

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. Oldfield
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Corneli	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Read
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hill	Mr. Yates
Mr. Manning	Mr. Boveil

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Ackland
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Needham	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Rodoreda	Mr. Totterdell

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.56 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, 16th October, 1952.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

As to Road Cartage.

Hon. A. R. JONES (without notice) asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the Minister's reply to Mr. Loton's question to the effect that, in special circumstances, a farmer's carrier could be granted a license or permit to carry superphosphate for a farmer and save the farmer the terminal charge, will the Minister instruct the Transport Board accordingly as it is unaware of this arrangement?

The MINISTER replied:

I do not think the Transport Board is unaware of the position, because that was what was carried at a meeting of the Equalisation Committee. However, I will inquire into the matter to see what cases may have been submitted and what their fate may have been.

NATIVE AFFAIRS.

As to Cundee Lee Mission Water Supply.

Hon. G. BENNETTS (for Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham) asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is he aware—

- of the dire hardship imposed on the Cundee Lee Mission through lack of water supply;
- that it is paying approximately 1s. per gallon for water from the Commonwealth railways;
- that it is trying to sink bores with a jumper bar by hand, because the Government will not obtain drilling rig for it;
- that the progress and advancement of the whole mission is halted because of lack of water;
- that the total cost to the Government in the past two years of establishing this mission has not exceeded £400 (exclusive of rations);
- that all cost of establishing the mission over and above this sum has been borne by the missionaries?

(2) Will he give an assurance of his full support in obtaining the needed gear for this mission to carry on its good work for the natives at this end of the Trans. line?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) (a) The missionaries were warned by the Commissioner of Native Affairs that water would be a major problem, and that they should concentrate on locating an adequate supply before commencing work among the natives.

In November, 1951, the Department of Native Affairs received two separate requests from the mission, one for assistance in excavating dams, and a verbal one for assistance in obtaining a boring plant. The mission was asked to specify exactly what assistance it desired but has not yet given this information.

The field superintendent of the mission discussed the problem a few weeks ago with the Commissioner, who advised him

to contact certain authorities. The Commissioner has not been informed of the result of these inquiries.

- (b) Yes, but it was understood that this was necessary only at the end of the dry season.
- (c) Yes, but not for the reason advanced by the hon. member, who is referred to the answer to question (a).
- (d) Yes, the mission authorities were warned of this when they applied for permission to establish the mission.
- (e) Government assistance, apart from food, clothing and transport, has amounted to £469 4s. 11d. In addition, during 1951-52 rations to the value of £1,573 were supplied, as well as clothing, blankets, etc. £693, and medical and transport £51, a total of £2,317.
- (f) Yes, exclusive of the amounts quoted in the answer to question (e).

(2) When the mission advises the extent to which it wishes assistance in its water problems, every consideration will be given towards helping it.

RAILWAYS

As to Truck Equipment for Wheat Transport.

Hon. L. C. DIVER asked the Minister for Railways:

Is it a fact that—

- (1) Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. handed over to the Railway Commissioners its jute truck liners, canvas truck extensions and equipment, without charge?
- (2) Do the Commissioners intend to maintain the supply of, and repairs to, these commodities without charge to the company?
- (3) What is the estimated cost to the railways of this added service?
- (4) Is it the intention of the Commissioners to raise the freight charge on wheat transport to meet the increased costs?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Supply and maintenance are undertaken by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. at the department's expense.

(3) Costs to the 30th June, 1952—		
New equipment	....	£18,003
Maintenance	....	£11,544
		<hr/>
		£29,547
		<hr/>

A proportion of these charges is payable by the Midland Railway Company of W.A. Ltd.

(4) No.

MEAT.

As to Discontinuance of Price Control.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the very sharp decline in sheep and cattle prices—

(1) Does he think that price-control on meat is now necessary?

(2) Will he endeavour to convince his colleagues in Cabinet that in the best interests of all concerned price control on meat should be discontinued?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) This is a Cabinet matter and, as a Minister, I cannot express my own individual view. Under constitutional Government all Ministers speak with one voice on high policy.

(2) I think the hon. member will appreciate that this is answered by No. (1).

TRANSPORT BOARD.

As to Summonses Issued.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Minister for Transport:

How many summonses have been issued by the Transport Board during the last three months against—

(a) Farmers operating their own vehicles;

(b) farmers operating their own vehicles but carting for their neighbours;

(c) farmers using the vehicles of other farmers;

(d) country carriers;

(e) members of the Road Haulier's Association?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) One—in respect of an offence committed more than 3 months ago.

(b) Nil.

(c) Nil.

(d) Two—one subsequently withdrawn.

(e) One—subsequently withdrawn. Included in reply to (d).

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Supply (No. 2), £10,000,000.

2, Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act Amendment.

Passed.

BILL—MARGARINE ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [3.16]: In rising to oppose the Bill, I would ask those members who have spoken and those who have not but intend to do so, to give deeper consideration to this measure and all that it implies. I feel that they might give more consideration to it than they have yet had an opportunity of doing. Firstly, I think we might consider the production of butter in Australia and the quantity exported. In view of the figures given by Mr. Henning and the Minister for Agriculture by way of interjection last night, there is no shortage of butter for local consumption.

Last season Queensland and New South Wales had extremely bad seasonal conditions, and Australia exported approximately 15,000 tons of butter and butter-fat. The supply of butter within Australia is controlled under the machinery set up by the producers in the Commonwealth and the various States, and where butter is required in one State it is provided from any other States that have a surplus, and although Western Australia last year only had a small surplus for export, there was ample butter available in Australia to fulfil our needs or those of any other States. Last year was somewhat exceptional.

As a result of seasonal conditions, which I think I am correct in saying were exceptional, production in New South Wales was down 13,000 tons on that of the previous year and in Queensland it was down 22,000 tons. In those two States alone there was a reduction of 35,000 tons. But with all that, we still had an export surplus of approximately 5,000 tons from which any shortage in this or any other State could be supplied. Whilst I have not been able to get the estimated figures of the export surplus for this season, it seems reasonable to suppose that it will be considerably more than it was last season. Seeing that the Australian production declined to some extent over recent years and, that prior to last season it was 164,000 tons, it appears reasonable to suppose that the export surplus will be considerably more than last season. In the circumstances, I hope members are satisfied that supplies for local consumption are assured.

I want those members who have not firsthand acquaintance with the position to realise that, though the more margarine that is sold in Australia automatically makes more butter available for export, the late Mr. Howey, who at one stage was president of the Dairy Farmers' Association of Australia and one of the outstanding leaders in the history of organised rural industries, stated that on every pound of butter exported, the industry lost 1s. per pound. Consequently, members will appreciate that the more we bump up the production of margarine, the greater will be the evil effects on the butter-producing industry.

The market for our butter in the United Kingdom under the existing contract is unprofitable to the Australian butter producer. According to a statement by Mr. McEwen, the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce, Canada and the United States of America prohibit the importation of butter, so no alternative market for us exists there. Certainly, the present price of butter locally shows an increase on that which ruled in the past, but I ask members, particularly those of the Labour Party who usually keep themselves well informed on these matters, to consider that the increase in the price of butter to the consumer since the recent war is proportionately little, if any, greater than the increase in the basic wage. Whereas the basic wage has increased about threefold since the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, the price of butter to the consumer has risen to about the same extent.

The present price may appear to be high, but we should have regard to the importance of the industry to this country and the fact that the price of butter is included in the index figures used to determine the basic wage adjustments. We must appreciate the absolute necessity of preserving to the industry the local market—the only market that, under existing conditions, permits producers to carry on profitably. If members consider these points, I feel sure they will conclude that the proposed considerable increase in the manufacture of margarine should not be sanctioned.

