  
Mr. Rodoreda  
Mr. F. O. L. Smith  
Mr. Troy  
Mr. Waanabrough  
Mr. Willcock  
Mr. Wilson  
Mr. Withers  
Mr. Wise  
Mr. Raphael

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Brockman  
Mr. Ferguson  
Mr. Johnson  
Mr. Keenan  
Mr. McDonald  
Mr. McLarty  
Mr. Mann  
Mr. Marshall  
Mr. North  
Mr. Patrick

Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Sampson  
Mr. Seward  
Mr. J. H. Smith  
Mr. Stubbs  
Mr. Thorn  
Mr. Warner  
Mr. Welsh  
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

## PAIRS.

## AYES.

Mr. Collier  
Miss Holman  
Mr. Tonkin

## NOES.

Mr. Latham  
Mr. J. M. Smith  
Mr. Griffiths

Clause thus passed.

Clause 32—Members of staff engaged and subject to dismissal by Commissioners:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That the clause be struck out and a new clause, to stand as Clause 32, instead in lieu as follows:—

“The commissioners may engage any of the officers in the employ of the Bank at the commencement of this Act whose services the commissioners desire to retain.

Every officer in the employ of the Bank at the commencement of this Act whose services the commissioners do not desire to retain, and who is an officer employed under the Public Service Act, 1904, shall remain under the control of the Public Service Commissioner, and shall be eligible for and shall be appointed to any vacancy in the public service he is fitted to discharge the duties of, and not being lower in classification and salary than the office held by him in the employ of the Bank at the commencement of this Act.”

As the clause stands at present, it means that any officer the commissioners may not desire to retain in the employ of the Bank will be dismissed without any consideration whatever, and I desire that they shall have an opportunity to secure appointments in the Public Service when vacancies occur. I also suggest that appointments they may receive shall be not lower in classification and salary than the positions they held in the Bank. I do not want men placed in that position to be thrown on the scrap heap, without any chance in the world of appeal

against the treatment meted out to them. I have no desire to interfere with the proper discipline of the new institution that will be controlled by the commissioners, but to extend a measure of justice to men who may be dismissed from their positions although no charge may be levelled against them. I do not desire to protect those to whom the Minister referred as being unworthy of consideration, but so long as the dismissed officer has been honest, has done his work to the best of his capacity and discharged his duty faithfully, he should have an opportunity to secure a position in the service.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I oppose the amendment, which, if agreed to, would do a grievous wrong to public servants. The amendment provides that a man whose services are not retained by the commissioners “shall be eligible for and shall be appointed to any vacancy in the Public Service he is fitted to discharge the duties of.” That means that should a vacancy occur, one of the dismissed Agricultural Bank officers will have a prior right to appointment, although there may be more capable men in the department concerned who have been awaiting the opportunity for advancement for years. The member for Nedlands says that those men must not have that opportunity, but someone the commissioners regard as a “dud” shall receive the appointment. Is that what the hon. member wants?

Hon. N. Keenan: No, I want to extend a measure of justice to officers who may be discharged.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not justice. The commissioners may not desire to make a charge against an officer but merely to discharge him. Although the man may be a “dud,” he must receive appointment to any suitable vacancy, and better men will be prevented from securing advancement.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	22
				—
Majority against	..			5
				—



## AYES.

Mr. Brockman  
Mr. Ferguson  
Mr. Keenan  
Mr. McDonald  
Mr. McLarty  
Mr. Mann  
Mr. North  
Mr. Patrick  
Mr. Piesse

Mr. Sampson  
Mr. Seward  
Mr. J. H. Smith  
Mr. Stubbs  
Mr. Thorn  
Mr. Warner  
Mr. Welsh  
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Clothier  
Mr. Coverley  
Mr. Crook  
Mr. Hawke  
Mr. Hegner  
Mr. Kennedally  
Mr. Lambert  
Mr. McCallum  
Mr. Marshall  
Mr. Millington  
Mr. Moloney

Mr. Muosle  
Mr. Nulsen  
Mr. Raphael  
Mr. Rodoreda  
Mr. F. C. L. Smith  
Mr. Troy  
Mr. Wansbrough  
Mr. Wilcock  
Mr. Wise  
Mr. Withers  
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

## PAIRS.

## AYES.

Mr. Latham  
Mr. J. M. Smith  
Mr. Griffiths

## NOES.

Mr. Collier  
Miss Holman  
Mr. Tonkin

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 33 and 34—agreed to.

Clause 35—No member of staff to obtain an advance:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be added to the clause:—"No officer or servant of the commissioners shall take any part in dealing with or make or be concerned in the making of any recommendation in connection with any application for any advance under this Act made by the father, mother, brother, sister, or child of such officer, or the husband or wife of such relative.

Penalty: One hundred pounds."

I do not think the clause as it stands is sufficient to provide for what the Minister has in mind. The Minister has told us how officers have been able to make advances.

The Minister for Lands: The Royal Commission told you.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister told us about it. I would not bother about the Royal Commission.

The Minister for Lands: Very well then, I told you!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of course the Minister did. What is there to prevent an officer transferring property to a son or daughter or other near relative, and secure what he requires? Let us do the thing properly. The amendment will provide that such transactions may not be done through a relative. That is merely right. I see no

reason why the persons mentioned in the amendment should not transact business with the Bank, but such business should not be done through a relative.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why not include half-brother and half-sister, grandfather and grandmother, or even fiancée? Why not embrace the whole lot? If the hon. member will move his amendment to the penal clause, I will accept it, but I thought the provision in the clause sufficient.

Mr. Patrick: What about a son 16 years of age?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would leave it to the administration. No officer of honour would make an advance to any relative.

The CHAIRMAN: I consider the amendment should be moved to the penal clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is very difficult to detect relationship. No doubt in the Minister's electorate there are people of the same name who are unrelated. As the Minister has offered to accept the amendment, I believe there must be something wrong with it, and so I ask leave to withdraw it.

Leave refused.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 36—Administration of certain Acts transferred to commissioners:

Mr. THORN: The Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act provides for a separate board on which Colonel Denton has been the representative of the soldier settlers. Does the Minister intend to give soldier settlers representation on the commission?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not.

Mr. Thorn: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Because there is no need for it. Repatriation was finished years ago. Colonel Denton is a very good officer, a gentleman for whom I have great respect, but really he is not needed there. I told the soldier settlers that.

