

operation of our gold-mining leases. If the House will take the Bill into Committee up to the third clause I am prepared to report progress. In the meantime I will have certain clauses drafted in such a way that they will plainly meet the wishes of hon. members. At the same time I would point out that the Imperial Government can always step in and make our actions ultra vires.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 26th November, 1920.

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

### MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

*Close of Session.*

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.35]: I move—

That for the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so as to enable Bills to be passed through all their stages in one day, and Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received, also so far as to admit of the reporting and adopting of resolutions of the Committees of Supply, and Ways and Means on the day on which they shall have passed those Committees.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.36]: I must express my surprise at the Premier moving this motion without giving any reasons whatever why it should be carried at this stage of the session. I intend to oppose the motion, and to oppose it strenuously. My desire is to meet the Government as far as possible in regard to the despatch of the business of the session, so that we may close down in a reasonable time; but I do contend that it is unreasonable to ask for the suspension of the Standing Orders when we have a Notice Paper with 36 Orders of the Day on it, 17 of them being Government Bills which have not yet entered upon the second reading, except for having been introduced and explained by Ministers. In addition, there are five Government Bills which have only just reached the Committee stage. Thus there are 22 Bills, Government Bills, which this House has yet to deal with practically from beginning to end. It is not fair to ask the House to deal with those Bills while the Government have power to push them through all stages in one sitting. Further, we have no guarantee that if to-day the Standing Orders are suspended as asked, new Bills may not be brought down next week. Indeed, there is on to-day's Notice Paper a motion, standing in the name of the Minister for Mines, which asks for leave to introduce "An Act to establish a Council of Industrial Development." To ask the House to suspend the Standing Orders before members know even the contents of some Bills yet to be brought before it during the next week or two, is altogether unfair. I know it has been the practice to suspend the Standing Orders as the close of the session draws near, but usually that request is made by a Government only during the last week or two, when the work of the session, that is to say the Bills on the Notice Paper, have advanced to such a stage that members know their contents and are in a position to judge of their importance. Under such conditions one is fairly safe in agreeing to a suspension of the Standing Orders. But with 17 Bills awaiting their second reading debate, and with five others awaiting the Committee stage, it is not right to ask that the Standing Orders be suspended. Included in this list are some Bills to which I am strongly opposed, and it is not fair to ask me to yield up some of the methods at my disposal for enforcing my opinion. If I am opposed to a Bill and have an opportunity of making that opposition felt at various stages in the passage of the measure through this Chamber, my chances of achieving my purpose, namely, the defeat of the measure, are better than they would be if the Government were empowered to force the measure through in one sitting. I am not prepared to agree to any proposition which would assist the Government to pass through this House as rapidly as may be Bills which embody principles to which I object. Moreover, there are on the Notice

Paper some private members' Bills, which are not included in the list to which I have referred; and some of these private Bills are of greater importance than many of the measures standing in the names of Ministers. One does not know whether an opportunity will be given at all to discuss those private Bills. If the Government intend, as apparently they do, to close the session at an early date and to rush their own Bills through there will be very little opportunity, or no opportunity whatever, given for the consideration of any matters on the Notice Paper outside Government business. Again, we have to recollect that all the Bills which have yet to be considered here must thereafter go to another place, where no doubt many amendments will be made. Those amendments will be crowding back upon this Chamber, many of them important amendments; and immediately a message is received from another place, if the Standing Orders are suspended, it will be open for the Government to proceed with its consideration, without hon. members having had an opportunity of considering or digesting the amendments. How will it be possible for members of this House to appreciate a long list of amendments in, say, the Factories and Shops Bill if their consideration here is proceeded with immediately upon their receipt from another place? The Premier no doubt will say that many of the Bills in this list of 22 or 23 are of minor importance. Some of them, certainly, are annual measures, merely continuance Bills which come down every year. There are the measures referring to land tax, income tax, and dividend duties, for instance. But, on the other hand, the Wheat Marketing Bill is one of the most important Bills which has come before Parliament during the present session.

The Premier: It is a very old friend.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt it is an old friend, but perhaps as we get to know old friends better we find ourselves more advantageously situated to consider their many idiosyncrasies.

Mr. Johnston: The Wheat Marketing Bill is a formal measure.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Hon. members may view that Bill as they like. I merely say that I view it as probably the most important Bill of the session. Further, in the list to which I refer there is a Bill to amend the Land Act. This, I take it, is the amending Bill which was promised last session, which has been promised ever since this session opened, to deal with pastoral lands, mainly those in the North-West. It will be remembered that on the day before the last session closed a Bill for this purpose was introduced here, being abandoned by the Government on the last day of the session because, it was stated, sufficient time was not available for the consideration of the measure. In giving the reasons for the abandonment of that Bill, the Premier definitely promised that the

whole matter would be fully considered during the recess, and that an amending Bill would be brought down during this session. The hon. gentleman said that the matter was rather complicated and required careful consideration, which would be given to it during recess. What has happened? We met early in August, and now we are at the end of November, within a fortnight, practically of the close of the session, and that amending Bill is not before us yet. It is a Bill of the utmost importance to the country generally, and also to the persons interested in pastoral leases; and yet, within a fortnight or so of the closing of the session, the Premier proposes to bring down that measure with the Standing Orders suspended and to push it through, if that course is thought desirable by the Government, in one sitting. It is not fair.

The Premier: There is no intention of doing it either.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But there is the possibility. It is not fair to the House, nor is it fair to the people. If we are to have legislation on sound lines, it is essential that the progress of Bills through Parliament should be fairly slow in order to allow people outside, who may be affected by the legislation, to become acquainted with their contents. If a Bill be introduced to-day, pushed through all stages and sent to another place, and dealt with in that Chamber with the Standing Orders suspended as well, it is quite possible for people to read the next day of the passage of a Bill through both Houses of Parliament without any prior knowledge of its introduction at all. Not only is such a thing possible, but at this late stage of the session it is practically inevitable, even without the suspension of the Standing Orders, that Bills will be dealt with in the manner I have indicated. That is not a fair way of doing business. If we have failed to make that progress we should have made during the early part of the session—and I think perhaps we have failed—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Opposition cannot be blamed for that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, it is not on account of any undue discussion on the part of members on the Opposition side of the House. We have not held up any of the business of the session by wilful obstruction or by undue talk. If there has been unnecessary delay, it has been because of the large following the Government is burdened with. In all probability that encumbrance will be relieved shortly. It cannot be charged against many members of the House—perhaps I should not make any exception—that they have been responsible for any undue discussion. That being so, to ask members to agree to the suspension of the Standing Orders within two or three weeks before the close of the session is not fair. We are only just now entering upon the legislative work of the session. We have been engaged up to now upon Estimates and motions, and the real work of the session,

so far as Bills are concerned, is only just starting. The first really serious attempt to deal with legislation was made yesterday when we had the Mining Act Amendment Bill before us. Some of the Bills on the Notice Paper are not even before us. That we are just now entering upon the real work of the session is evidenced by the fact that we have still 23 Government Bills on the Notice Paper, all of which are practically untouched. I must object strongly to the suspension of the Standing Orders at the present stage. We should not be asked to agree to such a proposal for at least another week; we should not be asked to do so until we have disposed of a fair proportion of the work on the Notice Paper and made reasonable progress with the remainder of the Bills. It is by such means that slipshod legislation passes through this Chamber. Amendments are agreed to which are drafted by members themselves, and we do not find out until later on what flaws exist in those amendments, and consequent defects, which we did not anticipate, are often apparent in far reaching results. I recall the fact that it was between two and three o'clock in the morning after an all night sitting when the amendment to the Land Act passed through the Chamber, the consequences of which have been far reaching to the people of Western Australia.

Mr. Johnston: A very adverse effect.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was because of the slipshod way that legislation was passed through the House during the early hours at the close of the session. It is inevitable that Bills will go through during the last few weeks of a session speedily, but if we suspend the Standing Orders, measures are passed so hurriedly that they are not properly examined. We should do our work in a reasonable way during reasonable hours, and not pass legislation which may have a detrimental effect on the interests of the State during the early hours of a sitting, by the adoption of slipshod methods. I shall oppose the motion even to the extent of calling for a division.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.53]: I hope the Premier will postpone this motion for another week. I do not think that he can look back on any part of his career—

The Premier: When this motion was not opposed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know it has been usual for the Opposition to oppose the suspension of the Standing Orders. The Premier himself did so when he was sitting in Opposition. It is only fair that the minority should try to protect themselves, and the only protection they have is embraced within the Standing Orders. On the present occasion I claim with all sincerity that during the period the Labour party have been in opposition, both during the war and since, we have indulged in no factious tactics. We have endeavoured to assist the Government and the State generally and the Government

have told the people that every member sitting behind them was free to vote as he considered best in the interests of the State. When we find a Government like the present, adopting the course, which has never been followed previously, of introducing eight or nine Bills during one week, and asking at the end of that week for the suspension of the Standing Orders to enable them to dispose of the Bills at one sitting, it is time that we protested against such a course as being unfair to members and to their constituents. Members will not be justified in agreeing to such a course, no matter how much they may desire to assist the Government in passing the legislation. It is often necessary for members to consult their constituents regarding measures which come before the House. During the present session I have found it incumbent upon me to discuss some Bills with business and other people, in order to ascertain the probable effect of the legislation, and in order to obtain knowledge which I did not then possess. It is necessary that every member should have time to make the inquiries he deems necessary before legislation is passed. The Government were late in starting the session and the Premier has put up what he considers ample justification. I am not going to say whether we consider that explanation sufficient or not. Members were in their places for many weeks before there was business of any importance brought forward by the Government. Some of the Bills on the Notice Paper at present are such that they could have been introduced during the first week of the session. The Premier must realise that we want to get away as well as he does.

The Premier: I wish I could believe that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a fact, but, while we are anxious to see the session concluded, we are willing to sit on so that the legislation passed may be in the best interests of the State.

The Premier: Well, you will have to sit on.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: With the Notice Paper in the state it is in to-day, it is not fair to ask us to agree to the motion at the present stage. Many of the Bills will require a good deal of consideration. Take the Bill which provides for the establishment of a council of industrial development. No one knows what that measure means, nor do we know what its effect will be. The Premier has referred to the Wheat Marketing Bill. Bills of a similar nature were passed in the other States a month or two ago. I read a speech by the Prime Minister when he introduced the Bill in the Federal Parliament. On that occasion he said that all the States had passed similar legislation.

The Premier: It is merely a continuance Bill.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, it is not. The Prime Minister did not know that Western Australia had not passed this Bill and even now we have not got the Bill before us, ex-

cept at the second reading stage. The State Trading Concerns Bill has not been introduced and a number of other measures have not been introduced yet. I presume the Land and Income Tax Bill is merely a re-enactment of the present Act, but the Premier promised one or two amendments.

The Premier: No, I did not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope the Premier will not adhere to his desire to pass this motion, and will agree not to bring it on before next week, when we will be able to see how we are getting on.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [4.59]: In a very few words I desire to express the opinion that the Premier will be ill advised to force this motion through to-day. I hope he will adopt the suggestion of the member for North-East Fremantle and so expedite the business. A severe indictment could be brought against the Government for the way in which they have held up the business.

Hon. P. Collier: Or failed to get it through.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Another place has been sitting for four months, and only to-day I heard a member of that Chamber declare that during the four months they have had two Bills introduced, both of which were ruled out. He intimated his intention for the rest of the session to vote against every Government Bill sent up there. Members of another place are always complaining that we send them slipshod measures. How are our measures to be anything but slipshod if we are to put them through all stages in one day? When such Bills come up for interpretation in the courts serious disabilities are imposed, serious wrong is often done, and the intention of Parliament is not carried out. In the whole of this lengthy Notice Paper there are but five measures which could not have been introduced at the beginning of the session. We have been sitting four months, and what have we done?

The Minister for Mines: We consider the Estimates on a totally different basis from that on which they are considered in the Council.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That is so, but if Ministers had desired to expedite business they would have made more progress with some of the Bills. Only the other night we had before us the Lunacy Act Amendment Bill, which could have been passed in a couple of hours, instead of which we were all night considering one reasonable amendment. Never before had I seen such an exhibition of stubborn obstinacy on the part of a Minister. The amendment was a perfectly reasonable one.

Mr. Johnston: And ultimately they will accept it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, they will accept it. Why do not the Government take up a reasonable attitude when a reasonable proposition is put forward?

The Premier: May I ask the same question of you now?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: My remarks will not unduly delay progress. But I must protest against the dilatory way in which the Government have tackled the work of the session. We let them get into recess last year without that consideration which should have been given many Bills, because each Minister said he wanted to get into his office, to administer his department. Then, after an exhibition of maladministration, they come back to Parliament with a new programme, not complete and ready for consideration, but added to brick by brick, week after week. Now the Premier tells us he wants to close up on or about the 10th December. In the meantime he wishes to get 27 Bills through, of which, as I have said, only five had to be of recent origin. For the others, there is no valid reason why they should not have been introduced during the first fortnight of the session. It is unfair to ask members at this stage to suspend the Standing Orders so as to allow Bills to be put right through in one day; it is not fair either to the House or to another place, which will be deluged with work after four months of comparative idleness. They will have to sit till two or three o'clock in the morning if they are to finish before Christmas. It is not an equitable distribution of the work. The Government ought to be more considerate, especially towards the leader of the Opposition, who, unlike Ministers, has no administrative staff to go through Bills for him.

The Minister for Mines: What are his lieutenants doing?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: His lieutenants cannot get the necessary information with the same facility as can Ministers and their staffs.

The Premier: I will appoint an additional secretary for him.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We might appoint an additional secretary, in the person of the member for Leederville (Mr. Veryard), for you. When the leader of the Opposition has to stew over every Bill, it is only fair that those Bills should be introduced as early as possible. If five or six are rushed on to him in a week at the close of the session, it is not to be expected that he shall get a reasonably good grasp of them. The business of the session might be more equitably distributed and the more important Bills introduced in the early stages and so considered at leisure.

The Premier: I promise that for next session.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Premier can afford to leave the business of next session to those who will be doing it, and in the meantime drop all the Orders of the Day which he does not seriously intend to proceed with, or which he can do without. That

would be much better than sending into our courts ill-considered Acts of Parliament to be torn to pieces.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.7]: I make the same suggestion. The Premier should select from this list those Bills which the Government propose to see through, and should drop the others forthwith. If the Premier intends to close the session on the 10th December, he ought to indicate to the House now the Bills which the Government consider important. We should then know where we are. It is altogether wrong to ask members to consider Bills which the Government have no serious intention of seeing through. There is here a large number of Bills which have no possibility of passing this session. I do not wish to see the session unduly prolonged, because we are to have the general elections next year, and I understand the majority of members are to be candidates. I am quite prepared to help the Government with the business, but before moving this motion the Premier should have notified us which Bills he considers important.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.10]: If those members who think they have a serious grievance against the Government express their opinions, they may influence the Government to give serious consideration to our views. It is the practice for the Premier to consult with the leader of the Opposition on a motion like this, and then to give to the House an indication of which Bills are to be carried through. The existence of this practice is suggested in the phrase, "Slaughtered innocents." If the Premier would give us some idea as to which are to be slaughtered, we should know where we were. The Governor's Speech declared that we were to have this session a Bill authorising the construction of a railway from Bridgetown to Denmark. I am assured that Bill, if it is introduced this session, will meet with serious opposition, and that unless it can be rushed through in one sitting there will be considerable difficulty in getting it passed. As the leader of the Opposition said regarding the Land Act Amendment Bill, I know members of both Houses who are going to offer serious opposition to it.