To authorise an increase in the permissible quantity of margarine that may be manufactured would not be in the long-term interests particularly of this State but also of Australia. The ingredients used in the manufacture of margarine are not produced in this country, despite the statement by Mr. Craig. In making that assertion, I should concede that margarine contains 1 per cent. of salt and 16 per cent. of water, both of which, I dare say, are produced locally, but the other 83 per cent., representing coconut oil, might be produced in a mandated territory or in the Pacific islands, but it is produced under conditions that industrialists in Australia would never tolerate.

Hon. L. Craig: They buy our wool.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Perhaps so.

Hon. L. C. Diver: But not much of it.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: That commodity is not produced under conditions that apply in the dairying industry or in other industries supplying requirements the cost of which enters into the cost of butter-fat production. If we argue that the margarine industry, dependent as it is for its raw material on native labour, should be expanded, we might as well revert to the days when kanaka labour was employed in the sugar industry in Queensland. Nobody would regard such a suggestion as other than a retrograde step.

Hon. L. Craig: We use native labour on the stations in the North.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Possibly the hon. member is somewhat out of touch with what is happening on the stations nowadays. In my opinion, the butterfat section of the industry must be retained as the basis of dairying in this State and for the development of the wholemilk supply. The butterfat side of the industry is to dairying what wheatgrowing has been to a lot of our agricultural areas, which today are recognised as the richest of our farming districts; it is the primary or developmental section of the industry.

If we are going to impose handicaps upon this section, and prejudice its future, as it certainly will be prejudiced under the conditions laid down in the Bill, it is political humbug to contemplate opening up another thousand dairy farms, or to undertake the further development of existing farms to produce butterfat. Many of those farms require much development that will involve years of work before they will be in a position to switch over to wholemilk production.

To me it seems extraordinary that we should be considering such legislation in a State like ours, where we are supposed to set a high value on the dairying industry and the need to expand it in order to open up those vast areas in the South-West that can be developed only by this industry. This proposal to increase the output of a substitute food manufactured from imported raw material is merely an attempt to capitalise on the emergency that arose last year as a result of drought conditions and temporary difficulties with shipping from the Eastern States.

So far, we have not been supplied with any information to show that margarine to be manufactured in the future will be artificially fortified with vitamins "A" and "D" which, I understand, is essential if this substitute is to have the food value of butter. Recently I asked some questions in the House regarding the nutritional value of margarine, and was told that no information was available. Since then, I understand, the Minister has obtained some particulars. I trust that when he replies to the debate he will give us very full information regarding this fortifying of margarine with vitamins and will let us know how much that will add to the cost and whether the whole of the output will be treated in that way—whether the whole 800 tons will be artificially fortified, and not just some portion of it made fit for the table and the rest sold for other uses, but with about the same nutritional value as axle grease.

It seems to me we must face the fact that if we are going to increase margarine production we will add more butter to our exports at a price that will not pay the producers, who will indeed be foolish if, under those circumstances, they try to

expand production of butterfat. They will be even more foolish to attempt to go through the pioneering involved in taking on the new farms which are proposed—if they get past the proposal stage and become reality—and live the sort of existence in the dairying industry that people were living 20 or 30 years ago when they were trying to maintain themselves on unprofitable prices. I cannot conceive of anything we could do that would be better designed to force prices down.

We have to remember that producers today are more inclined than previously to judge on their merits exhortations for more production and not to be carried away with enthusiasm for political platitudes and appeals from prominent people. The time when we had a cow population throughout the State other than in the recognised dairying areas was a time of depression and a hard time indeed. It was not the farmers' work to milk cows and separate milk and undertake the drudgery, but that of the women and children on the farms. That had to be done because there was not enough to live on by any other means. Those days are gone, fortunately. I do not want them back, and I hope they never will recur.

If this is the only way we can obtain an increase in butter for export, we deserve to be without it. In all earnestness I urge members to give deep consideration to this matter, which is a serious one indeed for the industry. I think it will do no harm to repeat what I said when I concluded my speech on the Address-in-reply, because it seems to me to be so fundamental to Australia as a whole and to Western Australia in particular in view of our dependence on primary industry and the further development of this State. I said that the first basic change in public opinion must be the conviction that agriculture is the very centre of our national living, the completely indispensable industry. I would like to add that the flight from the land is a national scourge and that those economic measures that attract people to the land are good and those that, consciously or unconsciously, discourage them are bad. I would say that, unconsciously, this proposal is bad.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [3.35]: I rise to support the Bill. At the same time, not being very conversant with dairying activities, I do not want to do anything that will adversely affect that industry. Last August, the local authorities in Kalgoorlie circularised members for the district regarding the supply of margarine, and that was brought about by the seasonal shortage of butter and the steep increase in price of that commodity. It will be remembered that last year we had to queue up for butter in the metropolitan area and many man hours were wasted in the attempt to obtain that commodity.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: They did not have to queue up. That was brought about by rushing supplies.

Hon. W. R. HALL: That may be so, but that was the position brought about by seasonal shortages. Last season was not the only time there has been a shortage.

The Minister for Agriculture: There was not enough to go around.

Hon. W. R. HALL: When the supply of butter is not equal to the demand, I cannot see any reason why, in order to tide us over, more margarine should not be put on the market.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is not warranted now.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Who is to say there will not be another seasonal shortage and the same queuing up will be necessary as took place previously?

Hon. G. Bennetts: What about big families? They must have margarine.

Hon. W. R. HALL: That is quite correct. I would rather have butter any time. I do not know anything about margarine, but there are many families on the basic wage by whom I suppose margarine is used as a substitute for butter. There are many commodities for which substitutes have to be found in times of shortage. I daresay that in introducing the Bill the Minister did what he believed to be correct. He is Minister for Agriculture and represents the agricultural industry. Surely he would know whether the prospect of shortage was such that it was necessary to bring down a measure of this description.

Hon. C. H. Henning: He said last night that he represented a majority, not a minority.

Hon. W. R. HALL: The Minister should know whom he represents. I know, at any rate. According to an authority I intend to quote, margarine is quite suitable in relation to nutritional value and spreadability, but, unfortunately, the quantity available is far short of requirements. Further, he says, from inquiries made it appears that Section 25A of the Margarine Act, No. 36 of 1940, limits the production to 364 tons per annum. That is the amount of table margarine that may be manufactured for consumption in this State. So far as can be ascertained, that section is responsible for the shortage of table margarine here. I do not want to see margarine affect the dairying industry because, after all, it has had a pretty stiff trot. My only point is that if there is to be a shortage of butter, why not allow extra margarine to be made available until such time as the dairying industry can cope with the situation?

Hon. A. R. Jones: There is no shortage at the present time.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I realise that, but we have had shortages so frequently in past years that, apparently, it is considered something should be done. I take it that is why the Bill has been brought down. I cannot see any other reason for it. When the supply is not sufficient, we cannot deny the people something they want, and so long as margarine has a proper nutritional value, I cannot see very much wrong with it. I am quite aware that there is a vast difference between the price of butter and that of margarine. Those people with families, who have been in the habit of using this commodity, will certainly keep on using it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: What about the pensioners? They want it, too.

Hon. W. R. HALL: There must be thousands of people who use margarine. I cannot see anything wrong with agreeing to the Bill so that we can supply a commodity which is in demand. If margarine is going to help feed the people of Western Australia, by all means let us have it until such time as we can permanently cope with the butter situation. I support the Bill.

HON. J. McI. THOMSON (South) [3.42]: Were I convinced that the introduction of the Bill would not seriously affect the dairying industry, I would no doubt support it, but I have not been convinced of that by any arguments put forward, particularly those of the Minister when moving the second reading. In view of the vast amount of public money that the State has spent, and will continue to spend on the dairying industry, I feel we cannot afford to pass a Bill of this nature without its having a serious effect on the industry.

