

**Legislative Council.***Thursday, 16th December, 1937.*

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

**QUESTION—SUPERANNUATION ACT.***Pensioner and Office of Profit.*

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: Would a person in receipt of a pension under the Superannuation Act (35 Vict., No. 7) be entitled to accept an office of profit under the Crown and receive payment therefor in addition to the payment of the pension mentioned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes. This is governed by Section 11 of the Act referred to, which reads:—"In case any person enjoying any superannuation allowance in consequence of retiring from office on account of age, infirmity, or any other cause, or enjoying any compensation for past services upon the abolition or reduction of office is appointed to fill any office in any public department under the Crown, whether in this colony or elsewhere, every such allowance or compensation shall cease to be paid for any period subsequent to such appointment if the annual salary and emoluments of the office to which he is appointed are equal to those of the office formerly held by him, and in case they are not equal to those of his former office, then no more of such superannuation allowance or compensation shall be paid to him than what with the salary and emoluments of his new appointment is equal to those of his former office."

**BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time and *passed*.

**BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.***In Committee.*

Resumed from the previous day: Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Imposition of tax (partly considered):

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: At yesterday's sitting I took a strong stand when the Leader of the House refused to agree to report progress. My object was simply to protect the rights of this Chamber, and I appreciate the support that was given me by a majority of members. Ever since there has been an alteration in the rates in this legislation, this Chamber has been four-square against the exemptions. Each session a firm stand has been taken on that point. Yesterday afternoon when I moved an amendment designed to keep the exemption to what it was in the last financial year, I did so thinking I had the support of the Committee. Unfortunately I was wrong. Therefore I no longer intend to make any amendments to the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Schedule:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move—

That the Assembly be requested to make the following amendment—

The Schedule, Third Part:

Insert a new clause after Clause (a), to stand as Clause (b), as follows:—

(b) Life Assurance Companies—Sixpence in respect of every pound of interest received by a life assurance company from its investments in Western Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot accept the amendment, for it would affect the rate of tax paid by the companies on the interest on their investments. There is no alteration in the rate of tax this year, and it seems strange that the hon. member should endeavour to secure such an amendment at this stage. Let me run over some of the advantages the life insurance companies have enjoyed. Those people who pay insurance premiums do not pay tax on the amount of premiums that they contribute to insurance companies.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is news.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Premiums paid to life insurance companies are exempt?

Hon. L. Craig: Up to £50.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But I should say the average of premiums of life insurance companies is less than £50. That £50 exemption is in regard to income tax, not financial emergency tax.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Explain what concessions the insurance companies get.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am doing that now. The life insurance companies are mutual offices, and they argue that we are taxing the money which belongs to their various clients. At all events, that was the argument used by the hon. member the other night. And when it comes to the payment of dividend duty, those companies are charged only 1s. 3d. as against 1s. 5d. charged to other companies. Up to the present, all income received by those companies from rents has not been subject to taxation, although under the new Income Tax Assessment Act they will be called upon to pay taxation on the rent they receive from their investments. They will still retain the other advantages to which I have referred. It is not right, therefore, that they should receive the further advantage of paying only half the emergency tax which is paid by other companies. The other companies pay in accordance with their premium income, at the rate of 6d. on every £3 2s. 6d. premium income they receive. When these companies are assessed on actual profits under the new law, there will no longer be any reason for a special rate under the financial emergency legislation. The only difference between the rates this year and last year is in respect to exemptions.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: When the Premier brought down the Income Tax Assessment Bill he said it was not his intention to increase taxation. Taxation will, however, be increased, in that it will be practically double in the case of the financial emergency tax. In view of what the Chief Secretary has said, it is not my intention to press this amendment.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Life insurance companies pay more tax in this State than they do in the other States. They claim that the tax should be eased in this State so that they can lend out their money at a low rate of interest. During the depression the A.M.P.

led the way by reducing the rate of interest on mortgages to 4½ per cent. on the understanding that there would be no increase in taxation. The company is still charging that low rate on mortgages. I understand that it has been in negotiation with the Treasurer with respect to taxation, and that the Treasurer is sympathetic. These companies not only give the mortgagor a low rate of interest but assist considerably in financing Government loans. I think the taxation should be brought into line with that existing in the other States.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not wish to belittle the activities of any of the life insurance companies. I submit, however, that they are not entitled, because they are possessed of large sums of money, to be relieved of the obligations that are placed on other companies. The premium incomes received by these companies are not taxed at the source. I do not know what is the outcome of negotiations between the Premier and the insurance companies, but I do know we are endeavouring to bring our taxation laws into line with those in the other States. Some of the amendments will mean a reduction in revenue to the Treasurer and in the case of others they will mean an increase. This is one of the items where there will be an increase in the amount received without there being any increase in the rate. Companies that have not been paying taxation on moneys received by way of rentals on properties will have to do so. Surely that money represents income and should be taxed. We have not taken away any of the advantages that apply to insurance companies, and the rate is the same this year as last year.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Insurance companies welcome the income tax assessment measure on the ground that it will level up income assessments throughout Australia. My point is that this Bill will increase taxation by means of the extra collection that will be made from the companies.

Amendment put and negatived.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and passed.

**BILL—RESERVES.***In Committee.*

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 2 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Reserve A9256:

Hon. H. SEDDON: This reserve is portion of a lot situated at Somerville, to the west of Kalgoorlie.

Hon. J. Cornell: To the south.

Hon. H. SEDDON: This lot was formerly used for educational purposes, but is intended to be used as the site for a sewerage tank. A few chains away is a reserve tank for the water supply of the Kalgoorlie town. The reserve consists of 10,000,000 gallons of water, which is kept there in the event of failure in the ordinary town water supply. Flies and mosquitoes will be able to get into the sewerage tank, and when they have had a good time there they can have a swim in the drinking water tank. This matter should be investigated before the sewerage tank is constructed on this particular lot.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My information is different from that furnished by Mr. Seddon, who said that the reserve was for educational purposes, whereas I have been informed that it was for water supply purposes. As for the suggestion that further inquiries should be made regarding the position, the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council, the Public Works Department and other departments concerned are all agreed upon the site. If all, including the local governing authorities, are in agreement, I cannot see that there is much need for further inquiries. If the scheme has been approved of, I take it the area has been determined as suitable.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The water supply to which the Minister has referred relates to two catchment tanks that are used for railway purposes, but that is quite different from the water tank to which I have referred. My point is that the reserve that is to be used as the Minister pointed out, is too close to the water supply for the town. I understand that the departments concerned have gone into the matter, but I think further inquiries should be made for the reasons I have outlined. However, I have achieved my purpose by drawing attention to the position, with that object in view.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I know the area well, and I submit it is not a proper site for the

purpose intended. A better site could have been selected further north across the railway. The lie of the land is such that all drainage must be towards the water storage tank to which Mr. Seddon has referred. Moreover, I consider the site is too close to the town, particularly in view of the fact that there is plenty of other land available.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not acquainted with the site and can go only on the information supplied to me. As all parties concerned, including the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council, are in agreement upon the matter, I should hardly think there was anything to be feared because the local authorities would have considered every phase.

Hon. J. Cornell: Sewerage was dumped into the Swan River at one time, but, thank God, we have got away from that!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is an entirely different matter. At any rate, even if the clause be agreed to, Mr. Seddon and Mr. Cornell will have ample opportunity to raise this particular point with the people concerned at Kalgoorlie.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 10—agreed to.

First and Second Schedules—agreed to.  
Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

**BILL—ROAD CLOSURE.***In Committee, etc.*

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

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

**BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT  
AMENDMENT.***Second Reading—Defeated.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [5.13]: When the Loan Bill was amended a few days ago I understood it was the considered opinion of members that they should not agree to a policy of building houses for letting purposes. I now regret to note that

a few members have departed from that attitude.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Three.

Hon. G. Fraser: They said they would not agree until they had seen this Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: Two of them said otherwise.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Anyhow, they changed their attitude, and it is difficult to understand their point of view. I do not speak without experience, and I feel confident that if the Government launches out on a scheme of this description it will make a great mistake. I am not looking at the proposition from the £10,000 point of view; I take the far broader view, that this would be only the beginning of a large and costly scheme. What effect would this have on the worker who required a home under the board? I am in favour of assisting the worker to obtain a cheap and comfortable home, but this could be done on sound lines. Mr. Parker pointed to other countries that were going in for housing schemes. We too have had such a scheme for many years and it should be possible to liberalise the conditions of that scheme, so as to meet the requirements of workers with small capital. The cost of construction of a small wooden house would not be the sole cost; there would have to be taken into account depreciation and whatever was required for upkeep.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The building of wooden houses would encourage the purchasing of timber from the South-West.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I consider that workers should have some equity in the house they live in. There is no need to build houses on the basis proposed. If the Government would bring down a Bill to amend the Workers' Homes Act so as to enable workers with small capital to invest in cheap homes, I feel sure the House would agree to the proposal.

Members: That can be done now.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I have had some experience and I know others who have had experience also of letting houses and the difficulty associated with the collecting of rents. It is the people who will not, not those who cannot, pay the rent that cause all the trouble. How will the Government get on when it finds itself in the same position as the landlord? I know of some Government-built houses that are going to rack and ruin because no care has been taken of them. In many cases it is held by the

occupants that because those houses belong to the Government they have no value to speak of. People who get cheap houses on a rental basis are not likely to commit themselves to the liability they would have if they had those houses on a freehold basis. I will oppose the second reading.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [5.19]: I cannot agree to support the Bill. What I object to also is the title. It should have been called "The Chickens Coming Home to Roost Bill." Probably the necessity for the Bill was brought about by the restrictive legislation passed at the beginning and since the depression started. First of all we had the Financial Emergency Act reducing interest on mortgages. Then came the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act and the Tenants, Purchasers, and Mortgagees' Relief Act, Distress for Rent Act and Rent Reduction Act. All that legislation scared those people who normally would have built houses from having anything to do with them. As was pointed out last night, there is ample money for investment, but sensible people will not touch a housing scheme of this sort especially for those who are considered to be the worst type of tenants. This is reminiscent of the old Agricultural Bank policy when money was advanced to farmers who had no interest in their properties. The land was given to them, as was also horses, machinery and plant, and they had nothing to lose. The result was that the Agricultural Bank lost millions of pounds. The farmer himself had no equity in the property and consequently had nothing to lose. Under the Workers' Homes Act everybody should have an equity in the property he occupies. He should have something to lose. If we are going to build cheap houses we can do that under the Workers' Homes Act. The man who lives in a house should have something to lose. I object to the Government or the taxpayer becoming a landlord and building a house from which it would be very difficult to eject the tenant. Some members of the Country Party the other day held up their hands in horror at the State Insurance Bill and said it was State trading and would not have it at any price.

Hon. G. B. Wood: This is a social service.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am definitely opposed to the Bill. It is wrong in practice. If houses are to be built, small deposits should be accepted from the tenants and they will

become the purchasers. If the occupants then neglect the property they will have something to lose and the poor old taxpayer will not have to foot the Bill.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [5.24]: If there is one activity with which I can claim to have closely associated myself since I entered this House and since the war, it is the workers' homes scheme. I have resided in a worker's home for 24 years. If members will take the trouble to read the debate that took place when the late Hon. John Scaddan introduced the legislation in 1911, it will be found that all that is being said on the present Bill is practically a recapitulation of what Mr. Scaddan said at that time. The whole argument then was that there was a section of the community that required cheap houses to live in and to own, and that the only method by which that section could acquire such homes was by a workers' homes scheme. The keystone of the argument not only here but in New Zealand and elsewhere was a genuine endeavour by the State to provide homes for those who showed evidence of thrift and whose desire was to own the home they lived in. That was the section that should be assisted. Now we propose the building of houses for renting purposes which is an absolute negation of the principle of the Workers' Homes Act. After a lapse of 25 years it is suggested that we should throw overboard the system for which we battled for many years to bring about because it is contended that the system has nothing to commend it. It has been said that houses can be built for between £400 and £500. If members care to make inquiries about the homes built at Fremantle or Leederville or even where I reside, they will find that the average cost of those homes was less than £450, and they are all of brick and stone and were built 25 years ago.