The Minister for Mines: Then we shall have to get some opposition to the Meekatharra-Horseshoe railway.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That would not make much difference to me. But why oppose it? The Minister for Mines: Why threaten?

Mr. WILLCOCK: I was not threatening. In any case it does not make much difference to me. If my constituents desired me to vote against the Meekatharra-Horseshoe Railway Bill I would be prepared to do so. It is not fair to ask us to agree to the motion until we know which Bills are to be dropped. We have on the Notice Paper a number of Bills designed for the protection of various professions. Are they all to be rushed through without our being able to

give them due consideration? We all have constituents interested in those professional Bills, and I think we should have full opportunity for discussing them with our constituents. We on this side are serious in our opposition to the motion, and the Premier will be well advised to withdraw it.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kalgoorlie) [5.15]: I trust that the Government will reconsider this matter. We should not be confronted with such a business paper in the very heat of summer and with no enlightenment from the Government as to what is material or essential, what can be held over, and what can be dropped altogether. We have no light to guide us; we are asked to give the Government carte blanche. I think we have never had a session when we have found business so congested at the fag end, largely by Bills of no temporary urgency, but as has been pointed out, of the character of special legislation for favoured sections of the community. We have been discussing almost academic subjects of no immediate concern. The country has continued up to the present without any outcry for these Bills, and all at once, as if when the Government took charge of affairs at the beginning of the session they felt that they must have something to go on with, they piled up anything and threw it down to keep Parliament going. Meanwhile we have kept going for no real public good. There are on the Notice Paper one of two Bills of vital importance to large sections of the community, which Bills should have been considered months ago. We should have been disposing of them instead of discussing debating-class matters of legislation. Another Chamber has practically nothing to do. It has been waiting for us; it has been adjourning before the tea hour almost regularly.

The Minister for Mines: Because we have been dealing with the Estimates.

Hon. T. WALKER: But as a rule we have always had sufficient general legislation of public importance to keep another place moving, and when we have sent along the Estimates members in another place have said that they were overworked, not underworked. What can we expect in the way of sound, clear-headed legislation when we are asked to deal with a programme like this in a week, a fortnight, or three weeks? To do it justice we should devote a session to it. If the Governor's Speech had been delivered to us yesterday and all these measures had been mentioned in the Speech, we would have shivered; we would have been taken absolutely by surprise at the fertility of the draftsman. Before we consent to pass the motion we ought to have a clear definite statement and understanding between both sides of the House as to what measures can be dropped, and what measures are of such importance that they will not wait. But we have heard no statement; we have nothing to guide us. There are Bills on the Notice Paper which have not yet attained to the second reading stage, Bills which will do

next century, and they will be new even then, as nothing of temporary necessity claims their attention at present. Then there are some measures that deserve more than a week's earnest consideration, measures affecting the whole policy of the development of this State, measures that may bind our destinies for good or for evil in our management of the public lands, measures that affect the policy of the future development and settlement and building up of our country, and we are expected to rush them through, probably some of them at midnight, without controversy, without time for cool heads to apply reflection, merely as they are printed. It is unworthy of the dignity of Parliament to take such a course. There is no excuse for the Government. Time has been occupied with matters of no immediate concern to the welfare of the whole State.

The Premier: To what do you refer?

Hon. T. WALKER: To several Bills, for instance some of those introduced by the Attorney General, Bills which affect a particular professional class of one kind or another. These measures may be all right to benefit a few individuals and perhaps remove some ills and injustices, but they are of no immediate importance when we have really important matters clamouring to be dealt with. The Bill relating to bulk handling is not a trivial matter to be taken in the spirit of "Open your mouth and shut your eyes and see what God will send you."

The Premier: It is easy to understand it.

Hon. T. WALKER: It may be, but it involves principles which require to be carefully weighed before a deliberative conclusion is arrived at. There are people who point out with a good show of reason that we are entering in the wrong way upon the bulk handling scheme, and there are others who produce abundance of facts to support their contention that we are harnessing the farmers to a very heavy chariot which in future they will be unable to draw. There are people who conscientiously believe that this State, with all the facilities at its disposal, is entering upon the scheme too soon.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to discuss the bulk handling scheme.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not discussing it; I am merely answering an interjection. The Premier said the Bill could be easily understood. However readily we may grasp the phrases constituting the measure, there are arguments which should be advanced before the House comes to a decision, so that the question may be considered in all its bearings. This cannot be done in the heat of debate with a rushed through measure, sausage-machine legislation, may I term it, put in at one end and dragged out at the other end, a wrapped-up document done by machinery and without supervision. That kind of legislation is not worthy of the representatives of free and enlightened electors. We are faced with the position that we must accept these things without debate. I do not know whether this method is wiser or less wise than the method adopted by the

Federal Parliament in their gagging of all kinds of free and fair discussion. This is a kind of gagging, because it prevents light being thrown upon subjects that affect the destiny of the country we are supposed to serve. I object to this procedure. The desire is that we should not pass the motion to-day, but wait until the Government have made public what they consider it is imperative for us to do and what they consider can be delegated to another session and another Parliament and perhaps to the supervision of another Government. But we are being asked to vote in the dark. That optimistic spirit which guides the Premier in most things guides him in this. He has a strong faith that things will come out all right, and he does not concern himself with that activity and personal supervision so necessary to make things come out right. He hopes they will come out right—we all hope that—but this is the way to botch everything. At the end of the session we shall not have a single measure that has been adequately considered. I would not object if we had reached the last stages of these measures, but some of them have only been introduced. A vast number are mysteries to us, and they amount almost to a score, enough to keep Parliament busily employed throughout a long session, and yet we are expected to despatch all this business in three weeks, with the Estimates still unfinished and some Estimates not yet brought down. This is asking too much of us. However docile we may be, however lacking in factious opposition, however earnest we may be in our desire to give the Government fair play and a fair chance, we cannot allow that spirit of tolerance to completely bind us hand and foot, and make us indifferent as to what measures come to the top and what measures are perfect or imperfect. We have a responsibility. We are part of His Majesty's Opposition placed here to prevent imperfect measures from becoming law. How can we prevent these imperfect measures from becoming law if we are not allowed to adequately consider and debate them, and intelligently vote upon them? I oppose the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Norham [5.28]: I do not suppose there is any member who has occupied a seat in this House for any length of time and has not heard exactly the same arguments used against motions for the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not so.

Mr. Munsie: On other occasions the Premier has always given reasons for the motion.

The PREMIER: Similar motions have always been opposed for the same reasons. I assure members that I have no desire or intention to deny them the fullest possible opportunity to consider all matters which may be brought before them. This House has worked well during the months that we

have sat. I have never heard anyone say we ought to have sat later than we have done. We have put through a large number of Bills, and, of course, there are many before us awaiting further consideration. Several of the Bills on the Notice Paper have already been read a second time, and there are five which I propose to deal with on Tuesday night next.

Mr. Munsie: And there is another Bill to be introduced to-night.

The PREMIER: That is not a very important one, and does not matter much. There are several Continuance Bills.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Only three.

The PREMIER: There are four. Many matters on the Notice Paper have been debated at considerable length. Most of the Bills are comparatively small. True, we have the Wheat Marketing Bill, which I believe hon. members desire to discuss. We have the Land Act Amendment Bill, which is very nearly the same as the Bill introduced last year. We have also the Mining Act Amendment Bill which has been discussed and almost disposed of.

Hon. P. Collier: We have only just started the Committee stage.

The PREMIER: I do not know why objection is taken to the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is too early to suspend them.

The PREMIER: It is not too early. Parliament will be given every opportunity to consider all measures presented to the House. There is no intention of denying that right to hon. members.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What measures are you going to drop?

The PREMIER: It is a convenience to the House, in dealing with these measures, that after a Bill is put through the Committee stage it shall pass the third reading and be sent to another place.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a convenience to the Government to be able to rush things through at the last stages of the session.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows what this motion means, and I hope the House will agree to pass it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You had better postpone it for a week.

The PREMIER: There are but few matters that are likely to take up very much time. I promise hon. members that they will have ample opportunity to discuss and consider every measure that is brought before us. The leader of the Opposition knows that whenever this motion is moved, the same opposition to it always occurs.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not for the last 16 years in this Chamber under similar conditions.

The PREMIER: Hon. members will find that the opposition has been the same on each occasion.

Hon. T. Walker: There has always been an understanding between the Government

and the Opposition as to what measures shall be dropped, and the Standing Orders are suspended to deal with the remainder.

The PREMIER: I do not mind sitting until January. The House can give proper consideration to those measures that remain to be dealt with.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Not all of them.

Hon. T. Walker: If you are going to drop some of them let us know what they are.

The PREMIER: Ample opportunity will be given to hon. members to deal with them. The interests of the country will not be jeopardised by the passing of the motion.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes	..	..	23
Noes	..	..	11
<hr/>			
Majority for	..	..	12
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#### AYES.

Mr. Broun	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Brown	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Draper	Mr. Roblison
Mr. Duff	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. George	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Veryard
Sir H. B. Lefroy	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Maley	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Mitchell	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Roche
Mr. Collier	Mr. Troy
Mr. Jones	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lutey	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Munsie	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

### BILL—COUNCIL OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND INDUSTRIES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [5.40]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for "An Act to establish a Council of Industrial Development."

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.41]: I must oppose this motion. The hon. member may nod his head. If the matter does not interest him he can go outside.

Mr. Teesdale: I only regret the necessity for it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am sent here to do my duty to the country, and that duty I intend to do. It is a pity that some hon. members do not even read the Bills that are introduced. For my part I always endeavour to discharge the functions I am sent here to perform. I do not loiter about, and even

refrain from reading so much as the titles of Bills, as is the case with so many hon. members throughout the session. It would be nothing short of participating in a farce for the House to agree to the introduction of a new Bill with the Standing Orders suspended and 36 Orders of the Day awaiting consideration. Are the Government serious in the way they are conducting the business of the House? To ask for leave to introduce a Bill at this stage is the most luckadaisical, careless, and shipshod way of conducting the business of the House that I have ever known. Ministers know well that they do not intend that half the Bills on the Notice Paper shall be put through. Why suggest a farce in this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in using the word "farce" in that way.

Mr. Jones: What else is it?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that the word is an offensive one or is contrary to the Standing Orders. At all events, it is the word I prefer to use, and I should prefer to continue to use it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has applied it to the House, or rather to the Government turning the House into a farce.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have applied it to the Government who are staging the farce.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is not the place in which to stage it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is what I am objecting to.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am objecting to the hon. member making use of the term in that respect.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I propose to do so. I have not cast any reflection upon this House, but I am at liberty to reflect upon the Government so long as I do not make use of any term that is offensive. The Government, not the House, are staging a farce. I hold that it is neither offensive nor contrary to the Standing Orders to say so. It is nothing short of attempting to stage a farce to be wasting the time of the House and even wasting the public funds in printing the notices, when the Government know full well that they have no possible chance of passing many of these measures, and have no intention that they should be passed. Do the Government imagine that they can get through the work on this crowded Notice Paper within the next 10 days, and at the same time go on introducing new Bills? They know well it cannot be done. There are Bills of the utmost importance on the Notice Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: Those Bills are not under consideration.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am surely permitted to make a passing allusion to them. You are not going to gag me, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw that remark. I have not attempted to gag him or any other hon. member. I ask him to withdraw the remark.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion before the Chair is for leave to introduce a Bill for a certain purpose. The hon. member is opposing this motion on the ground—

Hon. P. COLLIER: On the ground that commends itself to my judgment as being a sound ground, so long as it is within the Standing Orders.

Hon. W. G. Angwin: You can give your reasons for saying so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If I am to be pulled up as being out of order, the very moment I mention the title of one of the Bills on the Notice Paper without your knowing, Sir, in what direction I propose to refer to it—

Mr. Troy: It is unfair.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member said the Notice Paper was crowded with matter.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was pulled up because I said the Notice Paper was crowded with matter. To what else may I refer if I cannot make an observation of that sort? The reason I am opposing this motion is because the Notice Paper is crowded with matter. Surely I am permitted to say that, and to point out the reasons why I am objecting to the introduction of new legislation, namely, that there are so many Bills before us awaiting consideration. In order to advance my argument I am justified in pointing out the nature of some of these Bills and their importance. It would appear to be the desire of the Government to so crowd the Notice Paper with more or less unimportant Bills so that the House may be occupied during the remaining fortnight of the session on those Bills, and so that the Government may have an excuse for dropping those Bills that really do not matter. Then we shall be told at the end of the session that the Government regrets very much that the Land Act Amendment Bill was dropped because there was no time available in which to deal with it. Let the Government go on with the work which is before the House. Let them take up the Bills that are of importance and regarding which they are sincere. Let them proceed with the consideration of those Bills, and when they have been passed, then, with the Standing Orders suspended, the motion for leave to introduce this latest Bill can be submitted. To introduce new legislation on top of 23 Bills already on the Notice Paper, and with the Standing Orders suspended, is evidence of lack of sincerity, and of a lack of method, the like of which I have not noticed in this House for many years. Talk about shipshod methods of conducting business! What is this Bill? If the House grants leave to introduce it, we may find it to be of a controversial nature.

The Minister for Mines: I will not go on with it if it is.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know what it is about.

The Minister for Mines: You cannot know until it is introduced.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have more than ample work on the Notice Paper to get



through in the period at our disposal. It is not right to ask us to place a Bill on the Notice Paper merely to make it appear to the public that the Government are anxious to pass legislation which is sought by this, that, or the other quarter, when the Government know full well that the time at the disposal of Parliament will not permit of its being dealt with. It may even be that the responsibility for the failure to pass some of the Bills which appear on the Notice Paper will be heaped on the Opposition; it may be said that the Opposition obstructed the passage of that legislation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They cannot possibly say that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does not do for one holding a responsible position on this side of the House to be too complacent. The more one is inclined to be tolerant, the more does one see evidence of disgust on the faces of members opposite. Whenever a member on this side of the House exercises his right to criticise a measure, and thus occupies the time of the House for a little while, members opposite show their disapproval on their faces. If some of those members had been here in years gone by they would have had much greater reason to display those looks of disgust at the tactics of the Opposition. I am referring to the time when the party they are now supporting were in opposition.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We on this side represent people, not sheep.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope that our desire to be courteous and to help on the business of the House will not be regarded as evidence of weakness which may be taken advantage of. If any such impression has got abroad I want to dispel it.