Only as late as last year we stressed the necessity of giving every encouragement to dairying. We hear of the increased cost of butter, but I would remind the House that when adjustments of the basic wage are before the Arbitration Court, butter is included in the "C" series index figures, so that any increases in the basic wage have taken into account the price of butter. That point may be of minor importance, although it is worthy of some consideration. I oppose the Bill because I believe that by passing it we would be doing a grave injustice to an industry that we have been endeavouring to foster and encourage.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [3.45]: I oppose the Bill because I am thinking not of today or tomorrow, but of what might happen to the industry in a few years time if the production of margarine got out of control. We find that over the last few years, especially the last twelve months, the quantity of margarine available, not only in Western Australia but in New South Wales and Queensland, has gradually been increased. Today we are asking for an increase in

this State, and probably next year we will ask for a further increase of 1,600 tons, and the following year an increase of another 1,600 tons, and so on.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You can avoid that by cutting out the limit.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: One can imagine, with the money behind Lever Brothers—who are the main suppliers of the principal ingredients of margarine—the radio and paper advertising scheme with Jack Davey running it, and the price of margarine today, it could almost put butter off the table. That is, if we let it get out of hand. I think there will be sufficient members who will vote for the extra 800 tons now, and next year they might agree to a further 800 tons.

We have to consider what the result will be if the position gets out of hand. Today we have 3,000 dairy farmers in the State, and they represent something like 12,000 people. In the main they carry seven or eight South-West towns. Not only do these people support the towns, but also certain secondary industries. Let us have a look at what the effect will be on the economy of the country if we allow margarine to take control of the butter industry and wipe the dairy farmers out of existence.

All the country now being used for dairy farms has been brought under cultivation, and it would go back to nature. Then what would we have—timber. If all that country goes back to timber, and everyone starts cutting timber, we will have over-production there, and so the country will go back to nature again. It just does not work out. We have set up an industry for the benefit of the State, so let us keep it. I agree with the Minister when he says we have to feed the people, but let us feed them with something decent, and something that is produced in our own State and not out of coconut oil from a mandated territory.

The Minister for Agriculture: How are you going to do that, and what are you doing towards it?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Let us feed them with butter.

The Minister for Agriculture: How?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is plenty of butter today. There has been no real shortage in the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: No?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No. If people had not taken time off to stand in queues to get more butter than they needed, there would have been sufficient to go around. I never waited in queues, and I did not go short of butter.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why do you think we stockpiled last year, and why do you think we are doing it again this year?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Who did?

The Minister for Agriculture: The State.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The dairying industry stockpiled, and it is doing it today. It is part and parcel of the livelihood of the industry.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why are we doing it?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: So that the people can have butter, and not margarine. In the present circumstances probably a quota of even 800 tons would not matter, but what will happen in the future if the position gets out of hand? That is what matters and I will do nothing to help in letting it get out of hand. Let us examine the reason why butterfat production has declined to some extent in this State. That decline had its beginning in the 1940-41 period when the Commonwealth Government inaugurated the coupon system for butter in Western Australia. There has been no great decline in the industry itself but today the Minister is asking the people on farms to milk more cows. I agree with that principle, but they cannot get sufficient labour and if they could it would cost them 10s. for every pound of butter produced.

The farmer himself certainly has not time to milk many cows and if he is a decent man he will not ask his wife to do it. It is cheaper for the farmer in a wheatgrowing area to buy butter produced by those in the dairying industry. The fact is that the decline in butter production does not come from the dairying areas. Some members have said that we should make margarine available because the working man cannot afford to buy butter. If he is unable to buy butter on present-day wages, I think he could overcome the difficulty by buying one less bottle of beer per week or going without a few packets of cigarettes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Do you think we have the right to tell any man how he shall spend his wages?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Certainly, if he says he is not getting sufficient on which to feed his family. I have endeavoured to point out what could happen in this State in years to come if we allowed margarine production to get out of hand, and it is for that reason that I oppose the measure.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [3.53]: Two things have brought me to my feet this afternoon. Firstly, I desire to issue a warning to the opponents of the Bill who have done their cause no good by indulging in exaggeration. I refer particularly to Mr. Logan who said that the Bill, if agreed to, would result in the dairying areas of the South-West reverting to their virgin state, which is ridiculous.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not say that. I said that would happen if margarine production got out of hand.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope that speakers who follow me will stick more closely to the facts than did some of those who have preceded me. The other matter that caused me to rise was the statement by Mr. Thomson that he had heard nothing to justify the Bill from any member who had spoken in support of it. I wish to reverse that and say that, though I have listened attentively to the debate, in case I might hear something that would cause me to change my mind about the measure—

Hon. N. E. Baxter: All you want is a cheap product for the working man.

Hon. G. FRASER: No Labour man has ever looked for a cheap product for the worker. We have always maintained that the worker should have the best that the country can give him, and we will always fight to maintain that position. I have heard little in opposition to the measure but a lot of figures thrown across the Chamber, and figures always leave me cold.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Probably because you do not understand them.

Hon. G. FRASER: I could also use figures, but one can prove anything by means of figures. The opposition shown to the measure indicates a remarkable lack of confidence in the present Government on the part of its supporters. All the opposition to the measure is coming from supporters of the Government. Do those members who are opposing the measure not trust their own Government or their own Minister who introduced the Bill? Have they not sufficient confidence in their own leaders to know that the Government would not introduce a measure likely to prove detrimental to some of its greatest supporters?

Hon. C. H. Henning: Do you want us to be like dumb, driven cattle?

Hon. G. FRASER: No Government would introduce a Bill that would jeopardise its supporters.

The Minister for Agriculture: Especially not just before an election.

Hon. G. FRASER: Exactly.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You have been supporting Government Bills for some time past.

Hon. G. FRASER: I will support any Bill that I think is good, and I believe this measure is sound because the people of Western Australia have suffered a shortage of both butter and margarine during the past 12 months.

The Minister for Agriculture: And a shortage of dried milk, also.

Hon. G. FRASER: One of the greatest bugbears of the housewife is the problem of securing butter—at certain times of the year—for the preparation of lunches. I have known many families in the metropolitan area that, in the last 12 months, have been unable to buy butter. It is all very well for Mr. Logan to say that he did not go short. He has plenty of friends in the industry from whom he could get butter.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I got mine over the counter, just like anyone else.

Hon. G. FRASER: But how would the ordinary individual get on? I have seen people standing in queues hundreds of yards long in order to buy half a pound of butter.

The Minister for Agriculture: Often only to find it all sold before they reached the counter.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so. I have had that experience myself. I have come through Foy and Gibson's at midday and have seen people standing there in queues. I have seen them still there at 3.45 p.m., waiting patiently for their turn to come to buy half a pound of butter.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: They have probably been through the queue and back again to secure another half-pound.

Hon. G. FRASER: No; no butter had been sold in the meantime. Those people were willing to wait three or four hours in order to buy half a pound of butter each. The Bill is entirely justified. No one has a greater respect for the dairying industry of the State than I have. I pay the dairy farmers the compliment of believing that they are the hardest-worked people in this country, 365 days per year, and theirs is the last job I would ever think of taking on. I would never do anything, by voice or vote, that would be detrimental to them.

Sitting suspended from 4.0 to 4.25 p.m.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. G. FRASER: Before the afternoon tea suspension, I was mentioning the fact that I had great respect for those engaged in the dairying industry.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Vote against the Bill! That would be more to the point.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the hon. member had put up a good enough case, I would vote against it.

Hon. L. Craig: That is not a bad one!

Hon. G. FRASER: That is the point; I am not biased on this question. As I remarked earlier—and I still have no doubt about it—with a reasonable difference in price, and even with the difference in price today, if butter and margarine are both available in sufficient quantity, there is no doubt which the people will select; they

will certainly choose butter. Scientists can come along with all the information they like about the respective qualities of these two articles, but I have yet to find a person who, if given the choice, will take margarine in preference to butter. I know there are quite a number of very low-income people who have to consider the question of the price.

Hon. L. Craig: Not so low, either.