The Chief Secretary: What would be the cost to-day?

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: I know that the maximum at that time was £550. The desire of the occupier, of course, was eventually to own a home, and to the credit of a lot of them be it said that they have succeeded in owning them. A lot of workers have attained this desirable end on the same salary or wage right through as the men some hon. members say cannot pay the rent. Many men at that time were in receipt of only 8s. a day, whereas to-day they are getting the basic wage of £3 15s. Parliamen-

tarians themselves are responsible for putting up the cost of building workers' homes, first of all by increasing the amount defining a worker's income as from £300 to £400. Of course, in those days there was no such thing as electric light. Later on there also came the cost of installing sewerage. To-day also a porcelain bath is required whereas previously a tin bath served. For the type of house that is sought to-day even £500 is not sufficient, and so to meet requirements there has been a further increase in the capital cost. The result is that to-day workers' homes are being built for the man getting £400 a year, and he requires a house costing £800 or £850. We ourselves are largely responsible for that. After all, it is not the cost of material alone that has been added to the building cost. It is a question of all the conveniences that are required, conveniences that were denied to the occupiers of the original workers' homes. The board at that time said, "We will build a house for you, but some obligations will be cast upon you. You must put down your own foot-path." Nowadays a granolithic path is put down when the house is built. If members compared the houses built 25 years ago with the houses being built to-day, they would agree that there was no comparison from the standpoint of the conveniences provided. To-day there are no verandahs; all that people want is outward show and easy work inside. That is one of the reasons why the sponsors of this Bill have been forced into this position. A man in 1911 receiving £3 a week could not possibly have contemplated building a worker's home of the type being built to-day. Now, however, we are being asked to revert to a position that no one would have contemplated or tolerated when the workers' homes scheme was introduced. All possible consideration has been extended to the holders of workers' homes. If such a man falls on evil days, the term for the payment of his instalments is extended to cover the amount of the instalments unpaid. The tenant who could be secured for one of these proposed homes and who would meet his obligations without demur, provided circumstances were favourable, is the class of man who should be encouraged to build up an equity in the home and make it his own.

The Honorary Minister: He could do that under this measure?

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: How?

The Honorary Minister: That is specially provided for.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The man who would rush this proposal is the one who thought he might get away with something, not the man seeking to build up an equity in the home with a view to making it his own. My experience of life is that the man who rushes in and who generally receives the greatest consideration is the one who wants something for nothing. I should not care to live in a house built of asbestos, especially if there was a brick fight on, because a brick would go through asbestos as easily as through glass, and an Englishman's home would no longer be his castle.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Where would the bricks come from?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member has seen a brick or two flying when there was a riot or something of the kind. If Mr. Clydesdale were investing money in order to secure a reasonable return, I am sure he would not consider the erection of an asbestos house. Asbestos is all very well for constructing a motor garage. Indeed, asbestos in that instance is rather an advantage because, if the driver runs right through the end, little damage is done.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Cover it with rough-cast, and you could not tell it from brick.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Perhaps the hon. member could not tell it from brick. Where are the proposed homes to be erected? I understand that none is to be built on the goldfields. I would advise any member—and in this I think Mr. Heenan will agree with me—to go to Norseman and look at the habitations there, as well as in other parts of the back country.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: You will not be helping those people by your attitude to this Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL: And the hon. member will admit that this Bill will not help them.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: We might extend it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: To build such homes it would be necessary to find sites at some distance from the cities, where a brick area had not been declared, and that would mean adding to the travelling expenses of the worker getting to his employment. The existing Act provides all the machinery necessary for the building of homes on either a freehold or leasehold basis. When a worker applies for a leasehold home, he

puts up £5 with his application and 5s. as an occupation fee when the place is built. If a man cannot find that sum, I do not think he will ever get a home of his own.

Hon. L. Craig: And does not deserve it, either.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I cannot believe that such a man would find £5 in a rented house.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Give him a chance.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I would be agreeable to abolishing the deposit on homes of less than a certain price. Another proposition I think reasonable and feasible with a view to inculcating into citizens the wisdom of getting homes of their own—this should apply to every married man—would be to provide the capital for several years free of interest. Let the community bear the interest for that period, and do not saddle a man receiving less than a certain wage with interest. The interest charges constitute the expenditure that counts in relation to existing workers' homes, more so than the instalments. Five per cent. on an outlay of £600, the repayment of the principal being extended over 30 years, means that the worker has to pay £30 in interest in the first year. It would be infinitely better if the State assisted by granting a much reduced interest rate than building homes speculatively for people to rent. Mr. Franklin has been associated with the building trade for many years, and I think he will agree that it would be preferable to assist wage-earners in the way I have suggested. Much as I should like to support the Bill, I cannot see my way to do so. I have been associated with working men all my life. I have carried a swag and have lived under a tree, in a shack and in a hovel. Our first need is to inculcate into breadwinners a desire to strive to get homes of their own. If they are not in a position to find the requisite money, let the State find some of it. Certainly we should not place such workers in the position of being considered too poor to warrant their getting a home of their own.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.41]: I wish to preface my remarks by saying that there is a good deal of merit in the proposition Mr. Cornell has just advanced, but in some respects I think he has been reasoning on wrong pre-

mises. He should realise that there is a section of the community who are not in a position to purchase homes of their own and who probably have no desire to do so. They might be living in Perth to-day, in Kalgoorlie to-morrow, and somewhere else later on.

The Honorary Minister: That is the point.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: For that section of the community some provision should be made. We all recognise that there is something more important in life than looking for immediate financial returns. The goldfields water scheme was fostered by a man of wonderful foresight, but I understand that the scheme has not turned out wonderfully from a financial point of view. Indirectly, however, it has rendered a service to the State the value of which cannot be assessed. Governments build roads into the country, assist to build hospitals, and provide water supplies, and by so doing they are rendering a social service, the value of which cannot be estimated in pounds, shillings, and pence. I consider that this scheme falls into the category of the services I have mentioned. Mr. Cornell described the scheme proposed by the Government as pernicious, but on due reflection I think he will admit that he cannot substantiate the use of that word. To my mind, this scheme is the absolute antithesis of anything pernicious. The hon. member also said that we were going back but I regard this scheme as a move forward, if ever a forward move was made. I was also somewhat disappointed to note that Mr. Craig opposed the measure. In regard to similar legislation he has shown himself generous and I had hoped for his support on this occasion. For the hon. member's benefit I wish to point out that the original Act, like this Bill, provides for the purchase of homes by these individuals.

Hon. L. Craig: But purchase is not compulsory.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It might not be wise to make purchase compulsory with certain individuals. I think Mr. Craig will admit that.

Hon. L. Craig: In some cases it might be highly necessary.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If the person is desirable and wants to purchase a home, there is provision in the original Act as well as in this Bill for his doing so. Another argument in favour of the Bill is that apparently it does not trespass on a sphere of

private enterprise which ought to be immune from Government influence. Mr. Holmes has more than once quoted the old saying that fools build houses for wise men to live in. Seemingly the position has arisen that private enterprise does not desire to remain in this sphere of investment. It is a paramount duty of the Government to see that all sections of the people are adequately housed. If the scheme comes into operation, probably some tenants will miss paying their rents; but the proposal should not be condemned on that account. Apparently that state of affairs cannot be avoided, and we must have confidence in those administering this legislation to see that rents are paid. We have it on the Premier's word that this is experimental legislation. An amount of £10,000 is being set aside for the experiment; and that amount, I understand, will build 25 or 30 homes. We cannot go far wrong in agreeing to the scheme. If it does turn out a failure, not much harm will be done. If it proves the success the Government believe it will be, it will go a long way towards solving the present housing problem. Certainly we are dealing with a section of the people which must be catered for, and which, perhaps through faults of its own or perhaps through no fault of its own, is not in a position to purchase an expensive type of house. That section deserves attention, and the Bill will meet its needs.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan)  
[5.50]: The Bill definitely aims at extension of State trading, and for that reason I must oppose it. I do not need to state again where I stand in the matter of State trading. Most members know it already. The Workers' Homes Board has done and is doing excellent work, and I would advise the Government to leave the matter at that. Let the board go on doing its present work. Give the board more money if necessary, but do not undertake what Mr. Heenan admits is an experiment. If the Government wants advice in a matter of this kind, many members of this Chamber have experimented in building houses for wise men to live in. They have experimented to their sorrow. In this scheme the Government has probably assessed the rental value at a figure that provides for the house being occupied the full 52 weeks of the year. Again, members of this Chamber who have houses that they let, know how often it happens that a dwelling

stands empty. Mr. Heenan's argument regarding these places being built for a roving population is weak. It strengthens the argument I have used. Mr. Heenan suggests that there are people who live here to-day and in Kalgoorlie to-morrow, and in some other town later on. Thus it is hardly likely that there will be a tenant waiting to step into a vacated house. For a certain percentage of time these places must remain empty. The Government would be responsible for rates and taxes.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: It would certainly be responsible for repairs.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Government is not responsible for rates under the Workers' Homes Act.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: If the places were let, probably the Government would be liable. Mention has been made of the number of houses which the Government has let to tenants now. Probably those houses, especially those at Merredin which were mentioned by Mr. Wood, are let to employees of the Government. That is an entirely different proposition. If an employee finds it impossible to secure a suitable house, the employer is wise in providing him with accommodation. Probably the Government has done that at Merredin. Another reason for not passing the Bill is that under the present workers' homes scheme a man knows that if he maintains his payments, the home will eventually become his, and so he takes a wonderful interest in it. It is to the credit of the board and many of its tenants that such splendid homes are to be found in the suburban areas of Perth and in country towns. On the other hand, the man who rents a place from week to week seldom cares whether it is kept in good order and repair, seldom has a garden or troubles whether the fence wants painting. He will let the place go to rack and ruin. Because the Bill represents a definite extension of State trading I oppose the second reading.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.55]: It is interesting to get the points of view of some hon. members who have expressed their determination to oppose the Bill, particularly as regards the type of person who, they anticipate, will occupy these houses if and when they are built. I was really surprised to hear such

strong statements made by men with a reputation for at least having a kindly feeling for those who are not in the same position as themselves. I refer especially to Mr. Craig. He had the effrontery to say that four-fifths of these people would not pay their rent.

Hon. L. Craig: No. I do not remember saying that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the statement the hon. member made.

Hon. G. B. Wood: I think Mr. Craig said, 100 per cent.