The Premier: It has not so far as I know.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that the Premier would not be capable of entertaining such an opinion. That is the view I hold with regard to the Premier; others may take a different view.

The Minister for Mines: You are not referring to me.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not specifying beyond the Premier.

The Minister for Works: I am sure you are not referring to me.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I may make a mistake if I start particularising. I am going to exercise my right in the public interests to criticise those measures that I think should be criticised. I am also going to oppose any attitude which will serve to bring the House into ridicule, and I claim that is what is being done by introducing new Bills at this stage of the session, when it is recognised that there is no possible chance of passing them, and when the Government have no serious intention of endeavouring to pass them.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [5.54]: It seems to me the height of inconsistency to pass a motion to suspend the Standing Orders, for what purpose? For the purpose

of enabling us to get through the business already announced. On the very heel of that we find new business being introduced, and no assurance that there will not be more to follow. Can there be any earnestness in that method of procedure? We have in effect been told that unless the Standing Orders are suspended we cannot get through the business within the time allotted to us. I cannot tell what the Bill is that the Minister for Mines wishes to submit, but the title is suggestive of a Bill of a controversial nature, a Bill which will take up the time of the House. If it is valuable, if it is necessary, why defer it until this late hour of the session? The value of it must have been known before now. This policy of the Government is bad because new legislation should not be introduced when members are weary of the session and cannot avoid being weary of it, and they are all conscious of the fact that the session must be terminated within a reasonable time. The Government appear to have no appreciation of the responsibility connected with the introduction of legislation. I am reminded by the leader of the Opposition that the Premier said in reference to this Bill that it does not matter whether it goes through or not. If that be the case, is it not—to use a word that appears to have a tinge of the objectionable about it—a farce, to submit a measure when it does not matter what its fate may be?

The Minister for Works: This measure here?

Hon. T. WALKER: The Premier used those words with regard to the measure which is the subject of the motion. Yet we must have it put upon the Notice Paper, to take its place in the order of debate, and to have it discussed when the debate may be merely one with nothing to accomplish. I object to the time of Parliament being wasted in that way. Either the measure is important or it is not important.

The Minister for Mines: I will withdraw the motion if you sit down.

Hon. T. WALKER: Very well.

The Minister for Mines: I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

## BILLS (2), THIRD READING.

1, Railways Classification Board.

2, Innkeepers.

Transmitted to the Council.

## BILL—GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Legislative Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Munsie in the Chair; Mr. Roake in charge of the Bill

No. 1. Add the following new clause, to stand as No. 11:—"Where no adequate provision made by testator, court may make orders, etc. (1) If any person (hereinafter called the testator) dying or having died after the 1st day of January, 1921, disposes of his or her property either wholly or partly by will in such manner that the widow, husband, or children of such person or any or all of them are left without adequate provision for their proper maintenance, education, or advancement in life as the case may be, the court may at its discretion and taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, on application by or on behalf of such wife, husband, or children, or any of them, order that such provision for such maintenance, education, and advancement as the court thinks fit, shall be made out of the estate of the testator for such wife, husband, or children, or any or all of them, and may attach such conditions to the order as it thinks fit: provided that the court may refuse to make an order in favour of any person whose character or conduct is such as to disentitle him to the benefit of such order. (2) Every such order shall operate and take effect as if the same had been made by a codicil to the will of the deceased person executed immediately before his or her death":

Mr. ROCKE: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. T. WALKER: While approving of the purpose of the Council's new clause, I wish to question an aspect of the proviso. The real purpose of the clause is to provide for the children. There may be persons whose character is such as to entitle them to no consideration from the court. Suppose, now, that such a person were in charge of the children. True, the State could then take charge of them. But, surely, if there are assets left by the deceased parent which would secure education for the children we ought not to take into consideration the character of the particular person who has charge of them, but should rather extend the power of the court to order the children to be maintained out of the estate by some guardian appointed by the court, or, failing that, by the State Children Department. I merely draw attention to what seems to me an imperfection; I do not for the moment see how I can verbally amend the clause.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I would ask the member for Kanowna and other members of the Committee to bear in mind that the object of the new clause, which is taken from the New South Wales Act, is to prevent people making capricious wills and without good reason deliberately cutting off some of their dependants and thus throwing them on the State. We know it is utterly useless to leave money to some people: one might as well throw it in the gutter. The new clause will not interfere with the express wishes of the testator unless those wishes are really

unreasonable and against the interests of the State. I appreciate the object of the member for Kanowna, but I do not think it is one which would justify us in amending this new clause.

Mr. ROCKE: I think the member for Kanowna overlooks the fact that the Bill as it left the Assembly contained provision for giving the court power to remove an unworthy guardian. Another person may be appointed in the place of such a guardian, even if the latter is the parent of the child. I believe that the interests of the child, which are in the hon. member's mind, will under this new clause be safeguarded so long as the child remains a child.

Mr. ROBINSON: Would the hon. member in charge of the Bill please tell me what is the meaning of the word "children" in the new clause? Did the mover of the new clause intend that that word should apply only to boys and girls under the age of 21 years, or that it should apply for all life? Other words used in the clause, "maintenance, education, or advancement," are always in connection with minors, but hardly used in connection with adults.

Mr. ROCKE: I do not know what was in the mind of the mover of the new clause, but I certainly believe that he meant the new clause to apply so long as a person was the child of the testator, regardless of the child's age.

The Attorney General: That, certainly, is what is intended.

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

No. 2. Title.—Add the following words:—"And to assure to the widow or widower and family of a testator an adequate maintenance from the estate of such testator":

Mr. ROCKE: This is merely a consequential amendment. 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 Legislative Council.

## BILL—HERDSMAN'S LAKE DRAIN-AGE.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [6.13]: I am sorry that the Minister for Works, in introducing this Bill, did not give us more information. The works proposed under this measure may have an evil effect on the immediate locality and on the city of Perth. We have evidence here in Perth of past deleterious actions done without consideration

for the future. By way of illustration, one need only look at Hay-street, the residents of which, I believe, decided in the early days to build up closer.

The Minister for Works: That is correct as regards Fremantle, but not as regards Perth.

The Minister for Mines: Moreover, this Bill does not propose to drain Hay-street.

Mr. LUTEY: I am merely illustrating what may be done by hon. members unwittingly in passing this Bill. To control the traffic in the principal streets of Perth and Fremantle is now a most troublesome matter. Had some thought been taken in the past, our two principal cities would have been much better laid out and built than they are. Hay-street, Perth, should have been one of the finest streets in Australia. I understand that the land to be reclaimed at Herdsman's Lake is to be used for the settlement of soldiers.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. LUTEY: When introducing this Bill the Minister pointed out that this land was to be reclaimed for the purposes of soldier settlement. This particular area is quite close to Leederville and it strikes me that in a State like Western Australia there should be plenty of land available without commencing market gardening on an extensive scale in this particular locality. I do not know what the intentions of the Government are regarding this scheme, or on what areas it is intended to settle the men. The Government purchased 1,073 acres for £10,732 10s., and also another block of 200 acres 1 rood 24 perches for £3,036. It would be a pity to commence market gardens so close to the city. We have the Perth endowment lands on one side and the city on the other, and this particular area under discussion between them. I believe that Perth is destined to be an immense city in the future. It would be a pity to drain what can be made a beautiful lake.

Mr. Underwood: You can always block the drain if you wish to.

Mr. LUTEY: It may be necessary to have a certain amount of drainage there for the benefit of the district, but it would be of advantage in the interests of the future citizens of Perth that the lake should be made a reserve and retained as a beauty spot, such as distinguishes Ballarat, one of the most beautiful cities in Australia.

Mr. Lambert: They have not got a Swan River there.

Mr. LUTEY: Not many cities have the advantages that Perth has, but the people who will be resident in the area under discussion, will be far removed from both the Swan River and the coast. The time will come when the people will bless the Government of the day if they see fit to reserve this area for a park and convert the swamps into beautiful, ornamental lakes.

Mr. Underwood: There is another lake close by.

Mr. LUTEY: I believe there is, but these lakes should be reserved for future generations. It may appear fitting at the present time to throw this area open for market garden purposes.

Mr. Smith: Do you not want cheap vegetables? People cannot live on park lands.

Mr. LUTEY: We are not so sure that this land will prove good for market gardening. Last night reference was made to the fact that King's Park was a monument to the memory of the late Lord Forrest. I would like to see a monument to the Minister for Works, and this area should be suitable for the purpose.

The Minister for Works: I have my monument in the hearts of the people.

Mr. LUTEY: The plans for Canberra, the future capital of Australia, provide for the construction of artificial lakes. Here we have natural lakes which can be easily turned into beauty spots. The member for Leederville (Mr. Varyard) should support me in my desire to secure beauty spots for the people who reside in his constituency. This particular area could be made one of the most beautiful spots in the State. I know a man who has travelled in many countries. He takes a deep interest in town planning, and he has often been in this particular district. He remarked to me that it seemed a shame that the Government did not reserve these lakes and help to beautify the city of Perth. I hope the Minister will seriously consider this matter when the work is being carried out. I am not opposing these works, so far as it will be necessary to have a certain amount of drainage for the surrounding district, but surely it will not be necessary to go in for tunnelling and drawing off the water right away. It would be of advantage to the State if these areas were reserved for future generations for recreation purposes.

Mr. BROWN (Subiaco) [7.36]: I should like some explanation from the Minister relative to the financial arrangements regarding the drainage when completed. Seeing that it will be part of the metropolitan scheme, will there be any special provision for rates?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Clause 3 deals with that.

Mr. BROWN: That is the only point I desire to have some information about. I do not want other parts of Perth to pay more for stormwater and drainage rates on account of this particular area.

Mr. WILLOCK (Geraldton) [7.37]: I thought the Minister would have given us some idea of the cost of this scheme.

The Minister for Works: Twenty-five thousand pounds.

Mr. WILLOCK: That, added to the £10,000 we have heard about, brings the cost up to £35,000. For the area which has been taken over, this will work out at about £35

an acre. It seems to me that we are spending a considerable amount of money to get land of this description. It would appear to deery the lands of the State when we have to pay such a sum for lands of this description. Surely we can get as good land for repatriating soldiers at a smaller cost than this. If the Minister says that the scheme is in the interests of the adjoining settlers, then it will have to be carried out, particularly if flood waters are likely to damage the property of other settlers in the vicinity.

Mr. Smith: They will have to construct a railway there.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Although the whole scheme seems feasible, there seems to be a doubt as to whether it will prove successful.

The Minister for Works: There is no possibility of failure.

Mr. WILLCOCK: During the course of his speech, the Minister said that he was not sure whether the scheme would be successful or not.

The Minister for Works: If I had the slightest doubt about that, do you think I would have allowed the engineers to put forward this scheme?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Minister did not seem to be very enthusiastic or optimistic about it.

The Minister for Works: I am not at all pessimistic about it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Minister gave me the impression, when introducing the Bill, that he was not altogether sure in his own mind regarding the matter. The Minister is pretty sure about things when he makes up his mind, and on this occasion his speech seemed to convey a note of warning. Seeing that this scheme is costing £35,000 for about 1,000 acres of land, it seems a pretty dear proposition. We should be able to reclaim land for less than that, and unless we are sure that it will be successful and that we cannot get as good land for the same purposes in some other portions of the State, we should not go on with it.

Mr. Lutey: They have already spent about £14,000 on the land.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The whole thing does not seem to have been conceived in a very business-like way. Even if the land is good, £35,000 is a very large sum. Doubtless a certain proportion of the land will be useless, and probably from 10 to 15 per cent. will not come up to the mark. The returns dealing with properties purchased in the South-West for the settlement of returned soldiers show that about 20 per cent. has not been alienated yet. The explanation we were given was to the effect that the unalienated land was represented by rocky country and reserves for roads and so on. By the time this percentage has been taken off the Herdsman's Lake area, the cost will probably run up to about £50 per acre for the good land. If the Government are prepared to take the responsibility for this

scheme, it will be a monument to their want of capacity and business acumen should it fail. I hope to be in public life so that I may be able to point out, should the scheme not prove successful, that it did not go through this House without my voice being raised in protest.

Mr. VERYARD (Leederville) [7.42]: Some objection has been taken to the proposal as outlined by the Minister for Works, but there is very little in the contentions that have been raised, more particularly regarding the establishment of market gardens in this area. It may be interesting to members to know that there has been no attempt at drainage by any public body for the last 60 or 70 years in the city area. Going back some 60 years there was no attempt by any public body to construct a drain for the purpose of opening up some of the swamp lands. Areas suitable for market gardening in the city have been taken up by private enterprise, and also by the Perth City Council, who will not allow market gardening to be carried on. The Government have also resumed lands along the railways which were formerly under cultivation. The result has been that market garden land has become very scarce. Some time ago private enterprise stepped into the breach and spent a considerable sum of money at Njookenbooro, near Osborne Park. A drain was constructed, but, unfortunately, the heavy rains three or four years ago so soddened the ground, that many of the market gardens have been overflowing with water ever since. This drain will open up more than the thousand acres of swamp land. The Government have resumed some of the land adjoining the lake, and those who purchased the swamp land will want the higher land as well, and it will be a good payable proposition for the Government. Njookenbooro, which is a large district, is now drained into Herdsman's Lake. The result of the proposed drainage will be to release hundreds of acres of good land, which were previously under cultivation, and render them again available. Not only will it drain Njookenbooro, but it will have a great effect further north, and will cut off a large body of water coming south. Objection has been raised to the drain going through the endowment lands. All I can say is that if I had the endowment lands, I should welcome the scheme. In time to come many buildings will be erected out there, and this drain will then be of great use to the city council in providing for the drainage of that area. The restricted area of market garden land in the vicinity of Perth has been the chief cause of the high prices of vegetables. It is incumbent on the Government to move in this matter as rapidly as possible with a view to saving the situation for the coming season. Even now the supply of vegetables is by no means equal to the demand. The proposed drainage will be of vast benefit to large numbers of peo-

ple, and will be an important factor in the development of the Government's policy of closer settlement. The population of the metropolitan area is rapidly increasing, and the difficulty of supplying sufficient vegetables will increase in like ratio unless we can provide additional land for cultivation. Reference has been made to the conserving of Lake Monger. I do not think any citizen of Leederville or of North Perth would wish to see that lake drained. There is no intention of taking a gallon of water from Lake Monger. It is the wish of the people of Leederville that the swamp land on the east side of Lake Monger shall become the botanical gardens of Perth.