Hon. G. FRASER: But in the main, these people are in the minority. If any injury were to be done to dairying, I would vote against the Bill, but I have no doubt at all that the measure will do no injury whatsoever to that industry. As I have remarked earlier I would not think for one moment that the present Government, and the present Minister, who is a farmer himself and has spent all his life in the farming industry, would do anything to the detriment of any branch of the primary producing industry. Might I add, Mr. Deputy President, that if the wheel of fortune next year places other people on the Treasury Bench, these primary industries will get just as good a deal from that Government as they have done from the present one.

Hon. H. L. Roche: That is not saying much.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think they have been protected to a large extent.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: We have no right to say what people should use; it is for them to choose.

Hon. G. FRASER: We will give them that choice; as long as they have the purse, they know what the choice will be. I do not care what Government is on the Treasury Bench of this State; I repeat that no Government would be foolish enough to do anything that might harm or injure the primary producers of Western Australia. That is no idle boast. As a matter of fact, if members run quickly through the various Labour Governments, I think they will agree that those Administrations have always been very good country Governments.

When one considers for a moment the volume of legislation concerning primary industries placed on the statute book by Labour Administrations in the past, one will appreciate that it will be very difficult to contradict my assertion. A few acts of those Administrations flash through my mind. For instance, there is the Industries Assistance Board, which was inaugurated by a Labour Government. Again, we have the Rural and Industries Bank, which was also established by a Labour administration.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: What has that to do with the Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: It has this to do with it; I wish to assure the hon. member and his supporters that no matter what Government is in power in this State, nothing will be done to injure primary producers.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Where does that appear in the Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: I merely mention it in passing; one often remarks on things in passing which do not happen to appear in a Bill! The use of rock catchments for water supply purposes is another example of the work of Labour Governments. So we can go on right through the piece. I only mention these things to indicate that no Government will do anything to injure primary producing industries. Although I have already said a few words in support of the Bill, I still have an open mind in the matter, and if any hon. member who has yet to speak can show me where I am wrong, I will reverse my vote. I might mention, however, that he will have a difficult job ahead of him. I support the Bill.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [4.30]: I wish to offer my sympathy to the Minister for Agriculture on the predicament in which he, as an agriculturist, finds himself. Mr. Craig stated that the Minister was speaking for and on behalf of agriculturists, but I do not hold that view. When one becomes a member of the Government, he has to speak for the whole community, and sometimes a Minister finds himself in the position of having to make certain utterances that may be very embarrassing to him.

Let us consider what has caused the shortage of butter supplies. We have to go back to the wartime regulations based on legislation prohibiting farmers with small numbers of cattle from marketing their butter. We had the spectacle of hundreds of farmers in the wheat and wool areas who were milking one and sometimes two cows for the family use, but having some butter to spare, they were debarred from marketing it. Consequently those cattle were disposed of and, as time passed, the farmers found that the coupons they held for butter enabled them to carry on under much better conditions. This naturally threw a greater strain upon the specialist dairy farmer to provide for these additional needs.

The prices of rural commodities—wheat and wool—increased, and at the same time farm labour was difficult to obtain, and consequently many farmers, who had learned to do without the product of one or two cows during the war, continued to rely on outside sources for supplies of butter. At about the same period, the 40-hour week came into operation and proved to be one more factor in the decline of butter production in the wheat areas. The Minister for Agriculture referred to the old days when farmers

worked seven days a week, but we could not expect them to revert to those long hours. They took the view, "If our brothers in the city work only 40 hours a week, why should we slave seven days a week? We who are producing wool and wheat are providing overseas credit, and why should we rob the man who is a specialist in the production of dairy produce and encroach upon his sphere? Why should we deny him as a specialist the right to produce this commodity when it is substantially his livelihood to provide it?"

There is another aspect that should be considered. In calculating the basic wage, butter is one of the commodities included in the "C" series index to determine the adjustment. I have not heard any Labour member say that he would be prepared to have margarine included in the "C" series index when the basic wage was being determined. To be fair and to keep criticism within bounds, we should not permit this commodity to be manufactured to compete with butter, as it must do. Looking back over many years in the farming industry, we find numerous instances of departures having been made from accepted custom. These departures have been introduced as emergency measures but, with the passage of time, they have become an established practice. Consequently, I am fearful that if we permit an increase in the quota of margarine to be manufactured from time to time, it will undermine the dairying industry.

We were told by Mr. Barker that the butterfat industry had no cause to fear because any surplus production could be exported. Doubtless that is so; everybody is aware that it might be exported, but at the price obtainable, export is not profitable. Our Labour friends are seeking to establish certain standards of living in the Commonwealth, and yet they want to expose a commodity like butter produced in the Commonwealth to world competition.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What is the price for export butter?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Substantially below the home consumption price.

Hon. H. L. Roche: About 3s. 5½. a lb.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: And the Commonwealth subsidy is 1s. a lb.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Time after time, primary industry is twitted with receiving some handout from the Government. Such assistance is granted, not for the benefit of primary industry alone, but to maintain the economic structure of the country and enable the worker and his family to live more cheaply. I think I have covered the salient points that appeal to me, and while I sympathise with the Minister on the position in which he is temporarily placed, I must oppose the second reading.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [4.39]: I wish to point out one aspect that appeals to me, namely, that this legislation has been introduced just twelve months too late. Last year we in Western Australia experienced a shortage of butter supplies. Had this legislation then been operating, we could have fallen back on to a supply of margarine as a substitute for butter. We have been informed that, on the experience gained last year, there will not be a shortage of butter this year. This State is not quite able to produce all the butter necessary for its requirements, but the Eastern States will make good any deficiency. In view of the greatly increased production in those States, it is clear that there will be more butter available this season for export to this State or overseas.

I ask members to consider the point that this legislation has been introduced twelve months too late. Why should we worry about passing legislation when we shall not be confronted by a shortage of butter? I cannot swallow the statement made by some Labour members that families cannot afford to buy butter. Most people are receiving good wages nowadays, and housewives are good budgeters and will take steps to ensure that they obtain the best food available, including butter. I offer those few words against the Bill and trust that members will have nothing to do with it but will throw it out. Let us have good wholesome butter on our tables instead of having them cluttered up with margarine!

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.41]: I suppose no lion should enter this den of Daniels.

Hon. H. L. Roche: He might be gored by a cow!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: However, I feel it is essential to set before the House some views on this matter from possibly a different angle. Frankly, I am astonished at the sentimental case of the opposition to this Bill rather than the factual case. I wonder whether it is not time that the whole of the dairying industry should take proper account of the changing times and customs and the needs of the people in relation to their product. It seems to me that the opposition to the Bill is based on one or two factors.

The first and most important factor, I am certain, is the trade agreement with Great Britain. If that did not exist and the export price was reasonable in the minds of the dairy producers, we would not meet the opposition we are receiving to this measure. The second, I think, is based on the fact that butter is an essential article of food and should remain for ever as one of the necessities of our diet.

The first of these I cannot rectify. I believe that should be in the hands of the producers themselves. The problem should be approached by way of the Common-

wealth and British Governments to see that an equitable arrangement in regard to export price is reached. But we must not forget that the time has been when the export price was greater than the home price, whereas now the position is being reversed and it appears as though some stabilisation of export price should be arranged on a satisfactory basis.

Let us look at butter from the point of view of its necessity. There was a time, as I have said previously in this House, when the production of butter and butter-fat was the be-all and end-all of the dairy farm. I am certain that that began to go long since and is going and will continue to go at a greater rate, and whole-milk will become the essential product of the dairy farm. The talk about lack of food value of margarine is sentimental. The only reason for butter is its fat content. I think it matters very little whether it is fortified with vitamins "A" and "D" because we get plenty of vitamin "D," and butter is not our only fat.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What about calcium?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is so little calcium in butter that it has no real value in regard to that particular mineral. We receive that mineral in real quantity from wholemilk and not butter. Therefore, from a food point of view we have to look at the whole problem of milk in the light of growing knowledge. I believe the time will come when more and more margarine will be used, certainly for cooking purposes within the household, and when butter will be reserved as a table delicacy. I believe the time could easily come when the scientists will make margarine spread as easily as butter, and it will almost take the place of butter on the household table, because its value is nearly identical in regard to its fat content.