Mr. THORN: Will the withdrawing of such representation have any effect on the interest rates to be charged to soldier settlers?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. THORN: Will the soldier settlers continue to receive the same treatment?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The soldier settlers will be under the Discharged

Soldiers' Settlement Act, and all the privileges they now enjoy will be retained by them.

Mr. WARNER: Will the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act be repealed?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. WARNER: Under that Act are not the soldier settlers entitled to have a member on the board?

Mr. PIESSE: The Minister intends to deprive the soldier settlers of representation which they have had for a considerable time. While the provision remains in the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act, there will be much misconception amongst soldier settlers. I was deputed by certain soldier settlers to inquire whether the Government intend to substitute some other kind of representation. The present board consist of four members, the Managing Trustee of the Bank being chairman. The board have wide powers in the matter of recommending assistance.

The Minister for Lands: A soldier settler cannot get assistance in excess of £2,500.

Mr. PIESSE: The proposal will cause a lot of discontent amongst soldier settlers, who will not feel disposed to relinquish this right without having some assurance from the Minister that they will be protected under the new measure.

Mr. DONEY: There appears to be as much work for soldier settlers as there was when Colonel Denton was appointed. Whenever I have had occasion to see the trustees, there has always appeared to be ample work to keep Colonel Denton busy.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Section 5 of the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Act, 1919, lays down that the Act shall under the control of the Minister be administered by the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Board. This board consists of four members, one of whom is a discharged soldier, and another is a person not an officer of the Public Service. I do not see how the Minister is going to transfer these administrative powers to the Bank commissioners, and say he is not going to give effect to the Discharged Soldiers' Land Settlement Act, without first repealing the section I have quoted. I intend to see that the returned soldiers do have representation on the board, if the Act still provides for that. Whilst it is in existence they could demand such representation.

Mr. Piesse: If this clause is carried the returned soldiers will not have even the Minister to act on their behalf.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: What work has the representative of the returned soldiers to do on the board?

Hon. C. G. Latham: He is looking after the interests of the returned soldiers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: How does he do that? There is no money for repatriation, and no soldiers are being repatriated. Does the representative merely look on whilst they are being dealt with?

Mr. Doney: He could actually join in the discussions and influence the position.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Colonel Denton does virtually nothing. He attends only occasionally. The only position in which he could have any influence would be in the few cases of dispossession. That never occurs except as a last extremity. I have heard returned soldiers attack Colonel Denton because they said he had agreed to certain dispossessions. The facts were there, and he could not do otherwise. Is it considered that the commissioners will be hard on the returned soldiers? Have not these men a powerful organisation behind them, and an atmosphere in the community that is in their favour? Their executive has occasion frequently to see me. Our association has been always of the happiest, and we have never had the slightest friction. I can take it into my confidence and it can take me into its confidence. Under the Bill the administration is being taken over by the commissioners. Is it now proposed to carry a man who is not required? The returned soldiers can see the commissioners, and bring their influence to bear upon them. This measure will supersede the old board. The returned soldiers will not be dispossessed of any privileges or prerogative, for these will all be retained in the Bill.

Mr. THORN: We have made no charge against the Minister or Colonel Denton. All that the returned soldiers require is the same representation they had before, so that their viewpoint may be advanced. The Minister says Colonel Denton's judgment has been disagreed with. That is to be expected in any land settlement scheme. We are not complaining about that, for we have faith in Colonel Denton. When the Minister is appointing the commissioners he could choose quite a capable returned soldier to make one of the three. I am not, however,

pressing the matter, for returned soldiers have never yet pressed anything in this House.

Mr. PIESSE: Any communications I have had with the Minister concerning soldier settlers have always been of a happy nature. He is sympathetic towards them, and has done a lot for them. In this case he is handing over all these powers to the commissioners. It is just as well that members should know what is being done, and that in future there will be no Soldiers' Land Settlement Board.

Mr. MOLONEY: Colonel Denton's name having been featured in connection with the representation of returned soldiers on the board, I join issue with the member for Toodyay. Colonel Denton may be employed in other directions. He is a man of the greatest probity, and I have the utmost respect for him. I am not concerned with the individual, but am concerned with the principle involved. The Minister has said that there may be one or two cases of dispossession. To some people dispossession may not be a vital matter, but it is utterly vital when it means being deprived of everything one possesses. I realise that the Government are perfectly sympathetic towards the returned soldiers. There may be a little for a soldier representative to do, but I am jealous of that representation. I shall not vote for the proposed surrender of it. I cannot subscribe to anything that will be to the detriment of returned soldiers. I repeat that I am not wedded to representation by any particular person, especially if the person is remuneratively employed in another quarter.

Mr. DONEY: I readily agree, as do all returned soldier members of the Chamber, that the Minister's intentions towards returned soldiers are entirely good. Colonel Denton may not invariably have satisfied the returned soldiers, but even his predecessor did not succeed to that extent. However, the returned soldiers have not indicated that they do not desire any representation. Have they ever advised the Minister to that effect? I am glad to have the hon. gentleman's assurance that the slightly better interest rates conceded to returned soldier settlers will continue under the new control.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does the Bill repeal Section 5 of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act, which deals with the appointment of the board?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. The Bill, however, gives the returned soldiers every privilege and advantage they have enjoyed hitherto.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But it does repeal Section 5 of that Act?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Hon. members are unduly alarmed. The Returned Soldiers' Association saw me about the Bill, and I told them the board would go. I heard no dissent from them as to that, though I do not say they favour the abolition of the board. Colonel Denton is the representative of the soldiers. He is a man for whom I entertain the greatest respect and in whom I have every confidence. Returned soldiers will suffer nothing whatever by this legislation. The association know of the Bill, and they are not alarmed. I told them the commissioners would take over the duties of the board. The Act itself cannot be repealed, and it safeguards all the advantages and concessions the returned soldiers now enjoy. Moreover, they have an association numbering about 8,000, and a good deal of public support.