Hon. L. Craig: No.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Other members, referring to the type of individual whom it is desired to assist by the Bill, used language of a similar character. Even Mr. Cornell, notwithstanding all his experience of the working man, tells the House that so far as the present working man is concerned, there will be difficulty in regard to securing payment of rent and getting the tenant to look after the property—this merely because the man happens to be renting the property instead of purchasing it under the Workers' Homes Act. Mr. Cornell gave me the impression that he is living in times gone by. Unquestionably at the time he has in mind fine homes could be built for from £450 to £500. Those very same buildings, erected 20 or 25 years ago, if put on the market to-day would in some cases at all events bring 100 per cent. more than their original cost. This is due to the great increase in the cost of building since that time, as well as to improvements effected by tenants. The Bill is designed to assist a section of the community that cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as consisting of wasters. That section plays an important part in the life of the community; and the State must take notice of the fact that large numbers of such men, through no fault of their own, are unable to secure decent houses to occupy with their families. The experience here is no different from that of other States and other countries, except that here the problem is not quite so big as it is elsewhere. The number of persons for whom the Bill caters is much smaller than the numbers in other States. I recall a recent debate in this Chamber on the housing problem on the goldfields, when some hon. members, who have been strongest in their condemnation of this measure, claimed that it was the duty of the Government, and of



nobody else, to provide cheap homes for goldfields people.

Hon. J. Cornell: Under the Workers' Homes Act; and to buy, not to rent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are anxious to qualify their statements now. They want the Government only to erect homes for those people to buy. Very well, let us take that argument at face value. On another measure we had a debate during which some representatives of the mining industry referred to the fact that certain areas which had been boomed are now declining. I ask them now what I then asked them, whether it is a reasonable thing to expect the Workers' Homes Board to go into those districts and erect homes under the conditions under which they would have to be erected, and then expect residents of those districts to purchase the houses.

Hon. J. Cornell: Would it be a reasonable thing to erect these homes in those districts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Whether that would be reasonable is a matter we can leave to the Workers' Homes Board. Members who have read the Bill will realise that it contains plenty of safeguards. First of all, the board has to be satisfied as to the reputation of an individual applying to rent a house. Here may I point out an essential difference between this scheme and the workers' homes scheme as generally understood. If the Bill becomes law it will be possible for the Government to utilise the amount of money involved, £10,000—a very small amount, to my way of thinking—in the erection of homes which the people in question would be able to apply for, and the board will be able to select from the applicants those considered suitable to occupy the homes.

Hon. A. Thomson: And the others who want a home will not get one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Under the Worker's Homes Scheme at the present time an application has to be made by a person to come under the scheme, and the proposal has to be approved by the board. I regret that many applicants to the Workers' Homes Board seem to alter their ideas immediately they have made application for a home under this scheme. By that, I mean, that originally their intention was perhaps to own a home of a value of £450 or £500 or even £600. Unfortunately, however, they want too much for that

amount of money at present day values. They ask for too much accommodation and it is not possible for the board to erect the homes that these applicants desire at the price which the applicants wish to pay. Therefore many workers' homes to-day have been supplied which have cost anything from £700 to £800, whereas in the first place the applicant thought he would be well satisfied with a home costing considerably less. Under the Bill those people who are selected by the board as being suitable to occupy one of these homes when they are built, would have the option of purchasing the home they occupy, or rather of taking over the home on a leasehold basis, and it is anticipated that quite a fair percentage of those people will desire to do that after they have been in occupation of the premises for some little time. The people I have in mind are not the people who are here to-day and gone to-morrow, as suggested by Mr. Bolton when referring to the remarks of Mr. Heenan. I suggest that Mr. Bolton took those remarks of Mr. Heenan too literally. There is a certain section of the community who may be in the metropolitan area for a year or two but the very nature of whose employment means that sooner or later they will have to seek work elsewhere. Those people may then be a year or two in another district, and that is what I think Mr. Heenan meant when he referred to people who may be here to-day and in Kalgoorlie to-morrow.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: My experience is that they do not wait until to-morrow but that they go to night.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: These are selected clients, and if the hon. member had selected his clients, as I thought he would have done, his experience would have been different. I want to put up a plea for that section of the community which to-day finds it impossible to rent premises at a reasonable figure, or at an amount within their means. The houses that are to be built at a rental of from 12s. 6d. to 15s. per week will be erected in certain districts where the board is satisfied that the area is suitable from the point of view of the type of workman it is anticipated will apply for premises of this kind. I feel confident that quite a large percentage of the people who would occupy these premises on a rental basis would eventually desire to become owners of their own homes. In a large proportion of these cases it is no fault of the people concerned

that they are not in a position to enter into a contract to purchase their own homes at the present time. I should like to point out to hon. members who have criticised those people during the debate, that many of them in years gone by have been in a different position from what they are in to-day, and they are penalised sufficiently by the fact that it is not possible for them to live as they used to live years ago. If it is possible to give them the assistance provided for in the Bill, many of them will endeavour to occupy homes such as are to be provided, even though they are only humble dwellings at a cost of between £450 and £500. What has happened elsewhere? If we take Great Britain as our guide we will find that during the last few years in that country not £10,000 but tens of millions of pounds have been spent on housing schemes to provide homes for workers at a cheap rental, not with a view to those people purchasing the homes, but to give them an opportunity to rent them at a reasonable figure. In America to-day millions of pounds are being spent in the same way. In other States of the Commonwealth the same thing is taking place, only on a smaller scale. The experience of those places in the immediate past is going to be our experience in the future. We are going to supply that which private enterprise has refused to supply up to date. Mr. Bolton has spoken about his opposition to the Bill due to his objection to an extension of State trading. I am afraid that argument is far too weak. It is certainly inconsistent, because he eulogised the Workers' Homes Board, which at the present time is renting a large number of houses that originally were built for people who entered into contracts to purchase. To be consistent Mr. Bolton would have to say that the Workers' Homes Board should refuse to rent those houses, because that is an extension of State trading. But what a ridiculous argument it is, and how illogical. I regret that members have found it necessary to express themselves in the terms they have used in regard to this Bill. I do not mind their opposition to the principle underlying the Bill, but there was no need for them to cast any slur on a section of the community which has been unfortunate enough not to be in the same position as some of the members of this House. I support the second reading.

**HON. A. THOMSON** (South-East)  
[6.8]: I regret that the Chief Secretary has

flogged the remarks made by hon. members in his opinion regarding people not in a position to purchase a home. I do not think any member of this Council has any desire to cast any reflection on people who are in that position. I am opposing the Bill because I believe, like Mr. Bolton, that it is an extension of State trading. I have closely scrutinised the Bill, and note that there is to be a special selection made of tenants, as indicated by the Chief Secretary, who are to occupy the homes. This suggests that the very people the Government desires to help—people who are not in a position to pay rent, those people who are down and out—are not likely to be looked upon as favourable tenants for these homes. Let us scrutinise the Bill. It says that the tenant shall be required to sign a tenancy agreement in the prescribed form setting out the terms and conditions of the weekly tenancy. Also every weekly tenancy will be deemed to impose on the tenant by virtue of this Act the following obligation:—"Promptly to pay the rent reserved under the tenancy at such times and in such manner as may be stipulated in the tenancy agreement or prescribed under the Act." Therefore whatever the amount of rent which may be fixed or determined, the tenant who comes into one of these homes which are going to be provided by the Government under this scheme is not going to be any better off than if he were under a private landlord, because he has to sign an agreement whereby he undertakes to pay the rent agreed upon.

The Honorary Minister: It is not a charity scheme.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Judging from the remarks of some members I thought it was. Attention has been drawn to the fact that the Bill is designed to assist people who are not in a position to pay anything at all.

The Chief Secretary: Nobody supporting this Bill said that this was a scheme designed to help people who cannot pay rent.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Well I am not dealing with that phase at all. I am dealing with the Bill before us, and the conditions to be imposed on those who will become tenants under the scheme. The Bill says they must reside continuously in the dwelling house except for such period or periods as it may be necessary for them to be absent in connection with their vocation or calling or for periods when they may be away temporarily on holidays. Such tenants are not to be permitted to use

or permit the dwelling house to be used for any other purpose except as a residence for themselves and their families. They are not to be allowed to transfer, sublet or part with the possession of the whole or any part of the dwelling-house. That is a condition which is not imposed by the average owner of a private property, who permits a tenant if he so desires to let a room. That is not going to be permitted under the Bill. The tenants of these homes are to permit the board, its servants or agents, at all reasonable times to enter and inspect the house, and on the expiration or determination of the weekly tenancy to deliver up possession of the dwelling-house in such a state of repair as is consistent with the observance by the tenant of his obligations under the provisions of the Act. Let us assume that one of the occupiers of a house under this scheme is one of those unfortunate people not in a position to pay. I do not know just how we are going to recover anything from a man who is not in a position to pay rent. I can speak from personal experience of difficulties caused by tenants. I have had tenants who have left the buildings in a shocking state but they have had nothing, and it has therefore been impossible to get anything from them.

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

Hon. A. THOMSON: If I really thought the Bill would be in the interests of the workers and that it would provide sufficient homes, I think I would be doing right in supporting it. But I am afraid that if this measure be passed it will make the position very much worse than it is. It is provided that insurance must be effected. It is very wise and very necessary to insure the buildings against fire. I presume these places will be free of ordinary rates and taxes, but it is not stated in the Bill. Who is to pay these charges?

The Honorary Minister: The tenants.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not see that in the Bill. Consider the amount of money that is to be spent upon the erection of these homes. Mr. Heenan said there would be from 25 to 30 homes erected at an average price of £400. If that is so, certainly they will not be very palatial residences that are erected for £400. If the scheme is to be beneficial to the working man, these houses will need to be fairly central, for if they are on the outskirts of the towns or cities a man, if he has a family, will have to pay a fair

amount in fares to get to his work. I do not suppose that anything less than six per cent., or at least five per cent., will be charged on the £400 capital outlay, for presumably nothing less will be charged than is charged under the leasehold sections of the Act. If a man applies for a home to be built on the payment of a small deposit, he has his house for all time, provided he can keep up his payments. The Chief Secretary said that the Workers Homes Board were letting houses. We know what has happened in other parts of the State where there have been shortages of houses. An application has been made to the board and the home has been erected. The occupant of the house has lived in it at a very cheap rental while resident in the district, but on being transferred to some other district he has walked out and left the house to the board. Of course, if the board can get anybody else to take over the home under a new lease, presumably they will let the home. But as I have said, I believe the Bill will make the position worse. It has been stated in the House that private persons have built houses for letting and have found that it was not a good investment. If the Government is going to embark on a venture of this kind, not only must we be prepared to lose money on it, but year after year the loss will be increased; for every worker will be entitled to demand the same privileges as have been given to others.

Hon. G. B. Wood: But they would not necessarily be successful in their applications.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, once you establish a precedent, particularly in Government affairs, it must go on. Surely if a house were erected in the hon. member's own district and he, too, wanted a house, he would have the right to go to the Government and say, "I want a house. You have provided homes for others at a reasonable rental, so surely I have the right to demand the same privilege."

Hon. G. B. Wood: What if the system has been abused?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I say nothing about that. If one can judge from experience of the letting of houses, I think the Government is venturing on a dangerous scheme. There are ample provisions under the leasehold conditions for a man to come along, pay a small deposit and practically live in a house at the same rate as is provided for here.