What therefore of the future? It appears to me necessary to reorganise the whole dairying industry in the light of wholemilk. There is ample scope for the consumption of wholemilk in the light of modern knowledge and progress, and the allocation of wholemilk can be carried out on a purely scientific basis. I realise that the suggestions which I am making cannot be undertaken all at once because those whose livelihood is based on the sale of fat will not be able to reorganise on the basis of wholemilk very rapidly or easily. That, however, must be the aim.

Having done that, some priority must be established in relation to the various uses of wholemilk. I was very sorry and astonished to hear the opposition of the Minister of Agriculture to the suggestions put up by Mr. Hughes. I do not hold any brief for Mr. Hughes or his methods, but they are a very good starting point from which to make wholemilk available to the country districts.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is it better than spray-dried milk?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes. There might not be any difference if it were possible successfully to homogenise spray-dried milk. The problem is in the storing of dried milk and converting it into a readily acceptable commodity. It is a question of the homogenisation of the breaking of the fat capsule. If that can be done—I do not mind by what method—there will be a much greater field for the sale of wholemilk. I would much rather that places like Wiluna, Kalgoorlie, Laverton and mining districts in the North-West and the Kimberleys were supplied with milk which could be made from the dried factors of that commodity and the addition of water, than that Kalgoorlie and Wiluna should receive wholemilk at least four days late, chilled, and transported over long train distances, for such milk must surely have a very short keeping capacity on arrival in those country districts.

Hon. A. L. Loton: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy President, are we discussing wholemilk or margarine? I have not heard Dr. Hislop mention margarine for the last five minutes.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I take it that the hon. member will link his remarks with the purpose of the Bill and its contents.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, as successfully as the opposition did. As a matter of fact, they did not talk wholemilk; they did not even talk sense.

Hon. A. L. Loton: You can form your own opinion on that, and we can form our opinion on what you are saying.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The hon. member probably will, but what I am talking will be sense.

Hon. A. L. Loton: In your opinion.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: No, in the opinion of the House, I trust. In dealing with the question of margarine, one must go back to wholemilk, which unfortunately those in opposition to the Bill failed to see. I was asked a few minutes ago by one of those who opposed the measure how wholemilk would be distributed and disposed of. One of the methods which I have outlined will be a major factor in the distribution of milk when butter is not taking the place it does today on the household table. These facts must be considered when discussing a Bill such as this which has been classed by its opponents as sounding the death-knell of the dairying industry.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Not by the opposition, but the farmers.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Well, by those who are opposing the Bill. There are other factors we must consider. I would be in favour of going a good deal further

than is indicated in the Bill. I would permit the use of vegetable oils in the production of ice cream, so I would probably be told that I was still further sounding the deathknell of the dairy farmer. I believe that a considerable proportion of butterfat, which could well be used in the production of butter, is being used in this so-called "health food of a nation." I do not think it can be regarded as an essential food. It, again, is a luxury and is being used purely for the consumption of fat. If vegetable oils were used in ice cream, the same degree of nourishment would be obtained.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: How much butterfat is in ice cream?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think 10 per cent. I do not know whether members realise that when they buy ice cream they purchase 50 per cent. air. Their Dolly Madison delicacy is due to the effect of the aeration. When ice cream is purchased, 50 per cent. of what is paid for is the air which has been introduced into it. It is a light type of food, and the butterfat in it could well be replaced by a vegetable oil.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I think the hon. member is drifting further and further away from the Bill, which deals with the increase in the production of margarine.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not think it is possible to do otherwise. If you, Sir, rule against me, I will, of course, obey your ruling. I am endeavouring to point out that wholemilk can be used in so many other avenues that the passage of this measure need cause no alarm. I believe it is correct that the future will show a greater use of margarine and a diminishing use of butterfat as butter. If that is done, then the whole of the dairying industry must be geared to the production of wholemilk.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I do not think that is possible.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am afraid that remark will only redound to the discredit of the person who made it, because the future will show the avenue into which the dairy field will go. It has many avenues for the sale of wholemilk today, one of which I have indicated. I feel that the priorities for the use of wholemilk are so great that we, as a people, will be compelled to use more and more vegetable oil as butter. This will mean a greater production of margarine. The priorities I would give to wholemilk are, firstly, the actual consumption of wholemilk per head of population; secondly, the preparation of dried milks, for which our northern and eastern districts have been calling for years. There is a tremendous future here.

Thirdly, there is the production of dried extracts for the preparation of milk for consumption as wholemilk in the far

corners of the State; fourthly the production of condensed milk; and, finally, the use of milk as plastics. Those opposing the measure need not fear for one moment the introduction of an increased amount of margarine because wholemilk will have so many fresh avenues to explore. Those in the dairying industry would be well advised to take cognisance of the possibilities of the future of the industry.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Do you think it would release more—

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am certain it would.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Therefore the price would come down.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Only if a proper stabilisation can be arranged for export will the industry ever be on a real foundation.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You cannot arrange that while you have this in competition.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The hon. member's own Government is already subsidising one side of the industry, and it could subsidise both. It is a matter of approach to the Commonwealth Government for the equalisation of the industry. We cannot prevent an industry taking its rightful place by making two wrongs and hoping they will make one right. I know there are men in the Minister's department who view the future of milk in the same way as I do.

The Minister for Agriculture: I view it in the same way myself, because I know.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I consider the support I have is quite adequate when the Minister himself says that I am at least talking sense. I plead with those who are in opposition to the Bill to make a complete review of the dairying industry on the basis, not that the introduction of margarine is something new, because we have been accustomed to use butter, but rather that it will allow of a greater degree of service to the community by the dairying industry. We need more milk and everything else that the dairyman can produce.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We can take 6,000 gallons of milk a week in Kalgoorlie if we can get it.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is another side of the story for which I also make an appeal. I realise how the dairy farmer works because I have spent time, as a visitor, on dairy farms and have seen these men in the South-West getting up at all hours of the morning, cold and bitter though the morning might be, seven days a week, to do their work. An approach should be made to the Commonwealth Government for a selective method of taxation. I do not believe that the man who has to work all hours of the day, often in inclement weather, seven days a week, should be called upon to pay income

tax at the same rate as the man who enjoys the leisure which this legislature makes generally possible. If a man is called upon to work during times when other people do not work, he should get some relief, and it could be given, as it is in the United States of America, on the basis of selective income tax.

Hon. H. L. Roche: He will not if you go on with this sort of legislation.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am sorry that I have not convinced those opposing the Bill, but I hope they will think over what I have said and make some further inquiries into the future of the dairying industry in relation to the production of margarine. I support the measure.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.01]: Although short, this measure is apparently of great importance as it has resulted in a lengthy and interesting debate. I approached it with an open mind because I did not know much about the pros and cons of the subject before the debate commenced. However, the people I represent on the Goldfields have instructed me to support the Bill and, after listening to the debate, I have no compunction about complying with their wishes.

The original Act was passed in 1940, when the quota was apparently fixed at 364 tons. Now, 12 years later, we are asked to amend the Act by increasing that quota 100 per cent. I can see no grave objection to that. I desire to compliment the Minister and Mr. Craig on the valuable contributions they have made to the debate, and Messrs. Henning and Roche on the enlightening arguments they put forward. I am sure those members all know the dairying industry better than most of us do; they have worked in it and represent constituents whose living depends on it.

I have heard members in this House say that lawyers rarely agree, and apparently the same thing can be said about experts in the dairying industry. We have on the one hand the Minister, who is in charge of the industry, saying that the measure will do it no harm, and he is supported in that viewpoint by Mr. Craig, who represents what is essentially a dairying district and whose viewpoint carries a great deal of weight with me. On the other hand, we have the arguments put forward by Messrs. Roche and Henning.