Mr. THORN: I am not criticising the Minister at all. I state frankly that the Returned Soldiers Land Committee have advised me of all their interviews with the hon. gentleman. They have invariably stated that he has been perfectly fair with them. However, Section 5 of the Act provides for representation of returned soldiers. I want the Minister to understand that this Bill empowers two men to take control of the whole of soldier settlement. Once the two commissioners are appointed, the Minister will lose control of the matter. This is not a question of Colonel Denton; the Minister may appoint whom he thinks fit. However, the returned soldiers do desire to retain their representation. Many questions arise in connection with soldier settlement. There has been no repatriation for years, but soldier settlement still has its problems. They do not want to lose that representation. There are still some responsibilities that have to be shouldered. I do not want anyone in particular to be appointed. I suggest to the Minister that he agrees to give the returned soldiers the representation sought. If the Minister were still to be in charge, we would judge him on his past performances, but he intends

to hand over the full responsibility to two commissioners and to deprive the returned soldiers of their special representation. There will be much to be done in the future. I do not urge representation for returned soldiers from a selfish point of view, but because the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act provides for that representation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: When the soldiers left Western Australia, the Government—one Government commit their successors to a certain extent—gave them an undertaking to do certain things. They carried out their promise and the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act was passed. Under that legislation a board of four was created, and one of the members of that body was a returned soldier. The marginal note to paragraph (b) reads—"Commissioners exercise powers of the several bodies corporate or Ministers formerly controlling transferred activities." That means that the Minister will appoint two commissioners who will have sole control, and the Minister himself will have absolutely no say in future. He has informed the Committee very definitely that he proposes to throw upon the commissioners the whole responsibility respecting these various activities. Who will they be? I know there are quite a lot of people who think the returned soldiers have received far too good a deal.

Mr. Withers: The two men appointed as commissioners may be returned soldiers.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In that event there will be nothing to complain about. The Minister says that repatriation has ceased, but there is the larger problem of rehabilitation to be faced. The greatest difficulty will be experienced in rehabilitating the soldier settlers because so many have been placed on repurchased properties on which a large debt has been built up. It will all depend on the treatment meted out by the commissioner.

Mr. Hegney: Who put the soldiers on the repurchased properties?

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Who inflicted that injustice upon them?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We know the men are there: we are not concerned about who put them there. We desire to do the very best possible for them, and I consider the returned men should have representation. Doubtless the Minister made it clear to the Returned Soldiers' League that the commissioners would take over the control

of these activities, but I am sure the League had no idea that the representation of returned men was to be dispensed with. If the Minister agrees to special representation for the returned men, it will make for greater confidence and increased satisfaction. I ask the Minister to allow the returned soldiers to have representation so long as the rehabilitation of soldier settlers has to be faced.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I want the Committee to understand that there was every justification for the appointment of the board under the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act. It was the period of repatriation and the job of placing thousands of men on the land had to be taken in hand. That job was finished years ago. There is nothing for the board to do now, except to offer an opinion when certain cases have to be dealt with. Will it be suggested that that system must continue for all time, although the job has been completed? The member for Toodyay talked about problems yet to be faced. What are they? The means by which such problems can be solved are provided in the Bill.

Mr. Warner: There may be a lot more trouble when this legislation becomes operative.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All that the returned soldiers are entitled to is covered by the Bill. I am afraid their request for special representation is based on sentimental reasons.

Mr. Thorn: There is nothing sentimental about it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think there is. All the rights of returned soldiers are reserved to them and any problems that arise can be dealt with under the Bill.

Mr. Hegney: How frequently do the members of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Board meet now?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot say offhand.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They meet practically every week.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Returned soldiers enjoy a rent concession from the Lands Department, but there are many returned soldiers who think it should be ended. I have been advised, not by the Government or Government members, but by others, to introduce legislation to put an end to it,

because it has been going on from year to year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Some people would do away with soldiers' pensions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But the returned soldiers themselves have asked for this. They do not want any undue privileges. So, as I say, this board finished its job years ago. If the Federal Government come along and say, "The returned soldiers are still our charge," well and good, but under this Bill they cannot get any more than they have.

Mr. Thorn: There is no doubt they are going to be dispossessed, the same as other settlers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition spoke of repurchased estates; but they will not be administered by the commissioners.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about the adjustment of the debts of settlers on repurchased estates?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The repurchased estates on which returned soldiers are settled are being run by the Lands Department.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Their rents are paid under the Industries Assistance Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It does not matter who pays their rents. There is now before the House, legislation providing for the revaluation of repurchased estates, and that legislation gives the Lands Department power to do the revaluation. I have no desire that returned soldiers should not get a fair deal; they are entitled to what they have, and I am sure they are not alarmed about this.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 37—Power to make advances:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of paragraph (b), after "lands," the words "and/or superphosphates, and/or chaff or wheat bags" be inserted.

It would be very useful to retain power for the commissioners to make such advances.

Mr. PIESSE: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That "superphosphates" be struck out with a view to inserting the word "fertilisers."

Amendment on the amendment put and passed.

Mr. PIESSE: I move—

That the word "fertilisers" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot accept the amendment. It is not proposed to make the Bank a seasonal credit institution.

Hon. N. Keenan: What is stock?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not seasonal credit. If seasonal credit is to be given, it must be given by the Industries Assistance Board, not by the Bank. The Bank is for developing and rehabilitating the industry, and I do not want it to issue seasonal credits. Under paragraph (e) the commissioners will have power to advance for any other purpose which in their judgment is desirable, and that is all that is necessary. As for the insertion of the word "fertilisers," I am not going to permit the Bank to make a soft position for fertiliser firms by giving advances for fertilisers. I say let the fertiliser firms themselves provide seasonal credit. If the commissioners desire to give seasonal credit, it can be done through the Industries Assistance Board.

Mr. DONEY: In view of the Minister's interpretation of paragraph (e), that is as much as we want. We might advance wool sacks and food supplies, and medical supplies, and still we should not meet all the normal needs of the farmer.

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

Amendment as previously amended put and negatived.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Paragraph (d) provides that advances may be made to enable a settler to erect a dwelling house for himself. He may desire to erect a house for a married couple.

Mr. Doney: Or for a manager.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. Some time ago we were endeavouring to get married people to undertake work in the country. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (d) the words "for himself" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have no objection to the amendment.

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

Clause 38—agreed to.

Clause 39—Persons over 16 may obtain advances:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That after "may," in line 2, the words "with the consent in writing of his legal guardian" be inserted.

The Land Act provides that a person under 21 years of age may mortgage conditional purchase land, but this clause will extend it to freehold or any kind of estate. It is not a good principle to allow minors the right to mortgage their property without the consent of their legal guardian, because it might lead to disastrous results. If the transaction would be to the advantage of the minor, there is no question that the consent of the guardian would be obtained.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot accept the amendment, because it would create an invidious position. Conditional purchase land may be mortgaged by minors to the Bank, or to any other institution. The amendment would not prevent a minor from mortgaging his freehold to any other person.