Mr. Lambert: Will they pay for it?

Mr. VERYARD: I urge the need for draining Herdsman's Lake. For years past scores of people in the locality have suffered from inability to get on to their flooded lands. I support the second reading.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [7.51]: The Bill requires close scrutiny, particularly by metropolitan members. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Brown) raised a very important question. When the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act was passed it was intended to divide the metropolitan area into four districts, namely, Perth, Fremantle, Claremont, and Guildford. For several years that system obtained, but eventually the whole area was constituted one area. Under the Drainage Act it has been the practice of the Government to declare stormwater districts, so that only those persons benefited by a stormwater drain are rated to pay the interest and sinking fund. There have been many complaints in regard to this, a large number of the people so rated claiming that they have not received any benefit whatever from the drain. To-day that rate stands at 5d. in the pound. The Government, in this instance, instead of putting into force the Drainage Act, which provides for the formation of drainage boards, and the borrowing of money for their own work, have themselves stepped in. I again remind hon. members that under the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Act the Government have power to charge rates. Part VIII. of the Act refers to the rating of various land in the metropolitan area. Provision is there made for dealing with the land if the rates are not paid. It is true, as the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) remarked, the Minister distinctly said he was not sure whether this proposition for draining Herdsman's Lake would be successful. But if Parliament approve of this expenditure of £25,000, we may be very sure stormwater rates will be charged. If it were an agricultural district those rates might be waived. But it is not an agricultural district, and so the rates will not be waived. Under Part VIII. of the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Act, the Minister has power to levy a rate over the whole of the metropolitan area. The Minis-

ter made a mistake in introducing the Bill. He should have said to the Perth Road Board, in whose area the district is, "If you want this locality drained for the purpose of improving your district, providing additional holdings, increasing the number of ratepayers and opening up the land for settlement, you should create a drainage board and raise money for the necessary drainage. Then the persons who benefit from the drains to be constructed will have to pay the rates." I ask the member for Claremont (Mr. Duff) what benefit will Claremont get from the drainage of Herdsman's Lake? What benefit will Subiaco get from that drainage? As for vegetables, except during the present year, which has been too wet, there are more vegetables grown in the metropolitan area than we can consume.

The Minister for Works: We have to pay enough for them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, because the heavy rains this year killed a large percentage of the crop. What benefit will Midland Junction derive from the drainage of Herdsman's Lake? Yet under the Bill the Minister has power to rate Midland Junction for the purpose of putting in this drain. So, too, in regard to Fremantle. For years there has been talk of draining certain lakes at Jandakot. But the Government have taken this stand: "Yes, we will do the work for you if you will form a drainage board and pay the necessary rates." In consequence those drainage works have never been carried out.

Mr. Duff: That would cost £80,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It matters not, the principle is the same. The Government have as much right to drain the Jandakot lakes as they have to drain Herdsman's Lake.

The Minister for Works: The Jandakot people want those lakes drained.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course they do, but the Government will not drain them unless the Jandakot people create a drainage board and hold themselves responsible for the interest and sinking fund.

Mr. Hudson: Is there not a special Act for that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, there is. In this instance, however, the Government have brought in a Bill authorising them to drain Herdsman's Lake, not as a Government of the State, but as a Government of the metropolitan area, and they ask for power to make the whole of the ratepayers responsible for the cost.

The Minister for Works: I do not think that accurately describes the position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I cannot come to any other conclusion. The Government have constituted the four districts one area, and so the rating extends from Midland Junction to Fremantle.

Mr. Underwood: Is Armadale in it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not think so. However, it has been the practice of the Government under the Metropolitan Water

Supply and Sewerage Act to create storm-water areas. If I mistake not, Sir, you yourself are rated to-day, although you derive no benefit from the scheme.

Hon. P. Collier: I am rated 5d. in the pound, although I get nothing at all for it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I remember that one district lodged a complaint that it was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the drain and that the water ran in another direction, and yet it was rated for stormwater drainage. Under this Bill the Minister has provided powers to rate under Part VIII. of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act. I do not think the Minister has given the measure that close attention which he should have given it. I have not had time to go carefully through the Bill, but I think the Minister will find that the intention of the department is that the whole area must provide the rates.

Mr. Brown: That would be very unfair.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course it would. Clause 3 reads—

All the provisions of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909, relating to stormwater drains, including Part VIII. thereof, shall apply to the works authorised by this Act.

I hope the Minister will give us a guarantee that the Bill will be amended so that only the districts which benefit will be rated for the cost of the drainage. This would be only fair.

The Minister for Works: I think that is the intention.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Bill does not say so.

Mr. Underwood: What do you call the district?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member who lives at West Leederville will not benefit; in all probability he will be rated although his residence is about two miles from Herdsman's Lake. There is no justification for rating the people of East Fremantle to pay for the cost of draining Herdsman's Lake somewhere to the North Beach. This Bill should make it clear that the district benefited should be responsible for the rates. The Minister should have included the provisions of the Drainage Act which was passed for the purpose of dealing with works such as these.

The Minister for Works: This Bill is the work of the Crown Law Department.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Crown Law Department generally draft Bills in accordance with instructions given to them. Many districts have started drainage boards and have levied rates to meet the cost of constructing drains. The people of Jandakot for years have been asking that similar work should be carried out there, but a number of the ratepayers were not agreeable because they would be rated. The Government said, "If you want a board but will not stand the cost, the work will not be carried out." The same thing should apply to Herdsman's Lake.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.5] I was rather struck with the extraordinary suggestion by the member for Brown Hill that lakes or swamps such as the one in question—I think they might more aptly be termed swamps—should remain in undisputed possession of mosquitoes and suchlike parasites and for all time be unutilised.

Hon. P. Collier: Beauty unadorned.

Mr. LAMBERT: Nature unadorned. The reasoning of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) was just about as consistent. If he considers that the work of draining these lakes is a parochial matter, the people of Leederville might well ask of what direct benefit the Fremantle harbour is to them.

Mr. Brown: There is no comparison at all.

Mr. LAMBERT: I would not expect the hon. member to be able to make a comparison. The two propositions are comparable, whether it be a matter of draining a swamp or constructing a breakwater.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government will not drain the Jandakot lakes under these conditions.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not aware of that, but it is satisfactory to know that they are making a start somewhere, if only at Herdsman's Lake. It is a great pity, and to this extent I can agree with the member for North-East Fremantle, that a greater area is not embodied in this policy of draining swamp lands and making them available for useful purposes. The hon. member, foreign to his accepted beliefs that we should provide cheap food for the people, appears to have a greater desire for the ornamentation of certain areas than for the provision of cheap land and cheap food for the people.

Mr. Hudson: It is questionable whether it would be cheap if the works were constructed at high cost, and the land were sold at high cost.

Mr. LAMBERT: The price of £35 an acre for garden land is very low.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And if it comes to suburban land it is still lower.

Mr. Hudson: That was not disclosed by the hon. member who spoke.

Mr. LAMBERT: He would know from the amount expended on the purchase and the estimated cost of the works.

Mr. Lutey: That was only the cost of the land without the drainage.

Mr. Troy: What about improvements?

Mr. LAMBERT: There is very little improvement in the way of clearing. Our chief concern should be that we have swamp lands which should be handled scientifically, and until the Government realise what a great asset we have in our swamp lands, and undertake the necessary engineering works to bring these lands under cultivation, they will continue to be swamps. I regret that a serious attempt has not been made to utilise the fine, peat lands between Fremantle and Mandurah. Something might be done there. What could be more useful than good mar-

ket gardens? I should like to see every working man in the metropolitan area holding sufficient land to have a garden of his own, and I am not sure that I would not make it compulsory for every man to live on a certain area and cultivate it for his own needs.

Hon. T. Walker: Where would you get water to grow the vegetables?

Mr. LAMBERT: Not from the academic suggestions usually offered by the member for Kanowna.

Hon. T. Walker: That is a manganese answer.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am concerned now about making these valuable lands fit for utilisation. Later on we can concern ourselves about the water supply.

Mr. Underwood: There would be water three feet below the surface.

Mr. LAMBERT: The member for Kanowna knows that in nine-tenths of the metropolitan area a suitable and sufficient supply of water would be obtainable.

Hon. T. Walker: Could every worker obtain it?

Mr. LAMBERT: If he could not it would be a disgrace to the ruling powers. Every worker should be able to obtain it.

Mr. Hudson: During some of the summer months people are allowed to water their gardens only during certain hours of the day.

Mr. LAMBERT: If every worker had such a holding and were compelled to utilise it, he would have less time to engage in what he considers is recreation, but what I consider is neither fruitful nor useful to him.

Mr. Troy: You do not believe in freedom for any but for yourself?

Mr. LAMBERT: When the hon. member is expressing his views he is not always tolerant regarding the thoughts or opinions of others. I am not concerned about the ornamental lakes dotted over the metropolitan area. Leederville with Herdsman's Lake is not on all fours with Ballarat and such like inland cities. We have the Swan River, and Leederville is close to the sea, and in this case the need is not so pressing as in the case cited by the hon. member. The member for North-East Fremantle says that because the Government will not undertake the drainage of the Jandakot and other lakes further south, a start should not be made on Herdsman's Lake; but I hold that the fact that the Government intend to make a start on Herdsman's Lake is a healthy sign, and I hope it will be the forerunner of a bolder, broader and more useful policy to bring under cultivation the many unutilised swamp lands in Western Australia.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [S.13]: The Minister for Works in any natter which he brings before the House usually gives the fullest possible information, but in moving the second reading of this Bill I must say that he supplied us with very little information indeed.

The Minister for Works: I told you the facts as far as I knew them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think the Minister did. One very important fact in connection with the construction of all works is the estimated cost, and the Minister did not refer to it. This was a very important omission. On the amount of money involved in a work, members very often decide whether they will support or oppose a Bill.

The Minister for Works: There was no reason why I should have omitted it. The omission was not intentional.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Even now I do not know the estimated cost of this work.

The Minister for Works: Speaking from memory, I think it is £25,000. I do not know how it will soar if we have to pay £1 per day for labour.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We are quite prepared to view this matter from a national standpoint, but we must guard against bringing into cultivation too many other lands when we have such a big area ready for cultivation but not fully utilised. The member for North-East Fremantle did not express any opposition to the construction of these works, but he offered a legitimate opposition to certain principles. I intend to oppose the Bill on the same ground. It is all very well to ask us to take a broad view of the matter and spend £30,000 on these works, and then tax all and sundry whether they receive any benefit from the works or not.

The Minister for Works: You will find that the Bill restricts the area to a special purpose.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am paying 5d. in the pound for storm water rates, although I receive no storm-water service. There is none in the area in which I live, but nevertheless I have to pay £2 or £3 a year for such service. I have no desire to give any Government the power to increase my rates in Mount Lawley for the benefit of men living in Osborne Park or at Herdsman's Lake. It would not be an equitable arrangement. I presume the Herdsman's Lake area is included in that recently purchased from the church by the Government for returned soldier settlement, and as the land has been purchased it must be drained to be brought into use. There is a way of doing this. Under the Drainage Act, as pointed out by the member for North-East Fremantle, a board could be created, the Government supply the necessary capital for the work, or construct the work themselves.—

Hon. W. C. Angwin. Up to £30,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: While the board undertook, by levying rates upon those who receive the benefit of these works, to pay the cost of maintenance and interest on the capital. There was such a drainage board near Denmark and another at Busselton.

Mr. Brown: And one at Harvey.

Mr. Nairn: And also at West Armadale.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government have had some difficulty with these boards in getting the interest on the capital invested, but the Act I have mentioned provides

machinery whereby the cost of such works is placed upon the shoulders of those who should carry it. If it was a good investment to purchase the Herdsman's Lake area, and it can be properly worked, those who are settled on the land and are to receive the benefit of the money expended, are the people who should pay the interest on the money expended on the construction and the maintenance as well. I suppose it was a good investment, otherwise the expenditure of the money required to purchase it, and the expenditure on the works themselves, would not be justified.

Mr. Underwood: So they will have to pay.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member has no warrant for saying that this will be so. Under the Bill the Minister may levy rates over the whole of the district.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He has power to fix the area.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He may include all that area comprising Maylands, Mount Lawley, North Perth, or anywhere else he likes.

The Attorney General: Do you think he would be likely to do that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know. A department which levies storm water rates on an area which is not served by any storm water drainage might conceivably levy rates upon those who will derive no benefit from the expenditure of this particular money.

The Minister for Works: You levied the rates yourself when you were a Minister. You signed the book.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I should be surprised to learn that I had done so, but if I did I deserve to pay. We have not been told how many people will be settled on this area. I presume the number will be sufficient to pay the interest on the capital expenditure and maintenance of the work. That is only a reasonable proposition, and the House will be asking nothing unfair if it seeks to make that clear in the Bill.

The Minister for Works: That is all that is intended.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then let us make it clear that those who will be served by the works shall pay for them. Very often we allow things to pass with the best of intentions, but as time goes on the administration of our Acts passes into other hands, and all our expressions of good intention go by the board. For the guidance of those who may have to administer this piece of legislation, let us lay it down clearly what we intend. It is always wise in matters of legislation, if it is intended to take a certain course of action, to express that intention in clear language. In this way litigation, disputation and trouble are avoided in future. I hope the Minister will agree to this intention being clearly expressed in the Bill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [8.22]: I have listened with interest to the discussion. Hon. members do not seem to have

grasped the position in the way that I have done. If there is going to be a general rate charged, or an area prescribed, I think I shall be one of those who will be called upon to pay. Nevertheless, I intend to support the Bill and to take the risk of any extra taxation that may have to be faced. It has been said that we should keep this area for ornamental purposes. It has also been pointed out by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) that in the matter of water scenery, Perth and its environments is perhaps better off, with the exception possibly of Sydney, than any other city in Australia. Not only have we miles of beautiful beach running from Wanneroo to South Fremantle, but we have one of the finest estuaries in Australia in the Swan River. We have also a number of lakes around the city. Within half a mile of Herdsman's Lake we have the large sheet of water called Monger's Lake. Further west from Herdsman's Lake we have Jackadder Lake, and on the Perry estate, recently purchased by the Perth City Council, there is another lake.

Mr. Hudson: It cannot be guaranteed that these will be preserved.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is a guarantee so far as the Perth City Council are concerned.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Can you give any guarantee concerning the Perth City Council?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Even if they are not reserved we shall be infinitely better off for lakes than any other city in the Commonwealth. Monger's Lake and Smith's Lake are already reserved.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not a good argument. The man who has one shirt is better off than he who has none.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The man who has more shirts than he can wear does not need to possess so many. Shirts are no good unless they are worn. It has been suggested that those who take up this land should pay for the improvements. I would point out that there are no people at present to do this, and until the lake is drained they will not go there.