My final conclusion on the Bill has been reached largely on what Mr. Logan said. He assured the House that a quota of 800 tons would not matter to the dairying industry, and that was the sum total of his argument. If that is the case, I do not see any objection to the Bill. Mr. Logan was concerned lest at some future time the Act be amended to provide a much larger quota of margarine, and I can assure him that if I am in this House when that happens and

it is thought that a further increase will affect the industry adversely, I will not support such an amendment.

The man engaged in the dairying industry needs all the assistance that can be given to him, and I will never be a party to any measure that will obviously have a detrimental effect on him. I am convinced that this Bill cannot harm the dairyman. For that reason and because so many of our people are clamouring for a larger supply of margarine, I support the measure.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central—in reply) [15.51]: I wish to thank members for the reception they have given the measure. I refer particularly to Dr. Hislop, who has relieved me of the necessity of mentioning quite a lot of what I proposed to say in reply. Not only am I Minister for Agriculture but also, I believe, I have had more experience of the dairying industry than have many members of this House. Had they had experience similar to mine, there would not have been the opposition to this measure that has been voiced in the House this afternoon. From the time when I was nine years old, I was on a dairy farm and commenced milking cows at 4 a.m. every day for three years.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Others have done the same as you did.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Before I became a wheatgrower, the few pounds that I was able to accumulate were gained on a dairy farm, and during that period I was never in bed after 4 a.m. Despite the interjections that I expect from members who may regard themselves as having knowledge and experience in excess of my own, I can claim that my practical experience has placed me in a position from which I can speak authoritatively to the House on this subject. Often, when passing through the country, I have thought that I should take my hat off to the cows because they gave me the opportunity of attaining the position I now occupy.

Members are entitled to oppose anything they wish to in this House, and if they desire to be wrong, that is their own responsibility. If they are right we, of course, will applaud them, but first of all such members can have very little knowledge of the real position in our dairying industry. Dr. Hislop, with his professional knowledge, seems to have a great deal more information about the subject than have many members who spoke against the Bill. The most attractive phase of the dairying industry today is wholemilk—

Hon. L. A. Logan: And yet the producers are put on a quota.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no end to the quota so long as there is a market available for the milk,

and members know that we are not yet able to honour the obligation imposed on us by the Commonwealth Minister for Health under the free milk scheme. We cannot at present supply our school children with the quantity of milk to which they are entitled under that scheme.

Hon. C. H. Henning: And great tanks of wholemilk are still going to the factories to be processed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, and the processed milk will enable us at least to do something towards meeting our obligations. Surely Mr. Henning knows that we cannot send wholemilk direct from the cow to a place such as Wiluna, and that it must therefore first be processed. We all know that there are times towards the end of summer in this State when we are scratching to obtain sufficient wholemilk to meet the requirements of the metropolitan area. Whoever succeeds me in my present position will be able to appreciate what I am saying in this regard.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Are you expecting someone to succeed you soon?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is much easier to destroy than to build, and I make no apologies now and made none when I interjected and said that my responsibility was not as a friend of the farmer, a member of the Country Party or a member of the Farmers' Union, but to the people of the State.

Members: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: As long as I am in this position I will accept that responsibility. The second most attractive aspect is a factory that has been established in this State. When I was a Minister in 1931 I experienced a good deal of pleasure in being able to assist in the establishment of that factory. This afternoon, before I came up here, I listened to a story that made me feel ill; I was informed that the people running the factory had reached a stage where it would be almost impossible for them to carry on because they were not receiving sufficient milk supplies.

Hon. C. H. Henning: The wholemilk position has encroached upon them.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is an admission. Yet when the hon. member was speaking he tried to make out that I was the greatest mug that ever lived and that he was a most knowledgeable man. He did not tell us that the reason for a shortage of butter in this State was because of the necessity to produce increased supplies of wholemilk. I am very concerned about that fact, even though Dr. Hislop and I do not see eye to eye about the Hughes process. A similar process was used a great deal by the Americans during the war, and I do not think that Dr. Hislop is quite aware

of how fine is the sprayed milk and how it does break up the globules of fat. Also, the roller dried milk is very difficult to mix completely.

But I am very concerned about the factory going out of existence because its production would materially assist us in supplying processed milk to the outer districts. To my mind the dried milks are much better than ordinary condensed milk. So far, the factory has been able to supply us and they undertook to provide their entire output for Western Australian requirements if we made sufficient supplies of wholemilk available to them. The price paid for milk used in the production of butter is the lowest in the industry. Will Mr. Henning tell me that that is not true? So it is only natural that the drift should be away from butterfat production. Last year we produced 1,000,000 lb. less butter than we did in 1939. From that members will appreciate the distinct falling off in butter production.

Several members interjected.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I wish members would let me finish my speech. They will have an opportunity to oppose the Bill again at the third reading. I repeat that it is only natural that farmers should drift away from the production of butterfat and their first thought is the production of wholemilk. I think that that decrease in butter production will continue, and I realise that it has been brought about in our agricultural areas. Mr. Logan now blatantly tells us that he does not blame these people for not producing butter and says that they should not milk cows.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He said those are very busy.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not say that they should not milk cows.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I heard the hon. member say it and he said that he did not blame them—

Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:—because they could not get labour.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I agreed with you in principle.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope that if I ever dare to call myself a farmer again, and it is possible for me to have a cow on my farm, I will do so. I would be a disgrace to the name if I did not keep one.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Not necessarily.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In the earliest days the man who succeeded in this State was the one who took every pennyworth of profit he could off his soil. If the farmers had not done that, no development would have taken place. Do not let us mollycoddle them by saying

that they cannot do this and they cannot do that because it is not possible to get labour. A man can milk a cow in 10 minutes and I have had considerable experience at that game. I will even say that it takes a quarter of an hour; and if a farmer has only two cows, that is half an hour in all.

It is a poor outlook if a man cannot get up half an hour earlier in order to give his wife and children a supply of fresh milk to which they are entitled. There is nothing to equal it and I agree with Dr. Hislop in that respect. I also agree that we should do everything possible to help the dairymen. There are two classes of people in this State associated with the agricultural industry to whom I will give my wholehearted support; they are the vegetable growers and the dairy farmers. If the vegetable growers were to work only 40 hours a week one can imagine what would be the cost of our vegetables. It would do members good to go out to Osborne Park and other such places, and see how the people labour eight hours or 12 hours a day for seven days a week, with their wives and youngsters helping as well. I can assure members that I know something about this question.

Hon. L. A. Logan: So do we.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Surely the Minister does not believe in wives and youngsters working like that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not, but until we can overcome the situation, we should not complain if we have to pay a little extra for those commodities.

Hon. L. C. Diver: But should not our economy be balanced.

Hon. L. Craig: They are making good money.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: And they are paying high taxation. A foreign person came to me only the other day to see if I could do something about his problems. If there is any concession that I can give to these people, I will not fail to help them.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Could you not help them by getting the milk purchased on a butterfat basis rather than on a gallonage basis.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That provides some problems and the idea is not acceptable in some quarters. I agree that the butterfat basis, to my mind, is the right basis, and if we could have adopted it, it would have been a better idea. I advocated that principle, but difficulties have been placed in the way of adopting the suggestion. In the Old Country, and in Canada, too, the Friesian type of cow is being used to a greater extent and although it gives a greater quantity of milk it has not the butterfat content of milk produced by other types of cows.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: That is because of past policy.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If we have a butterfat basis, as Dr. Hislop suggests, we can use other fats to make up the deficiencies.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: You could take out some of the fats.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Dr. Hislop now suggests that we might lower the standard of wholemilk and take from it some of the fats and put them into butter, thus providing additional butter for people who require it. I want to tell members that had I not been convinced that it was necessary to increase the quota of margarine, I would not have attempted to do so. However, I happened to be in this State when no butter was available for the people.

Hon. G. Fraser: Or margarine either.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Was there no butter at all?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I should say that Sir Charles Latham has enough influence in the community to be able to beg or borrow butter if it were available, but I say, honestly and truthfully, that I rang the heads of two firms I know and they told me they would not have any butter until the next day, and if I liked to visit them then, I could get half a pound.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: From each of them?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, I played the game. I also attempted to purchase some margarine, but I found there was none available.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: For how long did that last?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Margarine is quite a good food.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Margarine was not being produced up to the maximum quota at that time.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Because it was not expected that there would be a shortage. I want the hon. member to remember that under the existing legislation the Minister, a fortnight before the beginning of the year, determines the monthly quota that the manufacturer shall produce. The Act enables the Minister to determine either a weekly, monthly or quarterly quota. A monthly quota has been fixed since the Act was passed, and it is still in existence. So the result was that at any time the Minister could legally—I use that word advisedly, because I want to follow it up later—give authority for the manufacturers to produce a greater quota of margarine than was set for them.

It was divided into twelve monthly allocations. At no time have they exceeded the quota of 364 tons a year until recently

when the shortage occurred, and then it was stepped up as high as possible. Because of the more recent demand for margarine, I was able to tell them that their quota would be increased and, in anticipation of the passing of this Bill, that it would be stepped up to the extent that would meet the demands of the people. At present we are producing butter in excess of our requirements and that excess is being stockpiled for the lean period ahead. The butter producers have told me that there will be a deficiency of butter in this State.

Hon. C. H. Henning: In Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, and there may also be a deficiency elsewhere.

Hon. C. H. Henning: In Australia?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, even Australia because last year there was a much greater deficiency in New South Wales than there was in this State. Will the hon. member deny that that is true?

Hon. C. H. Henning: I remember the conditions that caused it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member might remember the conditions that caused it and is not the hon. member responsible, if he claims he carries out his duties in a proper manner, to see that we do not suffer a shortage of the necessary commodities if we can avoid it? The floods may have had something to do with the shortage in New South Wales. I want members to bear this in mind: If tomorrow I brought down a Bill in this House for the repeal of this legislation and it was assented to by the Governor after passing through both legislative halls, it would mean that there would be nothing to prevent this State from being flooded with margarine. Let us examine that aspect. Is it not better to have margarine manufactured under our control in this State?

Hon. H. L. Roche: We are importing the raw material for margarine.

Hon. C. H. Henning: We cannot stop it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member says we cannot stop it. What childish talk is that, when he knows that since 1940 we have stopped the importation of all agricultural products!

Hon. C. H. Henning: That has gone now.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When the hon. member says that that is gone, it is purely guesswork on his part. He did not consult me about the matter but went to somebody else for the information he gave to this House—information that was incorrect. I have the

facts, and I will give them to the hon. member. He said that it was never mentioned at the meetings of the Agricultural Council.

Hon. C. H. Henning: I never said that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member made that statement. I have here a copy of agenda item No. 35 dealt with at the thirty-fifth meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council, which was held on the 17th January, 1952. It reads—

Table Margarine Quotas.

This item has been listed at the request of the New South Wales Minister for Agriculture, and the following is the text of an explanatory statement, dated the 14th January, which has been received from the Under Secretary and Director of the New South Wales Department of Agriculture:—

In 1940, the Dairy Industry Act of this State was amended to restrict the amount of table margarine which could be manufactured in New South Wales for local consumption to 1,248 tons per annum.

The committee also reported a change in the margarine quotas controlled by legislation in New South Wales.

The following is a summary of the change in quotas of the various States compiled as the result of inquiries made by the Superintendent of Dairying in this State. South Australia's quota was 572 tons and it informed the Australian Agricultural Council that it did not require any increase in its quota because the consumption was considerably below the maximum production permitted. Queensland's quota was 645 tons and it asked that it be increased to 1,600 tons in October, 1951.

Hon. C. H. Henning: It is now over 4,000 tons.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Victoria stated that its quota was 1,196 tons, but as it was exporting butter it did not require an increase. The quota of New South Wales was 1,249 tons and it asked for it to be increased to 2,500 tons in December, 1951. Tasmania, with a quota of 208 tons asked that it be permitted to increase it to 416 tons as the full quota was not availed of in 1950. That meant that the amount they had not used previously would be taken into account and that their quota would be 416 tons. I do not care who comes to the Department of Agriculture, as long as the visit is an official one, because information is available there to anyone who seeks it. However, I do object to people obtaining information from outside sources for political reasons and nothing else, and obtaining information that is not accurate.

Hon. C. H. Henning: That is the present Queensland quota?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not say it was the present quota. I said that at that stage it was 1,600 tons.

Hon. C. H. Henning: And it has gone up to 4,300 tons to the end of last month.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot dispute that, but evidently they have obtained authority from the Agricultural Council to increase it. Mr. Henning seemed to think it was a terrible thing that we should talk about margarine.

Hon. A. L. Loton: He can talk as much as he likes about it; it will not make any difference.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Although I do not like quoting letters, I have one here from the South-West Co-op. Dairy Farmers Limited. This is a request from the shareholders of this company and they are the ones who receive the distribution of profit. I will not read it all, but portion of it reads—

Hon. C. H. Henning: There is no need to read it; it has been published in the Press.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I noticed that the hon. member was extremely silent about it when he was speaking. The letter reads—

Re Margarine Production.

The South West Co-Operative Dairy Farmers Limited is a company vitally interested in the production of dairy products.

Being a co-operative company the owners of the company comprise a very large number of primary producers whose livelihood depends upon successful production of dairy products and by-products.

The policy of this company, includes plans for expansion into dried milk products of various kinds, both roller and eventually spray dried, condensed and concentrated milk products, etc., With a view to assisting dairy farmers to increase production and protect their stock against disease, this company employs a very active and capable veterinarian.

The many phases of this company's activities are designed to protect the interests of dairy farmers, who, as a body, form an integral part of this State's economy. As a further means of protection, we desire to manufacture margarine. Our whole organisation is equipped for the economic processing and marketing of this product.

They do not regard it as a disgrace to manufacture it, because they want to come into the market; they are showing good

commonsense because they know very well that there are times when it is short. They will be able to go to the public of this State, who may be butter-users but may need margarine when it is available. I notice the hon. member was very silent about the South-West Co-Operative Dairy Farmers who are applying for a license. He did not make that statement then.

Hon. C. H. Henning: I never mentioned it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But it would have been far preferable if the hon. member had explained to the House that this was one of the activities in which the local butter factory, which, as I said before is largely owned by producer-shareholders, was going to be engaged.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Would you say that letter was instigated by a meeting of the shareholders?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not going to answer inane interjections. The letter continues—

We hope, too, to utilise the product of another Western Australian industry, in whale oil as a manufacturing base, instead of the imported product used by local manufacturers of table margarine.

As a matter of fact, to date whale oil has not proved a success, due to the fact that it has not been possible to remove the flavour and smell from that article. But that does not mean it has been finalised. It is very interesting to find that with all the noise and all the remarks we have heard today, I have here a request from a dairy farmer's own concern asking for a license. I suppose now I will have to refuse it, because members representing that locality have definitely said that they do not want margarine. I shall not forget to tell these people that because of the opposition here, I have been obliged to refuse their license. I have also a monthly memorandum of shareholders. I cannot permit members to get away with the remark that suppliers are not shareholders.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Nobody suggested that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a wonder the hon. member did not do so. This is what was said in their monthly memorandum of August—

The pressure for increased margarine manufacture is not confined to W.A. or Australia. There is a world-wide offensive in progress ably assisted by the Chairman of Unilever Ltd., whose company monopolises the fats used in most of the margarine manufactured.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: There is pressure for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They want a share in it. The memorandum proceeds—

When any price reaches a certain high point, there is a natural public reaction to find a cheaper substitute. Economists call it the "marginal price."

Margarine interests have no doubt considered the present peak of dairy products prices to be an opportune time to encourage the public tendency towards accepting a substitute. New York recently lifted restrictions and 9½ million pounds of yellow margarine entered the city that very day.

Canada lifted restrictions about 18 months ago and now consumption of margarine exceeds that of butter. If the production quota of margarine is increased in W.A. the best plan for the safeguarding of dairying industry would be for the co-operative dairying interests to manufacture the margarine, so that profits made from margarine would be returned to the dairy farmer. He would then be compensated for any loss incurred by consumption of the substitute in larger quantities.

Is not that splendid? This supposedly defamed industry is going into it so that it can reap the profits from the public and pay them to the shareholders. There is such a great demand for wholemilk in this State that very shortly we are not going to have men milking cows for the purpose of turning the milk into butter.

The hon. member who represents the Albany district said he was lukewarm in his opinion; that he was not too sure whether it was right to support the Bill. Now, I dare say, he will be definitely against it. I would like to tell the hon. member that Albany today has to send its milk to Katanning to provide for the requirements of that town. Of course that is going to spread if we have people like some of the members who represent the Central Province saying the work is too hard for the farmer; that he should not get up early in the morning to milk his cows; that he should get somebody else to milk the cows and supply him with milk and butter.

Hon. H. L. Roche: That is all imagination.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have listened to a lot of imagination and I am profiting by it. Generally I am most meek and mild in this Chamber, but when I have to take up arms in a just cause, I am quite capable of doing so. I do not propose to say very much more; I think I have explained to members that there is great necessity for this Bill. I do not want to introduce a measure that will permit the manufacture of margarine ad lib; I want the law to be carried

out as it is today, increasing the production proportionate to the increase of population.

Members will appreciate that the population of Western Australia has increased by over 100,000 since the original Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly and became law; at that time I was a member of that House. At no time previously has the amount allocated been exceeded, and this is the first occasion that it has happened. If we had been an exporting State, or if there had been any danger of our people not getting the necessary commodity either in the form of butter or margarine, I would not have introduced this measure. It is no pleasure for me, and I want to see the dairy farmer paid the best price possible. I have always fought for it and nobody could fight harder than I have done. I now propose to run through my notes rapidly.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not spoil a good case.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It makes me very cross when Mr. Henning and some of his supporters speak as they have done. I dare say we may find the hon. member a fellow brother in the Country Party before very long, particularly after the wonderful lead he has given on this measure! It will be impossible to keep him out; he will no longer be a Liberal but will join the Country Party. I warn him, however, that he should be careful of the rogue elephants. The hon. member said our brothers in New Guinea, who fought side by side with us, are now going to get some of the revenue. He scorned them and referred to them as "black labour."

Hon. C. H. Henning: I did not; I said coloured labour.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I would like to inform members that those people were good enough to help us in the last war, so he should not bring matters like that up. Today we are educating these folk and placing them on the land. Are we to say to them that there is no market for their output in this country?

Hon. C. H. Henning: I did not mention New Guinea black labour.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member mentioned black labour. We are importing copra from New Guinea. That is where Lever Bros. are getting their supplies. We must bear in mind that the portion of New Guinea from where it comes is Australian territory. Mr. Henning also stated that, had the money spent on the atom bomb tests been devoted to the development of the dairying industry, the State could have supplied all its requirements. Do not let us put up arguments of that sort. A case is weak when it has to be bolstered up in that way.

I could quote from the hon. member's speech what he said about the New Guinea people and his statement was repeated by other members. Although I am fortunate enough to be white of skin, I might just as easily have been born with a dark skin. When these people form part of the Australian community, we should at least refrain from speaking of them as black labour.

Hon. A. L. Loton: The term was not used in this House. The hon. member spoke of coloured labour.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not speak of coloured labour.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I suggest that the Minister should count ten.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think Mr. Henning would admit that he said so.

Hon. C. H. Henning: When I spoke of black labour, I was quoting the Premier. Does that alter your opinion?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I shall quote from the hon. members speech.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker. We shall get it in "Hansard" next week.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We shall get it in Committee today.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You are not permitted to quote from "Hansard" of the same session.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I shall be in order in referring to statements that have been made. The argument was used to bolster up the case against the Bill. I am satisfied that we must assist those people, and any commodities which they can produce and of which we have need, should be accepted from them. The Bill contains only two provisions. One is to increase the quota from 364 tons to 800 tons a year. The Act also provides that the weekly, monthly or quarterly quota shall be fixed within a fortnight of the first day of the new year. It is necessary for us to obtain authority to increase the quota for the forthcoming year. That is all the Bill contains, although it has given rise to a great deal of discussion.

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

Ayes	.....	19
Noes	.....	9
Majority for	.....	10

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. J. Cunningham
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—New Section 25A added:

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I move an amendment—

That in line 7 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 25A the words, "the maximum quantity of eight hundred tons" be struck out and the words, "a quantity in excess of three hundred and sixty-four tons as the Minister may in his discretion think fit" inserted in lieu.

Too many measures are brought before us which, after having been passed, are found to be inadequate and have to be amended. When the Bill was framed, doubtless the department considered that 800 tons would be sufficient, but I have it on good authority that the demand during the coming year will exceed that quantity. If it is more than that, we should give the Minister power to fix the quantity according to the demand. Who are we to dictate to people whether they shall use margarine or butter? Obviously the dairying industry cannot produce butter in sufficient quantity, so we must empower the Minister to issue licences for enough margarine to be manufactured to meet requirements. I wish to quote a question asked by Senator Cooke in the Federal Senate. He inquired—

What is the estimated current cost to the Government per pound of butter produced for (a) home consumption; and (b) export?

The answer was—

(a) Approximately 10½d. per lb.

(b) Approximately 1s. per lb.

So there is always a market for export butter. Dr. Hislop told us that we would use more and more vegetable oils and far fewer fats in the future. I believe he is correct. The Minister has told us that there will be a greater shortage of butter next year than there was last year. It does not necessarily follow that if my amendment is carried permits for more than 800 tons of margarine will be issued, but if the need arises the Minister will have authority to act without coming back to this Chamber. More than the 364 tons at present permissible has been manufactured up to date this year. I have it on good authority that one firm has already manufactured 21,000 lbs. more than its quota.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not in this State.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Yes, in this State.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, you have not!

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If this legislation had been introduced sooner, that would not have been necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member please resume his seat. We are discussing an amendment and the hon. member should not make a second reading speech.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I bow to your ruling, Sir. I ask that the amendment be agreed to because I do not think that the 800 tons provided for will be sufficient, and the Minister should have power to increase the quantity if occasion arises.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot accept the amendment and hope the hon. member will not persist with it. There is an honourable understanding between the Ministers for Agriculture in Australia that we will not do this sort of thing. Immediately it was permitted, New South Wales or any other State with big industrial concerns would flood the market with margarine, and there would be no control over it at all. It is doubtful whether we will need at any time in the next three or four years the 800 tons the Bill provides for.

Hon. A. R. Jones: There will be plenty of butter; we will not need it at all.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I wish I were as sure of that as the hon. member is.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I understand that the quota allowed in Queensland has rapidly increased since the meeting of the Agricultural Council to which the Minister referred. Does that mean that Queensland has had to bring down a Bill similar to this to obtain the increased amount?

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not want to delay the Committee but I would like to indicate that what I said about the future of this industry was not hot air, after all. Already we have one member who would throw the thing right open.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid we are not discussing the hon. member's speech, but an amendment.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am giving my reason for opposing it.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: My suggestion does not throw it wide open as the hon. member suggested. However, I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 21st October, 1952.

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

QUESTIONS.

HOSPITALS.

As to Albany Regional Site.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) In what year did the Government resume land in Albany for the regional district hospital?

(2) What was the cost of the various resumptions?

(3) What are the costs to date covering survey work, checking of levels and preparation of plans and specifications for the building?

(4) Does the Government now propose abandoning this site overlooking King George Sound; if so, does it consider it an economical course to adopt in view of the expenditure to date on the present site?

(5) On what site does the Government now contemplate building this regional hospital?

(6) Will the change of proposed site delay the commencement of building?

(7) What are the reasons for the change of site and what are the advantages?

(8) What saving in expense is contemplated by changing the site at this late date?