**HON. J. M. MACFARLANE** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [7.37]: We are told that the Bill is intended to be helpful to the worker who is finding it difficult to obtain a house at a cheap rental. As such, of course, the scheme is experimental and only a sum of £10,000 is to be used to try out the experiment. It must either be carried out on sound business lines or it must be experimental in a sense that will give opportunity for it to work out successfully. Otherwise it will turn out to be truly experimental at a dead loss to the country. In view of the difficulties the Government has in securing money to-day, can we afford to risk £10,000 on this experimental scheme? Can it be proved that the scheme will be successful from a financial standpoint if it is entered upon? The experience of those who have had to let cottage property is such that it is very doubtful if the scheme will prove satisfactory. As Mr. Bolton said, we want to have no loss of time in the tenancy if it is desired that the scheme should be successful. Of course even a tenant who regularly pays his rent sometimes has to shift from that locality in order to follow his work. Then there are the indifferent tenants, whom the landlord would soon want to get rid of. When that happens, there is a loss of tenancy and consequently a loss of revenue. Then there is the extreme tenant who says, "I am going to live in the place, but I am not going to pay any rent." Only the other day I heard of an authentic case: A person had a cottage to let and it was handed over to an agent for that purpose. The agent explained that he had a tenant in view and that he had taken every precaution in regard to references and the liability of the prospective tenant to pay. The tenant was admitted. After the first month had gone by the landlord looked up the agent to see how things were going. The agent confessed that a bad choice of tenant had been made, and that he had told the tenant he must pay up or get out. But the tenant had said to him, "I am not going to pay. I never intended to pay when I came in here." The agent asked, "What about the landlord?" and the tenant replied, "He can do as he likes. I do not see why I should be bothered about the landlord." It is an extreme case certainly but, as I have said, it is authentic, and in the light of that case we can see the possibilities ahead of this scheme. The

Government hopes to get a fair return on its outlay, but I feel sure that as an experiment it will be found to be unsuccessful. I have not touched upon the question of this being another State trading concern, but I am sure from previous experience of cottage letting, the scheme will turn out to be quite other than successful. If there were a dearth of houses so acute that a housing scheme had to be built up to meet the need, we might get something more than is expected here. I am told the scheme could be arranged by other means at the disposal of the Government. I feel that as an experiment it is a bad proposition and one that the State should keep out of. Consequently, I will not support the Bill.

**HON. C. G. ELLIOTT** (North-East) [7.45]: I listened with a good deal of interest to the speeches on this Bill, and gathered that, in the opinion of several members, it is far from perfect, chiefly from the financial or business standpoint. I take it the Government did not intend that this should be a money-making concern.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It ought to pay its way.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: It may, and it may not. Perhaps there would not be much wrong if it did not pay its way, from the point of view of the people it is intended to assist. I understand the purpose of the proposal is to give a chance to a section of the community, members of which find it impossible to purchase a home for themselves, an opportunity to obtain a house in which to live. Their position may be due to a run of bad luck, or other causes. The fact remains that it is impossible for them to purchase a home of their own. It is the function of any humane Government to see that these particular people have a roof over their heads. I understand that is the chief reason for the introduction of this Bill, and it is a very good reason. There are many unemployed in our midst and quite a number of sustenance men. It is only right to suppose that a big percentage of these people do not possess the wherewithal for the purchase of a home. That being the case, no one would be so inhumane as to say to them, "You will have to camp under a tree, or any other place where you can find shelter."

Hon. L. Craig: Look at the men working on the roads, with their families close by. They all camp out under these conditions.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: They have my heart-felt sympathy.

Hon. L. Craig: I refer to some of them.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: It is not right in a civilised country like this that such a thing should be allowed.

Hon. L. Craig: How else could we get the road work done?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: This question has been dealt with in England, New Zealand, Germany and other countries.

Hon. L. Craig: That is for people permanently domiciled in one place.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: The work is being done from the humane point of view. It is all very well to say, "Why do not these people put up a £5 deposit and buy their own home?" A big percentage of these persons have not five pence, and it is through no fault of their own that this is so. Can we expect a man, his wife and two or three children to camp out all their days? It is the function of the Government to see that such conditions do not obtain in this State.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do they obtain?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: Yes. Judging from the statements of members, I should say they are under a misconception concerning the use of the word "worker." It is not intended that this should apply to workers. A worker is in constant employment in the mines and elsewhere. Quite rightly, he does not want a house of this kind. If a man is in constant employment, why should he not have a better house? It is not the intention of the Government to provide for the worker who is in a good job, and in constant employment. Its desire is to assist a section of the community the members of which have been unfortunate, in most instances through no fault of their own.

Hon. L. Craig: During the depression the demand for houses was greater than it is now.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: Perhaps so, but it may be that the finances of the State were not so elastic as I hope they will be in the next few years. Not long ago I saw men with their wives and families living in dug-outs on the side of hills, and in costeens, not far from Kalgoorlie. In most cases this happened through no fault of their own. They went to the fields because they could not get work elsewhere. They thought they

would find work in Kalgoorlie. Unfortunately, the mines can absorb only a certain number of men. These people could get no work, and consequently could obtain no money. They therefore had to live in dug-outs and costeens not half a mile from the Kalgoorlie post office. It would not be a bad thing if the Government were to spend the £10,000 and allow the houses to be occupied free. I would be prepared to support such a proposal. There have probably been many times in our lives when we have not had the wherewithal to buy food. This poor section of the community should be catered for in some way, and this is the nearest approach to a suitable scheme, in the circumstances, that has yet been suggested. It has been said that these people would constitute a bad risk, so far as rent paying is concerned. There may be a certain amount of truth in that, but it would only be because they had not the money with which to pay. The same sort of thing applies to other sections of the community, to people in very much better circumstances who are of the type to endeavour to get out of their obligations.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: What encouragement is there to men to be thrifty if the Government is going to do everything for them?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: I do not suggest that. The Government cannot find more work than it is finding. If it could do so, this scheme would not have been brought down. Unfortunately there are many people not in a position to finance their own homes. This scheme will assist them. From the humane point of view, if from no other, I would like to see this Chamber pass the Bill.

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—in reply) [7.58]: I could make a long reply to the debate, but as we want to finish to-morrow night, I do not propose to do so. I feel there has been an unwarranted slur upon a large body of decent men and women living in this State. We have been through a depression. The Workers' Homes Board has a long list of desirable clients who have been forced, through no fault of their own, to throw up the homes on which they paid fairly big deposits. They had to do this because they lost their employment. The people who take workers' homes belong to a good type. They have been selected by the experts of the board, who seldom make a mistake. Society owes something to those people, because they

have been sacrificed, owing to the depression, and are endeavouring to fight their way back to their old positions. This is not a charity scheme. It is for men who want to get out of the town into a home in which they can have a garden and fruit trees and generally build up a nice little place for themselves. There is a definite shortage of houses. In this respect we must look to the future. It is not right for two or three families to be living in one small cottage, or for a man to live in one room with his family. Mr. Holmes, who was a good landlord, knows that there are many places in Fremantle in which three or four families are forced to live together, because of the lack of other accommodation. If the Bill is passed, and Fremantle gets its quota, the Workers' Homes Board will be able to buy land for £7 a block. This land is within five minutes of a tram and could hold 150 houses. If this had been a £100,000 scheme I could have understood the criticism, because members might have been afraid to embark upon it. The scheme, however, involves only £10,000.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It is because of its being the thin edge of the wedge that we do not like it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The policy has been followed by many other countries. Private enterprise never has embarked largely upon the building of small cottages.

Hon. L. Craig: It has had more sense than to do so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This has been a problem ever since the workers' homes scheme was launched in 1911, and as years have gone by the problem has become intensified. We must look to the future and the citizens and children of to-morrow. I strongly resent the slur cast upon thousands of decent people in this State who require homes to live in.

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

Ayes	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	13

Majority against .. 3

#### Ayes.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. G. Fraser

(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. E. Tuckey
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. H. V. Piesse	Hon. J. T. Franklin
Hon. C. B. Williams	Hon. G. W. Miles

Question thus negatived; the Bill defeated.

### BILL—LAKE AVENUE RESUBDIVISION OF LAND.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

Read a third time and passed.

### BILL—DAIRY PRODUCTS MARKETING REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [8.9] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to amend the sections of the principal Act that deal with (a) the powers and functions of the Dairy Products Marketing Board, and (b) the application of moneys in the Dairy Products Stabilisation Fund. The first amendment proposes to empower the board to expend money from its administration funds for the purpose of encouraging the consumption of dairy products. At present, the per capita consumption of butter in this State is only 28.6 lbs. per annum, as compared with 32.8 lbs. per annum for the Commonwealth, and 49.6 lbs. per annum for New Zealand. I understand that if our rate of consumption could be increased even 10 per cent., a large proportion of the butter now exported would be consumed locally. This would result in improving the position of butter manufacturers, and a very considerable saving to the producer, as well as increasing the national income. The board feels that this increase could be achieved through an active propaganda campaign. At present the Act makes no provision for the expenditure of money in that direction. Provision has, therefore, been made in the Bill to enable the board to expend

funds upon this and similar desirable projects. The second proposal relates to advances on stored butter. Under the present system, butter is stored during the flush periods for use during the off season. In that way producers have been able to avoid exporting a certain proportion of their output at a loss. It was originally intended that those who stored butter should be in exactly the same position financially as those who exported the butter or sold it locally. However, recent experience has shown that, if the local market price of butter falls below a certain level, a manufacturer who stores butter may be placed in a worse position financially under the present Act than if he had exported. It is highly desirable to get away from that position. When this legislation was first initiated, it was not anticipated that there would be any storage when the export parity price was more than, or equal to, the local price. Thus Subsection 2 of Section 41 limits the advance to cover costs of storage to "a sum calculated upon the basis of the amount of the difference between the local and export parity price." It may be desirable, in the future, to store butter when the export parity price is not unfavourable. In that case the costs of storage may actually exceed the original advance made when the butter is put into store. The position would be still further aggravated if there were a fall in the local price during the period of storage. Under these conditions no one would store butter. Even to-day, I understand, manufacturers are finding difficulty in arranging the necessary finance to store their butter, because of the risks attendant on a fall in price. The amendment set forth in Clause 3 has been brought forward with a view to remedying this condition. It simply provides that the board may recoup to manufacturers any losses incurred during storage as a result of a drop in the market price in Western Australia. I believe this is a measure desired by those associated with the industry and it will commend itself to the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. L. CRAIG** (South-West) [8.0]: I am going to support the Bill, because it is a necessary amendment to the Dairy Products Marketing Regulation Act. The industry is governed by a board of seven members representing the consumers, producers, dealers, manufacturers, and so on, and the board is

charged with the regulation—organisation, sale and distribution of dairy products, the storage of dairy products, the regulation of farming machinery and appliances, etc., also the issue and cancellation of licenses. The revenue for administration purposes is provided by a levy not exceeding one per cent. from the dealers and manufacturers. It is now felt that some good could be done by advertising to bring about a greater consumption of butter. There is at the present time quite a considerable amount of margarine coming into Western Australia, I understand up to as much as 200 boxes a week. That margarine is mainly used for cooking purposes, and it is quite satisfactory. The Minister has pointed out that the consumption of butter in this State is 28 lbs. per person per annum, that of the Commonwealth 32 lbs. per person per annum, while the New Zealand figure is 49 lbs. We cannot hope to approach the New Zealand figure, because of the difference in the climate. The climate in New Zealand is cold, while here it is mostly hot and there is not the demand for butter that would be found in a country of lower temperatures. In certain parts of the North-West butter is never seen in the summer, and the people there do not want to see it. It would not be possible to get it there unless it were conveyed in tins, so we cannot approach New Zealand in respect to the consumption of this commodity. But it is considered that an increase can be brought about in the consumption by advertising, and the Bill proposes that the money for advertising shall come out of the administrative fund, that is from the 1 per cent. levy from the dealers and manufacturers. There cannot be any objection to that. The board is capable and is not likely to waste any money that comes under its control. The next clause is a little more complicated, but is capable of explanation. I shall endeavour to tell members what it really means. I have had an interpretation placed before me, and it has confirmed mine. Under the provisions of the Act arrangements are made, as the Minister pointed out, for the storage of butter during the flush period, so that when summer comes and we are not producing a sufficient quantity for our own requirements, rather than buy butter from the Eastern States we will be able to go to our own stored butter and draw upon it. That is very desirable, be-