Mr. Nairn: Who is going to pay in the meantime?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Who paid for the construction of the railway to Bunbury?

Hon. P. Collier: The board would only be created when the people were there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And the people would not go there until the land was drained. We built railways at a cost of millions of pounds to open up the wheat belt. The people will not go on to that sort of land until the railway is built.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The people were there first in our day.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: People will not take up this swamp land until it is drained. If we can reclaim 1,000 or 1,500 acres of good



swamp land for £35,000, will that be a good proposition or not?

Hon. P. Collier: No one argues against that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It may or may not be good. If the water is gone the land may be useless.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It would not be the first £35,000 we have taken a risk with. We took a risk with £300,000 for a dock at Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, we did not.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We lost money, anyhow. If the land is worth reclaiming, it is the duty of the Government to do it. My opinion is that it is worth reclaiming. Regarding the point as to the ornamental value of Herdsman's Lake, it would be infinitely more ornamental if vegetable and fruit gardens, vineyards and ornamental trees, were grown upon it by the settlers who go there. I have been round the lake scores of times and can vouch for its not being ornamental at present. It would be a pleasant sight to see this area occupied by about 100 settlers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Market gardeners say that once the water is drained off, the land will be no good.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Let them take the risk. I hope the Minister will make certain, before he allows his officers to go on with the work, as to what the cost of the drainage will be. I have before this known officers of the Public Works Department to underestimate cost. I will not say that there is not some little gully passing through the sandstone range; but unless there is such a gully, I undertake to say we shall not be able to get through that range along the lime kiln for £25,000—and that is irrespective of the rest of the drain. The proposition requires very careful consideration from the aspect of cost before one embarks on it.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [8.31]: At the outset let me say that I believe this magnificent area of land to be well worth reclaiming. If the departmental estimate is anywhere near the mark, we shall obtain at a cost of £35 per acre—

The Minister for Works: The cost of draining will be £25 per acre.

Mr. NAIRN: I understand that the purchase price and the cost of drainage together will amount to £35 per acre. Even that amount will not scare away from the proposal any person who knows that land of such quality as this is worth up to £100 per acre. That is the price being paid for land of that quality not only in Western Australia, but also in other parts of the country. I have been over the lake and around it, and know a good deal about this area. So far as I can judge by casual observation, this land is similar to the best that can be found in other swamp areas. To that extent I approve of the Bill. However, I entirely agree with what has been said regarding liability to pay for the cost of

drainage, as apart from paying for the land itself.

The Minister for Works: Only those who benefit will have to pay.

Mr. NAIRN: I agree with the leader of the Opposition that our drainage legislation provides for the creation of separate districts. Such districts have been created in other parts of the State. What has the Minister to lose by making the Bill state quite clearly what he tells us is the intention of the measure?

The Minister for Works: The Bill is perfectly clear.

Mr. NAIRN: It is not clear to me. I have had some little experience of the difficulties experienced by local drainage boards in raising revenue from those who should pay.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Minister has power to declare a drainage area.

Mr. NAIRN: Yes, but that is purely discretionary on his part. If the Minister will insert in the Bill a provision making this matter clear, I shall be satisfied to let the measure go. The Attorney General has intimated to me that only one word more will be required to make the matter perfectly clear. Until such time as I feel assured that only those who are going to enjoy the benefits of the draining of that area will be liable and responsible for the cost of the undertaking, I shall not feel justified in supporting the Bill.

Mr. DAVIES (Guildford) [8.36]: I shall support the second reading of the Bill, hoping that what the measure proposes is part of a comprehensive scheme contemplated by the Government for the drainage of the metropolitan-suburban area. It is true that the House is in the dark as to why the immediate drainage of this particular area should be necessary. Let me remind every member of this Chamber that there is much greater need for drainage of the metropolitan-suburban area than for reclaiming this land about Herdsman's Lake. No doubt members will have observed in a recent issue of the "Sunday Times" photographs showing how Maylands has been submerged. There are homes in Maylands which even to-day are almost surrounded by water, though a few years ago there was no water within hundreds of yards of them. I presume the object of this Bill includes drainage of storm water as well as the drainage of Herdsman's Lake. The intention is, I understand, to take the water off scores of acres in the neighbourhood where the water is rising now. It is deplorable to see how homes in the metropolitan-suburban area are to-day surrounded by water. If the Government have money to spend in this direction—and apparently they have—they should do something immediately for the relief of those people who are suffering from the rising of water in the metropolitan-suburban area.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [8.37]: I regret that my speech last evening on this Bill should have led to misunderstanding on the part of any hon. member. On referring to the "Hansard" report of my remarks, I observe that Mr. Underwood interjected—

Where will the open channel be?

That, however, was not what reached my ear. I understood an hon. member to ask, was I certain about what the channel would do in the matter of draining the area? I replied—

It is not possible to make a positive certainty of anything of this sort, but the impression amongst the engineers, which has been fostered by the results of the various levels which have been taken, is that the work can be carried out successfully.

Hon. members have assuredly given the House their views on this Bill. Certainly I had no idea that so small a measure as this would have been the object of so much interest. I will endeavour to deal with the various remarks and criticisms which have been made. One hon. member expressed a fear that the work proposed by the Bill might have an evil effect on the district in question, or even on the city of Perth. I fail to see what evil effect can result from the draining off of water which has been for many years a source of malaria and other troubles to the people living in its neighbourhood. Further, from representations which have been made to me, and which I know the member for the district can corroborate, the settlers in the district, who have been trying for years to make a living there, are restricted to using their land for only a portion of the year, owing to the rising of water. The draining of the lake, therefore, will not only serve the purpose of providing land for soldier settlement, but will also enable other land, held by old settlers in the district, to be used throughout the year. If that is an evil effect, I say we could do with a little more of it elsewhere in the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are settlers in that district?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, in the vicinity of the lake. What possible evil effect the draining off of the water could have on the city of Perth my imagination, which may have become dulled with the course of the years that have passed, does not enable me to conceive. One hon. member appeared to think that large areas of land were available near Leederville for soldier settlement. With the subject of soldier settlement my department have nothing to do. That matter is one entirely in the hands of the Repatriation Department, who provide all the funds required; and I hope hon. members will bear that fact in mind. The only way in which my department come into the

matter is that we have been asked by the Repatriation authorities to drain this area so that it may be made available for use. Another hon. member said it would be a pity to start market gardening so near the city. In a climate such as ours, it would be better for the health of the people if they were enabled to consume twice the quantity of vegetables that are now produced by our market gardeners. If there is one direction in which Western Australians, either by adoption or by birth, err, it is in consuming too much meat; and one of the reasons which bring about the excessive consumption of meat is to be found in the fact that vegetables, although grown here in large quantities, are scarce and dear.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But that is not the fault of the market gardeners.

Mr. Lutley: Latterly it has been due to the wet season.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think there is anything in the argument that Herdsman's Lake should be retained as a sheet of water. I agree with the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) that there are sufficient lakes in the vicinity of Perth. Besides, more lakes are evolving year by year. The member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) referred to the land as being high in price. So far as I am able to gather, the land will probably cost £35 or £36 per acre. Before it was purchased it was thoroughly tested. Some hundreds of samples of soil were obtained from the deposits on the bottom of the lake, and these samples were analysed and reported upon by the officers whose duty it is to perform that class of work. I understand that their reports were such as to make the proposition appear not only feasible but even desirable. Mention is made by one hon. member of the effect upon the district if the lake were drained. Its greatest depth is 26 or 27 feet. Hon. members will see at once that if that water can be removed, there must be a direct effect in relieving the water-logging of adjacent lands. The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) and other hon. members referred to the intentions of the Government regarding the drainage of the metropolitan area, and drew attention to the undoubted fact that in Maylands and other parts of the metropolitan area the water has been steadily rising during the past few years. Let me inform the House that this aspect of the matter has not been lost sight of by the officers of the Public Works Department, but that careful observation has been taken by them of some hundreds of places in the metropolitan area in order to ascertain the effect of this rising water. The officers are convinced that unless remedial measures can be taken in the immediate future, there will be more and more land in the metropolitan area seized by the water, which is rising everywhere.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is due to building operations and road construction.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Members who know the Subiaco district are aware that only a few years ago there was in that district a park known as Shenton Park. To-day that former park is a lake. We know that houses have been flooded in that neighbourhood, and that the water is still rising there. The same position obtains around Butler's Swamp and at Jolimont. Engineers put down the cause partly to the denudation of the area of timber which has taken away one means of drawing off a considerable quantity of water. Another cause arises from the fact that whereas before there were no buildings, the sandy soil served as a sponge or a piece of blotting paper. Now the buildings prevent the sand soaking up a considerable amount of moisture and the roofs discharge the water largely in one spot. The average quantity of water delivered in any one year for water supply, sewerage and storm water is between seven million and eight million gallons per day right through the year and this will increase annually as the population increases.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That water goes down to the sea.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not all of it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Nearly all of it. It goes down through the Swan River to the sea.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Whether that view be correct or not, we cannot get away from the fact that the water is coming, and coming fast. Consequently, the engineers have been considering a scheme whereby a system of drainage can be established to draw off the water from Herdsman's Lake, from Butler's Swamp, from Subiaco and from Jolimont. The estimated cost prior to the rise in wages during the last 12 months was between £290,000 and £300,000. Such a scheme was out of the question for any Government to entertain in view of the financial situation, but it was within the province of the department controlling this matter to make all inquiries possible, so that when the time came for any portion of the scheme to be constructed, the work could be carried out in such a way that it would form portion of the bigger undertaking when the complete scheme was worked out. That is the work which is being done to-day. Reverting to the question of the drainage of Herdsman's Lake, however, the carrying out of this work at a cost of between £25,000 and £27,000, whatever it may be, will demonstrate whether the influence of this scheme will extend so as to enable a reduction of the larger scheme, which was estimated to cost upwards of £300,000. It will not only be a work which will drain the lake, but observations will be taken and, in my opinion, the bearing of the scheme on the drainage of the total area will be more easily ascertainable than would otherwise be possible. The estimate of between £25,000 and £27,000 was made some time ago and would be subject to the ad-

vances which the rise in wages and commodities will bring about. The engineers have made an estimate in regard to the tunnel, but tunnel work, as hon. members will know, is very tricky, and the expenditure will depend very much on what is disclosed during the driving of the tunnel. All these features have been made quite clear to the Controller of Repatriation, who will provide the funds. Dealing with the criticisms by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) and the leader of the Opposition, if members will turn to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act of 1909, they will find that Part II. provides that the drainage area is divided into four districts, namely, Perth, Fremantle, Claremont and Guildford. The boundaries are defined in the schedule and then it goes on to state that the Government may, by Order-in-Council, from time to time alter or extend the boundaries of the area or of any district and re-divide the area and increase or reduce the number of the districts and re-divide the boundaries of the districts. There is the power that will enable the Minister, by Order-in-Council, with the consent of the Governor, to define the areas on which rates can be declared where these areas receive benefit from the work done.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the very point we raised.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If members will turn to page 26 of the Act, they will see that Section 92 states—

The Minister may make and levy storm water rates in respect of all ratable land within any district in which a storm water drain has been laid.  
Section 93 states—

Separate rates shall be made for each district. . . .

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is, the district defined by the Governor. You can define the whole area as a district, if you like.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Clause 3 of the Bill provides—

All the provisions of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, 1909, relating to storm water drains, including Part 8 thereof, shall apply to the works authorised by this Act.

What are the works authorised by this Act? These are set out in the schedule as follows—

The construction of drains, regulating gates and tunnels, with necessary shafts and bores and fencing from the outlet of an old drain in Location AO, on the west side of Herdsman's Lake (Njookenboro), through Locations AN and 1251; thence through the city of Perth endowment lands to the Indian Ocean.

Clause 3 continues—

And that portion of the metropolitan water, sewerage, and drainage area drained by the works authorised by this Act may be constituted a storm water district and

the drains shall be deemed stormwater drains.

I suggest to the Committee that where it is stated that an area "may be constituted," this shall be altered to read "shall be constituted." This will furnish an immediate answer to the objections which have been raised on this point. If that is done, then we shall limit the Act to the district which is served and benefited by the drain. I do not know whether there is any further information that members desire, and I shall answer any questions I am able to during the Committee stage. I regret that when speaking last evening I did not mention the cost of construction, for there was no reason whatever for keeping back that information. We want to get on with this work, for we do not want to hang fire.

Mr. Smith: Where are you going to get the money?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member forgets that I mentioned that the soldiers' settlement scheme will provide the cash.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Application of the provisions of Act No. 43 of 1909:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This Bill only came before members yesterday afternoon and I have not had time to make inquiries as to what the effect of this clause will be on the metropolitan area so far as rating is concerned. It is all very well for the Minister to say that certain provisions are laid down in this Bill or for the Minister to say, "Do you think a Minister would do such a thing?"

The Minister for Works: I did not say that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: You did, by interjection. It is not what we think a Minister will do but it is a question of the powers which are given to a Minister. Under the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, four separate districts were provided for, but it gave power to the Government to vary those districts. The result is that there is now one district. The effect of this has been that at Fremantle where residents formerly paid 6d. in the pound, they now have to pay 1s. 2d. in the pound, although they get practically the same water supply. The power to form these districts is in the hands of the Minister, or in other words, in the hands of the engineers. Many people in the metropolitan area at the present time

have to pay stormwater rates although they do not receive any benefit whatever regarding storm water drainage. The Minister has suggested an amendment to this clause and my idea in moving that progress should be reported was that I might be able to frame an amendment which would prescribe the area under this Bill.

The Attorney General: It would take time to survey the area.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: You could get the particulars from the Lands Department very quickly from the surveyed blocks. This is an agricultural district, and the drainage scheme will also affect the market gardens which are in existence at the present time.

The Attorney General: They are in the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That makes my case all the stronger. What is to be regarded as "within the metropolitan area"? It naturally follows that the whole of the metropolitan area will carry the rates, and the burden will be imposed upon some persons who will not derive any benefit whatever. Take Shenton Park to which the Minister referred. Suppose that area is drained in a little while. Then there is Cottesloe Beach, where places are built in a hole. Suppose that also is drained. The Shenton Park people might have to pay not only for their own drainage, but a share of the drainage of Herdsman's Lake also.

The Minister for Works: That is part of the area drained by these works.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is right enough, but, as the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) said, he has to pay 5d. in the pound, for which he gets no benefit at all.

The Minister for Works: That may be the fault of the local people.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, it is the departmental engineer who fixes the area. I drew the attention of the Minister to the position at East Fremantle, where the water was running in the opposite direction from the drainage, notwithstanding which the engineer said the ratepayers must be receiving some benefit and therefore must pay the rates, although for years they had not been regarded as being in the rateable area.