Hon. N. Keenan: How could he mortgage it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He could mortgage land under the Land Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That would not be free simple land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I desire this power particularly because all group settlement land is freehold. Some group settlers have large families, and to enable them to carry sufficient stock to keep the family, we provide a block for a promising son and he and the father work together. The block, however, is in the son's name as freehold. It is a distinct advantage to have sons settled on the land and growing up in that atmosphere, and I do not wish anything to interfere with that arrangement. The boys mortgage their blocks to the Bank.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 40—Commissioners must be satisfied as to certain conditions before making advances:

Hon. N. KEENAN: There is no need for paragraph (b). Is it not extraordinary to lay down in the Bill that the commissioners are to satisfy themselves before they make an

advance that there is reasonable prospect of its being used to good purpose?

The Minister for Lands: It is necessary.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Does the Minister think he is stating any more than that the commissioners are expected to do their duty? Is there any necessity for saying that the commissioners are to satisfy themselves that the applicant has reasonable prospects of developing his land successfully before they advance him any money? If we can conceive that they will do anything less than that, we should throw the Bill out of the window. The Minister made a spirited request that the commissioners should be given a free hand to carry on the Bank along the lines that would appeal to them. He now wants this silly provision put in, that they shall not lend money to a settler unless they are satisfied he will spend it in a proper manner. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (b) be struck out.

Mr. DONEY: I am sure the Minister does not wish to burden his Bill with a lot of useless matter. Surely the commissioners will stand in need of no instruction of this kind. It is a waste of ink to discuss the obvious in this matter. It is kindergarten talk.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am grateful for the compliment paid by the member for Nedlands when he calls this a silly provision. It would be a silly thing not to put it in. It has been said that the trustees have had to accept any settler the Government liked to put upon the land.

Mr. Patrick: Because the Lands Department allowed them to take up blocks.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bank did not want to go into the Bullfinch area. The settlers signed a declaration that, if they were given the land, they would require no assistance. When they got there, they made it a political question and called upon the Mitchell Government to help them. Against its will, the Bank had to take them on as its clients.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Will this provision alter that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, it will be a direction to the trustees on this very important subject. Settlers take up land through the Lands Department and the Bank may refuse to grant them an advance.

It is immediately stated that the men are being persecuted. By this provision the commissioners will have the protection of an Act of Parliament if they refuse an advance. I have a file here showing what has happened in numbers of cases. One settler on a certain estate deliberately robbed the Bank. He then went to a new district and took up more land.

Mr. Patrick: But you say you are taking these men away from political influence.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Under this provision the commissioners will be protected when they decline to advance money in cases of this sort. They will not have to do it any more. This has not been put into the Bill stupidly, as suggested by the member for Nedlands. The settler I have referred to took down the Bank, and became a client again.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is the Minister going to lay that file on the Table?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would not mind doing that. It would make good reading.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It would show who made the recommendation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The file shows that this settler took down the department, and hoodwinked it on another occasion. When he had beaten the Bank, he was taken on on another basis. The inspector reports to the effect that he has been robbing the Bank for years, and will continue to do so whilst opportunities such as are presented to him are given to him. He adds that it is useless to endeavour to deal with this man on a percentage basis, that there is no hope of obtaining a fair deal from him, and that the Bank is optimistic if it expects to get a fair return from him. Settlers have been supplied with super, refused to spread it, and have been taken on to sustenance. Settlers have sold their stock and detectives have been sent after them. Others have sold their wheat and beaten the Bank. And yet we are told this is a silly provision. The personal equation is most important. The managers of Associated Banks are always told to take notice of that factor.

Mr. Thorn: You do not say that members of Parliament have assisted to get these men out of their troubles.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows I have not said that.

Mr. Thorn: Someone said it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is an instruction from Parliament to the commissioners that the personal equation must receive consideration. The member for Nedlands thinks this a good opportunity to exercise his caustic wit. Does not he have regard to the personal equation? Does he want the institution in the future, as in the past, to accept any kind of man? If this instruction had obtained previously, there would not have been the present trouble. By these words Parliament tells the commissioners that before making an advance they must be satisfied that the applicant has reasonable prospects of developing his land successfully and that he is deserving of the advance.

Hon. N. Keenan: Would not the commissioners have that power without those words?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The trustees have complained that in the absence of those words they were compelled to accept any kind of applicant. Is not that their defence? Is not that the defence put up for them by hon. members opposite? Such a policy will no longer be the policy of the country if the words are retained.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Accepting the Minister's word, I am absolutely convinced that not one officer of the Bank should be retained. Ever since the Bill has been before Parliament, the Minister has made charges against all the officers, with the possible exception of two whom the Royal Commissioners declared to be quite all right. The Minister has told us that the trustees have not controlled the staff, that recommendations have been made and not carried out, that advances have been granted against the advice of the field officers. Knowing the field officers, I say that charge is unreasonable and unfair. It is absurd to include such verbiage in an Act of Parliament. We might as well set out all that the commissioners may do and all that they must not do. The words are an intimation that the commissioners to be appointed will not be men of common sense.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the insertion of the words was necessary in order to give the commissioners power to refuse an application by some person who had no reasonable prospects of developing his land successfully, or was not deserving of such advance, then I would willingly withdraw any oppo-

sition on my part to the words appearing in the Bill. However, under paragraph (b) of Clause 6 the commissioners are given power to consider and determine applications for advances, and to make advances to persons engaged in rural industry, subject to the prescribed security. Therefore these words are not necessary in order that the commissioners may have power to refuse in the case of an applicant who had not reasonable prospects of developing his land successfully.

Mr. Lambert: What is the danger in allowing the words to remain?

Hon. N. KEENAN: They are a mere pious opinion, and to retain them will make us objects of contempt. If the Minister insists on retaining this sort of stuff in his Bill, let him do so; but at all events let us protest against the Bill being overloaded with language of this kind, which is wholly unnecessary.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Some hon. members first complain that the commissioners are to be clothed with wonderful powers, and then complain that the discretion of the commissioners is taken away. I see no objection to the retention of the words.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	..	25

Majority against .. .. 12

AYES.	
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Sampson
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Seward
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Mann	Mr. Welsh
Mr. North	Mr. Doney
Mr. Patrick	

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Brockman	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Clothier	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Coverley	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Cross	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Warner
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Motoney	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Munsie	

(Teller.)

PAIRS.	
AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Latham	Mr. Collier
Mr. J. M. Smith	Miss Holman
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Tonkin

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

### Clause 41—Security:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to Sub-clause (c):—"Provided that the commissioners may advance up to the whole of the reasonable cost of improvements proposed to be carried out, if such advance together with the existing debt of the borrower to the commissioners shall not in the aggregate exceed 70 per cent. of the total value of the fixed improvements on the land of the borrower over which security is held."

There may be a wide margin in favour of the Bank, and the settler may require to put down a dam, which will probably cost him £150 in cash. If he can secure an advance of 70 per cent. only from the Bank, he will have to find a considerable sum of money. In the event of there being a sufficient margin of security, the commissioners should have discretionary power to advance the whole of the expenditure necessary. Many settlers are now eking out an existence owing to their inability to run stock. We should enable them to secure advances from the Bank to assist them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he withdraws his amendment and I will move to insert a new clause that will meet his requirements.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will accept the Minister's proposal, and beg leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (c) be struck out, and the following paragraph inserted in lieu:—"Where an advance is required to enable the applicant to purchase machinery, stock, and/or plant, or to excavate a dam to an amount in excess of the value or reasonable cost of such machinery, stock, and/or plant or dam, and where an advance is required for improvements other than for the excavation of a dam as aforesaid, to an amount in excess of 70 per cent. of the reasonable cost of the improvements proposed to be carried out."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (d) the words "of the commissioners" be struck out.

As the provision is now framed, the client if he wishes to re-establish himself must



do so on lands in the possession of the commissioners. In most cases that would mean abandoned farms. The client should be allowed to take up new land from the Crown, of course with the approval of the commissioners.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment, if carried, would mean that any person could take up another piece of land and ask the commissioners to advance on it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It does not say they must advance on it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not desirable that the Bank shall use its money to re-establish a settler on some other land. It must be on the land of the commissioners.

Hon. N. Keenan: What about other Crown lands?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: To-day the trustees have about 1,500 abandoned farms. In any rehabilitation it may be necessary to link up two or three locations. The commissioners will not have funds to re-establish a settler on land other than that in their own possession.

Hon. N. Keenan: It means an abandoned farm.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Abandoned farms carry Bank mortgages, and it is not desirable that the commissioners should re-establish a client on other lands.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There are some places, particularly in the area of the 3,500 farms scheme, where there are Crown lands and, as the Minister says, it may be necessary to enlarge those holdings.

The Minister for Lands: There are no Crown lands down there.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, quite a number which have reverted to the Lands Department. We are giving to the commissioners discretionary power, but after all it is of no use tying them down too much. In the South-West it may be necessary to get a piece of Crown land outside the group settlement areas. I think we should leave this discretionary power to the commissioners.

Mr. BROCKMAN: Does it mean that if a man takes up Crown land, the commissioners will not be allowed to advance on it?

The Minister for Lands: Oh, no!

Mr. BROCKMAN: Adjoining many holdings are very good pieces of Crown land

which will have to be added to those holdings. Will not the man taking up such a piece of land be able to get an advance?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course. The Act provides that a settler can get advances up to £2,000, and a soldier settler up to £2,500. A settler can take up any Crown land and get an advance on it, but not beyond the £2,000. All the abandoned properties lying idle are in the care of the commissioners. That is why those words are there.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That at the end of sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph (d) the words "but not exceeding an additional one thousand pounds" be inserted.

So far the Minister has been setting out definite instructions on minor details of administration, but the big things he has left alone. Under the Bill the commissioners may advance up to any sum they like; there is no limit. The commissioners will have a seven-years appointment and there will be no control by this House. The Bill provides for a limit of £2,000, and then follows a provision that the commissioners may exceed it. If a settler were already indebted to the extent of £2,000, I would not advance more than an additional £500, but that may be insufficient in some instances and so I suggest £1,000. No 1,000-acre block in the agricultural areas that I know of could to-day carry an indebtedness of £3,000 and pay interest and working expenses.

Mr. Wansbrough: How do you account for the large amount of some of the mortgages?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: They were granted in the boom years and the officers are now being blamed for what has happened. The least we should do is to limit the amount of the additional advance.

Mr. THORN: I hope the Minister will accept the advice of the Leader of the Opposition. Unlimited advancing has landed settlers in their present trouble. To fix the advance at £2,000 and leave it to the discretion of the commissioners to advance any additional sum without limit is farcical. The Minister would be rendering the settlers a great service if he limited the amount of the additional advance.

Mr. BROCKMAN: What would be the position of a man turned off his holding if he took up Crown land? Could he get an advance?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Replying first to the member for Sussex, it would depend on the commission, provided the personal equation was satisfactory. The Leader of the Opposition is wrong in saying that the commissioners would have unlimited power. Additional advances may be made only with the approval of the Governor. The Minister and the Treasurer must approve of any excess.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think you are using the wrong notes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the approval of the Governor is distinctly provided for in sub-paragraph (iii).

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Governor has nothing to do with the expenditure of money. The commissioners may put up 100 blocks, and say they want additional money to settle them. The application then goes to the Treasury, who initials it before despatch to the Governor.

The Minister for Lands: You have had that experience, have you?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have followed some of the Minister's experiences. Will the Treasurer search the records of the Bank, or make a field inspection, or peruse all the files? This is a matter that ought to be determined by the people's House. We know what Governors have done in the past. Take the advances for the building of the manganese railway and other things.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect upon His Excellency.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: His Excellency does what Executive Council advises him to do. The Governor means the Treasurer. If a thorough investigation had in the past been made into advances to industries, our financial position would not be as bad as it is. The Minister is giving greater control to the Treasurer than is being given to Parliament. We ought to limit the amount of advance to £2,000, and provide that authority shall be sought for anything over that, up to say £3,000.

Mr. McDONALD: The Government desire to lay down the code the commissioners are to observe. They are to be told exactly how far they may go. If we are to follow

out that principle, we should tell them also what the maximum advance is to be.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I am amazed that the Minister, who is supposed to be the most cautious man in the State, should refuse to accept the amendment. In practically all the clauses we have passed the Minister has tied down the commissioners in every way. He has instructed them how to dot their i's and cross their t's. He now throws his caution to the winds, and says the commissioners may advance to their clients as much as they like. When a genuine attempt is made to improve the Bill the Minister should agree. In another place members may be expected to take reasonable precautions to render this Bill workable. There is enough commonsense there to cause members to do this. The Minister should not be so pigheaded as to refuse to accept any amendment from the Opposition.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition cannot be serious when he gives his experiences of the Treasurer's duties. Did he merely initial papers and send them on to the Governor? Did he inquire into every matter before he signed a paper? If he did not, it is what he should have done.

Hon. C. G. Latham: From whom did I take advice as to writing off? From the officers. I could not investigate.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Without the consent of the Under Treasurer's deputy, no writing off will take place under this Bill. And beyond the Under Treasurer's deputy again, there is the Treasurer. I do not think any Minister on this side of the Chamber has carried out his duties with such irresponsibility as the Leader of the Opposition attributes to himself.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I shall speak presently. If you continue in that strain, I shall not let you get away with it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Even in the case of a proposed purchase of, say, window sashes for a group settler, I ask first, "Have you got the money?" Did not the Leader of the Opposition, when in office, do those things? Did he merely initial requisitions without bothering further?

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are putting in half an hour misrepresenting me, so that I will get up and stonewall your Bill!

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: Under the Bill, the matter is properly safeguarded in every respect. I thank the member for Irwin-Moore for saying I am cautious. I shall be cautious in this respect, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister talked about careful investigation before authorising the purchase of window sashes for a group settler. What did he do except ask his officers? If the Minister treated them as he treats members, of course he refused their proposals. The Minister will not get away with saying that I was irresponsible in my office. I was no more irresponsible than the hon. gentleman is. However, I know what happens in regard to Executive Council minutes. An officer comes along with them and waits for them, and of course he gives the Minister all the information the Minister requires. But that officer is the man who has put up the minutes.

The Minister for Lands: Is he? I make inquiries.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister has only one department. I do not know how the Acting Premier gets on with two or three departments. I venture to say he is kept pretty busy with files. There is a new departure in the Bill. The Act limits the authority of the Bank trustees to £2,000, and we have got into enough trouble with that maximum of £2,000. The Bill hands over to the commissioners, subject to the approval of the Governor, unlimited authority, authority to advance as much as they like. If this Chamber will not accept the responsibility of fixing a limit, then some other place must do it. We have heard what is the trouble with the Bank. I shall divide the Committee on the matter.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	23
				—
Majority against	..			8
				—

#### AYES.

Mr. Brockman	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Seward
Mr. Mann	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Warner
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Welsh
Mr. North	Mr. Doney
Mr. Patrick	

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Clothier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Cross	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hawke	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hegney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wise
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Withers
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Needham	

(Teller.)

#### PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Latham	Mr. Collier
Mr. J. M. Smith	Miss Holman
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Tonkin

Amendment thus negatived; the clause, as previously amended, agreed to.

Clauses 42, 43—agreed to.

Clause 44—Terms of repayment:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the clause:—  
“Any advance paid off at an earlier date than provided by the term of the advance may be re-advanced for a term to expire not later than the date of repayment provided in the original term of the advance, if in the opinion of the commissioners such re-advance is desirable.”

If a client has some money which he does not require for the time being, he may pay it into the Bank to clear his overdraft, or to repay an advance made against his property. He would do that if he felt that at some future time he could get an advance in the event of his requiring it. If he discharges a mortgage, of course he cannot expect the commissioners to lend him the money again; but in other circumstances the amendment would encourage the farmer to be thrifty.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair]

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: The case put up by the Leader of the Opposition may seem reasonable, but the second mortgagee may not agree. What if the client paid the amount off, and then went to one of the Associated Banks? Then again, part of the mortgage may still exist.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am afraid the advice tendered to the Minister by his officers is with the object of inducing him to refuse to agree to alterations. There is nothing obligatory about the amendment. It does not say that the commissioners must make the advance; they will have to protect

the security. The amendment is reasonable. If a client were to secure an advance from an Associated Bank, I would not suggest that the Agricultural Bank should make him further advances.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have no very strong objection to offer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But your officers have an objection, apparently.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will look into the matter, and if I can meet the Leader of the Opposition I will be glad to do so.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 45—Interest payable half-yearly:

Mr. SEWARD: I would like the Minister to consider altering the months when interest is payable from January and July to March and September. Harvest proceeds are not in hand by the 1st January, and therefore the farmer is usually not in a position to pay his interest that month. Similarly July is a month of lowest returns, whereas in September the farmer will possibly have his returns from wool or from sheep off shears. The alteration I suggest would be of great convenience to farmers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member will allow that matter to remain in abeyance, I will look into it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That after "prescribed," in line 5, the following words be inserted:—"but the rate shall not exceed by more than one per centum the rate of interest payable for the time being on funds raised by the commissioners."

The extra one per cent. will cover expenses, and, as the commissioners are to be so perfect in their administration, no losses will be incurred.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I want the Leader of the Opposition to be reasonable. The rates of interest are to be "as may from time to time be prescribed." They will be prescribed by regulations, and Parliament will therefore have control over the rate of interest to be charged.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It has been the custom of the Agricultural Bank to make advances over long periods at a fixed rate of interest. Does the clause mean that the rate of interest may be changed annually?

The Minister for Lands: Everything depends upon the rate of interest at which the money was raised. The rates may come down as loans are converted.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not like the wording of the clause. Does it mean that there shall be no fixed rate of interest for long-dated mortgages?

The Minister for Lands: The trustees always charge an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for administration.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But the one rate of interest remains on the mortgage.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, but the commissioners can alter the rate to pay for administration. The rate to be charged is prescribed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot understand why there should be differential rates yearly. Is it proposed to vary the interest to be paid on the mortgage from year to year? Is this to have any effect on existing mortgages?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, of course not. But advances are always being made from time to time, and if new money is borrowed by the Bank at a lesser rate of interest, the advances from that loan will carry a lesser rate of interest.

Mr. SEWARD: Then, if an advance is made this year from money borrowed at 5 per cent., will the client be charged, say, 6 per cent.? And if a further advance is made two years hence when, let us suppose, money is dearer, will the client be charged accordingly.

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Mr. SEWARD: Then the various clients of the Bank are not all charged the same rate?

The Minister for Lands: That is so. Today we are charging the soldiers only 4 per cent.

Mr. McDONALD: In the existing section the word used is "differentiate," whereas in the clause it is "differential." Apparently it means that the commissioners have power to differentiate between the customers of the Bank. They may charge one man 5 per cent. and another  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 46—Interest on interest in arrear.

Mr. McDONALD: On behalf of the member for Nedlands, I wish to move to strike

out this clause. I am aware the clause is taken from the 1922 amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act, and am also aware it is customary for the Associated Banks to capitalise interest. But the representation I wish to put before the Committee is that when a man gets to such a stage that he is in arrears with interest, and the power of sale has become exercisable, it is not much good charging interest on interest. It is much more likely that it will be a matter of writing off interest. So, if the clause is not going to do very much good, it might as well not be there at all. I ask that the clause be struck out.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will vote against the clause.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I hope the Committee will not strike out the clause. All that the Bank does is to charge interest on the interest in arrears. I am sure the hon. member does not want any person to get something for nothing. The State has to find interest, and so the client must find interest. The Agricultural Bank charges only simple interest, whereas other banks charge compound interest. This is the same provision as in the existing Act and nothing could be fairer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the following be added at the end of the clause:—"Provided that, if in the opinion of the commissioners the nature of the operations conducted by the borrower is such that payment of interest half-yearly will impose hardship or loss on the borrower, the commissioners may for any period not exceeding six months waive their right to charge interest on interest in arrear as provided for in this section."

That would give power to the commissioners to waive the interest payment for six months if they found it would inflict hardship on the borrower or cause him loss. The power would be discretionary and the chances are that it would prove helpful.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: For reasons already given I cannot accept the amendment. The Bill gives the commissioners power to write down debts and suspend payments of principal. If the commissioners show reasonable consideration, is it not right that clients should stand up to their obligations? Yet some members desire that the Agricultural Bank should be subject to conditions that would

not be imposed on private banks. The Agricultural Bank charges simple interest, whereas the private banks charge compound interest, but I have never heard any objection to the action of the private banks.

Mr. PIESE: Bank clients object more particularly to the charging of interest on interest half-yearly.

The Minister for Lands: That is what the business firms do. Do not superphosphate firms charge interest on interest.

Mr. PIESE: That may be so.

The Minister for Lands: Then why not the State?

Mr. PIESE: When a farmer deals with a merchant he knows what he has to pay, but often he does not realise that he is paying interest on interest to the Bank until it is charged up half-yearly. As a rule the farmer has only an annual income and it seems unfair to charge interest on interest half-yearly.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister should agree to delete the clause or accept the amendment. For years clients of the Bank have not been paying their interest. Penal interest has been charged to soldier settlers and it has not been paid. We are trying to frame legislation to rehabilitate the farming industry, and yet the Minister adheres to orthodox practices and will not give away anything. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of interest are owing, and one object of the Bill is to empower the commissioners to write down arrears. Why does not the Minister realise that it is time to get down to tin tacks? He has received dozens of deputations on the subject and yet, in Shylock fashion, he insists on demanding interest on interest. This is not a party Bill, and I hope that members will support the amendment in order to help the farmers. To charge penal interest is neither reasonable nor fair.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I am particularly concerned about those clients of the Bank who, through the depressed state of the market, have been unable to pay any interest, or more than a little. How can they afford to pay interest on the accrued interest? If the Minister would give them some relief in this respect, he would be likely to have a more contented body of men than is possible under present conditions.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	22

Majority against. . . . . 9

AYES.	
Mr. Brockman	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Seward
Mr. McDonald	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Warner
Mr. J. J. Mann	Mr. Welsh
Mr. North	Mr. Doney
Mr. Patrick	

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Clothier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cross	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hawke	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Wise
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Withers
Mr. Needham	Mr. Raphael

(Teller.)

AYES.	PAIRS.	NOES.
Mr. Latham		Mr. Collier
Mr. J. M. Smith		Miss Holman
Mr. Griffiths		Mr. Tonkin

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: This question of penal interest has been a burning one throughout the State for many years. If members are going to endorse the principle in this Chamber, they will create an immense amount of heartburning. I cannot understand the Minister's attitude. This Bill is brought down largely because of the great amount of interest that is outstanding. Fully a quarter of the money involved in the financial difficulties of the Bank is made up of unpaid interest. Surely members are not going to countenance the principle of charging the settlers interest on interest! The Minister talks about rehabilitating the farming industry, and yet he is prepared to charge penal interest against persons who cannot even afford to pay the ordinary interest.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This opposition, I am sure, is purely political.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Do not say that. I said nothing nasty.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It has no sincerity at all. When members opposite sat on this side of the Chamber, the same provision existed; and they never attempted to repeal it. A division is to be called for merely because they want to register their votes. I tell the country that they

are hypocritical in this respect. I have here papers showing that an esteemed member of their party charged a borrower 12½ per cent.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Has what somebody else did outside the Agricultural Bank anything to do with the question?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A rate of 12½ per cent. has been charged by a man associated with them, and now they pretend that they are opposed to simple interest. They pretend that, whereas they endorsed, and fought for, and elected a man who charged 12½ per cent. interest; in fact, a man who overcharged that rate.

Hon. C. G. Latham: On a point of order. Is the Minister in order in referring to something that happened outside this Chamber and outside the Agricultural Bank?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am exposing hypocrisy.

Hon. C. G. Latham: This refers to some personal dispute between the Minister and somebody else.

The CHAIRMAN: Interest on interest has been discussed pretty freely under the clause, and I therefore think the Minister is in order.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There have been references to me as a Shylock. Is this money going into my pocket? It is the State's money. Members who complain regarding this clause endorsed, worked for, and voted for a man who admittedly charged 12½ per cent. compound interest. That man is now a member of their party. If they desire to dispute my statement, here are the figures, here is the man's return.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Name him!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This man was endorsed by hon. members opposite, and supported by them.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And returned by the people, I suppose?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Returned by people who will not complain of simple interest, inasmuch as they endorsed 12½ per cent. compound interest. If the electors endorsed that, what have they to complain about in connection with this clause? The terrible thing they complain about is a thing they themselves endorsed. One of their own Parliament men charged that rate of interest, and they complain about this rate! Here is the man's own statement, his own bill.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The electors believed him, and did not believe you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did not even attempt to bother about it.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You mentioned it on every platform.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Read the statement out. I am anxious to hear it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I never mentioned it on one platform.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You did. A man told me you did.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The man is not telling the truth. I never mentioned it anywhere.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You did, but the trouble is that none of them bothered to believe you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I never mentioned the matter.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I am talking about Watheroo.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I spoke only at Watheroo, and never mentioned the matter. I never discussed the man. I have no personal friends in Watheroo. I can discuss the man here. Here is his account. This hypocrite charged 12½ per cent. on money that he had already received. He was in possession of the borrower's farm. The borrower had a fee-simple property, and raised money on it; and he was charged 12½ per cent. interest. He handed over the proceeds, and when he got out of the money lender's hands he received a bill for £1,740. The borrower paid his debt. The interest charged was 12½ per cent. compound. The man who charged that rate of compound interest is opposed to simple interest. The member for Irwin-Moore does not tell the truth.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I object to being called a liar in this Chamber. I ask for a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Irwin-Moore has asked for a withdrawal of the statement that he did not tell the truth.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have to withdraw.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Why not do it decently?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But now I say to the member for Irwin-Moore, if he is an honourable man let him bring his proofs to me. Let him bring forward the

man who said I made that statement at Watheroo. There is a challenge.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Right.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Mr. Chairman, I submit it is not right for a member to ask that another should withdraw a statement that he is not telling the truth, when the member who asks for the withdrawal has stated that the other member—that is, the Minister—was not telling the truth.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I never made such a statement.

The Minister for Employment: You did, and I ask for that statement to be withdrawn also.

The CHAIRMAN: When that happened the Minister was speaking, and one member was asserting and another was denying.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am indifferent. However, a division is to be called for purely to serve political purposes. Here is a matter of simple interest. I have not the slightest respect for the opinions of certain hon. members. They are convicted by their associations.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not know, Mr. Chairman, why you are allowing such a discussion.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: You do not like it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You can go for your life so far as I am concerned.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: You supported that man.

Hon. C. G. Latham: God help any man of any character who comes here with you.

Mr. J. H. Smith: On a point of order!

Hon. C. G. Latham: This is absolutely disgraceful.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a disgrace to you.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the Committee went to the vote on the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and it was negatived. I dealt with Clause 46 and I do not know what all this discussion has to do with that clause. The Minister has gone beyond the clause and has made charges against someone. I want the Minister to reply to my arguments on Clause 46. I do not want him to deal with an amendment respecting which no one has spoken.

Many members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must have order! In my opinion, there is nothing in the hon. member's point of order. The Minister will reply to the hon. member in his own way.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have nothing more to say to these people except that if they publish anything, let them publish my remarks too. There is no sincerity about a party that pretend to oppose this provision and yet support and endorse a member who was elected to another place whose principles are to the contrary. What does all this attack on me mean? It is made simply because I pulled a farmer out of this man's clutches.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I did not mention anything about that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have been called a Shylock.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I spoke of Shylock methods and was not referring to you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If members are not satisfied, they can have an inquiry. There is more than that in this.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There may be more than you will want.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Well, go on with it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If you attempt to fasten your dirty linen on us, we will fasten some on you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Do so! Members opposite called for a division on a question of simple interest, and the object was to publish the division list in the country to show what a fight they put up. Although they did that, they were in association with a man elected at the last Legislative Council election who charged 12½ per cent. I have nothing but contempt for the Opposition members who can take such an action. Let them make what inquiry they like! I will welcome it.

*[Mr. Sleeman resumed the Chair.]*

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This is an innovation. We are having election speeches on the floor of the House.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we will have no more. Members will deal with the clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will not allow the Minister to say what he did about Country Party members, without having some-

thing to say in reply. Had you been in the Chair, Mr. Chairman, things would have been different. I appealed to the temporary Chairman of Committees for protection but he said the Minister was in order.

The CHAIRMAN: I will give you all the protection you require, so stick to the clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will not allow the Minister to make such charges against members sitting on this side of the House. The Standing Orders permit us to call for a division if we so desire. It is wrong for the Minister to say we did that for political purposes. If that were so, then it has been done for a very long period in this Parliament.

The Minister for Lands: You signalled me you would let the clause go.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I cannot control every member. I am anxious to help the Minister.

Mr. Coverley: You have a funny way of showing it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will not tolerate such an interjection as that. I hope we can get away from this washing of dirty linen. I would never applaud a man who charged 12½ per cent. interest. Why should the Minister level that charge against members of the Opposition? We do not want that sort of thing fastened on to us. If it is to be permitted, we will make it our business to go out and discover something about individual members and then level a charge against the Minister for Lands. What has it to do with members of this Chamber? For that reason, I asked the temporary Chairman of Committees to protect members against the absolute abuse that the Minister showered upon us. Surely we can disagree with the Minister with reference to the Bill. We have a perfect right to do so. I did not ask for the division because of interest charged on interest; I called for it because I wanted it.

The Minister for Lands: You nodded to show you would let it go. You showed you had finished with it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So I had, until the Minister made his attack upon us.

The Minister for Lands: Mere hypocrisy.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I was going out with my papers when the Minister indulged



in deliberate abuse of members sitting on this side of the House.

The Minister for Lands: Why did you call for a division after you had nodded to me?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I said I was finished, and so I was.

The Minister for Lands: And why was I called a Shylock?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I did not call the Minister Shylock, nor did anyone else on the Opposition side. I object to the Minister's attitude. We can disagree and agree to disagree without all this heat. Don't let us be personal as the Minister has been, and that has been particularly apparent recently.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And with that, let us get back to the clause.

The Minister for Lands: I will expose this business.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: And the Minister can do so. There is a proper place for that; let him do it on the public platform, not in this Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order; we will deal with the clause. I ask the Minister for Lands to keep order, and the Leader of the Opposition to speak to the clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I object to the Minister's attitude, but I am satisfied to let the clause go.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I regret that so much heat has been engendered by my remarks. I had no intention of stirring up such a hornet's nest. I am sorry you, Mr. Chairman, were not in the Chair at the time, because you would have protected members.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect on the temporary Chairman of Committees.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister was quite wrong in his references to Shylock. I did not say the Minister was a Shylock, but that we did not desire Shylock methods to be adopted. The provision for interest upon interest has been a bugbear and probably every country member has introduced deputations urging the wiping out of penal interest. I do not know to whom the Minister referred when he made his charge about someone levying interest at the rate of 12½ per cent. I thought he was referring to a previous Minister. It seems that it amounts to a private quarrel between members of the Country Party and the Minister himself. I know nothing about it, and have

no wish to know. I am sure the Minister, on second thoughts, will agree that if interest alone can be collected, he will be satisfied and there will be no necessity for the imposition of penal interest. If there is any writing down, it should be such as to enable a settler to meet his liabilities and then the man who will not pay his interest should be put off his holding and another settler installed in his place. There is no necessity for this interest on interest. Why not accept the amendment moved by the member for West Perth?

Hon. C. G. Latham: It has been rejected.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, it was your amendment that was rejected. Cannot the Minister agree to do away with this interest on interest? I urge the Minister to accept the amendment of the member for West Perth.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	..	9
Majority for					13

#### AYES.

Mr. Clothier	Mr. Needham
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cross	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hegney	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Kennelly	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wise
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Withers
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Brockman	Mr. North
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Warner
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Doney
Mr. J. I. Mann	

(Teller.)

#### PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collier	Mr. Latham
Miss Holman	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Tonkin	Mr. Griffiths

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 47, 48 and 49—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.47 p.m.