cause if that butter were not stored it would have to be exported and sold at a lower price than that obtaining in Australia. So the scheme is evolved to enable us to make use of our stored butter during the lean period. As I said, the clause is somewhat complicated, and perhaps difficult to explain in the abstract, but its effect will really be this: We will presume that 1 cwt. of butter is put into cold storage, and that the London value of that butter is 140s. Australian. That would be what is called London parity, and it means that if the butter were exported overseas, then when sterling was converted into Australian currency the value of the butter would be 140s. Now we will assume that the local price of the butter is 154s. It must be remembered that the local price of butter is nearly always considerably higher than London parity. So we have 1 cwt. of butter put into cold storage worth 140s. London parity and 154s. Australian parity. Under the Act the board can only advance to the man who stores the butter the difference between London parity and Australian parity, in this case 14s. The board is limited in its advance to 14s. As a rule merchants or manufacturers arrange through the banks for the financing of the storing of the butter. It is obvious to members that if you put 20,000 boxes of butter into storage—and the farmers have had their payment for the cream—it requires a considerable sum to do so. The payment to the farmer has involved say £6,000. Then as a rule the merchant will go to the bank and say, "We want you to finance us against this butter." The bank, knowing that we are living on a fictitious market, replies, "We will advance you about 80 per cent. London parity; the market may drop, there may be another James case or something else, and we may be left high and dry." The charges on the stored butter may be as much as 10s. I am now taking round figures for convenience. With a fluctuating market as we have to-day the price of butter might drop 10s. That has happened. It may have been 140s. in London, and the price then dropped by 10s. The butter is stored and it may involve a loss of 20s., 10s. for storage and 10s. the drop in price. We must, however, take hon. members back a little and remind them that the board guarantees to the man who stores the butter that the price will be the same to him when he takes his butter out as it was when he put it in. If such an arrangement were not made

no one would store butter. The board has advanced 14s., the difference between London and Australian parities. We find, as I have stated, that there has been a drop of 20s. The storer of the butter is inevitably going to lose 6s. a cwt. Have I made that clear to members?

Members: Yes.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The board has no power at the present time to make up that difference of 6s. Under the Act it has no power to make good the loss. The clause will give the board power to make up the difference between the advance and the drop in the market price, which in the particular instance I have cited, is 6s. I do not think I can make the position very much clearer. I hope the Bill will be carried.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.27]: I intend to support the Bill and trust that the House will agree to it. I should like to supplement the remarks made by the Chief Secretary and Mr. Craig. The first clause with regard to the consumption of butter will when carried into effect make a considerable difference in the position as far as the producers are concerned. There is no provision in the principal Act to enable the board to carry out what the clause will empower it to do. It will be possible no doubt by publicity to increase the consumption of butter by a fair amount. With regard to the importation of margarine it was the Minister for Agriculture himself who gave the protection that was sought by agreeing to a quota. He said that that quota should be 200 cases a week. We know that margarine is the product of vegetable fats and of the whale of the south seas, and has nothing to do at all with our industry. Mr. Craig said, a good deal of that margarine is used for cooking purposes, but most of it is edible margarine. It is up to the Government to protect the dairying industry by doing as other countries have done, that is, to check the consumption of this commodity. Since the manufacturers of margarine obtained that privilege they have undertaken propaganda work and in a very short time reached their quota and they now desire an increase. So far the increase has not been granted. However, they are a very powerful body and will not



rest content until they get an increase. This is entirely against the interests of the dairying industry and I am convinced that something should be done to check the consumption of margarine. Clause 3 involves the question of using the butter produced in the flush season, and using it satisfactorily with as little cost as possible to the producer. A long time has been necessary in which to evolve the conditions of stabilisation that exist to-day. Members might recollect the Paterson scheme under which bonuses were paid on butter exported. Then the equalisation plan was evolved with the object of securing to everybody who exported butter the Australian parity which was fixed at 140s. per cwt. and last year, despite the loss of the James case by the Commonwealth Government, the price was raised to 154s. 4d. It is advisable to continue this work because, as has been truly said, the keeping qualities of the butter have improved and it will now stand storing for the necessary period. At one time when the conditions were rather doubtful, wisdom dictated the exporting of the surplus butter in those months because of possible deterioration, as well as loss of price through the London market falling, as it usually did, when that butter arrived. If the Bill is passed and the manufacturers are given the protection offered, a good deal of the butter hitherto exported will be held in storage here, thus obviating the necessity for importing butter from the Eastern States to make good the shortage in the months of March to July. The main point that I should like to impress upon members is that manufacturers are somewhat fearful of the conditions, not because of the shrinkage in the price, between London and here—the price here is stabilised as well as the price paid by the consumer—but because of the loss of protection and of possible danger arising from the James appeal case. That danger is ever with us. If we put butter into cold storage and somebody endeavours to break down established conditions under Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, the loss is likely to be considerable, and many of those people engaged in the manufacture of butter would be broken financially while producers would suffer greatly. The Bill will have two good effects: it will make the position of the manufacturer and producer more satisfactory and it will prevent the export of butter which can be held for local

consumption during the lean period, much to the advantage of the producers. Therefore, I commend the Bill to the House, believing as I do that it will prove of great benefit to the industry. Once more, however, I should like to emphasise the necessity for dealing with margarine at the earliest possible moment, as the Governments of the other States have done. It has cost the other States many thousands of pounds to suppress the manufacture of margarine, but we have done nothing. Our producers are being seriously affected by the manufacture of margarine, and some action similar to that taken in the other States should be adopted here.

**HON. W. J. MANN** (South-West [8.35]: One of the good features of this Bill is that it is extremely clear and concise. There is not much difficulty in comprehending what is intended. Clause 3 might seem to be a little involved from the point of view of length and phrasing, but I think my colleague, Mr. Craig, has given an excellent interpretation of it and one would be unwise to attempt to supplement his remarks. To those of us who are interested in the marketing of dairy products, the Bill is very clear. The first object is to make the product more widely known. My memory goes back to the campaign upon which New Zealand embarked some few years ago. New Zealand butter was challenged in Canada about 1930 and as a result, the New Zealand butter exporters decided that the only way to combat the threatened competition was by a campaign of judicious advertising. I was privileged to join with a party of New Zealanders, who approached the then Prime Minister of Canada—though not in my presence—and discussed the matter with him. Following the advertising propaganda and the trade compact made between New Zealand and Canada, the consumption of New Zealand butter in Canada increased enormously. It has been claimed by previous speakers that in the past we in Western Australia have had over-production, and there has been only one course open to producers and that was to sell the product for what it would bring. Then the Marketing Board stepped in and did excellent work, but the board was handicapped by reason of the fact that sufficient finance could not be arranged in order to bridge the gap that existed. This

measure is a laudable and complete attempt to overcome the difficulty. It must not be forgotten that this is an attempt at real stabilisation, and that the money that will be utilised is money that is being found by the butter producers themselves. It is money they pay by way of levy that will be used by the board. The board has given general satisfaction. We have heard very little complaint about the working of the board. I feel that it can be trusted to undertake the expenditure that will be called for under this Bill. Regarding the first portion of the Bill, there is a safeguard that the amount of money required for propaganda purposes may be utilised only with the consent of the Minister. Having that safeguard, I can confidently ask the House to pass the measure.

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [8.41]: I do not intend to enter into a discussion of the dairying industry. We have been informed that this measure will receive the approval of the producers and the manufacturers or the distributors. The only point I wish to raise is whether the interests of the consumers are being protected, I should like the Minister, when he replies, to say how the consumer's interests will be safeguarded.

**Hon. L. Craig:** There is a consumer on the board.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [8.42]: I rise mainly to thank Mr. Craig for the very clear explanation he gave of what is, to most people not associated with the industry, a rather involved matter. I thank him sincerely because, while I might have attempted to give the same information I certainly might have been involved in trying to explain. The money to be used by the board is the money subscribed by the industry and there will be no outside liability.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** Will not the consumer have to find it?

**Hon. W. J. Mann:** The consumer gets the value.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** The money is found by the industry. Mr. Fraser raised a question as to whether the interests of the consumers will be protected. This Bill will not affect the interests of consumers in any shape or form. They are protected by having a representative on the board, and this

Bill will not affect the representation on the board and will have no effect except in respect to the two points mentioned. The first point is to give the board power to increase the consumption of local butter by means of advertising, and provided the consent of the Minister to the amount to be expended is first obtained, and the second point is to ensure that those manufacturers who agree to store their butter in the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Craig will not suffer loss.

**Hon. G. Fraser:** The consumer will be affected through the price that will have to be charged.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** It will not make the slightest difference. The Bill involves nothing beyond what has been explained fully and clearly. I feel sure that the House will agree to the Bill, which is necessary in the interests of the industry as a whole.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

Read a third time, and *passed*.

## **BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.**

Returned from the Assembly with amendments.

## **BILL—ELECTRICITY.**

*In Committee.*

**Hon. J. Cornell** in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation

**Hon. H. SEDDON:** One of the definitions is too wide. Definitions in the principal Act refer only to electric light and power. This Bill refers also to transmission and distribution of electricity. That implies various forms, as in connection with telephones and telegraphs, and the use of electricity by railways.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Constitution of Electricity Advisory Committee:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2, after the word "members," there be inserted "one of whom shall be appointed to represent the local authorities."

I claim that one member of the committee should directly represent local authorities. It does not necessarily follow that he must not be a technical man. He should be at the service of local authorities.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think the amendment desirable. The clause provides that no person shall be qualified for appointment as a member of the committee unless he is either a corporate member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, London, or of the Institution of Electrical Engineers of Australia. Again, if in the opinion of the Governor no person can be found qualified to be a member under those conditions, or if there is no qualified person willing to be a member, the Governor may appoint some other person who is sufficiently well versed in the theory and practice of electrical engineering. Further on, the clause provides that the advisory committee may with the approval of the Minister, and shall if the Minister so requests, co-opt any person or persons for the determination or consideration of any matter. The same committee which has been responsible for the compiling of the Bill is the committee that it is desired to appoint as the advisory committee. The members are Mr. Taylor, Mr. Edmondson, and Mr. Shaw—three gentlemen well known in connection with electrical matters. There is ample scope under the clause for any local authority to be represented in any particular case. Therefore at present the amendment is not necessary.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I voted against the second reading for various reasons. The more I look at the measure, the less I like it. Before the Bill was brought down, the local governing bodies outside the metropolitan area should have been consulted through their associations. I shall vote against the clause.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is the amendment before the Chair. The principle of the Bill was approved on the second reading.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I would like to see the clause defeated, as that would be the end of the Bill. The three gentlemen mentioned

by the Minister are gentlemen with a metropolitan outlook.

The Chief Secretary: What right have you to say that?

The CHAIRMAN: I ask Mr. Mann to confine himself strictly to the amendment for the present, reserving his general remarks on the clause until the amendment has been disposed of.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Rather than have the clause as it stands, I support the amendment.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The amendment really means nothing except that when the Governor appoints three members he puts after the name of one that he shall represent the local authorities. Perhaps Mr. Piesse desires that one member of the committee shall be appointed by the local authorities.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I support Mr. Piesse's amendment on the lines suggested by Mr. Parker. The Bill is being hurried through while half the people concerned do not know that it is on the stocks. Much heartburning will be created in putting it into effect. So many road boards and municipalities are concerned, that they should have representation. As far back as 1913 I was a member of a board on which technical men and commercial men worked together satisfactorily.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the amendment.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The Bill should satisfy the people concerned—mostly road boards and municipalities. If the Minister would agree to a representative of the local authorities acting in conjunction with this technical committee the interests of the local authorities would be looked after. Such a representative would not clash with the technical men on technical questions.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: I intend to oppose the amendment. I want to see three highly qualified men on that committee. I have seen too many mistakes made by men from whom mistakes would not be expected.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment does not deal with the qualifications of the committee at all; all it does is to intimate that the Governor shall say that one of the committee shall represent the local authority.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I would be in favour of the amendment if it provided that one representative should be appointed by the local authorities. The object of the Bill is

to unify the system of electrical generation in Western Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away from the amendment.