The Premier: Under the clause the land must first receive some benefit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is not so. This area could have been brought under the Drainage Act. It should not be under the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act. I think I can give the reason why it is not under the Drainage Act, namely, because under the Drainage Act the Government have to provide money at four per cent., which is too low a rate at present. I am sorry the Minister would not agree to report progress, because I think the area should be defined in the Bill. The engineers who have surveyed this work have already agreed upon the area, otherwise they could not estimate the cost. Why, then, should not the area be defined in the Bill? I do not really think

Fremantle will be brought in but, as the member for Subiaco said, there is grave danger of Subiaco being roped in.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: After having heard the hon. member I am prepared to report progress until Tuesday. In the meantime I will go into the various points raised and see if I cannot satisfy the hon. member.

Hon. P. Collier: And see about bringing it under the Drainage Act.

Progress reported.

## BILL—MEEKATHARRA-HORSESHOE RAILWAY.

### Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 16th November.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.6]: The principle of State-owned railways appeals to the people of Australia the Commonwealth over. Generally speaking, in each State we have paid pretty dearly whenever we have departed from this principle. However, in the present abnormal state of the finances it is impossible for Western Australia to build this railway from the Government's resources. Even if it were desirable that it should be so constructed, we have a large number of other railway authorisations, some of them dating back to the time when the Labour Government were in power in 1914. Since then the present Government have stated that they desire to build 100 miles of railway per annum as a minimum. But in view of the large number of authorised railways required in closely populated areas, no one would desire that this particular railway should be authorised for construction by the Government, to wait many years before it could be built, or, alternatively, to hang up far more important railway projects. I would strongly object to this line being built by the Government if it were to receive precedence over other authorised railways, and on the other hand I do not think it desirable that the people who own those rich manganese deposits should be prohibited from developing them. It is not desirable that the State should be prevented from receiving the manifold benefits which must accrue to it through the construction of this railway and the working of those rich mineral deposits on a proper scale, deposits which promise to give to the State a new aristocracy in the persons of our manganese millionaires. The representatives of the Primary Producers' Associations here will undoubtedly support the railway, such action being in consonance with our active mining policy, of which more will be heard in the near future, an active policy of assisting in the development of every section of the great mineral resources of the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We don't mind that sort of guff on ordinary nights, but we don't want it on Fridays.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I observe from the route of the railway that the proposed extension may to some extent conflict with the projects which the Hon. George Miles, a big-minded Australian, has so vigorously put before the people of the Commonwealth.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not say a foolish Australian?

Mr. JOHNSTON: That might be said, but it was the type of person who said that, who, in the first place, something over half a century ago, opposed the construction of a railway from Fremantle to Perth, who subsequently opposed a railway from here to our then newly discovered eastern goldfields, who opposed the Trans-Australian railway when that project was first put forward, and who to-day opposes the railway proposed to be built from Darwin to Adelaide. All these big projects received a great deal of opposition in their inception, but I believe that all who desire Australia to be properly developed and occupied by that white population which is necessary for its defence, must applaud the action of Mr. Miles in putting his big project before the people of the Commonwealth in the energetic manner he has done during the past few months. Whether that project is immediately feasible or not, I applaud Mr. Miles and those associated with him for their action in drawing attention to the national necessity for opening up the north of the Commonwealth with railways. It appears, however, this short 85 miles of railway is entirely on the route and in the direction of Mr. Miles's far more ambitious project. That merely serves to show that the Government in granting this concession have been wise in safeguarding to the State the power to resume the railway and pay to those who constructed it a fair price should the necessity arise. I shall not be surprised if the fruition of those projects on a large scale which Mr. Miles has put so prominently before the State renders it necessary for the Government of Western Australia to acquire this private railway at a much earlier date than to-day may be foreseen; because I am convinced that from a defence point of view alone, before many years it will be necessary for the Commonwealth Government not only to construct the railway from Meekatharra to Horseshoe, but its extension right through the northern parts of Australia to Port Darwin and Queensland.

Mr. Maley: You would not urge the building of a two-foot line right through?

Mr. JOHNSTON: No; it should be on the standard gauge, and that brings me to the point, that I regret to notice there is in the Bill no provision whatever to show the proposed gauge of this railway. I do not know what is proposed. I know that in our ordinary Government railway authorisation Bills it is not necessary to mention the gauge of the railway, because it is always in consonance with the State system. I do not know whether it is desired that this line should be of 2-foot gauge, in which case it is really nothing more than a tramway,

and even if the Government line were extended to the North-West and Port Darwin there would be no need for the resumption of this 2-feet tramway. It is a deficiency in the Bill. I am not prepared to say we ought to compel the concessionaires to build a 3 feet 6 inch railway, but if it proposed to be a railway in truth as well as in name, such a provision would appear to be desirable. That is what I favour if it can be done without imposing on the private company a burden greater than the industry would warrant at the present time. Another point referred to is the necessity for a time limit in connection with the starting and completion of this line. No one would desire to harass a local company who might require time to make their financial arrangements, but we cannot give them a blank cheque in the form of an Act of Parliament, authorising them to exercise this valuable concession at any time between now and the repeal of the Act, which may be many years hence.

The Premier: I have an amendment to cover that.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am glad to hear that, but I hope that the time limit will not be of such a nature that it will in any way harass the company, who at their inception may be more burdened with enthusiasm and optimism than with hard cash and capital. It appears necessary to have a provision regarding the rates to be charged for the carriage of goods and passengers. The Bill provides that goods and passengers shall be carried over the railway at such charges and subject to such conditions as shall be prescribed by by-law. The terms under which the Great Southern railway concession in the first place was granted, and the terms under which the Midland Railway Company run to-day provide that the rates to be charged shall not exceed those in force on the Government railways. I do not contend that, in this remote part of the State between Meekatharra and Horseshoe, it would be fair to expect goods to be carried at the same rates as in the closely settled coastal portions of the State, but I think there should be a provision that the rates and passenger fares should not exceed by more than 25 or 50 per cent., or some stipulated percentage which may be accepted as fair, the rates in force on the Government railways. Higher rates may legitimately be charged than are charged in the coastal parts of the State where there is a large population, but the maximum percentage permitted to be charged should be fixed by the Bill.

The Premier: It would be subject to Government approval.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am aware of that, but I have been charged previously with a desire not to give any Government a free hand, and surely the Government have professional information which would enable them to fix a fair maximum difference.

Mr. Smith: Why not apply the Marble Bar rates?

Mr. JOHNSTON: The member for North Perth says we might apply the Marble Bar railway rates. I thank him for the reminder. We all know that on the Marble Bar railway different rates are charged from those on the ordinary railway service, and probably it would be fair if we provided that the rates on the Meekatharra-Horseshoe line should not exceed those charged in the North-West. I visited the North-West when the Marble Bar railway was approaching completion, and the pastoralists and other people were delighted to have the railway and to pay the higher rates, rather than continue with their bullock wagons for transport. There is one matter to which I wish to direct attention, namely the differentiation in treatment between the company building the line from Meekatharra to Horseshoe, and the treatment which was extended to the concessionaires for the Ajana-Geraldine railway with regard to the making of by-laws for the regulation of traffic. With regard to this railway, it is provided that the owner may make by-laws for the regulation of traffic and prescribing the charges to be made for the carriage of passengers and goods and imposing penalties not exceeding £20 for the breach of any such by-laws. No by-law is to have effect unless or until it shall have been approved and confirmed by the Governor and published in the "Government Gazette." With regard to the Ajana-Geraldine railway, it was provided that the Government might make regulations for the regulation of traffic and prescribing charges to be made for the carriage of passengers and goods and imposing penalties not exceeding £20 for a breach of any such by-laws.

The Premier: That is the same thing.

Mr. JOHNSTON: If so, I do not wish to labour the point. In both cases the by-laws have to be approved by the Governor, but in one case the owner makes them, and if the Governor does not approve of them, nothing happens, while in the other case the Governor has power to make by-laws which the owner must observe.

The Premier: They must carry the goods.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I mention this point in order that the interests of the people shall be safeguarded with respect to this concession. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading, and I hope that the points I have mentioned will be embodied in the Bill when it reaches the Committee stage.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.22]: If this Bill bore any resemblance whatever to a private railway proposal, I could not be associated with it either directly or indirectly. So far as I can understand it, the proposal is primarily one to allow the company to build what may be described as a tramway to convey their ore from the mine to the railhead. I should imagine that the tramway would be run on similar lines to

the private lines owned by timber companies operating in the South-West. This is virtually the purpose of the Bill and I think it a legitimate one to which no exception can be taken. The deposits at Horseshoe are of a fair extent and they can only be rendered marketable by providing transit facilities. The readiest and cheapest means to enable these deposits to be operated can be afforded by a tramline as suggested. In reply to the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) I might say that these propositions will stand only a certain capitalisation. If it is proved that these deposits can stand a capitalisation sufficient to warrant the construction of a 3ft. 6in. gauge railway to conform with the Government standard, well and good.

Mr. Smith: Are you referring to the manganese deposits?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. I do not think that the House, or any fair-minded person, remembering the present cost of material, would say that if this railway could not be built to Government standard, it should not be built at all. This is not a railway in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a tramline. There will be no obligation on the part of the Government to purchase it. The Government could build a line of their own to-morrow if they thought fit. If the value is in the line, it can be purchased by the Government at not more than its actual cost. If our railway were extended by the State or Federal Government, I do not suppose they would ever contemplate purchasing this tramline. I emphasise that I would not be associated directly or indirectly with this proposal if it had any semblance to a private railway project. The object is to give the company who own these deposits similar transit facilities as are permitted in the South-West to convey the timber to the Government railways. The interests of the State are thoroughly safeguarded. With reference to the possibility of any profit being derived from the carrying of goods for the public, I think one motor lorry would be able to carry out all the goods required from Meekatharra.

Mr. Johnston: But not when the men are at work.

Mr. Duff: You cannot tell what the development might be.

Mr. LAMBERT: At the present time the quantity is about 100 tons a year. It is to be hoped that the district will develop. If, as a result of the construction by the company of this tramline, the extension of the railway is justified, so much the better. It will not affect the company, who would be only too pleased if the Government undertook to construct the line straight away. It is for us to consider whether these deposits should continue to lie idle when the Imperial Government are starving for this ore to keep the steel furnaces in the Old Country going. It is to be hoped that the tramline will be the forerunner of an extension of

our railway system, even beyond the point mentioned by the hon. member.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Land may be reserved and acquired:

Mr. HUDSON: Provision is made under the Public Works Act for land to be compulsorily acquired. It should be provided that the owners of the land, through which it is proposed to construct a private railway, should have notice of such construction in order that they may have an opportunity of saying whether or not they object to this being done.

Mr. Maley: It will only go through leasehold land.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Survey and construction:

Mr. JOHNSTON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 "shall" be struck out and "may" inserted in lieu.

This clause is mandatory in its terms.

The Attorney General: We must have the right to survey the land.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The Government may be committed to a big expense under this clause if the resources of the company become strained.

The PREMIER: It is a poor look-out for the company if they cannot pay the cost of survey.

Mr. Teesdale: The hon. member is giving it a good start in life.

The PREMIER: The land must be surveyed by the Public Works Department, and the cost borne by the company. It will only be a matter of a few hundred pounds. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—On completion Minister to lease railway on terms:

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (c), line 4, after "are" the words "approved by the Governor and" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. MALEY: I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph be added to stand as paragraph (d) as follows: "That the lessee and his assigns shall at all times during the term of the lease thereof keep

the railway and rolling stock in good order and substantial repair to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Railways."

At the instance of the leader of the Opposition a provision similar to this was made in the Ajana-Geraldine Railway Bill. All private railways and tramways should be under the strict supervision of the Commissioner. We all deplore the terrible accident which occurred on the timber line in the South-West. Where passengers and goods are carried it is essential that there should be Government supervision over the line. I should like to know if there is any such strict supervision over the private lines of Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: None at all. When they were constructed there was no power taken in this direction.

Mr. Lambert: There was no control over the timber line in question.

Mr. MALEY: It would impose no hardship on the company concerned to provide the necessary safeguards for the travelling public.

The PREMIER: I do not think the company can object to this amendment. Unless the rolling stock is kept in decent repair the line will of course be useless. I think the timber line mentioned by the hon. member was a good line and kept in perfect repair.

Mr. LAMBERT: The provision is a good one. It recalls to my mind that some of the wood lines on the goldfields which carry passengers require some such provision as this to apply to them.

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

Clause 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—By-laws:

Mr. MALEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 "owner" be struck out and "Governor in Council" inserted in lieu.

If the owners of this railway do not make by-laws the Governor in Council cannot review them.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do not know what prompts the hon. member to move this amendment. It may lead to a great deal of trouble and friction. The Government cannot be judges of the proper regulation of traffic of this nature.

The PREMIER: The company must carry passengers.

Mr. TEESDALE: This provision might be made to apply when it comes to a question of carrying passengers, but it will be a long time before that is brought about. It would be rather hard upon the owners of the property if they were penalised in any way merely through carrying one or two passengers. I hope the hon. member will not persist in his amendment.

The PREMIER: I hope the clause will not be altered. It is clear from paragraph (c) of Clause 8 that goods and passengers

must be carried, subject to by-laws which the owners must submit for the approval of the Governor in Council. We have all the protection needed already. The terminus of the line will be 700 miles from Perth, and the ordinary terms of traffic could not apply there. The traffic will consist for the most part of wool. It will bring in wool from stations situated probably as much as 200 miles from the head of the line. The railway will carry very few passengers. However, in any case the owners of the railway will have to act reasonably.

Mr. Hudson: What control will the Government have over the owners?

The PREMIER: That they must carry traffic under conditions to be approved by the Government. I hope the Committee will not make any alteration in the clause.

Mr. TROY: The discussion on this clause suggests to me very forcibly that the Bill has been improperly introduced, and that it should have been introduced as a private Bill. It is in every sense a private Bill. We now have members who are interested in the Bill discussing it, whereas they have no right to be discussing it at all.

Mr. MALEY: I do not propose to withdraw my amendment, but I do propose to throw the responsibility on the Committee. The by-laws will not be made by the Governor-in-Council in the first instance, and unless the owners make by-laws and send them on to the Governor-in-Council for approval, there will be no by-laws.

Mr. Lambert: But it is the by-laws that will make the charges. Without by-laws there cannot be any charges.

Mr. MALEY: Possibly I am obtuse.

Hon. P. Collier: It is immaterial whether the Governor-in-Council makes the by-laws, or approves of the by-laws.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If we substitute "shall" for "may" it will be mandatory on the owners to make by-laws. At present they are under no compulsion whatever to make any by-laws.

The PREMIER: Very well; make it "shall."

Mr. WILLCOCK: I move an amendment—

That "may," in line 1, be struck out, and "shall" inserted in lieu.

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

New clause—Time limit for construction of railway:

The PREMIER: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 11:—“(1) The owner shall (a) begin the construction of the railway within two years after the passing of this Act, and continue the work to the satisfaction of the Engineer-in-Chief, and complete the railway within five years after the work is commenced; (b) duly pay the charges of the Department of Public



Works relating to the survey and laying out of the line of railway and the supervision of its construction; (c) on the completion of the railway, accept and execute a counterpart of the lease to be granted under Section 8. (2) If the owner shall make default in the performance and observance of the provisions of this section, or any of them, the Governor may, by Order-in-Council, declare that the rights of the owner under this Act are forfeited, and thereupon the authority conferred by this Act to construct, maintain, and work the railway shall be annulled: Provided that any rails and material belonging to the owner may be removed by the owner from the site of the railway within six months after the publication of such Order-in-Council, but if not so removed such rails and material shall become the property of the Crown, subject to the payment to the owner of the value thereof to be fixed by the Engineer-in-Chief."

Mr. TROY: The new clause gives the owners seven years in all, which is a ridiculous proposition. In view of such a time limit, why bring in the Bill at all?

The Premier: Make the time for completion three years after commencement.

Mr. TROY: I consider that three years in all from now would be ample time. I do not want to see a concession of this kind granted to a company of this character on the flimsy evidence which has been submitted to Parliament. I have heard that there are possibilities of the exploitation of minerals if the line is constructed, but I know nothing about the possibility of raising the capital required or securing the necessary material. I suggest that the Premier amend his new clause so as to provide that the work of construction shall be completed within three years of its commencement, which commencement must be within two years of the passing of this measure.

The PREMIER: I ask leave to amend the new clause by striking out "five" in paragraph (a) of Subclause 1, and substituting "three" in lieu.

Leave given; the new clause amended accordingly.

New clause, as amended, put and passed. Schedule. Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second reading.

Debate resumed from 16th November.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.3]: I thought that the Premier would have moved for the postponement of this item on the Notice Paper because the representatives of that section of the community to whom the Industries Assistance Board has rendered such service, are, with

the exception of a very few, absent from the Chamber.

Hon. P. Collier: They abandoned the mining industry first, and now they have abandoned the farmers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: One would have thought that when a measure of such importance as this is to the farming community was to be discussed, every member of the Country party would have been in his seat.

The Premier: They knew you would support it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There are only four representatives of the Country party in the Chamber at present. They are more like rats running away from a ship than they were some time ago.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a very warlike opening.

Mr. Maley: I understood that there were a good few rats at Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not accusing the hon. member of running away. He is in his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is: That the Bill be read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am coming to that. I notice that the Bill is in a form slightly different from other continuance Bills which have come before the House. The title reads to the effect that the measure is for an Act to continue the operation of the Industries Assistance Act, 1915. The short title of the Bill sets out that the measure shall be cited as the Industries Assistance Act Amendment Act, 1920. The title of the Bill, therefore, is contrary to the subject matter of the Bill. The only amendment that I can see is the altered date. Whether it is the intention of the Government to allow a number of amendments to be made in accordance with the short title, I do not know.

Mr. Harrison: They are not mentioned here.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It has become a common practice for the Government to introduce a Bill and then place amendments on the Notice Paper, which amendments sometimes cover a greater space than the Bill itself. There is a possibility of that taking place in connection with this Bill.

The Premier: I do not know of any amendment to be made.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At any rate, this gives us an opportunity to make amendments. I was interested in listening to the Premier introducing the Bill. He pointed out the good work that has been done under the Act, and for the first time, I was going to say, he did give the Labour party some credit for introducing this legislation originally. It should be remarked, at the same time, that the administration of the Act is not what was intended at the outset. The Act was introduced as a temporary measure. It was brought in at a time when Western Australia was going through very stressful conditions, through one of the

greatest droughts ever experienced in the State. In addition to that we were experiencing the trying conditions brought about by the commencement of the war. It was found necessary in the interests of the State that special legislation of an emergency nature should be introduced for the purpose of assisting men on the land, but owing to the conditions which obtained in other industries, it was deemed necessary for something to be done to assist the people in general. It was never intended that the Act should continue for all time. It was intended that thorough protection should be given to every section of the community. We realised that not only merchants in the city, but large numbers of storekeepers throughout the country, had given credit and found themselves in debt owing to their endeavour to assist the men who were carrying on the industries of the State. It was thought necessary to carry on the farming industry for nearly two years, and the conditions under the Act were carried into effect. The Government realised that the farmer was the first to need assistance owing to the special conditions brought about by the drought. Timber companies suffered from disabilities regarding the export trade owing to the scarcity of shipping. As they could not get their products to market, they found it necessary to secure assistance under this Act. They were assisted temporarily. The pearling industry was also affected. The pearlers could not get rid of their shell as a payable proposition and they also were assisted. Owing to the locking up of money, the conditions in the mining industry necessitated assistance being rendered to that section as well. To-day, however, there are very few industries apart from farming, which are securing assistance under the Act, which has become not an Industries Assistance Act, but, as the Premier said, the farmers' bank.

Mr. Troy: For some farmers.

Mr. Johnston: The poor farmers' bank.

Hon. P. Collier: And some of them not too poor either.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is the position now. For two years the provisions of the Act were carried out in accordance with the intentions of Parliament. The storekeepers were able to carry on in the various farming towns of the State. The merchants knew that they were safe in assisting the farmers until such time as they would become fairly prosperous. And they put no pressure on the small storekeeper, who continued to do business with the merchant in the city. But when the Premier took office, in his usual optimistic way, he concluded we were not doing sufficient. The greatest condemnation the Labour party got from members representing the farming community was that they would not violate the intentions of Parliament and pay cash to certain farmers when the cash was owing to other persons. The result was a

change of Government, and the new Premier immediately gave in to the demands of the farmers' supposed friends and said, "In future you can buy where you like. I will make cash payments." And he paid cash, not only to the farmers, but also to the persons they employed. The cash payments immediately stopped the farmer from continuing to trade with the storekeeper.

The Premier: He did not need to.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: With the result that the storekeeper was unable to trade as he had been doing with the merchants, being unable to meet his current account, because his money was not coming in. In many instances he went to the bankruptcy court.

The Premier: I do not think so. He did better.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And there grew up in the State a political trading concern. I am not going to deal with that. I am merely pointing out what the intention was, and what the actual effect has been under the present Government. The Industries Assistance Board has at last sent down their report. It is dated 19th November. Their year finished on the 30th June, but their balance sheet is dated 31st March.

The Premier: According to the Act.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I notice in this report one or two matters which call for investigation. We find that 253 customers have taken their discharges during the year, making the total number of clearances granted to date 729. Through the action of the Labour Government in introducing legislation of this kind for the purpose of rendering assistance in time of need, we have 729 men who do not believe in working continually under a charity organisation.

The Premier: It is not charity at all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They believe in being free men. The State ought to be proud of them. They said, "We have worked hard, we know the assistance the Government have rendered us, we have repaid the Government, paid our storekeepers, paid our land rents, and are again free men, and we intend to trade where we so desire." What is the position? The Government found those men were going off the board. Whether it was the influence of the officials who were desirous of retaining a large Government department, I do not know. What has been done? The report states, "All clearances are now granted at clients' option, and the board finds that the desire to get free from its control is not by any means general." Instead of complying with the intention of Parliament that a man once getting on his feet must become a free man again and not have some Government official looking after him, the Government have turned round and said, "You can please yourself. If you like to stay on with us you can. We do not intend to strike you off our list, because if we do so the board will soon become a dead letter. See how much better we can do for you. We can pay cash for

super; we can buy bags (although they are not buying bags this year), and generally we can make you very comfortable." Other farmers who have not had the assistance of the board have to pay through taxation a portion of the cost of its administration. It is very interesting to note that these keen business men, who are maintaining a large number of clients instead of making them free men—

The Premier: They are free men.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is interesting to note how they view the position. They tell us that numbers of farmers have gone over to the board. They say they have made advances on 159 properties, aggregating £94,124 7s. 7d. On these properties interest has accrued to the amount of £9,835 16s. 7d.

The Premier: That dates back to 1914.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not expect them to get clear of every property, but I am pointing out how their smart business men administering the Act view the position. This represents a total amount of £103,960 4s. 2d. It is not much if we talk in millions, as the Premier does.

The Premier: You are very unpleasant to-night. What do you want?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Nothing. The report states, "The bulk of these holdings are composed of light country which has failed to give profitable results. The proportion of losses to be faced will be heavy." At the time the Act was passed, no hon. member expected that every man who should get an advance under the Act would succeed. Some of those men had not had practical experience, while others were of the type referred to on one occasion by the leader of the Opposition who quoted one as having said "God bless the Industries Assistance Board," and went on to explain that his farmer friends had declared he did not know what he would do if the board were to close down, that he would never leave the farm so long as the board was in existence. That man, according to the leader of the Opposition, had been getting about three bushels to the acre for the preceding seven years. But here is the strange position: I pointed out just now that clearances have been granted to 729 farmers. Others on the books at the present time are not indebted to any person, but I will deal only with the 729. Those men have paid their debts.

The Minister for Mines: They are lucky.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Well, they worked hard. "But," says the board, "as an offset to this £100,000 which we have paid out, and which has not been repaid, these people have paid their debts, which may be offset against those unpaid."

Mr. Maley: That is what you call balance.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: As an offset to this the board have paid land rents. It is really purchase money. They have paid

Agricultural Bank interest, water rates, land tax, accounts for implements received, and a few other charges, amounting in all to £720,787. One would think this was a present being made to the Government. It is merely the just dues which those persons owe to the Government for property they were purchasing, and this is to be used as an offset against the man who has not paid. This is the way the board view the position.

The Premier: I do not think they do that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Undoubtedly this legislation has been of benefit to the State, but I do not know why the Government should claim that some of these people, who would never have got any money but for the Act—there is no doubt some of the people indebted to the merchants at that time would have endeavoured to clear off their liabilities at a later date.

Mr. Harrison: They would not have been able to do so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not say that. It was an advantage to them to have assistance to remain on the land.

Mr. Maley: And to preserve the State's security.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, a number of them; some did not. But the Premier said there had been three millions of cash trading since the establishment of the board. I do not know that that is of much importance. These people have had to live and wear clothes and boots and buy machinery and observe the usual conditions of life, and they have brought about a trade equal to about three million pounds. But they have received a little over four million pounds in cash for their produce; consequently the money which they put into cash trade was used to enable them to get a little over four million pounds.

The Premier: They paid the Government nearly a million.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am only using the Premier's figures. It was not of benefit to the trading community. If they paid the Government £720,000 they have had the benefit of that, and their land is now nearer to alienation than it was in 1914, when the Act was passed.

The Premier: Of course.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Consequently they have the benefit of that. The Premier makes out that they paid the Government something for nothing. Instead of that they merely paid the Government their just dues.

The Premier: No, I did not say that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have been trying to understand the balance sheet and have found it very difficult indeed. The Premier stated that on the 31st March the outstanding liabilities under the Industries Assistance Board amounted to £693,000. I have endeavoured to ascertain how the Premier arrived at those figures.

The Premier: Not from that balance sheet. It is £921,000 now, and this is a long time afterwards.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: According to the balance sheet the liabilities of the board are £2,470,352 11s. 7d.

The Premier: There is a big credit against that amount.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If there is a big credit against that amount one would have thought that it would have been shown among the assets. I think it is, but the Premier infers that it is not. In the assets there are a trust assignment account of £675,251 14s. 1d., receipts in suspense £243 1s., sinking fund contributions £751 4s. 5d., sinking fund contributions in suspense £2,625 13s. 2d., a total of £679,018 12s. 8d. On the contra are liabilities for the 1919-20 season's crop and previous crop proceeds, £662,651. The £679,018 12s. 8d. represents the sinking fund and certificates held by the Government with regard to the amounts owing for wheat. Is that what it means?

The Premier: I have not the balance sheet.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If we take the £679,018 as crop proceeds and a few other small amounts less bills receivable £254, less reserve for bad debts £111,050, stock in hand £1,192, and recoup from the Agricultural Department £3,849, there is still an indebtedness of £1,674,573.

The Premier: You have misread the figures.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not say that I am correct.

The Premier: Finish the Bill and let us have a look at the figures afterwards.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a novel idea.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: While the Premier says that £693,000 was outstanding on the 30th June, I find under sundry debtors principal advances £1,610,193 4s. 3d. interest accrued and outstanding £111,533 14s. 4d. These are debtors.

The Minister for Mines: That is a most successful balance sheet. A balance sheet that proves everything is of no value.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This proves that the Premier's statement is about a million out.

The Minister for Mines: That is nothing; that is a compliment.

Hon. P. Collier: A million is neither here nor there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is nothing when the Premier talks in millions. The Premier, however, must admit that it is difficult to understand this balance sheet. The board say that they made a profit for the 12 months of £5,767 12s. 1d. It is a queer thing to calculate profits when there is a large amount outstanding. There is another Bill dealing with advances under this Act, and I intend to discuss some of these matters when that Bill is before us. There is only one other thing I wish to refer to; it is about time, in view of the report of the board that the farmers of this State are in such a prosperous condition, that some effort was made to further reduce their indebtedness to outside firms.

The Premier: We are doing that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier said he has £40,000 for payment, and that £210,000 has been paid, and that there is still owing to outside creditors £392,000.

The Premier: The amount still owing is £350,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is about time the board took into consideration the question of reducing the amount owing to outside creditors. It is true that many of those persons would perhaps have lost some of their money if it had not been for this Act.

The Honorary Minister: They would not have received within 50 per cent. of it.

Hon. P. Collier: That is no reason for keeping them out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Through the action of my hon. friends some of them have got nothing and will never get anything. They have become bankrupt and ruined, through the neglect of the Government to carry out the intentions of the Act when it was passed. This constitutes one of the greatest scandals ever perpetrated in the State. Everything should have been done to protect not only the farmer, the mining agents, the timber man, the pearler, and so on, but to see that the storekeeper also was protected. The storekeepers, however, have been sacrificed because they have been fewer in number than the farmers. There was more political support from the large body of farmers than from the smaller number of storekeepers. During the last two or three years some of the storekeepers have been sacrificed while other persons have flourished and are now in a prosperous position. Some of the people have had bankers at their backs and have been able to tide over the years until payment was made to them. Another section, however, has not been backed in this way and has had to go to the wall. They are no longer in as prosperous a position as they were before they went to the assistance of the farmer. I trust the Government will see that some of this £392,000 is distributed at an early date. I shall support the second reading of the Bill because I know it is impossible just now to do without this legislation. The Industries Assistance Board accounts should be closed as soon as possible. If a farmer's bank is necessary let it be a bank of issue to which anyone can go. The farmer has no more right to special privileges at the hands of the State than the baker or the grocer.

Hon. P. Collier: Not in normal times.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. If it is intended to carry this on as a bank let it be a bank open to all.