Hon. H. SEDDON: No, I am not.

The CHAIRMAN: I say that the hon. member is; he is discussing the principles of the Bill. I ask the hon. member to resume his seat. I have called him to order and also Mr. Macfarlane and Mr. Wittenoom on this amendment. The clause says there shall be three expert members of the committee. Mr. Piessé's amendment states that when the Governor appoints them he shall say to one of them, "You are to represent the local authorities." That is where the amendment begins and ends.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I am supporting Mr. Piessé's amendment. I am discussing the reasons why the local authorities should be represented on this committee.

The CHAIRMAN: It is the Governor who says that one of the committee shall represent the local authorities, and not the local authorities who say it. I suggest that the hon. member move an amendment on the amendment.

Hon. H. SEDDON: To put the matter in order I will move an amendment on the amendment—

That the words "to represent the" be struck out and the words "by the" be inserted in lieu.

The local authorities are directly concerned because the objective of the Bill is to unify the system of generating electricity throughout Western Australia, and to introduce ultimately the system of alternating current. As many local authorities are operating direct current, they will be affected financially and in other ways.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is an advisory committee, which has a full knowledge of the State's requirements. If the local authorities have representation, it will be necessary for them to be represented by a man with the qualifications expressed in the Bill. If they are going to appoint a man with those qualifications they will have to foot the bill. This measure does not provide for any payment whatever, except travelling expenses. I think the Committee will agree that each one of the three men mentioned as having been responsible for drawing up the Bill are men competent to do this work. Realising that local authorities may want some particular point of view stressed, provision is made for the committee to co-opt a representative of the local authorities.

In fact, provision is made that if the Minister says so, they shall co-opt such a representative to assist in dealing with any matter with which the committee may be concerned from time to time. What more do the local authorities want?

Hon. W. J. Mann: You do not know what the local authorities want because they have never been asked.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is a matter which affects the whole State.

Hon. H. Seddon: And the local authorities.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The local authorities are affected in their own districts. Various districts may have different ideas. The purpose of the Bill is eventually to obtain uniformity throughout the State, and there is no reason why any particular body should have specific representation on the committee. If it is right that local authorities should have representation, it is just as logical for some member to move for somebody to be appointed to represent the private concessionaires, and having gone so far it would be as logical for someone to suggest that the commissioners should be similarly represented.

Hon. H. Seddon: There is a great deal in that, too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The committee will not have any power. It is purely an advisory body. The only men who can satisfactorily advise the Minister on the various matters set out in the Bill are men with technical knowledge and experience.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: If one member of this committee is appointed to represent the local authorities surely no harm will be done. Mr. Parker said there was very little value in the amendment, but there is a great deal in a name and in the nature of a representation. I am not in agreement with the amendment on the amendment. It would be very difficult for the local authorities to elect a man, and I do not think it would be justifiable for them to do so.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I support the amendment on the amendment. I do not agree with the views of the Minister regarding the position of the local authorities. Local authorities play an important part in assisting the government of this country.

The Chief Secretary: Who said they did not?

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Surely they are entitled to some consideration. To ask that

they should be represented on this committee is a moderate request.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I suggest that the matter might be overcome by an amendment of Subclause (8). Instead of saying the committee "may," we should say the committee "shall" co-opt any person or persons the local authorities may consider capable of giving the committee that assistance that would be required. I would oppose the removal of any one of the three gentlemen referred to, who are highly efficient officers.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment does not propose that.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am inclined to think it does. The amendment on the amendment wants the local authorities to have a say in the appointment of a representative. My suggestion is that the committee be left as it is and if a matter arises that concerns any particular local authority, the committee could co-opt a representative suggested by the local authority. It is true that such a representative might be out-voted but the committee would have had the benefit of his advice.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am in favour of leaving the clause as it stands, without either the amendment or the amendment on the amendment. If the amendment on the amendment were carried I do not know what provision there would be for any municipality or road board to elect a representative. The trouble will be to get the two associations to meet together to appoint a man. It would be very much easier for those two bodies to bring pressure on the Minister to force him to co-opt the man they suggest.

Hon. H. SEDDON: If it is practicable to do that it is practicable for them to arrange for the election of a member of the board. It would be altogether a better thing to appoint one of a committee chosen by the Government to represent the local authority than for that man to be appointed by the local authority itself. For in the latter case he would be answerable to the local authority, whereas if appointed by the Government, he would be able to tell the local authority that its point of view had to be co-ordinated with the committee's decision. The Minister says the consumers are entitled to representation. I say the same, because they have to pay the piper. If the system be changed from d.c. to a.c. in any district every motor and every part of

machinery used in the district will have to be scrapped.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: It does not provide that.

Hon. H. SEDDON: What about your kelvinators? If the system be altered the kelvinators also will have to be altered, and so too will the electric fans. So I say the consumers are very much concerned and will have to bring their influence to bear on the local authorities. It is said that the committee will have no power. But suppose the committee recommends to the Minister that he shall change the system from a.c. to d.c. The Minister will then say, "On the advice of my advisors I have decided to change over from a.c. to d.c." I can see every reason why this Bill should have more publicity before we attempt to finalise it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am afraid this question is being approached from a parochial point of view. Where can Mr. Seddon find it provided in the Bill that the existing services can be changed by this committee? There is nothing in the Bill affecting existing stations except where it is intended to extend the plant. In that case they are asked to submit their proposals to the committee so that the committee shall have knowledge of what is being done. I cannot follow the reasoning of the hon. member. Surely he is not going to question the competence of the committee?

Hon. H. Seddon: Of course not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then why insist that it is necessary for the local authority to have a representative on the committee? This Bill is looking ahead, looking forward to the time when we shall have uniformity in our electricity. It is not a Bill affecting existing plants. If the local authority desires to instal a new plant it has to submit the plans and specifications, after which the advisory committee will advise the Minister as to the proposal. The very clause we are dealing with provides that the advisory committee may co-opt a representative of the local authority, and also provides that if the Minister says it shall co-opt a representative of the local authority, then that shall be done. Can we imagine a responsible Minister having a proposal made to him by the local authority on some particular matter saying, "No, you shall not have representation in regard to that matter"? I can

appreciate the idea underlying the amendment, namely, that local authorities shall be associated with the work of the committee. At the same time I hold that the committee shall be appointed by the Government, which is not likely to place itself in a position where it is not going to have the advantage of the knowledge that can be given to it in regard to any particular district. I hope the amendment on the amendment will be defeated. If it were to become law the local authorities would have to accept some responsibility for the expense of their member of the committee.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is just one point I should like cleared up, namely, the question of payment by the local authorities. A Minister is reported to have said that there will be no charge against revenue; and he added that the supplying authority would have to pay.

The Chief Secretary: Which Minister said that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: A Minister in another place.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think the Minister has made out rather a good case. The committee will be purely an advisory committee with no power whatever, and the Minister if he so desired could consult the same three technical officers without their having any special authority. Therefore, if the whole clause were wiped out the Minister could still have the advice of those technical officers. I cannot conceive of any Minister objecting to local authorities having full representation.

Hon. H. SEDDON: And then overriding them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Minister would not do that, or not without very good reason. Had this power been given to the Minister before, a lot of money might have been saved. The Minister has made out a good case for a purely advisory committee.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Mr. Seddon is wrong in his contention about the position of the committee. If it comes to a parochial point of view, I may say that I placed the Bill before the expert officer controlling the Katanning Electric Light Department and he was of opinion that the Bill was perfectly all right. For myself I think the Bill is most necessary, and that the advisory committee of those three officers will be wholly beneficial. I will not support the amendment on the amendment.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am not in favour of either amendment. The Minister said that experts had been dealing with this measure for 18 months. The Government now expects us to review it in the dying hours of the session. The Minister would be well advised to allow this matter to stand over for the time being.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Even if the local authorities were asked to pay to have a representative on the Committee, it would be a small insurance for their own protection and be a safeguard against being overridden and being obliged to fall in with the desires of the Minister.

The Chief Secretary: What part of the Bill gives the Minister power to interfere with existing plant?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I will answer that point at a later stage. I feel that my amendment on the amendment is in the best interests of local authorities.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Local authorities should be represented on the committee. If that were arranged, it would make for peace throughout the country districts.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	16
Majority against				9

AYES.	
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. C. G. Elliott
Hon. W. J. Mann	(Teller.)
NOES.	
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. V. Piesse
	(Teller.)

Amendment on amendment thus negatived.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Members feel they have not had sufficient time in which to consider this Bill. It has taken the experts 18 months to prepare it. We in this House have no technical knowledge of the subject. The Chief Secretary would be well advised to report progress and bring the matter up again next year. That would give us time in which to make the necessary inquiries. If progress is not reported I feel that the Committee will oppose this clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know if Mr. Miles is speaking with the support of the majority of members.

Hon. G. W. Miles: No.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is a very important measure, State-wide in its application. The Government desires to have it passed, and it is also the desire of all those authorities who have a knowledge of the subject. There is nothing in the measure about which members need be afraid. Apparently it does not matter what the Leader of the House may say; members will still declare that he is wrong.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I do not say you are wrong.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Leader of the House cannot always be right.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are you suggesting that 29 members are wrong, and that you are right?

Hon. H. Seddon: I think the Minister is wrong in the opinion he holds.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have explained what I am advised the Bill means. If it is not dealt with now, 12 months must elapse before it comes up again for discussion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Only eight months.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In the generation and distribution of electricity, advances are being made every month.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then the scene may change by next year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know much about the matter from the technical point of view. The experts have not spent the whole of the last 18 months on this Bill.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Apparently it was not a matter of urgency.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Government desired that the investigating committee should report on the subject as early as possible, consistent with giving the best of advice. If the Bill is held up because some private generating plant or some local authority is affected, we shall be in the same position next year. There is a suggestion that unless I report progress the Committee may refuse to go on with the business. I am afraid I cannot adopt that suggestion, although, as I have said before, there is no desire to rush the Bill through.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I intend to support the Minister in his attitude. When the Bill was introduced in another place, copies were sent to various local authorities in the South-

East Province, and so the Bill has been thoroughly discussed.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot proceed along those lines. Other members represent other provinces.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I am referring to the province I represent. I made inquiries from members in another place who represent centres in my province, and they informed me that they had not been advised of any contentious matters by local authorities in the province.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot refer to a debate during the current session.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The Bill is technical, but we will have an opportunity to-night to deal with the various clauses. We know that, in our own positions, we always accept the advice of technical officers, and in this instance they are men of undoubted ability.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Local authorities have conducted electricity supplies affecting their respective districts from the beginning without any assistance from the Government, and it is not quite fair that the Bill should come like a bolt from the blue and take complete control without adequate time being given to refer its provisions to those concerned. I suggest it would be better to leave consideration of the Bill until next session. For my part, I would like to see the Bill defeated.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Local authorities empowered to generate electricity, etc.:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That in lines 2 and 3 of paragraph (b) the words and parentheses "(subject to Section 14)" be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I suggest that the amendment be withdrawn until we deal with Clause 14. If as a result of the discussion on that clause the hon. member thinks it necessary to persist with the amendment, the Bill can be recommitted.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I will adopt that course, and will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—No further generating stations to be erected except under this Act:

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of paragraph (b) of Sub-clause 1, after "consent," the following pro-

viso be added:—"Provided that this subsection shall not apply to the extension of any transmission works for the purpose of supplying the same consumer at a different place."

The Minister said that this was one matter that those concerned had a right to deal with. If it were desired to extend the electricity supply in a mining centre or at Collie, for instance, those controlling the supply would have to secure the consent of the board before the work could be undertaken. My amendment will cover that position.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Seddon has an amendment on the Notice Paper which covers much the same ground, and is sought to be inserted in the same position in paragraph (b).

Hon. H. SEDDON: The amendment proposed by Mr. Piesse deals with the extension of any transmission works, but my amendment not only covers that but goes further by covering existing supplying authorities. If a local authority finds that it is necessary to extend its plant to cope with the demand for current, it would be necessary to supply plans and other details to the Minister before assent could be obtained to the installation of additional power plant. I desire that that authority shall remain with the supplying authority during the currency of its concession.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: But you make no provision for an extension of that concession.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is so, but the hon. member could move an amendment to my amendment to deal with that phase.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot quite follow the reasoning of either Mr. Piesse or Mr. Seddon. If it is necessary in the first place to get the permission of the Minister with regard to new plant or new installations, it is surely highly desirable that knowledge should be available of any extensions sought. It is reasonable to assume that, should a local authority require to extend its plant, it should be prepared to submit to the Minister details of what is proposed. It might be that the local authority's scheme would conflict with what was being done by another authority. The desire is to secure uniformity some time in the future, and not straight away. The only way it can be achieved is by accepting the principles embodied in the Bill. If the amendment be agreed to, it is quite possible that a local authority might desire to duplicate its power plant to provide additional current in order to supply a district some

miles away, whereas that distant district could be better supplied by another supplying authority. It is desirable that particulars regarding every such proposal should be available to the advisory committee, who could discuss the possible effects with the Minister and advise him accordingly. From the points of view of economy and uniformity, is it not right that if suppliers have to conform to the requirements of this legislation with regard to new plants, they should also conform with regard to additions to existing plants? I do not think it would be right to amend the clause as suggested by Mr. Piesse and Mr. Seddon.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The Minister has dealt with one example. He referred to the supplying authority that might desire to furnish an outer district with current. I dealt with the position of a local authority desirous of duplicating its plant for supplying its own consumers. The advisory committee may have definite ideas regarding the type of plant to be installed in future. A Minister might desire to encourage the use of local fuel at the expense of imported fuel, and might refuse to allow a local authority to instal an additional unit unless it agreed to his views regarding the use of local fuel.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I wonder if any other member than Mr. Seddon can imagine a responsible Minister of the Crown, or the advisory committee, recommending to such a Minister that a local authority should not be permitted to extend its power plant unless it was prepared to scrap the existing plant and instal an entirely new one!

Hon. H. Seddon: The local authority could be directed to instal plant that would be partly coal-driven and partly oil-driven.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Can any other hon. member imagine such a state of affairs arising?

Members: Of course.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It seems to me that members are visualising the most extreme action that could be taken by the committee in the first place and then by the Minister. If I were the Minister concerned, I am afraid no advisory committee would get me to agree to anything of that description, more particularly as I, as Minister, would have to accept full responsibility.



Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Mr. Seddon's amendment is a little astray.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Seddon's amendment is not before the Chair. The amendment we are dealing with is that of the hon. member himself.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I will adhere to my amendment. The only point we want to take into consideration is the transmission work and that is very important. Whenever any local authority or contractor requires a new plant, he usually employs a technical man to advise him.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That at the end of paragraph (b) the following be inserted:—"Nothing in this section shall apply to an existing supply authority during the currency of its concession."

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

Ayes .. .. .	9
Noes .. .. .	15

Majority against .. .. 6

AYES.	
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. V. Piessé
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. W. H. Kitson	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—Crossing the territory of local authorities with transmission lines:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: One can easily conceive in the course of time changes taking place, and there may be some alteration in the definition of "transmission lines" without one realising what it might mean. If any alteration took place in the definition it might not be extended so as to empower the supply authority to distribute electricity within the area of that authority through which area the mains would be carried. If any alteration were made in the definition of transmission works, there would need to be something added to safeguard the position.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the hon. member prepare an amendment and move it on recommitment of the Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I will do that.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Advisory committee to report:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That after "(vi) capital charges" the following words be added:—"including interest, depreciation and obsolescence."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: "Capital charges" is the correct way to express all matters referred to. Those words will cover everything. I am advised that the correct method to describe these things is to allow the words "capital charges" to remain without any addition. There is nothing in the amendment that would not be covered by the term "capital charges."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have the opinion of one of the ablest King's Counsel in Perth, though that statement might not appeal to Mr. Clydesdale.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Why bring that up?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: He says that the words "depreciation and obsolescence" should be included to make the meaning quite clear.

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

Clauses 12 and 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Standard form of concession:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I hope this clause will be deleted. There is such a form at present and local authorities refer to the department for advice, but there is nothing to compel them to accept the advice. If this clause were included, it would subordinate the local authorities to the department to the extent that, unless the Minister consented to a contract, they would be unable to make it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: For many years local authorities have sought the advice of the department and a standard contract form has been drawn up. It consists of four pages containing all the matters that should be included, and experience has shown that it is satisfactory. By the use of the form some of the local authorities have been protected, and I could imagine the standard document proving a protection to some local authorities, even against themselves. The desire is to get uniformity throughout the

State, and to achieve that the clause is essential.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 24—agreed to.

Clause 25—Regulations:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That at the beginning of paragraph (d) the words "subject to existing contracts" be inserted.

The amendment will make it clear that there must be no interference under this legislation with existing concessionaires.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not see any harm in the amendment, although I consider it unnecessary, because existing contracts will not be affected by the measure.

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

Clause 26—agreed to.

Clause 27—Inspectors:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That the words in Subclause 2 "(including the Crown)" be struck out.

This Bill could be made to apply to every type of electrical apparatus. It could be made to apply to railway telephonic, telegraphic and safe-working equipment. That is not intended. At present inspections are carried out by a representative of the Fire Underwriters' Association and the inspector attached to the local authority. The Bill provides for a team of inspectors who shall operate under the control of the Minister, and make inspections throughout the State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Again I cannot follow Mr. Seddon's reasoning. The measure is designed to apply to the whole State, but the hon. member wishes to exclude the Crown.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Crown can do no wrong.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no intention to appoint a host of inspectors to travel all over the State. We shall utilise the services of men engaged in this work in various parts of the State provided they possess the necessary qualifications.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I do not wish to see inspectors entering Government departments and interfering with delicate and intricate apparatus about which they know nothing. Yet, under the clause, an inspector could enter a department and object to something that might not conform with his ideas.

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

Ayes .. .. .	8
Noes .. .. .	16

Majority against 8

#### AYES.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. C. F. Baxter

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. E. H. Angelo

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 28 to 40—agreed to.

Clause 41—Obligation to supply:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the clause:—"unless it can be shown that no loss would thereby be entailed."

The concessionaire, having a monopoly, might refuse to extend the distributing system to a resident just beyond the system.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I see no grave objection to the amendment, but how would it be proved that there could be no loss?

Hon. G. B. Wood: The accounts would show that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The difficulty is to prove what the amendment sets forth.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 42 to 51, Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

#### Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, Bill re-committed for the purpose of further considering Clauses 2 and 9.

#### In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

### Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Seddon drew attention to the possibility of the powers contained in the Bill being extended to certain workings in connection with the Railway Department. The more one looks at the Bill, the more one becomes convinced that by its wording there is great risk of this. The Chief Secretary rather discounted the idea, but we have to bear in mind that we are dealing with a measure which, once it becomes law, may be law for a long time. The Minister and others of us may not always be here to deal with the matter. I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the definition of "Electric fitting":—"but shall not include any fittings or apparatus used by the Railway Department for communication or safe-working purposes."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot imagine any necessity for adding the words.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The Minister for Railways has already approved of the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Not only that, but one member of the advisory committee, Mr. Taylor, is a railway officer. He would never agree to anything in any way detrimental to the safe working of the railways. I regard the amendment as extreme, and almost ridiculous.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is better to insert the words, out of more abundant caution.

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

Clause 9—agreed to.

Bill again reported with a further amendment, and the report adopted.

### Third Reading.

Bill read a third time, and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

## BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Returned from the Assembly with amendments.

### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Special Tax Assessment Acts Revision.
2. Special Tax Acts Revision.

Received from the Assembly.

## BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

### In Committee.

Hon. G. Fraser in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Continuance of Act; amendment of Section 20:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause (1) "December" be struck out and "June" inserted in lieu.

The amendment will have the effect of terminating the Act on the 30th June next, instead of the 31st December. Six months should be sufficient for any ordinary mortgagor to make the necessary arrangements for the taking over by someone else of his mortgage should the present mortgagee not be prepared to grant an extension of time for carrying on the mortgage.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Sufficient was said about this matter on the second reading of the Bill. The time has not arrived when we can safely discard a measure of this kind. I submit there is necessity for the continuance of the measure for another 12 months.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I hope the amendment will not be agreed to. Mr. Seddon has given no good reason in support of it. I do not regard six months as being sufficient time.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That "June" be struck out and "September" inserted in lieu.

I have always considered that the mortgagor should apply to the court and not the mortgagee. I do not believe in the Act being wiped out straight away. A sudden change might be too drastic. The amendment I have suggested would give an opportunity for Parliament to consider an alteration of the Act before it expires. The Act might be amended by Parliament next year so that the onus could be put on the mortgagor instead of the mortgagee. I do not want the Act wiped out straight away, but hope we may be able to terminate it in a year or two years' time.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is a bit previous. We will first consider the amendment to strike out the word "December." If that word is deleted, the hon. mem-

ber's amendment on the amendment could then be submitted.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I intend to oppose the amendment for the reason stated in my second reading speech. If notice is to be given of the termination of this legislation, the period should be at least two years.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I hope the amendment will be carried. Mr. Wood and Mr. Piesse are both concerned with country mortgagors, the farmers. This Bill hardly affects the farmer at all, for the banks can close down on him by just curtailing his credit. I hope "June" will be inserted in place of "December," for six months' notice will be quite long enough.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: On no occasion during the debate have I said anything about the banks in connection with the Bill, which deals more with mortgages than trust investments. When mortgages were granted prior to the depression, only 60 per cent. was advanced, the 40 per cent. representing the farmer's equity. Trust investments are not permitted unless 60 per cent. of the value is available. That is one of the main reasons why I am supporting the Bill.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: It is nearly time the Act was wiped out, but I think some reasonable notice should be given. Therefore I will vote for the amendment with a view to supporting Mr. Parker's later amendment to insert "September."

Hon. H. SEDDON: If any attempt be made to realise on the security, it will be very serious for the farmer. The Act applies more particularly to the city than to the country. There is no intention to force the position, for the investors have funds which they are prepared to lay out on reasonable security. My amendment will give ample time to such mortgagors as will be requested to meet their commitments or change their mortgagees.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There are thousands of people who come under the Act, some of whom are in a far more precarious position than are the farmers. We do not find people rushing about with thousands of pounds to invest in these particular securities. It will be very unfortunate if the Act goes out of existence without due notice. Those supporting the amendment will admit that there would be a difficulty if a foreclosure were made. Then why not let the Bill go through for another 12 months? It will make a tremendous difference to those

who are faced with possibilities of foreclosure. This debate will be quite sufficient to warn those who require warning.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the amendment will be agreed to. This legislation has been in existence quite long enough and I should like to see it go out altogether at the end of this year. The mortgagees have never been considered by country members, who are out for the mortgagor every time. Those members are never satisfied. We hear from them nothing but moaning about the man on the land. The mortgagee who finds the money has no consideration at all given to him.

Hon. T. Moore: You all live on the man on the land.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The man on the land should play the game. There are many wasters who should be off the land instead of on it. I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Mr. Miles says there is general moaning by country members who think only of the man on the land. On the second reading I specially mentioned the man on wages who has bought a house on mortgage. He also has to be considered. There is plenty of money available, but the unfortunate part of it is that the securities have seriously depreciated. Recently a property originally purchased at £7 per acre was sold at £3 5s. per acre.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It is clear that the Government is seized with the necessity for terminating this legislation within a reasonable time. Six months is not very much notice. I think for the sake of the mortgagors the additional few months proposed would not be too much. I am prepared to allow the Act to continue for another year.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No undue hardship would be cast on any person implicated under the Bill if the proposed date were extended to the 30th September. That would be an indication to a section of the people who are affected by this legislation but who have no intention whatever of meeting the situation unless they have to.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is the point—a lot of those cookies.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is not the cookies alone. I do not think the loss of this legislation would greatly affect 95 per cent. of the cookies, for the trading banks, if they so desired, could deal with the cocky irrespective of the mortgage. Taken by and large the Associated Banks have given the

farmer a better deal than has the Agricultural Bank. If we make this "September," it will be more or less a warning to the people interested that there is a possibility of the Act going out. In all continuation Bills that are left to the end of the year the inevitable happens. This Bill has been on the notice paper for many weeks and the only reason why it has not been finalised earlier than this is that the Act does not end until the close of the year. I hope the word "December" will be deleted, and "September" inserted in lieu.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I support the amendment to delete the word "December." If "September" is then inserted the measure will have to come up for review at an early stage in next session.

Amendment (to strike out December) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	13
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	5
				—

## AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. H. Seddon
	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

## PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. E. H. H. Hall
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. J. T. Franklin

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment. and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

## BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

*In Committee.*

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

### Clause 2—Amendment of Section 47:

Hon. J. CORNELL: This clause seeks to increase the area of cultivable land a settler may hold from 1,000 acres to 2,000 acres. Recently the President and I visited the locality between West Bullfinch and the rabbit proof fence. We met practically every settler, but did not meet one who agreed that this proposal would do any more than increase the burden of debt upon them. They were of opinion that the district concerned would be better served if the Mitchell plan were adapted to their case. Their only hope is to link up with the Bullfinch-Southern Cross scheme.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know that this proposal is designed to assist only the particular settlers referred to by Mr. Cornell. The Bill will give settlers an opportunity to increase their holdings with a view to their being more successful than they have been in the past. I know of districts where settlers are keen to have their holdings increased.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Will settlers be compelled to take up 2,000 acres?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know of no such obligation, but if settlers are likely to be more successful with the larger area than they have been with the smaller holding, they should have the opportunity to take up the additional land.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I support the clause. It is necessary to provide the Minister with the powers sought. It will be helpful in my Province. For instance, it will enable the farmer who has sons, to take up additional land and thus provide his lads with training until they are able to secure blocks for themselves.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Piesse does not know what he is talking about. If he had listened to the Minister, he would have ascertained that the Bill is not designed to assist farmers or their sons as he suggested. It has been found that in certain districts the growing of wheat alone is not sufficient, and it is proposed to encourage settlers to go in for sheep in addition, particularly in the outer districts. Mr. Holmes asked if this was to be made compulsory upon the farmers. I do not know that that is the position, but I do know that some men who are under the Agricultural Bank have had to take up more land, or get off. I have already pointed out that in the outer districts, to which I referred specifically, the

farmers do not want this legislation because they consider that if they are required to take up more land it will only add to their financial burden.

The Chief Secretary: But there are other localities.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Minister for Lands himself said that in some districts wheatgrowing alone was not satisfactory, and it would be necessary for the farmers to go in for sheep in addition.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I do know what I am talking about, although Mr. Cornell is always so very correct. The Minister will have power to use his discretion and so each case will be treated on its merits.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3, 4—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### *Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

## **BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Assembly's Message.*

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 28 and 29 of the amendments made by the Council to the Bill and had disagreed to Nos. 1 to 10, 16 to 27 and 30 to 34 for the reasons set out in the Schedule annexed.

## **BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [11.37]: I do not propose to detain the House for a long time on the Bill. If a search were made to locate the most unfortunate industry from the standpoint of legislation, I think it would be found to be the baking industry. At times it has fallen between two stools, and at other times legislation dealing with it has been introduced too late in the session.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Always too late.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have gone to some trouble to elicit from an old friend of mine for whom I have the highest regard, a man

whom I have never found wanting in judgment or integrity, information as to what was the catch in the Bill. After perusing it, he assured me that the only catch about it was that it caught the chap who ought to be caught. So far as I can understand, the master bakers, the journeymen, the bread carters and the customers who are out to do the right thing by all concerned, are all right under the provisions of the Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Where did you get in touch with the consumers?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am one of them. It will not matter to me what happens because I have dealt with the one baker for the past 24 years. The Bill is designed for one purpose, namely, to bring about some semblance of order and cleanliness in the baking trade. From inquiries I have made, particularly in Kalgoorlie and Boulder—I understand the same position arises in Perth, too—I gathered that an element has crept into the trade that is highly undesirable and its presence can only have repercussive effects on the community. If some members of this Chamber who may be inclined to oppose the Bill were in a position to gauge the inroads of the foreigner in this trade, as members representing mining constituencies have been, probably they would withdraw some of the opposition we may anticipate from them. On the fields, foreigners are gradually displacing the legitimate employer, journeymen and carter, and by "legitimate" I mean British.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If you allow them to come here and be naturalised, are you not to allow them to live?

Hon. T. Moore: That is what the Japs are doing at Broome.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, and in China. While I have high regard in some respects for some foreigners, I have the utmost contempt for their business scruples and methods. They stoop to questionable practices to secure a footing and adopt, like the heathen Chinese of Bret Harte's description, "ways that are dark and devious." They combine to defeat and circumvent the law and lower the standard set up by the British community. I believe Mr. Mann can speak feelingly regarding the inroads of aliens, with their propaganda that is not conducive to the maintenance of British standards.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Unfortunately we admit them to this country.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The State has no say in that; the Commonwealth permits them to enter Western Australia. On the other hand, the State has the power to say that aliens who engage in our industries shall not circumvent the law or lower the standards of living we set up, by resorting to partnerships of a certain description. The Bill seeks to deal with these phases and is deserving of the support of members. The Honorary Minister is in a position to speak on this subject as he was at one time a journeyman baker. I do not know if he was like the bakers we knew in the A.I.F. who were about the world's worst. At any rate, the Honorary Minister has told us how serious is the position in the trade to-day. He has shown us that while the British-born section of those engaged in the industry are conducting their trade so as to provide for the training of apprentices, a situation has arisen that means that when those apprentices are out of their time, there is nothing for them to do.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Why is the Bill to be confined to Perth and Kalgoorlie only?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It can be enlarged if necessary, and be made to apply to the whole State. I belong to a very active body in this State, and it is not so long since we had a deputation to the Prime Minister, and put before him some of the harmful and dangerous propaganda that was being disseminated by Communists. In parts of the South-West and in the Swan Valley there is a strong Communist element. Unions have accepted them in days gone by. I have been associated with trade unions for many years, and we took them in as being the only possible way of disciplining them. We thought we could do that by getting them into the organisations. That is what the Bill proposes to do. It proposes to try to discipline them, and say that they shall conform to our conditions. I appeal to members to treat the Bill as in the nature of an experiment. I can see no harm in passing it, and at any rate giving it a trial, say, for a year. We can then treat it as we treated to-day the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you approve of depriving the poor man of getting cheap bread, as the Minister suggested in his speech?

Hon. J. CORNELL: In an ordered community we should say what is fair and reasonable to suit the conditions in any industry

On the question of cleanliness the law requires some tightening up. We have heard of people sleeping on premises where bread is baked, and they are immune from prosecution. I would go further and lay it down that we institute in this State the system that has been in operation for 20 years in Glasgow, that no bread may be sold unless it is sold in a container. We know that must add to the cost, but it also may result in the longevity of the people. I hope the House will agree to the Bill in principle. Lastly I say that if the baking industry were similarly circumstanced as is the industry with which Mr. Holmes was associated for many years, the difficulty that has presented itself to-day would not have arisen. We do not find many alien butchers. The people in the North who grow the beef sell it to the wholesale butchers.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And you find the Butchers' Union striking, and permitting people to starve.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was saying that in the butchering industry we do not find the conditions that are associated with the bread industry, because much more capital is required in the butchering industry than is the case in the baking industry. I hope the House will pass the Bill.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [11.50]: I remember about two years ago when another Bill of this nature was brought in, it contained many clauses that did not meet with the approval of this House. After reading the present Bill through very carefully, I have come to the conclusion that with the exception of the clause that refers to country baking hours, it is a reasonable measure. I intend to support the second reading, but when the Bill is in Committee and we are dealing with the position of the country bakers, I shall accept the amendment to be moved by Mr. Nicholson in preference to that which stands in my name on the Notice Paper.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

**ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.**

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [11.55]: There is a possibility of Parliament being able to conclude its business at the next sitting, and in order to enable us to bring that about with as little inconvenience as possible, I propose to ask members to meet to-morrow at 2.30 p.m. instead of the usual hour. I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 11.57 p.m.*

**Legislative Assembly.**

*Thursday, 16th December, 1937.*

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

**QUESTION—PLANT DISEASES ACT.***Orchard Registration.*

Mr. **SAMPSON** asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is insistence of registration and reregistration of all orchards as re-

quired by the Plant Diseases Act maintained? 2, How many orchards have been registered for the different periods since registration was declared compulsory? 3, How many prosecutions in connection with the fruit fly scourge have taken place for the different periods since registration became compulsory?

The **MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE** replied: 1, Yes. 2, In 1936-37, 53,080; in 1937-38, up to date, 45,104 orchards have been registered. In the Swan electoral district, there are no less than 751 orchards which were registered in 1936 but have not yet been registered for 1937-38. 3, There have been 50 prosecutions since registration became compulsory. The department would appreciate the assistance of the hon. member for Swan in its endeavours to eradicate this pest.

**QUESTION—ELECTRICITY.***Collie Coal Costs.*

Mr. **WILSON** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the train mileage from Collie to the electric power station at East Perth? 2, What is the mileage rate per ton on all coal used by the electric power station at East Perth? 3, What is the cost per ton for hauling coal from Collie to the electric power station at East Perth?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 1, 123 miles, plus distance from pit's mouth to Collie. 2, 12s. 3d. per ton. 3, Such costs are not segregated, nor is it possible to extract them with any degree of accuracy.

**BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.***Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. **SAMPSON**: On a point of order. May I ask whether the Minister for Agriculture is acting in accordance with approved practice in introducing a further question into the questions asked by me?

Mr. **SPEAKER**: The hon. member is too late. He should have taken notice of it immediately afterwards.

Mr. **SAMPSON**: We have not yet proceeded to deal with the next business.

Mr. **SPEAKER**: The hon. member's only course is to give notice of a question.