The Minister for Mines: What we want is an industries assistance advance bank.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We shall then have a bank which can be used by all the people of the State. As things are now the bank is only for a section of the people. I hope the Government will put an end to this system at the earliest possible date.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.43]: I look upon this legislation as of the utmost importance to the State. The results which have been achieved show that the operations of the Industries Assistance Board have been of great advantage to a large number of persons. When one realises from the figures given the amount of money that has been advanced to producers, and the fact that this money has enabled them to tide over a difficult period, and become solvent, as well as build homes for themselves and induce others to take up the same occupation, any minor objections one may have should not prejudice one's regard for the value to the State of the Industries Assistance Board.

The Premier: And it has been the means of an immense amount of money being produced.

Mr. TROY: I take up the same attitude as that of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). I had no objection at the beginning to provision being made for those farmers who were dependent upon the State for assistance. When drought struck this country I had no objection to the State going to the assistance of a body of people who were in parlous circumstances. According to the balance-sheet produced, and the facts given regarding the operations of the board, however, I think that time has now passed. To-day most of the clients of the board are in a position to look after themselves. Because of this they are not entitled to any more consideration than should be given to any other section of the people, no matter what industry they are engaged in. In its early stages the measure was open to a great deal of criticism. I remember the "West Australian" sent a representative around the country and referred to the board as "The Industries Resistance Board." Heart-rending stories were told of the manner in which the settlers were being treated.

Hon. P. Collier: The farmers were enrolling to resist by force of arms.

Mr. TROY: The articles in the "West Australian," condemning the operations of the board bear out what the leader of the Opposition has stated. The board has been of immense value. Not only has it conserved portion of an industry which would otherwise have been lost to the State, but it has also given special consideration to a body of men over the heads of other persons in the community who are equally deserving of support. That is my only objection to the measure. To-day, many of the clients of the board should not be there at all. If they should remain clients, everyone else engaged in any primary industry should be entitled to come under the good offices of the board. The board is a privileged institution. It finances the farmer in such a way that he is able to gamble on the seasons. He knows that if the season proves a failure, the board will carry him on. The farmer, however, who is dependent on his own re-

sources, is afraid to gamble in this way, because if he fails he has to make up the liabilities from his own pocket. The farmer who is not dependent on the board is equally as good a farmer as the other.

Mr. Harrison: Do you not think that every farmer who grows wheat is gambling on it?

Mr. TROY: If I had been a client of the board, I would have put under crop every acre of my land whether fallowed or not fallowed, but as the board does not carry me on I have had to be cautious in the matter.

Hon. P. Collier: There are gamblers and gamblers.

Mr. TROY: As a result, my acreage is limited in comparison with the acreage of men who have been able to gamble on the board. Further, the board has been able, by buying a large quantity of goods and material, to supply its clients at a cheaper rate than others have been able to get. During the last three or four years the clients of the board have been able to secure their wheat sacks at a cheaper rate than the farmer who was not on the board was able to do. The same thing applies to other commodities, for instance, superphosphates. The farmer on the board also had his insurances effected at a cheaper rate than the farmer who was not on the board. In consequence, the farmers on the board were a privileged section. At the beginning of the board they had to be assisted, but now they hang on to the board because thereby they receive advantages over the rest of the community. If we are going to continue the board—and I have no objection to that—why carry on two institutions serving the same purpose? Why carry on the Agricultural Bank as well as the Industries Assistance Board? Why not amalgamate them, making one general bank for the purpose of financing all the industries of Western Australia? There ought not to be any privileged institution giving concessions to a few, but there ought to be one bank for the purpose of assisting every industry in the State. Is there any possibility of this board, which was inaugurated by the Labour Government, being extended to embrace other industries? I hope that the Premier, in replying, will give an indication of the Government's intentions for the future. I belong to the party who were instrumental in putting the measure into operation here, and it has always had my support. But numbers of people who enjoyed the advantages offered by the board, did not play fair with the board in the beginning. They put up the most ridiculous arguments why their sheep and various commodities produced on their farms should not be handed in to the board, and that position was backed up by the farmers' representatives in this House. However, all in all, the operations of the board have proved of great advantage to the country. Nevertheless, I object to the usefulness of the institution being restricted to the few settlers who are now its clients. I shall vote

for the continuance of the Industries Assistance Board, but let that institution become a general bank not only for the farmers but for the producers in every other class of industry. A policy of that nature would, I say, receive the endorsement of every member on this side of the House.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [10.55]: I agree with portion of the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), but with another portion of his remarks I cannot agree. The creation of the board was in the first instance essential to the welfare of the whole State. The farmers having suffered severe losses in the drought of 1914-15, and also prior to that year, such legislation as this was indispensable to the maintenance of the agricultural industry. The results of the expenditure by the board have more than warranted that expenditure. The aggregate returns from wheat for the years from 1915 to 1920 are, according to the board's report, £4,154,000. Besides that, there is the aggregate of receipts from hay, oats, barley, and other products. It has been stated in this Chamber that the farmers have received benefits at the expense of the storekeepers; but that is not correct. True, some storekeepers have suffered, but as the result of the operations of the board other storekeepers have been enabled to retire from business altogether. Some cases could be mentioned on each side, and the same state of things would have obtained even if the board had never been created. However, as stated by the Premier on a former occasion, the Industries Assistance Board have been the means of paying to the storekeepers and other creditors of the board's clients sums aggregating over three millions sterling. Thus the keeping of the settlers on the land, producing wealth, has been the means of paying old machinery debts and old store accounts totalling very large amounts indeed; and to-day we have, in addition, a live asset of great magnitude represented by the properties of the farmers. I have not been able to go through the returns furnished by the board, but I understand they show that the credits of the coming harvest will go to liquidate large debits. Further, a farmer on the board is debited each year with so much per acre in respect of the land he intends to put under crop for that year. In reply to the statements of the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) that farmers on the board practically gamble, let me point out that one of the duties of the board's inspectors is to see that each client of the board falls a certain area each year and unless that fallowing is done during the following season, the inspector does not authorise the monthly payment to the client. The client has to work according to the inspector's instructions, and most of the board's inspectors have been instructed by inspectors of higher grade in the best methods of farming. It is part and parcel of the conditions under which advances are made that some permanently valuable work must be car-

ried out on the farm from month to month. Therefore the Industries Assistance Board are now in a very much better position than during their early days. With regard to the statement that certain properties on the board were in the nature of insolvent securities, let me point out that the board's report says—

On the 30th June the board were carrying 159 advances, aggregating £94,124 7s. 7d., with £9,900 accumulated interest.

The bulk of these holdings were principally on light lands. Although I cannot prove the statement, I am satisfied that the major portion of these holdings were abandoned in the early stages of the war and have not since been re-selected. Some have been taken up by returned men and some of the holdings are on the poorer soil in the lighter country. If it were not for this fact, I am satisfied that some of them would not have been on the board at all.

Hon. P. Collier: And we would not have lost £100,000 on them.

Mr. Johnston: You would not have received £4,000,000 for the wheat.

Hon. P. Collier: I am not dealing with that aspect.

Mr. HARRISON: Even if the war had not started, it has to be remembered that we had bad years prior to 1914, and some of these men had to receive assistance. Some of the farmers were behind in their Agricultural Bank interest, their land rents, and water charges, even to the extent of two or three years. Through the assistance which has been rendered to them in the past, a large number of the farmers have made good. The member for North-East Fremantle desired to know why a large number of these farmers still had current accounts with the board. The reason is that these men do not care to clear off their indebtedness to the board and terminate their accounts. Immediately a farmer does so and pays off the whole of his liabilities to the board, he is without capital for the commencement of the next season. The result is that he is not in a reasonable position to shoulder all the expenses attached to a new season. When such a farmer is on the board, he is in a better position and is able to carry on with confidence, whereas the man who meets all his liabilities is not so fortunately circumstanced.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He would be better off than he was prior to the drought.

Mr. HARRISON: I am satisfied that a considerable proportion of the liabilities owing to the board by returned soldiers affect new men, who have taken up holdings.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The returned soldiers furnish a good old excuse.

Mr. HARRISON: According to the report of the Industries Assistance Board for the year ended 30th June last, 497 soldiers had availed themselves up to that date of the privilege of obtaining assistance under the Industries Assistance Act. This fact, it is pointed out, militated against the liquida-

tion of the board's overdraft. This assistance has done a tremendous amount of good, and if returned soldiers can secure these advances and their operations are supervised by officers who are able to advise them regarding the working of their properties and their choice of machinery, these men are wise in taking advantage of this measure.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There would be only one choice of implements if I had my way. They would take the State implements.

Mr. HARRISON: I regret that the State Implement Works do not turn out machinery of a uniformly high standard, but perhaps that will be improved in due course. We hope to continue the operations of the Industries Assistance Board and so give these men a chance to pick up. There is a chance that some of them will require assistance in due course. If the operations of the Act were extended to the South-West and other portions of the State as well, it should result in great benefit to the State. I intend to do all that I can to keep the Industries Assistance Board in operation for some time to come.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [11.6]: Members of the Country party naturally desire to reply to some of the statements which have been made during the course of the debate with reference to the initiation and working of the Industries Assistance Board. It is certain that the whole agricultural community, as well as the people of the State generally, were behind the Labour Government in the policy they adopted when they established the Industries Assistance Board in January, 1915, on which date the Act was put through.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The board was started in 1914. Mr. Bath started it.

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is so. If there have been complaints against the administration of the board, they have only been on matters of detail, and at this stage those complaints are hardly worthy of recognition by the House. There was no division of opinion so far as the agricultural community was concerned regarding the wisdom of the establishment and continuance of the operations of the Industries Assistance Board. The figures quoted in the report for this year show that a huge amount of wheat has been produced by farmers who have been assisted by the board. That in itself is illuminative of the result of the assistance by the State. Let it be remembered that this great production has been achieved by men whose condition was so parlous owing to climatic and other adverse conditions that without that assistance the men could not have remained on their holdings. Between 700 and 800 farmers have obtained clearances from the board and are now independent and well-established settlers. In 1915-16 the wheat produced by the farmers who were assisted through the Industries Assistance Board totalled 4,954,608 bushels, of a cash value of £688,094. In 1916-17 the production was

4,005,909 bushels, and the cash value £858,291. In 1917-18 the production was 2,370,753 bushels, and the cash value £498,175. In 1918-19 the production was 2,510,553 bushels, valued at £695,809; and last year, due to the high price received for wheat, the production, which amounted to 3,101,607 bushels, was valued at £1,405,104. Nearly one and a half million pounds worth of wheat was produced by the assisted farmers last year alone, and for the five years during which the board has been in operation over fourteen million bushels of wheat were put into the Pool, apart from seed, hay, wool, and other produce, and for this wheat alone the assisted farmers received a cash value of £4,145,533. In face of those figures, who can question the wisdom of having established and continued the operations of this beneficent institution? We have been told that the assisted farmer is in a better position than the man outside to gamble on the season. This is not so. If the assisted farmer gambles on the season he does it at his own risk. Parliament decided to give the State a first mortgage, absolute security over the farmer's crop, his animals, his chattels, his machinery, and even his furniture, although that was not in the original contract under which the advances were made.

Hon. P. Collier: And all those goods and chattels did not nearly cover the amount loaned.

Mr. JOHNSTON: In many cases they covered more. A man with a well-established home might go to the board for a limited amount of assistance and then wake up to find the Government had extended the security over his possessions to the whole of the stock, machinery and plant, without consulting him.

The Premier: That was done years ago.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It was not done until last session. Previously the farmers were protected by the moratorium from the very beginning of the board's operations, and last session a Bill was brought in giving that extra security over the farmer's assets. Thus it will be seen that the gamble referred to is one in which the State has full security.

Hon. P. Collier: What security has the storekeeper?

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is not the point I am at present discussing. The Government are protected under the Act to the extent of everything the farmer possesses.

Hon. P. Collier: Even so they lost £100,000 on 159 holdings.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am not deprecating the value of this assistance to the industry, but it should be remembered that it is not a gift, neither is it a loan without interest. It is a loan of the greatest advantage to the recipient, but still a loan for which the recipient pays full market value in interest. It is of great benefit to the settler, but he pays in full when he pays seven per cent interest on the whole of the loan.

Hon. P. Collier: That is unquestioned.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am pleased to have that admission from the leader of the Opposition. The Industries Assistance Board has been a most valuable institution to the Government departments in respect of the collection of outstanding debts. Through the operations of the board the Government have collected an immense amount of money due to public revenue which otherwise would not have been collected, and which during five years have aggregated nearly three-quarters of a million.

Hon. P. Collier: In other words revenue has benefited from loan funds to that extent.

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is so. During the five years the board has paid to the Lands Department by way of land rents £307,858; to the Agricultural Bank in interest, £229,848; in water rates, £29,685; in State land tax, £4,830; to the State Implement Works, £37,167; to the Seed Wheat Board, £33,838; to the Civil Service settlement scheme £929; the Tammin settlement department, £641; and in road boards rates £5,186, or a total payment to Government departments of £720,787. That shows the measure in which the State has benefited from the establishment of this institution. It is certainly the best-revenue-collecting agency the Government have. I commend the Government on having decided to continue the Act, and I congratulate the board upon the way in which they have carried on. I regret that the Government did not decide to make the board a permanent institution instead of merely continuing the board for another year.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why should it be confined to one industry?

Mr. JOHNSTON: It should not be confined to one industry, but should be for all primary industries, as has from time to time been the case. If we are to make it more useful, let us do so, do not let us reduce its utility in any direction. The fact that 500 returned soldiers have recently come under the operations of the board is convincing proof that the board will have to be carried on.

Hon. P. Collier: Why have two institutions dealing with the man on the land? Why not leave it to the Agricultural Bank?

Mr. JOHNSTON: The trustees of the Agricultural Bank are the members of the Industries Assistance Board.

Hon. P. Collier: Still, they are operating two separate Acts.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have no objection to the combination of those Acts if that will make the work of the board more useful. Apart from the settlement of returned soldiers the unfortunate storms lately experienced in the Dalwallinu and other districts will probably necessitate new settlers being brought under the board. I regret that while the Government were introducing this Bill they did not make the board a permanent institution as I am satisfied its position merits. It would save the necessity for bringing a continuance Bill down every

year and would obviate the need for their annual debate. If the Government will accept an amendment to continue the board for five years I shall be pleased to move it.

On motion by Mr. Maley the debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 11.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 30th November, 1920.*

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:

- 1, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.
- 2, Health Act Continuance.

### VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

*Resolution of Loyalty—Letter in Reply.*

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following letter from the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor—

I have the honour to enclose herewith copy of despatch His Excellency the Governor has received from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies—

Downing Street, 1st October, 1920. I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 22 of the 13th August, transmitting Addresses to His Majesty the King which were passed unanimously on the 5th August by the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia