

ther amendment in which it desired the concurrence of the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. today (Wednesday).

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 12.28 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 11th December, 1946.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

OBITUARY—LETTER IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following letter from Mrs. Cornell:—

Would you please convey to the members of the House the sincere thanks of myself and Mr. George Cornell for the messages of sympathy in our loss, and also my gratitude and thanks for the many tributes expressed by members.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

That during the remainder of the session, so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be put through all stages at the one sitting, and all messages from the Legislative Assembly to be taken into consideration forthwith.

QUESTION.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES ACT.

As to Revoking Proclamation.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

1, As there is no authority under the Stipendiary Magistrates Act, 1930, to revoke a proclamation made thereunder, by what authority did the Minister for Justice publish in the "Government Gazette" on the 22nd November, 1946, a proclamation revoking a proclamation, made under that Act, and published in the "Government Gazette" on the 8th November, 1940?

2, Has a magistrate other than a stipendiary magistrate any power or authority to act as a resident or police magistrate at Bunbury in view of the aforesaid proclamation published on the 22nd November, 1946?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, Authority is given by necessary implication in Section 1 of the Stipendiary Magistrates Act, 1930.

2, Yes.

BILLS (6)—THIRD READING.

1, Legislative Council (War Time) Electoral Act Amendment.

2, Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment. Transmitted to the Assembly.

3, Timber Industry Regulation Act Amendment.

4, Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment.

5, State Forest Access.

6, Canning District Sanitary Site.

Passed.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 15.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 15.—Cancellation of registration for fraud or on other grounds:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have made inquiries from the Solicitor General regarding the question raised by Mr. Parker last night, and he is of the same opinion as the hon. member. There is an apparent contradiction in the clause and he considers that in Subclause (5) the period of six months allowed for the making of an appeal should be altered to one month. Perhaps Mr. Parker would like to move an amendment in that direction.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I do not care what is done with it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We had better let it remain as it is, then.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I merely drew attention to the point. As far as I am concerned it does not matter. The whole Bill is so stupid that I do not care whether the period is six months or one month or whether they have any right to appeal at all.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think it is my duty to take notice of the Solicitor General's opinion. I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of Subclause (5) the word "six" be struck out and the word "one" inserted in lieu.

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

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

Further Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, Bill again recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 3.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Application of Act:

Hon. A. THOMSON: I intend to move that all the words after the word "apply" in line 1 be struck out. If it is essential that the people in the metropolitan area should have the advantage of this Bill I do not see why those in the country districts should be debarred from the same rights and privileges. Conditions imposed by similar measures have made it very difficult for men with practical knowledge and experience to pass the necessary examinations with the result that they have been debarred from entering their trade or calling. If I am successful with this amendment I shall then move to insert words to provide that the measure shall apply to the whole of the State. Any man then, who has been carrying on business for a number of years, will be entitled to all the privileges of the Act.

Hon. L. Craig: He will have to pay for them.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, and he will do that in any case because he will not be permitted to join later on and will have no say in the fixing of rates, or anything else.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member desires that the measure shall apply to the whole of the State, his best course of action is to move that the clause be struck out, and if it is, the measure would then automatically apply to the whole State. There is no need to strike out certain words and insert others.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That being so, I have pleasure in suggesting that the Committee support me in having the whole of Clause 3 deleted.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I support Mr. Thomson. Why should these restrictions apply to Armadale and not to Pinjarra, or to Mundaring and not to Northam? The customers in Northam are just as much entitled to protection as are those in the metropolitan area.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am surprised at Mr. Thomson, a business man, putting forward this proposition. If it is agreed to the fees will have to be increased, and the Bill considerably revised. Without knowing what we are actually facing, it would be unwise to consider what he suggests. Under this legislation the cost of administering the Act will be borne by

those engaged in the industry; the Government will be put to no expense. This is experimental legislation and we want to give it a trial in the metropolitan area and it can then be extended to the larger towns.

Hon. G. B. Wood: You say that it is risky legislation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, it is experimental.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Committee will not support Mr. Thomson. He shows bad sportsmanship in moving as he has at this stage. Right through the piece he has opposed the Bill, which he is quite entitled to do, but now he comes to light with a suggestion that upsets the whole measure.

Hon. A. Thomson: Not at all.

Hon. G. FRASER: Of course it does. If the hon. member wanted the Bill to apply to the whole State he should have dealt with this clause in the Committee stage so that, had he been successful, amendments to other clauses, that were dealt with later, could have been carried. If this clause is deleted now some other clauses will require altering.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Which ones?

Hon. G. FRASER: Many of them dealing with fees and other things.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: They can be reduced.

Hon. G. FRASER: They cannot be touched at all because, as the Bill has been recommitted, the only clause that we can discuss at the moment is Clause 3. If Mr. Thomson is successful in his desires we will have to further recommit the Bill. This is experimental legislation which should be confined to the metropolitan area. That is not an unusual procedure. If it proves effective it can later be extended. Mr. Thomson can see nothing good in the Bill and has opposed it throughout. He now tries this means of wrecking it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The discussion on the Bill has been based on the assumption that its operation would be confined to the metropolitan area. If extended to the country, it will put many hairdressers out of business as they will be unable to comply with the conditions laid down.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Already it will embrace some small country towns, down to Mundijong.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not care whether it does, or not.

Hon. A. Thomson: What effect will it have at present?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am trying to see what effect it will have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Kindly address the Chair.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I will do so if my friends from the bush will allow me. The measure would interfere greatly with the barbers in small country towns. The amendment would enforce the payment of fees which such barbers could not afford. They do not want the measure at all.

Hon. A. Thomson: How do you know?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Mr. Thomson knows the type of barber to whom I refer, working perhaps in a little room where the hair-cutting is done.

Hon. G. B. Wood: If the measure is good enough for the metropolitan area, it is good enough for the country.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think it is too good. The amendment, if agreed to, will ruin the Bill. The country town barbers will resent it. I see no advantage in it for the public, except in the larger country towns, where it may be desirable. It would be a mistake to agree to the elimination of this clause.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: If the provision does not extend to country districts, expert barbers in those areas will be debarred from going into business in the city.

Hon. G. Fraser: No. Read the Bill!

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I have read it. When examinations were held recently many competent people were unable to pass them, and that could happen in this case.

Hon. G. Fraser: The man already in business is not required to sit for the examination. He has only to prove he has been in business.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: He cannot be licensed without passing the examination. The country barber should have the same rights and privileges as the city barber, and the only way to ensure that is to extend the measure to cover country areas. I think the Bill is not required in either the city or the country but, if we must have it, let it apply throughout the State.

Hon. W. R. HALL: There are just as good hairdressers on the Goldfields as in the metropolitan area, and the ladies there require just as much protection as they do here. I think the measure should cover the whole State. It has been suggested that those already in business need not pass examinations. What is the position of an apprentice on the Goldfields who may later desire to find employment in Perth? Would he be entitled to set up in business here? There are just as large hairdressing establishments in Kalgoorlie as in Perth, and just as good in every way. I support the amendment. There was a certain fraternity mentioned during the discussion on the Bill. A certain element within the 25-mile radius and not far from Parliament House some time ago wanted to become connected with the trade. Certain people said, "We will work at the trade for perhaps three or six months and will then start our own businesses."

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is just as much risk to the public, no matter where hair is dressed, if electrical appliances are used. If the country areas are not included under the measure persons found incompetent in the metropolitan area, who have failed to pass the examinations, will be able to commence business in the country. The amendment would obviate that. If a person were apprenticed to an unregistered hairdresser in the country, his apprenticeship might not be recognised in the city. The bona fide hairdresser can register under the Bill now. I think the amendment would lessen the fees, rather than increase them, and they could possibly be eliminated altogether if the measure were extended to cover the whole State. The board would probably decide not to appoint its own inspectors but to leave the work to local health inspectors, who should be trained to do it, so that the onus would eventually come back to the Health Department.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I see some virtue in the argument that a measure of this kind would be advantageous to the public of the whole State, but there are difficulties in the way. The Bill was designed for the purpose of dealing with the metropolitan area and I do not think it will prejudice those outside it.

Hon. G. Fraser: Clause 10 protects them.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The measure provides that those engaged in the industry

when the measure comes into operation are to be protected. Anyone practising as a hairdresser in Kalgoorlie at present could, if he came to the metropolitan area next year, apply for registration. I think Dr. Hislop's fear that apprentices working in the country may be prejudiced is groundless. The board will prescribe standards for examinations and will surely provide for apprentices serving their time with reputable hairdressers in the country. The effect of striking out the clause will be to defeat the Bill. The measure is a good one as far as it goes, but there would be many difficulties in the way of giving it general application. After we have had experience of its operation in the metropolitan area, we shall be in a better position to decide whether its scope should be extended to the rest of the State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members and particularly representatives of country districts should hesitate before supporting the deletion of the clause. If the measure be given general application, many country places will not be able to have the services of a hairdresser.

Hon. A. Thomson: Why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because they will not be registered and will not have an opportunity to register. There are many small country centres where hairdressers come and go and, if any one of them set up as a hairdresser, he would be running the risk of prosecution and a fine of £50.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Provided he did not register within a certain time.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Many of them could not register. The measure might apply fairly successfully to larger country towns, but there are smaller towns where it would not be possible for any one to set up as a hairdresser unless he were registered. In many cases a registered person could not set up in the business because there would not be sufficient work to enable him to carry on successfully. Members should consider the real effect of the proposal.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: In dealing with experimental legislation of this sort, we should consider its probable effect on the whole State. The question resolves itself down to this, that we can have clean conditions in

the metropolitan area and dirty conditions in the country, or clean conditions throughout the State. It is a matter of choice.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Some members appear to have suddenly become intensely interested in the well-being of the people in the country. Recently they cheerfully supported a Bill dealing with petrol supplies that applied to the whole of the State but, when the health of the people is involved, they want to experiment on residents of the metropolitan area. No charges are stipulated in the Bill, and some of us know that in Sydney and other places, when one enters one of these special shops to spend a few shillings, one is fortunate to get out with the expenditure of a few pounds. If this legislation is good for the city, why not for the country? If, as the Chief Secretary said, a man setting up as a hairdresser in the country would be liable to a penalty of £50, we should abolish the fine. Most country towns have two or three hairdressers' shops and ladies' salons. Why should a lady going from Perth to Albany, Bunbury or Busselton have to run the risk of not getting proper treatment? The business conducted in those towns should be subject to the same supervision as in the metropolitan area. A man who has learnt the trade in the country might combine hairdressing with other business and thus supply a pressing need.

The Chief Secretary: He would not be able to do that under your proposal.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Then the Bill should be rejected.

The Chief Secretary: That is what the hon. member desires.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Minister is not fair in making that charge.

Hon. W. R. Hall: You are only objecting to sectional legislation?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. Members talk about decentralisation, but many of the measures we pass have the effect of forcing people to leave the country for the more comfortable conditions of the city. If the measure is in the interests of the people of the metropolitan area, its scope should be extended to the whole of the State.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Thomson has opposed the measure right through because he does not think it a good one. Yet he wants to extend to the people in the

country legislation of which he has such a bad opinion.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 14 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 11 |

Majority for 3

AYES.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. E. H. Gray |
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. W. H. Kitchin |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. A. L. Linton |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. R. M. Forrest | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. G. Fraser |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | (Teller.) |

Clause thus passed.

Bill again reported without amendment and the reports adopted.

BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

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

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th November.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [3.35]: It has always been conceded that local authorities have done a vast amount of work in assisting the Government in the development of the State, and there has always been a very good feeling between the Government, the Public Works Department and its officers, and members of the local authorities. It is this good feeling which has existed throughout that has enabled successful work to be done from time to time. I regret that sometimes legislation is not brought under the notice of local authorities before being introduced into Parliament; because, after all, it does not seem quite fair that legislation should be passed that affects any section of the community without the people concerned having an opportunity to know some-

thing about it. In the present instance, local authorities throughout the State have had no chance whatever of becoming acquainted with the provisions of the Bill, because it has been introduced without notice.

I do not understand why so many proposals are brought down without any request from the people who administer the Road Districts Act. When the Minister was introducing the Bill, he conveyed the impression that the measure was the result of representations made by the Road Board Association. That is not so. Out of 14 amendments submitted by the Road Board Association—amendments agreed to at its last general conference—only three are included in the Bill. The other 26 amendments in the measure have been incorporated at the request of some other authority. It seems to me that if any individual road board asked the Minister to introduce an amendment, it was very wrong to do so; because, of the 127 road boards throughout the State, only one is not affiliated with the association, and it is a golden rule that no board shall move except through the proper channels—the Road Board Association executive.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Who asked for the abolition of plural voting?

Hon. H. TUCKEY: It appears to me there is a little unfairness in regard to some of the proposals because, as I said, there has been quite a good feeling between the local governing bodies and the Public Works Department, and there should be more co-operation when legislation of this kind is being prepared. I am quite sure that all the members of the road boards are most anxious to improve the Act, if that can be done, but they would like an opportunity to express opinions on proposals to that end. The Bill contains a few desirable amendments, and for that reason I propose to vote for the second reading, but I regret that I shall have to oppose a large number of the clauses. I hope it will not be considered that I am obstinate in regard to this legislation, because I desire to assist in improving the Act in many ways. Nevertheless, I do not intend to agree with many of the proposals in the Bill.

Plural voting is the first matter which is mentioned. This question was raised at the last general conference of the association,

and the proposal was defeated. I do not think those local authorities would reverse that decision. I have never heard complaints about plural voting at road board elections, and I do not think that those who understand all the circumstances have much objection to the system. If a person owns land with an annual ratable value of £10, he is entitled to two votes. If the value is £25, he is entitled to three votes; and if it is £50, to four votes. A large number of ratepayers have land with an annual rental value of £1 a week, so all those people are entitled to four votes. Although they may have different political and other views, they are very satisfied and never seem to complain about the system under which they are working.

Rating on the unimproved value is on a similar basis, only in that instance values run from £150 to £600. An unimproved value of £150 entitles a ratepayer to one vote. If it is up to £300, he is entitled to two votes; up to £600, to three votes; and over £600, to four votes. The usual system of voting is to adopt the unimproved value for rural areas and the annual value for townsites, and I think most boards use that basis. When a person has more than one vote and owns land in more than one ward, it is necessary for him to select the ward in which he desires to use the votes. It is necessary also for such ratepayers to select those wards in January prior to the day of the elections. Once the wards have been selected, there cannot be any alteration for a period of three years. Plural voters cannot transfer their votes at every election, so there is some restriction in this matter of plural voting. Votes cannot be transferred from place to place to sway the election of different candidates.

It is possible under one section of the Act for a ratepayer to cast eight votes. The Road Board Association proposed that the Minister should have that section amended so that no-one could cast more than four votes, but that amendment was not accepted by him and as the Act stands a man may claim eight votes. That is brought about by a corporation being able to appoint an agent for the purpose of voting who would be entitled to cast four votes for the corporation and at the same time cast four votes on his own behalf. That

would give that particular person the right to cast eight votes at one election. The matter was discussed at the last road board conference, and it was decided to ask the Minister to amend the Act so that that could not continue. That is the only case where a ratepayer can use more than four votes.

The Bill provides for several alterations in the method of objecting to ratable values. The association has never had the opportunity to consider those proposals, and I feel bound to oppose them because there is no reason why they should not have been dealt with and agreed upon by that association. They have been in the Act for a long time and I do not think I have ever heard of trouble in that respect. If the ratable value is not correct any ratepayer should have the right to get it amended as soon as possible, and that is provided for in the Act. The Bill seeks to remove that right. A ratepayer may apply to have his name included in the list of voters that has been compiled but he cannot have the ratable value corrected at the same time if it is wrong. That would make a difference to the ratepayer's right to vote because his valuation might entitle him to only one vote, whereas in fact he should be entitled to three or four votes. If he has no right to get the valuation corrected he loses votes accordingly. I do not think the proposals regarding alterations in the ratable values are necessary, at any rate for the time being.

It is also proposed that a candidate must deposit a fee of £5 before he can contest a road board election, whereas the Act provides for a deposit of £1, which is quite sufficient. I have known cases where it has been difficult to get men to stand for a ward in a road board. I do not see why people should be asked to put up £5 to have the right to render public service to the district and the community in general. In a case like Kalgoorlie, which is a well populated district, there may be busybodies who cause a lot of trouble by nominating at elections when they have no chance of winning and when perhaps their nominations are not required. In the outlying centres, however, the position is quite different. People have to travel long distances to attend meetings and, indeed, it is not easy to

get candidates to nominate for the positions. If the fee were left at £1 that should be quite sufficient.

There is also a proposal to establish a board of secretaries, and to ensure that no secretary shall be appointed unless he passes an examination and is brought under the control of the board. That is not in the best interests of road board districts. At present a secretary of a road board cannot be appointed without the approval of the Minister, and unless he is covered by an insurance policy and a fidelity guarantee. A road board cannot be conducted without a quarterly audit, 50 per cent. of the cost of which has to be paid by the board. I cannot see the necessity for requiring people to pass an examination before they can be appointed as secretary of a road board. Recently we had a fine junior in the office at Pinjarra. He relieved the secretary for some time and did a very good job. He is quite a capable young man. The auditors knew his qualifications and had seen his work. Is it suggested that if the road board had applied to the Minister for permission to appoint that young man as secretary there would have been any objection? There could have been no objection.

The Honorary Minister: He could have passed the examination easily.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: He may not have done so. In the case of another board, a man had spent five years doing a job and could not have passed the examination. I do not think the examiners themselves could pass it. There are such things as close preserves. We do not want to close the door against those who are desirous of getting on and doing a good job. No appointment of this sort can be made without the approval of the Minister. That is sufficient protection against the wrong man getting the position. The proposal in the Bill is quite unnecessary. I have spoken to two road board secretaries about it and to two accountants. I know from my own commonsense and experience that an accountant could not walk into an office and do the work straight away. The man best fitted to do the work is the one who has had the training. As a rule junior officers get the opportunity to carry out various branches of the work and in due course they become efficient. I do not think there is any shortage of men offering to fill these

positions. There are generally 20 or 30 applicants when a vacancy is advertised. In my own experience the usual thing is to seek the co-operation of the Public Works Department. I have never known the officials there to refuse to co-operate in finding a suitable man for a particular position. I have yet to be told why it is necessary to create a board of secretaries before I will support the proposal.

Another rather objectionable clause is that which provides that a board may not dispense with the services of a servant unless that servant has the right of appeal to the Minister. I do not know whether the Minister would like to have to look to someone else before he dismissed an employee. It is not easy to manage workmen in these times. Many of them think they are badly treated and are looking for the new order. They often squabble amongst themselves and thus cause trouble. If a road board is not a fit authority to discharge a man without reference to the Minister it should no longer exist. I would not remain a member of a board in such circumstances. If it is necessary to provide for this right of appeal before a servant is dismissed the best thing would be for the Minister to employ all those people, and pay them to carry out the work. What we want is confidence. Over the years we have always been eulogised by the Minister for the good work that local authorities have carried out. Surely we have a right to a measure of confidence in these matters. I have yet to learn that anyone has been dismissed from his work when there has not been good cause for that step to be taken. I hope the House will not agree to that provision.

The Bill also provides for laying part of the cost of water supply schemes established in a road board area. I should like the Honorary Minister to clarify that clause. I want to know what it means, for as it reads it does not seem to be very clear. To what extent will it be possible to levy on a road board in a case like that? Some time ago the Minister in control fell out with the Melville Road Board over a refusal to grant a request for the building of a wooden house in a brick area. The upshot was that the Minister over-rode the building regulations of the road board and the individual concerned was permitted to erect a wooden

house. That was wrong, although I will not castigate anyone at present over that matter. If a road board or municipality cannot declare a brick area in certain parts of its district the development of the locality will not be advanced.

It is wrong that people who have spent large sums of money in building fine brick houses should wake up one day to the fact that someone has built a weatherboard establishment costing £200 alongside a brick house. The building may consist of asbestos or galvanised iron. Surely such a practice is not desirable. People should not be allowed to build a wooden house in a brick area. I hope the House will not agree to the use of "any structural material" such as is referred to in the Bill. For a long time the Public Works Department refused to agree to road boards paying the expenses of two delegates to attend the annual conference. It is usual to send two delegates and when they have to travel long distances the cost is fairly considerable. The Bill, however, provides that the road board may pay the expenses of two delegates. That is a good provision. It is also provided that travelling expenses may be paid. This will help road districts in the North-West.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Not only in the North-West.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Particularly in that part of the State. The Act provides for a maximum of 10s. but this Bill increases the sum of £1. The Road Boards Association desires that members should be allowed 4d. a mile. If a member of a board in the North-West has to travel 100 miles he would be entitled to £1 13s. 4d.

Hon. G. B. Wood: That would be little enough up there.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: It would be little enough. To raise the amount to £1 is to provide something that is neither useful nor reasonable. The request for the payment of 4d. a mile was a reasonable one and should have been agreed to. The Bill provides for the valuation of part of a district. That is a good proposal. In the past it has not been possible to alter any valuation made for any particular part of the district, no matter how desirable that might be. The Bill, however, provides that any part may be re-valued, and that will enable road boards to

bring the valuations more into line and collect a greater revenue. There is also a proposal that 20 resident owners may demand a poll as to the method of rating in a district. It is not necessary to pass that clause.

If a poll is to be demanded, it should be at the request of 10, 15 or 20 per cent. of the ratepayers and not only by 20 ratepayers. One could get 20 people to sign anything. A poll cannot be taken without involving some expense and considerable inconvenience. A ratepayers' meeting is held at least once a year. Such a meeting is well advertised and ratepayers have an opportunity to attend and to pass motions dealing with matters on such occasions. There is no need to provide for 20 ratepayers having the power to do all this. The population of the district may be small and those who concern themselves may have very little interest in local matters, yet they could demand a poll and put the board to a good deal of expense.

Sitting suspended from 4 to 4.17 p.m.

HON. H. TUCKEY: Another proposal in the measure is that model by-laws shall be prepared which may be adopted, wholly or in part, by any local authority. I think that is an excellent provision. Many boards have their own by-laws, but there is always a difficulty in framing by-laws to meet the requirements of a district. If there were a model set of by-laws prepared by the Crown Law Department, it would be of great assistance to local authorities when framing by-laws to cover their own particular districts. Another important provision in the Bill deals with the sale of land for non-payment of rates. While this provision clarifies the present position and makes it somewhat easier to sell land for non-payment of rates, it is still rather cumbersome. It would still take a long time to effect the sale and clear up the business.

Under the existing law, a ratepayer must be five years in arrears before his land can be sold for non-payment of rates. If he came along and paid, say, £5, off an amount due of £50, then the board could not take action for the time being, and the whole procedure would have to be gone through at some future time. The period of five years is too long. I would suggest three years.

If he is given three months' notice, as provided in the Bill, that ought to be long enough. It has been the desire of road boards for some considerable time past to secure a simplification of this procedure in order to avoid long delays in cases where ratepayers have died or left the country owing a considerable amount for rates. The road boards want machinery whereby the procedure can be made quicker. A fair amount of work is entailed in carrying forward the rates from year to year and in sending out rate notices.

I hope the Minister will agree to alter the period from five to three years. I know of some persons who deliberately allow their rates to fall in arrear because they have some grievance against a board; they prevent the board from selling the land by coming forward, just as the sale is to take place, and paying some amount in reduction of the rates owing. They are then legally entitled to carry on in the same way. There are some other matters that I do not think it necessary to touch upon. I regret I have so much of the Bill to oppose, but that is mainly because some of the clauses have not been considered by the Road Board Association. Others I think would be not satisfactory to the association and I am certain I cannot agree to them myself. I shall support the second reading, as there are two or three clauses that will be helpful to the road boards.

HON. R. M. FORREST (North) [4.22]: I am surprised at some of the clauses in the Bill; they will require serious consideration. I intend to support the second reading, but I hope those clauses will not be passed. It is proposed to amend Sections 33, 34 and 35 of the principal Act. Section 33 is to be amended by providing that if a district is divided into wards, an elector shall be entitled to be enrolled as a ratepayer for only one ward. Notwithstanding that he may own land in more than one ward, he may only vote for the particular ward in which he is enrolled. Section 34 is to be repealed and a new section inserted in its place. The new section provides that a person enrolled as a ratepayer shall have one vote only, and no more. He will be entitled to vote only for the ward in respect of which he is enrolled as a ratepayer.

Section 35 is also to be repealed, and the clause in substitution provides that where two persons hold a piece of land, both shall be entitled to be rated and both shall have a vote; but if more than two persons own the same property then, notwithstanding that they may pay a considerable amount of rates, only two of them shall have a vote. Obviously, the Government's intention is to do away with plural voting. If a person owns a farm or a station which is situated in two or more wards, surely he should have some say as to who shall represent those wards. He may be the biggest ratepayer. I consider that a person who pays £100 to £150 per annum in rates should have some say in the spending of that money. He certainly should have more say than a ratepayer who pays, say, £1 per annum in rates. As Mr. Tuckey has mentioned, the Bill also provides for a nomination fee of £5 in lieu of the existing fee of £1. I am not sure whether that will make much difference. I am not convinced that it is necessary, because the experience I have had on road boards is that it is extremely difficult to get people to act on such bodies, especially in the outlying districts.

I notice that proposed new Section 129D provides for the examination of road board secretaries. It is but right that these secretaries should be qualified, but is it the intention of the board, which is designated the "Road Board Secretaries Board", to examine candidates in accountancy only, or will they be examined in road construction, road repair and other subjects arising in connection with the administration of a road board? These secretaries should not be accountants only. Speaking from experience, I consider that a road board secretary should be a good bushman as well as a good secretary. In outback places, the secretary is generally also the supervisor and it is necessary for him to spend much of his time out in the district. A number of road boards cannot afford to employ a secretary. It is all very well for some of the well-to-do boards, in districts with a big population, to employ a large staff: but the majority of the country road boards have a very small revenue and it is impossible to employ more than one executive officer. Some road board districts in the North-West have 2,000 miles of bush roads to maintain and they have but limited re-

sources or revenue to carry out the necessary work.

I was interested to hear Mr. W. R. Hall say that the Kalgoorlie Road Board had a revenue of over £10,000 per annum from motor licenses alone. No wonder that board can afford to employ a number of qualified executive officers! But that is not so in the majority of country road boards. I wish now to say a few words with respect to Section 138. The Government has overstepped the mark by including a clause, which deals with the employment of road board employees. Surely we could have left to the discretion of road board members the right to say whom they would or would not have for their employees. Road boards are not generally hard on their employees, but if the servant of a particular board were not carrying out his duties to the satisfaction of the board, then it should have the right to say that he should be dismissed.

Why should the Government want to interfere to this extent in local affairs? No board would dismiss an employee unless there were very good reason for doing so. I have been a member of a road board for 32 years, during 20 of which I have been chairman, and that is the position I still hold. I would not have been on the board for very long had a clause of this description been in the Road Districts Act.

The Honorary Minister: You are a good boss.

Hon. R. M. FORREST: I consider it a reflection on the integrity of road board members to suggest that they cannot be trusted to decide an issue of this sort. The State would be far better off if more power were given to local authorities, instead of centralisation being encouraged. How can any government be expected to manage local affairs in outlying places, such as Wyndham, Hall's Creek and others? The least the Government can do is to leave local affairs to local governing bodies. It would be a poor state of affairs if we could not dismiss an employee in these isolated parts. Under this Act, such an employee has the right of appeal. It is difficult at times to get staff in these places, and I am quite safe in saying that, as far as I am concerned, no employee has ever been dismissed without there having been very good cause. I have mentioned a few of the clauses that affect the North-West. The others mostly affect the road boards in the more closely settled areas.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—in reply) [4.35]: This is essentially a Committee Bill, so I do not propose to deal now with the various points that have been raised. Every amendment in it has been requested by authoritative bodies of men and women, from all over Western Australia. Some amendments have been requested by the Road Board Association, some were passed last session in the Municipal Corporations Act, and there is not one that has not been requested by some responsible body of men and women, to whom of necessity the Government must listen.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What body requested the abolition of plural voting?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The one that I am proud to belong to. The biggest argument in favour of the amendments relating to this matter was put forward by Sir Hal Colebatch quite recently, when he stated that in the Old Country there had been one vote for one ratepayer for over 62 years. Imagine the progress we might have made here had we adopted the same principle!

Hon. A. Thomson: Look at the marvellous progress we have made in a young country under present conditions.

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

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 18 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| Majority for | .. | .. | .. | 13 |
| <hr/> | | | | |

AYES.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. W. J. Mann |
| Hon. J. A. Dimmitt | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. E. H. Hall | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. A. L. Loton | Hon. R. M. Forrest |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | (Teller.) |

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 33:

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: This is the first of the clauses to do away with plural voting. We have heard all the arguments on this question, and I do not propose to repeat them. I hope the Committee will delete the clause.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The principle of the abolition of plural voting is contained in many amendments in the Bill, and I hope that even at this late hour the Committee will alter its mind, and agree to it. As I remarked just now, Sir Hal Colebatch told us that for 62 years in the Old Country the principle of one ratepayer, one vote has been followed.

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

| | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 14 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| Majority against | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| <hr/> | | | | |

AYES.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. G. Fraser |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. A. L. Loton | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| | (Teller.) |

PAIR.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| AYE. | No. |
| Hon. C. B. Williams | Hon. F. E. Gibson |

Clause thus negated.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 34:

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Clause 2 having been struck out, it seems consequential that Clause 3 should go out.

Clause put and negated.

Clauses 4 to 9—negated.

Clause 10—Amendment of Section 69:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I hope the Committee will agree to this clause despite both Mr. Forrest and Mr. Tuckey having spoken against it. Its object is to prevent irresponsible people from nominating. In the metropolitan district people with no possible chance of winning frequently stand, thus putting bona-fide candidates to unnecessary expense. It is

thought that the fee of £5 will have the effect of preventing such people nominating.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I hope the Committee will reject the clause. In my long experience of road board work I do not remember any person having lost a deposit. In the metropolitan area it happens that certain candidates put up for election five or six times, with no chance of success, but that does not occur in the country. This provision was turned down by a conference of over 100 road board delegates.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I think the clause should be retained. As a councillor of many years experience I know what the fee of £5 means. That amount can always be found by bona-fide candidates, yet it excludes certain undesirable people.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I think the clause should remain. It is no hardship for a bona-fide candidate to find £5, but that is not the case with a man who has to borrow it, and who has no chance of being elected. There are many men who would not be prepared to put up £5 simply for the sake of advertisement.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 13 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 11 |

Majority for 2

AYES.

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. J. G. Hison |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. A. L. Loton |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. W. R. Hall |
| Hon. E. M. Heenan | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | Hon. G. W. Miles |
| Hon. C. H. Simpson | (Teller.) |

Clause thus passed.

Clause 11—Amendment of Section 81:

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is a consequential amendment, also.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 12—Amendment of Section 129:

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is one of the most important amendments in the Bill and deals with the issue of certifi-

cates of competency to road board secretaries. It has been asked for by officers of the audit branch of the Local Government Department, and by the secretaries' organisation. Mr. W. R. Hall said that if a man was an accountant that should be sufficient, but there is special training required for the position of a road board officer. This provision would save the Minister, the department and the road boards a great deal of worry and trouble. It is necessary in order to safeguard the road boards themselves.

Hon. H. L. Roche: To save them from themselves.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It will give the young men a chance. When applications are received everything possible is done to assess the qualifications of the candidates. A man who is strongly favoured by certain road board members may have qualifications and experience that are not to be compared with those of other candidates. If the proposal be agreed to, existing secretaries will be granted a certificate but new appointees would have to qualify by examination. I stress the importance of this proposal because it will contribute greatly to the good government of local authorities and afford an incentive to young men to study for a career.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I do not agree with the Honorary Minister's statement that an accountancy certificate is not sufficient qualification for a road board secretary. The secretary of the Kalgoorlie Road Board holds no accountancy qualifications, but is the equal of the best secretary, health and meat inspector in the State. These are important considerations, especially when a board has not the revenue to finance the appointment of a man with the qualifications advocated by the Minister. We have two lads in the office who hold accountancy qualifications, but I would not compare them to the secretary for efficiency or a knowledge of the duties. Admittedly the secretaries of some boards are not qualified and the auditors of the Works Department have practically to do the job for them. Some of those secretaries were appointed during the war period. My board has a revenue of £40,000 a year, but some of the 127 boards in the State have not a large revenue and have not been able to get thoroughly competent secretaries. I shall support the clause, though I still believe that a certificate of account-

tancy should be sufficient qualification for the position.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I hope members will not agree to the clause. Mr. W. R. Hall admitted that some secretaries are not competent; yet under this provision they would be regarded as competent. This proposal should have been submitted to the road board conference for its opinion. The Works Department is already protected in every reasonable way, and I fear that the proposal may create a considerable amount of friction and lead to meddling with local government affairs.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I cannot see any justification for the proposal. Mr. W. R. Hall condemns it, though he proposes to vote for it. He knows that the position is already adequately safeguarded. Government auditors conduct an almost continuous audit, a practice that I instituted years ago. Before a man can be appointed as road board secretary, a recommendation has to be sent to the Minister for consideration. Surely this makes the system watertight! It is only to be expected that the government auditors and road board secretaries would favour such a scheme; it would make a close preserve for road board secretaries. I object also to bringing another board into existence. We seem to be doing little apart from creating new boards. The present system has worked satisfactorily and there is no occasion to alter it.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I oppose the clause. I have not heard of any request along these lines having been made by road boards.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not by the boards, but by the secretaries.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Generally speaking, the standard of road board secretaries is high and the present system is working well. The constitution of the new board to be appointed to conduct examinations has not been mentioned, except that the members of the board are to be fit and proper persons. Will they be accountants or engineers? An important safeguard is that the Minister has power to over-ride the decision of a board. It would not be advisable to pass the clause.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Leave well alone.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Yes.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is the most important proposal in the Bill. Similar legislation has been operating in Vic-

toria with great success. This is a copy of the Victorian legislation, slightly altered to deal with our conditions. We could not apply it to all parts of the State. There are some boards, particularly in the North-West in respect of which this provision could not be operated.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And a lot down south!

The HONORARY MINISTER: In exceptional circumstances, the Minister can give authority for the appointment of a man with a certificate of competency. This provision has been tried out elsewhere and has been a success. I think, too, that we must take notice of our own auditors and the experience they have had, and we must also give encouragement to the coming generation. An individual will be able to go into an office as a boy, give his attention to the job and look to it as a career.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What will happen in a few years' time when they are all of age?

The HONORARY MINISTER: This will absorb a lot of them.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Then they will be put out and a new scheme will be started.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This will stop a lot of misunderstanding between the road boards and the department and will generally add to the efficiency of road boards throughout the State.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I hope the Committee will delete the clause. I see no reason to believe that if it is included road boards will have any more protection than now. I can recall cases where road board secretaries have been appointed with the approval of the Honorary Minister's department and they and the boards have parted later without any regrets. A certain portion of this Bill is designed to take away from the people who have to pay the piper the right to call the tune. I know of no-one better qualified to decide whether a secretary is capable of discharging his duties than are road board members, who are responsible to their ratepayers and have to answer to them for any money spent. The idea of a certificate of competency may be all very well in theory, but those certificates will be issued by the road board secretaries' board, when created, and will be issued in such a way as to maintain a close corporation. I have had experience of the autocratic and bureau-

eratic attitude adopted by some of the officials of departments in respect of appointments to secretarial positions on boards, and I am not disposed to agree to that portion of the Bill, of which this clause is a part, that will make the bureaucratic control and interference with road boards worse than it is at the moment.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Mr. Baxter said I condemned the clause after saying I was going to vote for it. I merely said I would vote for the clause but would not agree with everything the Minister said in regard to the certificate. If road boards were in a position to pay a reasonably decent wage, they would get men with qualifications without any trouble. This provision will not affect present secretaries, who will be immune. The point is that if my board pays £12 a week for a secretary, which it does, it is entitled to someone with a certificate or someone with the qualifications of an accountant.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Wages do not come into this argument. I maintain that a road board is the most competent authority to appoint a secretary.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I oppose the clause. The best judges in regard to the appointment of secretaries, town clerks or any employees of bodies like these are the members of those bodies. I have had 20 years' experience of municipal and road board matters, and I think that if those authorities are not competent to select the men who are most suitable for the work, they had better get out of the job. For them to be subservient to a Minister in this matter is entirely wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This clause will assist the road boards. The board of examiners will not recommend an appointment. They will examine a man's qualifications and issue a certificate. Road boards will then be in a position to select their own employee from those holding certificates.

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

| | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 8 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 16 |
| | | | | — |
| Majority against | .. | .. | .. | 8 |
| | | | | — |

AYES.

Hon. G. Bennetts
Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. E. H. Gray

Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. H. S. W. Parker
(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter
Hon. L. B. Bolton
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch
Hon. L. Craig
Hon. E. H. H. Hall
Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. W. J. Mann

Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. F. E. Gibson
(Teller.)

Clause thus negatived.

Clause 13—New Sections 129A to 129L:

The HONORARY MINISTER: This clause will have to be treated consequentially because of what has occurred in the case of the previous clause.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 14: New Section 130A:

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is the practice throughout Australia to give civil servants the right of appeal against dismissal. As local governing authorities are semi-governmental employers it is recognised that their employees should also have that right. The practice has proved very successful in New South Wales. Both the unions concerned in Western Australia have requested the Government to bring down this amendment to the Act, so that all employees concerned may have that right of appeal. In New South Wales very few, if any, frivolous appeals are lodged. I hope the Committee will accept this clause. It will not affect certain local authorities because of their distance from Perth, but it will beneficially affect others. The employees concerned should be given the protection that is afforded to members of the Civil Service.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I hope the clause will be struck out. I would not sit as a member of a road board that had to carry out a provision such as this. If a road board is not capable of discharging its own employees when it sees fit to do so it is not capable of carrying on its work.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: This is the worst clause in the Bill and constitutes an insult to road board members. Time and again Ministers have told road boards what a wonderful job they are doing, and now we find the Government endeavouring to insert this provision in the Act. Such an amendment as this may well lead to em-

employees loafing on the job because they will be in a position, if the clause is passed, to appeal against their dismissal.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I support the clause. At times road boards give a great deal of authority to one man who can do what he likes with the staff, and that gives rise to a great deal of dissatisfaction because no appeal is provided against dismissals.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Many safeguards are provided for employees of road boards. If a dispute arises the foreman reports the matter to the secretary and everything afterwards comes before the road board itself.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is a lot of merit in this proposal. This is an endeavour to extend the privilege of appeals to employees of local governing bodies. It is a practice that has proved valuable in the Commonwealth and State services. In many instances the employees are victimised by someone in authority but the right of appeal gives them a safeguard against wrongful dismissal. This provision will apply only to men who have been longer than 12 months in the service of a road board.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 17 |

Majority against .. 10

AYES.

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. G. Bennetts |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. A. L. Leton | Hon. W. J. Mann |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | (Teller.) |

Clause thus negatived.

Clauses 15 and 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—New Section 198A:

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Will the Honorary Minister explain this clause, which may have far-reaching effects? It should be considered by the Road Board Association before it is carried into force.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Members representing Great Southern districts will understand the necessity for the clause. In the past, dams have been constructed for the convenience of farmers, and the understanding was that the local authorities would maintain and look after them. They have fallen down on the job. When there were dry years, the dams were in a very bad condition and the community suffered considerably. The Public Works Department proposes to maintain travelling gangs that will be engaged in cleaning the dams and the road boards will be debited with a proportion of the cost. It should be a good investment for the boards, because the department has the necessary plant to do the work much more cheaply.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Have you any idea of the proportion that the boards would be called upon to pay?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot say what the proportion would be.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Unless the Minister can say that this provision has been requested by local authorities, I shall vote against it. It seems to me the Government wants to "pass the buck" to road boards in order to collect money.

The Honorary Minister: That is not the idea at all.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: That is how it appears to me.

Hon. L. Craig: Who benefits from the dams? Only the ratepayers!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: That may be so, but it is a question of who will collect the money—the road board or the Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This does not involve the collection of money from anyone. It means that local water supplies in areas where the people are not rated will be cleaned out by the department and kept in good order in the interests of the local people. In the past, the local authorities undertook to maintain and clean out the dams but they did not do so, with the result that the ratepayers were in trouble during dry seasons.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Who asked for this?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Possibly the proposal emanated from the department.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I hope the Committee will delete the clause. It seems to me that the Minister will be able to put

gangs on when and where he likes and under whatever conditions he desires, and then send the bill to the local authority. That does not appeal to me. Some of these water supplies are not so much of local benefit as in the interests of the public generally.

Hon. G. FRASER: The clause has merit. With the Minister for Works, I visited the Great Southern districts. Several deputations had to wait on the Minister, who could not receive them all, and he delegated me to take one. The deputation urged that a gang of men should be sent to clean out a drain. I inspected the drain and told them that if they could not remove the little silt that was there, they deserved to go without water. I advised the Minister accordingly. In all probability the same sort of thing happened elsewhere, with the result that this proposition has been put forward.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The clause is quite reasonable. It means that where there is a water supply for which the local people pay nothing, if the dams are out of order the Minister will send his gangs to repair and maintain them, and the local authority will be expected to pay a proportion of the cost of maintenance. The alternative would be for the Minister to put in a water scheme and all the people would be rated.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The clause certainly has merit and will enable the Government to do the work much more cheaply than a road board could. The Government has the necessary plant, whereas the local authority would find it very expensive to undertake the work without that plant.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The clause, I should say, deals mainly with key dams that were constructed by the Public Works Department to assist settlers in various parts of the State. They were constructed long ago, when Mr. W. D. Johnson was Minister for Works.

The Honorary Minister: It was done in Sir James Mitchell's time as well.

Hon. A. THOMSON: At any rate, the key dams were used as reserves for the districts where they were constructed. The amazing thing is that, despite the knowledge of the local authorities and their protests that if dams were constructed in certain areas they would be salt, a dam was constructed in one place and it was salt, and has never been any damned good at all! That is a case in point. While this propo-

sal has merit, the clause is worded too loosely. As Mr. Tuckey, who is president of the Road Board Association, has mentioned, this is a matter that should be considered by the road boards at one of their conferences. The Minister cannot tell us what the charges will be. While I am not raising any objection to the proposal, the fact remains that the Minister may apportion whatever cost he likes and debit it against the road board. It could represent a heavy charge on some of the smaller boards. In the circumstances, I do not think sufficient consideration has been given to the matter, and I shall oppose the clause.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: The clause indicates that a road board must pay whatever the Minister may decree. If the clause were amended to enable a board and the Minister to arrive at an agreement, that would overcome the difficulty. It is iniquitous to suggest that the Minister can levy what charge he may like.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not like the air of distrust that seems to pervade the minds of some members. I expected Mr. Thomson to support this proposal. He mentioned an instance of a dam being salt. He must know that there are dozens of excellent dams that have been put down. I have made it clear that the local authorities' job was to keep those dams in order, but they did not do so, and the community suffered. The Government is prepared to undertake the work in future and to do it more cheaply than a road board possibly could, and I certainly think it would be more expensive for a road board if it attempted to undertake the task, perhaps 30 miles away, without having the necessary plant. I ask members to trust the Government, so that this essential work may be carried out.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am in sympathy with the clause, but not with the statement of the Honorary Minister with respect to dams that might be 30 miles out. It would be cheaper to have those dams cleared out by a neighbouring farmer than by a travelling gang.

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

| | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 13 |
| Majority against | .. | .. | .. | 2 |

| AYES. | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. W. J. Mann |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | Hon. L. Craig |
| Hon. E. M. Heenan | (Teller.) |

| NOES. | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. A. L. Loten | Hon. L. B. Bolton |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | (Teller.) |

Clause thus negatived.

Clauses 18 to 22—agreed to.

Clause 23—New sections 219A-219C:

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Under this clause any 20 resident owners may demand a poll and have a referendum to decide whether a road board should value on the annual value instead of the unimproved value. In the metropolitan area we have road boards which are virtually municipalities. The Nedlands Road Board and the Mosman Park Road Board are examples. They are comparable with, say, East Fremantle. I mention East Fremantle as the Honorary Minister knows the district very well. Strange as it may seem, the Mosman Park Road Board would prefer the annual value to the unimproved capital value.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I do not blame the Mosman Park board.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The annual value is more equitable.

Hon. W. R. Hall: It is far cheaper.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The matter probably does not affect country road boards. The clause should be struck out.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I intend to vote against the clause, as, if passed, it would probably affect country road boards considerably. It would be quite easy for 20 ratepayers to sign a petition and put a board to much trouble and expense. There is an opportunity once a year, at the annual ratepayers' meeting, to discuss matters of this kind.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do ratepayers attend the annual meeting?

Hon. H. TUCKEY: They have the opportunity to do so.

Hon. G. Fraser: Are the motions that are carried at annual meetings ever put into effect?

Hon. H. TUCKEY: There is ample opportunity to put them into effect. After all, it is the business of road boards to get what revenue they can, and if it is to their interest to adopt a particular system of valuation they will adopt it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I hope we shall not have a big debate on this clause. It is recognised by the majority of people concerned that the unimproved land value system is more equitable in any district, including the Mosman Park and Nedlands districts. Why should ratepayers have the right to petition a road board for a referendum on the question?

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

| | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 7 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 14 |
| Majority against | | | | 7 |

| AYES. | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. W. R. Hall |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | (Teller.) |
| NOES. | |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. A. L. Loten | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| | (Teller.) |

Clause thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Clauses 24 to 26—agreed to.

Clause 27—New Section 359A:

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I see no reason for this clause, and shall therefore vote against it. Any ratepayer can appeal against a rating within a certain time after receiving the notice. Money cannot be borrowed by boards without advertising the intention to borrow for at least one month in the local newspaper, and if 20 resident ratepayers petition the board to take a loan poll, that must be done. This clause might have the effect of encouraging people to harass the board on unimportant matters.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The clause gives the right for the matter to be heard by the Local Court. Up till now it has been a matter for the Supreme Court and in one case, that of the Mosman Park

Road Board, the matter was tested in the Supreme Court. A certain ratepayer tested the validity of a rate assessment $2\frac{1}{2}$ years after the notice was received. It is now proposed that such action must be taken within four months of the striking of the rate.

Hon. H. Tuckey: I think such matters are amply provided for in the existing Act.

Hon. G. Fraser: If the four months' provision is struck out, the matter will be left open altogether.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It could then be tested at any time.

Hon. G. Fraser: The case that went to the Supreme Court cost a great deal of money.

Hon. H. Tuckey: If this matter is as important as has been suggested, it is remarkable that no complaint has been made about it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is not sufficient provision in the present legislation, and the present provision has been thought advisable after consultation with the Crown Law authorities.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 28 to 30—agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. W. R. HALL: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—

10. Section sixty-seven of the principal Act is amended by—

(i) Substituting the word "three" for the word "two" in the second last line of the section.

(ii) Deleting the words "one guinea" at the end of the section and substituting the words "one and a half guineas."

Section 67 of the Road Districts Act deals with road board elections. On the Goldfields there have been many road board elections in the last 20 years. It is necessary at such elections to have poll clerks and a returning officer. Under the Act the returning officer is paid £2 2s. for his services from 10 a.m. till 8 p.m. It is necessary for him to count the votes and that sometimes keeps him till 11 p.m. or 12 p.m. The same applies to the poll clerk, whose payment under the present Act is £1 1s. for his services from 10 a.m. till 8 p.m. The result is that in the last few years it has been very difficult to get persons to act as poll clerks. Road board elections are generally

held on Saturdays and it is difficult to get people to work on Saturday afternoons without overtime payment.

Under the State Electoral Office poll clerks receive 35s. per day and I understand they receive overtime if required to work beyond the ordinary hours. I think we should make it possible for road boards to pay a reasonable fee for the services rendered them. I am sorry I did not make the fee 35s. instead of $1\frac{1}{2}$ guineas. If it is possible for me to do so, I will alter the amendment to provide that poll clerks shall receive £2 2s. If the returning officer is chairman of the board he has to some extent the right to claim for expenses incurred, but often the road board chairman does not act as returning officer. In that case, another member of the board usually acts and on the Goldfields such members are generally working men who must lose a shift in order to do this work. I do not act as a returning officer.

Hon. H. Tuckey: If we increase the rate for the poll clerk we must increase the rate for the returning officer.

Hon. W. R. HALL: On the Goldfields we sometimes have ten polling places and usually the most experienced man is the presiding officer, but he has only been receiving the same amount as the poll clerk. The returning officer has been paid two guineas and the poll clerk one guinea. Many of the provisions of the Act are obsolete and it is time they were brought up to date. We have been told that these officials could be paid extra out of the 3 per cents., but to do that would not be legal. The proposed payments would not affect the funds of road boards to any great extent. I have been requested on numerous occasions to move in this direction. I should like to increase the amount for poll clerks to two guineas.

The CHAIRMAN: The matter is entirely in the hon. member's hands.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Then I should like leave to substitute the words "two guineas" for the words "one and a half guineas."

The CHAIRMAN: I will allow the alteration to be made.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I am agreeable to the payment of three guineas to the returning officer, who is the responsible man, but I am opposed to paying two guineas to a poll clerk. We have to consider a number

of small boards for which the increase proposed for poll clerks would be too much.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Most workers receive £1 or more a shift in their occupations and will not forfeit a day's pay and sit the whole day in a polling booth unless reasonable payment is offered. Two guineas is not too much for a poll clerk.

Hon. L. CRAIG: You realise that this would apply to all road boards?

Hon. W. R. HALL: Yes; but these elections occur only once a year and the extra cost would be a mere bagatelle.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: The Kalgoorlie Road Board has only one district, whereas some boards have six or seven wards and the increased cost would be considerable. Payment of one-and-a-half guineas to a poll clerk would be a fair thing.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Would both sides be agreeable to making the new clause provide "not less than one-and-a-half guineas and not more than two guineas"? Then each board could fix the amount it thought fit.

Hon. W. R. HALL: The suggestion is a good one and would meet the wishes of all boards.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I support Dr. Hislop's suggestion, which should overcome the difference of opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: I will accept the alteration indicated by Dr. Hislop and the second paragraph of the proposed new clause will now read:—

(ii) Deleting the words "one guinea" at the end of the section and substituting the words "not less than thirty shillings and not more than two guineas."

New clause, as altered, put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

BILL—HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION.

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

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION.

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

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Eastern Goldfields Transport Board.
- 2, Traffic Act Amendment (No. 3).
- 3, Economic Stability.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 39:

The HONORARY MINISTER: When Mr. Baxter spoke against this Bill, I made certain inquiries and found there was some ground for the statement he made because there were anomalies in it. Consequently I have tabled some amendments. If this clause is struck out, I will move to insert another in its place.

Clause put and negatived.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I now move:

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—

"6. Section 39 of the principal Act is amended as follows:—

(a) By inserting at the commencement thereof the brackets and figure '(1)'.

(b) By inserting after the words "New Year's Day" where they occur in lines five and eight, the words "Australia Day".

(c) By inserting after the words "Good Friday" in line five the words "Easter Saturday".

(d) By inserting after the words "Labour Day" in line six and after the words "Anzac Day" in line eight the words "Foundation Day".

(e) By deleting the words "and birthday of the reigning Sovereign" in lines six and seven and the words "or birthday of the reigning Sovereign" in lines eight and nine, and—

(f) By adding thereto a subsection as follows:—

(2) In addition to the holidays mentioned in Subsection (1) of this section, the occupier of a factory shall allow to every person employed in the factory such period of annual leave (if any) with payment of such person's ordinary wages as is required to be allowed by an employer to a worker under and subject to the provisions of the award for the time being in force under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1941, governing the employment of shop assistants in the Metropolitan Area of

Perth in the circumstances and upon and subject to the terms and conditions therein prescribed: Provided that for the purposes of this subsection any reference in such award to a casual worker shall be deemed to be a reference to an employee who is employed by the same occupier for less than six consecutive working days."

This conforms with the shop assistants' award of which I tabled a copy some time ago and which was agreed to quite recently and declared by the Arbitration Court. It will meet our wishes with respect to young people in the country who are not covered by awards. It will give them the right to a decent remuneration, the effect of which will be that they will be encouraged to stay in the country and work in shops there. The holiday provision that it is proposed to insert will also conform with recent Arbitration Court awards.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The whole of the Minister's amendments meet my objections. They do what I set out to achieve. I am, however, as strongly of the opinion as previously that Parliament has no right to take upon itself the duties of the Arbitration Court by establishing wages, working conditions and conditions relating to sick pay and annual leave. It may be argued that this was done in 1920. The position then was different, because in 1926 a permanent president was appointed to the court and since then the court has worked expeditiously and met all requests for awards or adjustments of awards in a reasonable time. Furthermore, in the South-West Land Division, where this will apply, there are a number of unions that these people could join if they desired. In fact, they should join one of them for their own protection and obtain an award through such union. I would like to see that come about because we have adopted the system of industrial arbitration and it has worked satisfactorily in Western Australia.

New clause put and passed.

Clause 7—New Section 39A:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (c) of proposed new Section 39A the word "reasonable" be struck out and the word "satisfactory" inserted in lieu.

I do not know where the draftsman got this word. The Arbitration Court realised

the trouble caused by the word "reasonable" because it no longer adopts it. Its award always state "proof satisfactory to the employer of sickness."

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection.

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

Clause 8—Amendment of Section 61:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: This is an obnoxious clause. It brings in the Chief Inspector and gives him powers to compel employers to set up in their factories conditions designed by the Department of Labour and National Service, which is a Federal body. We do not want to harass employers like that. If these powers are given to the Chief Inspector, employers will be put to a lot of trouble and unnecessary expense. I want the clause struck out.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Chief Inspector is the Chief Inspector of Factories. Under this clause, he would confer with the shopkeeper or the factory-owner and try to obtain modern conditions. It is essential that the clause be retained. Section 61 of the Act deals with all kinds of things that happen in a factory.

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

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 6 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 17 |
| Majority against | | | | | 11 |

| AYES | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. W. R. Hall (Teller.) |
| NOES. | |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. G. W. Miles |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. R. M. Forrest | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. A. L. Loton | Hon. C. F. Baxter (Teller.) |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | |

Clause thus negatived.

Clause 9—Amendment of Section 116:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (c) be deleted and the following paragraph inserted in lieu:—

"(c) by adding thereto a subsection as follows:—

(2) In addition to the holidays mentioned in Subsection (1) of this section, the shop-keeper shall allow to each shop

assistant such period of annual leave (if any) with payment of such shop assistant's ordinary wages as is required to be allowed by an employer to a worker under and subject to the provisions of the award for the time being in force under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1941, governing the employment of shop assistants in the Metropolitan Area of Perth in the circumstances and upon and subject to the terms and conditions therein prescribed: Provided that for the purposes of this subsection any reference in such award to a casual worker shall be deemed to be a reference to a shop assistant who is employed by the same shop-keeper for less than six consecutive working days."

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

Clause 10—New Section 116A:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The word "reasonable" occurs here as it did in Clause 7. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (c) of proposed new Section 116A the word "reasonable" be struck out, and the word "satisfactory" inserted in lieu.

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

Clause 11—Amendment of Section 138:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of the proviso to paragraph (a) the word "relevant" be struck out.

My information is that this word is redundant and may lead to misunderstanding.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the proviso to paragraph (a):—"provided that no employee shall be entitled under this paragraph to be paid at a higher rate of wage than that payable to a male or female worker over twenty-one years of age under the provisions of paragraph (g) of this section."

This makes it quite clear that no employee shall be entitled to be paid at a higher rate of wage than that payable to a male or female worker over 21 years of age under the provisions of paragraph (g).

Hon. C. F. Baxter: This will correct the anomaly.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes.

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

Clause 12, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

BILL—COAL PRODUCTION.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—PURCHASERS' PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 10:

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I move an amendment—

That all the words after the word "that" in line 4 be struck out and the words "where the purchase price under the contract of sale of any land exceeds by more than twenty per centum the present value of the land as determined by a sworn valuator" inserted in lieu.

While I am in accord with the purpose of the Bill, which seeks to protect returned Servicemen against certain rapacious types of land salesmen, I think the basis of the valuation set out in the amendment would be fairer than that included in the Bill. I gave instances to show that the valuations on the books of local governing bodies were very much at variance with the Sub-Treasury valuation and you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, gave instances of valuations that were considerably over-stated by road boards. That apparently emphasises the necessity for a fairer basis, hence my amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have had this matter inquired into and I cannot accept the amendment. The Bill was brought forward at the request of the R.S.L. and the members of the executive of that body have considered the amendment in relation to the Bill. They regard the Bill as more satisfactory than the amendment, first, because the latter will necessitate increased expenditure on the part of the individual who may desire to cancel a contract and, secondly, because there is no guarantee that there will not be the same difference between the valuations of sworn valuers as have been disclosed in the valuations of different local authorities.

Hon. L. Craig: This provision will apply not only to returned men but to any purchasers.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so, but the Bill has been introduced because of the experiences of some returned soldiers who are in difficulties. Certain people thought that as the men had a certain amount of money upon discharge, they should be proceeded against.

Hon. A. Thomson: But only one company was concerned.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would not like to say that, but I know that there is one company in particular that was concerned. In view of the attitude of the R.S.L. I prefer to stand by the Bill.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: In consequence of the attitude of the R.S.L., I am not prepared to proceed with the amendment and I ask leave to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BILL—MINES REGULATION.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Inspector not to report or divulge information.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That in lines 17 and 18 the words "and in the case of a workmen's inspector to his union" be struck out.

I do not know how these words have crept into the clause. Without them, it is an exact reprint of the present provision, and the purpose of it is to secure secrecy. The clause provides that an inspector shall not for any purpose whatever make a report on any mine or mining property or prospect, except an official report to his superior officer or the Minister, nor shall he make public or reveal to any purpose

any knowledge or information obtained by him in the exercise of his official duties except as set out or when giving evidence in a court of justice. Then in the middle of that clause the words I desire to strike out have been inserted. With those words in the clause, what becomes of secrecy? The whole purpose of the clause is destroyed. The words have evidently not been inserted by the draftsman of the clause, who would have attempted to make reasonable English of it. What do the words "nor shall he" mean? The meaning of the clause was quite clear as it stood originally. I do not know whether the words "nor shall he" apply to the mines inspector or to the workmen's inspector.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: These words have not crept into the clause at all. They were inserted deliberately, and for a very good reason. There are three classes of inspectors, the workmen's inspector being one. He is appointed by his union and represents the men. He must be a member of the union. He attends the meetings of the union, at which frequently questions concerning the conditions of the workings of the mine or of the safety appliances are discussed. It is then that the workmen's inspector makes his report. Without the insertion of these words, the workmen's inspector would be committing a breach of the law.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I do not think that explanation gets the Committee anywhere. What is the purpose of the clause? Is it to prevent any inspector, for any purpose whatever, making a report on any mine or prospect except the official report to his superior officers or to the Minister, or in evidence before the court?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am convinced that Sir Hal Colebatch views the clause from an entirely wrong angle. The violation of secrecy of which Sir Hal Colebatch is so afraid amounts to something almost negligible. I can explain the reason why the words were inserted. They were omitted from the existing Act. Their omission on one occasion nearly had the effect of getting a workmen's inspector into trouble. He reported on some condition in a mine to his union and was charged with a breach of duty by the Public Service Commissioner. The insertion of the words will protect the workmen's inspector.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: If there might arise any circumstances in which it is desirable that the workmen's inspector should make a report to his union on the condition of a mine, then it should be provided for in a separate clause, which could be considered on its merits.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: When speaking to the second reading, I pointed out the danger that Sir Hal Colebatch sees. It is very real. Great importance attaches to not divulging secret information. The clause is explicit as to reports by official inspectors. These may be made only to the superior officers or to the Minister. The object of the words is to permit the workmen's inspector to report to his union on matters regarding working conditions or the safety of a mine, but I suggest that there should be a separate provision dealing with that matter. The secrecy clause is necessary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Would Sir Hal Colebatch's objection be met if we made provision for the workmen's inspector in some other part of the Bill?

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: He can report to his union upon anything that affects safe workings, but not as to the value of the ore or the prospects of the mine.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If Sir Hal Colebatch is agreeable, we could provide for that by a separate clause. I am prepared to accept the amendment, provided we could insert a proviso at the end of the clause somewhat to the following effect:—

Provided that a workmen's inspector may report to his union on the working conditions and the safety factors of a mine or mines.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that consideration be given to the proviso and that we deal with it after we have dealt with the remainder of the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am quite agreeable to that course.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Why not put the proviso in this way:—

Provided that nothing in this clause shall be so construed as to prevent a workmen's inspector from reporting to his union concerning his duties.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We will consider the matter and have a proviso drafted. If it meets with the approval of the Committee, it will then be inserted in

the Bill. Therefore I raise no further objection to the amendment.

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

Clauses 15 to 30—agreed to.

Clause 31—Notice of accident to be given:

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That in lines 7 and 8 of Subclause (4) the words "and of the accredited workers' representative" be struck out.

Who is the accredited workers' representative, and by whom is he accredited?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not like the sound of this amendment, following on the previous one. It looks as though there is a desire on the part of some people to prevent the workers obtaining knowledge of what occurs. The mine workers are the persons chiefly interested in accidents. Many mines, particularly the smaller ones in isolated localities, have no workmen's inspectors. In such cases the union representative is the accredited workers' representative. If the amendment is carried the Minister may have to appoint some other person to inspect the accident book. Why should the Minister be called on to do that? Why not allow the workers' representative to inspect the book whenever he thinks fit?

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 32 to 35—agreed to.

Clause 36—Persons in charge of machinery not to be employed for more than eight consecutive hours on the surface or seven hours twelve minutes underground:

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: My objection to this clause and the two or three that follow it is that they ask Parliament to do something that the Arbitration Court should do—to fix the hours and conditions of labour. The hours and conditions are laid down in the existing regulations, but they are different from these. That applies to Clauses 36, 37, 38 and 39.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A similar discussion took place on the Coal Mines Regulation Bill. We are consolidating the existing Act and are bringing it up to date. In these clauses we are providing for the

hours laid down by Arbitration Court awards. The clauses affected are the same as those in the original Act, except that the hours are altered to coincide with those being worked at the present time.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: The references are incorrect. Against Clause 36 appears "Ibid. Section 38, as amended by this Act." It is really Section 40 of the present Act. It looks to me like clumsy drafting.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am glad Sir Hal has drawn my attention to the error in the marginal note, but we need not worry about it. It is a matter for the clerk to put right. The main point is that the clause brings the measure up to date and in accord with the Arbitration Court awards which specify the hours provided for in this clause.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I believe the practice is that where machinery requires continuous supervision, the companies pay for 7 hours 12 minutes as a shift and 48 minutes overtime, which ensures continuous operation, but there is uncertainty whether this can be done or whether extra men will have to be employed to cover that gap of 48 minutes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This provision will not affect in any way the manner in which the shifts have been worked for years. Clause 37 stipulates that the inspector, in case of emergency, may give permission for longer hours to be worked.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 37 to 49—agreed to.

Clause 50—Protection of abandoned shafts:

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I think there has been a mistake in the drafting in that the words "without the consent of the inspector" should govern the whole of Subclause (1). I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (1) after the word "who" the words "without the consent of the inspector" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That in lines 6 and 7 of Subclause (1) the words "without the consent of the inspector" be struck out.

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

Clauses 51 to 60—agreed to.

Clause 61—Power to make regulations:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (v) of Subclause (1) be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—

"(v) Dealing with the medical examination of men employed or proposed to be employed in and about mines, and prescribing the methods to be employed for the prevention of silicosis or other occupational diseases affecting or likely to affect such men and regulating and where considered necessary prohibiting the employment of any persons affected by any such disease."

The amendment is necessary because the draftsman overlooked the fact that there had been an amendment of the Act in 1945.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I propose to move an amendment to add a new subclause providing that before any regulation or by-law is made under this legislation a copy shall first be submitted to all parties concerned. The power of the Government to make by-laws is supreme and the Government need not be influenced by any protest. Still, it is only fair and reasonable that the parties should at least have an opportunity to raise any objection they might have.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In practice, wherever possible, the parties concerned are consulted with regard to regulations, but it would be inadvisable to insert this new subclause in the Bill. The parties concerned might be in very remote parts of the State, and considerable delay would ensue. It might be necessary to move very quickly in regard to regulations, particularly those dealing with the safety of mines as a result of accidents.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Would the Chief Secretary be prepared to accept the amendment if the words "all parties concerned" were struck out and the words "the Chamber of Mines and the mining branch of the Australian Workers' Union" inserted in lieu?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think it is the invariable practice to submit copies of these regulations and by-laws to those two

parties and I would not raise any objection to that amendment.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That a new subclause be inserted as follows:—“(3) Before any regulation or by-law or amendment of any regulation or by-law is made under or by virtue of this Act, a copy of such regulation or by-law or amendment shall first be submitted to the Chamber of Mines and the mining branch of the Australian Workers' Union.”

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (3) be struck out.

I do not see that the subclause serves any good purpose. It casts on the manager of a mine the obligation to post a correct copy, in legible characters, of all general rules and to keep it in order. If it becomes defaced or destroyed, a new copy has to be provided. It is a vexatious provision, and I do not see that it serves any good purpose. The general rules are gazetted and known to everybody, and this subclause is unnecessary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot agree. There is nothing new in this. The general rules are really the working conditions, and deal with all manner of things, including safety, the working of the mine, explosives, ventilation and matters of that kind. From time to time changes take place, and it is necessary to have the regulations altered or amended and new ones introduced. It is essential that workers should have direct access to these regulations, without any trouble whatsoever.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: It might be all right to post new regulations, but it is wrong to require that the whole list of regulations should always be kept in good order.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no hardship in that. I certainly have not seen them posted, but I imagine it is easy to comply with the provision in that respect. Naturally any new regulation would have to be posted, but it is equally essential that all regulations should be easily accessible to persons working in a mine.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: These rules are published in book form and put into a little slot, and amendments are pasted in. It is

in the interests of both the miners and the company that they should be available. They are not in the weather and not affected by rain or storm, but are protected.

Hon. W. R. HALL: These regulations and by-laws have been posted in the mines for 30 or 40 years. In some cases they are tacked on poppet heads, and in other instances are printed on linen. They are also posted in the change-rooms of the mines. They serve a very useful purpose for new men who have no idea of the regulations and by-laws and who, for their own safety, will take time to read such notices as are posted in a conspicuous place.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: The following proposed new subclauses appear in my name on the notice paper:—

(4) Such regulations and by-laws shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen days after publication if Parliament is in session, and if not, then within fourteen days after the commencement of the next session.

(5) If either House of Parliament pass a resolution at any time within one month after any such regulation or by-law has been laid before it disallowing such regulation or by-law then the same shall thereupon cease to have effect, subject, however, to such and the like savings as apply in the case of the repeal of a statute.

I would not suggest the insertion of these provisions if the Government would only adopt some general practice in regard to regulations. Last night we were discussing the Coal Mines Regulation Bill, and we found a subclause relating to the publication of general rules in the “Government Gazette,” and their tabling in Parliament. There is no such provision in the Bill we are now considering. In the coal mines regulation measure it is absolutely meaningless. If it were deleted, the position would be the same; because, under the Interpretation Act, all these regulations must be gazetted and all must be placed before Parliament. In the Coal Mines Regulation Act there is a further provision setting out the powers of Parliament in the matter of disallowing rules. All these provisions are quite meaningless because the matter is governed by the Interpretation Act, and no regulations can be made except in the manner provided by that Act. Last night a suggestion was made that no regulation or by-law should come into effect until it was laid before Parliament. Much as I dislike

the extent to which the making of laws by regulation has grown, I do not think it would be reasonable to ask that no regulation shall be effective until it has been laid before Parliament. Even if that were desired, it should not be included in any particular Bill but should be brought about by an amendment of the Interpretation Act, so that it would apply to all regulations.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The matter is governed by Section 36 of the Interpretation Act, and no such amendment as Sir Hal has mentioned is necessary. With regard to the Coal Mines Regulation Bill, it may be said that, while the provision to which he referred may not do much good, it cannot do much harm. I presume that the hon. member does not intend to move his amendment.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: No.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Schedule:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That the Schedule be amended by inserting at the end of the first column the words and figures "9° Geo. VI., No. II" and opposite thereto in the second column the words and figures "The Mines Regulation Act Amendment Act, 1945."

This is in accordance with a previous amendment to which the Committee agreed.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clauses 14 and 46.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair: the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 14—Inspector not to report or divulge information:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: When we were discussing this clause it was agreed that we should insert a proviso giving the workmen's inspector the right to report to

his union on working conditions or safety factors. I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—
"Provided however that nothing in this section shall make it unlawful for a workmen's inspector to report to his union on matters concerning safety factors and working conditions."

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: I have no objection.

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

Clause 46—Engine drivers to be certificated:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That a new subclause be added as follows:—" (3) This section shall apply to coal mines within the meaning of the Coal Mines Regulation Act."

This is already in the existing Mines Regulation Act, but has been omitted from the Bill by accident.

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

Bill again reported with further amendments and the reports adopted.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Lapsed.

Debate resumed from the 5th December.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [9.55]: I want to say at the outset that I do not like this Bill very much, but I believe there is some good in it, and for that reason I shall support the second reading. If that is agreed to I propose to submit a series of amendments which will considerably improve the measure and remove a number of the objections that I have to it. I am opposed to the handing over of the administration of this Act to any one man, and particularly as suggested in the Bill. I believe that a person could very easily become a dictator in that position so that the last stage would be considerably worse than the first.

There are many phases of the industry, and much as I object to the continual creation of boards I am, in the circumstances, forced to admit that as an alternative to the inspector, an advisory board would be preferable. A board of that description, composed of representatives of all the parties concerned, could be created. I was impressed by the Minister's references to the great necessity for improving the quality of the people's daily bread. There is no doubt that in some countries the question of bread baking is much more advanced than it is here. The application of scientific principles to the selection of flour and the other ingredients, has reached a much higher pitch than it has here, and, as a consequence, a much better and more uniform loaf is put before the people.

The suggestion made by the Minister, when introducing the Bill, that a trained cereal chemist should be co-opted to assist the industry, has much to commend it. Rather than place all these duties in the hands of an inspector, as the Bill proposes, it would be better to have a board which could secure the services of a technician such as I have described. My amendment would cover that position and I do not intend to enlarge upon it at present. The question that seems uppermost in the minds of most people at present is not specifically mentioned in the Bill—I refer to zoning. This, however, is a matter of which we can take cognisance, and we should see if we can improve the position that now exists.

It seems to me that most of the objection to zoning arises from the fact that the objector is unfortunate in being compelled to purchase bread from a baker who is not producing a high-grade loaf. I can best illustrate that by the position in my own home. The other day my wife said, "Why does Parliament want to get fooling about with zoning? We have a very good baker." My daughter lives less than half a mile from us and she said, "If you do not do something about zoning, you ought to be dealt with." I think that about explains the position with regard to the zoning problem—it all depends upon the type of baker serving the individual. Under the amendment that I shall propose it would be possible for a board to arrange that consumers should have the opportunity of purchasing their bread

from one of at least three or four bakers. I believe that would overcome the most pressing difficulties in that respect. I believe, too, the Bill is deserving of further consideration and I shall support the second reading.

HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH (Metropolitan) [10.1]: I shall oppose the second reading of the Bill for several reasons. In the first place, it sets up a monopoly and seeks to prevent enterprising people from starting in businesses in which they think they can do well. In the second place, it interferes with the province of the Arbitration Court. As I understand it, the duty of the Arbitration Court is to fix wages, conditions and hours of employment for employees. This Bill will interfere with the hours of labour of employees. No doubt members will have noticed in this morning's paper that the Arbitration Court is being approached on this very subject. Let the Arbitration Court decide it.

A third and very strong objection I have to the Bill is that we cannot set up a commissioner with all the powers of a Royal Commission to deal comprehensively with a matter like this without keeping in mind that he will soon gather round him a very extensive staff. In an elevated position such as that of a Royal Commissioner, the person appointed will not do all the detailed work that will be necessary under the Bill, but he will gather round him a large staff to cope with that phase. The effect of that must be to increase the cost as between the producer and the consumer—and that is a thing we ought to avoid. We cannot put it out of our minds that at present the price of bread is being kept down by compelling the grower of wheat to sell his commodity at a great deal less than the price at which he could dispose of it in the world's market. If there is to be any increase in the price of bread there is one person, and one person only, entitled to the advantage and that is the farmer who grows the wheat.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: To say we shall set up a body like a Royal Commission, which will increase the price as between the producer and the consumer is, I think, entirely wrong. I have only one motive in rising to speak on the Bill and it is to express regret that the Honorary Minis-

ter, usually so kindly and just in disposition, should, in the moving of the second reading of this measure, have sought to excite prejudice by saying that the people he wanted to get at were foreigners. I notice that the union is now appealing to the Arbitration Court on the ground that it wants to stop foreigners from doing something, foreigners who are acting in accordance with the law and who are merely trying by their own labour to build up some sort of a position for themselves.

I suggest there is nothing so easy to excite as racial prejudice—prejudice against the foreigner. I suggest there is nothing so difficult to combat and to stop and nothing so fraught with dreadful consequences if it is allowed to grow. On what did Hitler build up his strength? How did he bring the Nazis together? Simply by racial prejudice—nothing else. We have to remember that in the dark days of the war when the British Prime Minister and the President of the United States of America signed the Atlantic Charter—the very basis of which is the recognition of the equal rights of all peoples. I hope this is the last time on which any attempt will be made to excite sympathy for this or any other proposal by saying that the people one wants to get at are foreigners. They have come to this State lawfully and we shall have to encourage a great many more foreigners from different countries to come here, if we are to people Australia and make it safe from invasion. When they come here and so long as they observe the laws of the country—

Hon. W. J. Mann: Which they do not always do.

Hon Sir HAL COLEBATCH—and act decently, they are entitled to respect and ought to be treated in the same way that we treat our own people.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan) [10.7]: It is not my intention to discuss the merits or demerits of the Bill because in any case I intend to follow my usual procedure, which I have adopted for many years since I have been a member of this Chamber, of voting against the second reading of any measure that is brought before us in the dying hours of a session. Unfortunately each time we have had a Bread Bill before us, the Honorary Minister has had to bring it in at the very last minute.

As a result he usually does not secure what he desires. I think probably that is the explanation of the position. In order to shorten the debate I move an amendment—

That all the words after the word "that" be struck out and the words "this House shall not proceed with the debate on the second reading of the Bill until the Government has given consideration to the insertion in the Bill of provisions for the establishment of an independent board with power (1) to appoint all necessary scientific and other officers; (2) to consider the abolition of zoning."

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—on amendment) [10.10]: The amendment moved by Mr. Bolton provides a quick way of arriving at a decision, but I hope the House will ignore it. It is to be regretted, of course, that the Bill was not introduced earlier but there were circumstances that absolve me from blame in that respect. The measure has been introduced in all good faith to meet a position that must be dealt with. If it is not met, this House must be held responsible. We have never had a more striking example of the power of the Press to mislead public opinion than that disclosed in connection with the introduction of the Bread Act Amendment Bill.

On the 5th December a leading article on the Bill was published, which merits the strongest condemnation from all those who believe in truth and fairplay. A more glaring example of gutterpress anti-Labour propaganda would be impossible to find. In the article I refer to the writer suggested that the position of bread industry advisory officer would not be filled until after the State elections. There is no possibility of that being done for the simple reason that no member of Parliament, so far as I am aware, could fill such a position. I can guarantee to this educated ignoramus that it would be an easy matter to select any member of Parliament, defeated or otherwise, who could write with ease a clearer, finer and more truthful explanation of a parliamentary Bill than the alleged article on the Bread Bill which appeared in "The West Australian." That paper infers that I have an aversion to aliens.

I resent also Sir Hal Colebatch's reference to this subject. It is not true. All through my private and public life I have spent a lot of time in defending aliens who have been subject to persecution. On the

other hand, I do expect aliens and all others to conform to and observe the working conditions established by the Arbitration Court. The bread industry is menaced by these people, most of whom, I am informed, are foreigners. The Bill provides a remedy for the evil. In 1937 amending legislation was presented to this House and passed in the dying hours of the session.

It was passed because of the ruthless tactics of a certain type of alien in the metropolitan area whose operations were undermining the decent bakers. The result of the position then was that the Operative Bakers' Union and the employers had to get together and arrive at an agreement for the 3 o'clock start of baking, which was included in the legislation. The operative bakers and the employers had to get together in that way and effect an agreement. They were forced to do that, not because they wanted to fight one another but to avoid the dishonest tactics—

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: How were they dishonest?

The HONORARY MINISTER: They were always trying to evade the law.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: If they evaded the law, why were they not prosecuted?

The HONORARY MINISTER: They broke the law by pretending to enter into partnerships and working together so as to undermine the decent bakers in the metropolitan area. Their actions were dishonest because they were pretending to be working in partnership, and that is what they are doing today. Something must be done to meet that situation. It is a pity that foreigners or aliens stoop to such tactics. There is no doubt about the truth of the statement, and that is why we have had to take special steps to include in the Bill means by which we can deal with the problem.

A further misrepresentation on the part of "The West Australian" was in regard to small bakeries. The Bill does not endanger the existence of small bakeries, neither does it prevent any qualified baker from commencing new business, provided his bakehouse conforms to health standards. I challenge anyone to name any action or administrative act on my part for the past ten years that has been harmful to proprietors of small bakeries. Ever since I have been in the Ministry—ten years last September—

I have been in charge of the administration of the Bread Act, and I therefore have had a unique opportunity to do everything possible to stop the registration of small bakeries. Western Australia possesses the most progressive legislation with regard to the bread industry of any State in Australia. Under its provisions I could have effectively put the brake on the licensing of small bakeries. The facts are as follows:—

Perth has nearly twice as many bakeries, in proportion to population, as Melbourne.

It has twice as many as Brisbane.

It has two and one-sixth times more than Sydney, and over 30 per cent. more than Adelaide.

That is an effective answer to the statement made by "The West Australian" that I was against the small bakeries. It is also a convincing answer to the inference that I was out to prevent small bakeries from operating and was in favour of protecting and extending the big bakeries. The unfortunate thing about the leading article is that people are approaching me in the street and accusing me of harming the small bakeries. What I did say was this—

Actually, from an economic point of view, there are too many small bakeries in the metropolitan area. If it is acknowledged that the health and well-being of the people as a whole must be considered first, then there must be established a minimum output below which it is impossible to take advantage of the latest machinery and equipment available for the use of the bread industry.

I can amplify that statement by saying that in Perth particularly—it cannot be done in the country—people are entitled to have their bread manufactured under the most hygienic conditions. I am a practical baker and if I were in the trade I would rather work in a big bakery than try to run a small bakery myself. The people are entitled to have their bread made by machinery. I consider it is not a good thing for men to be sweating over big doughs and allowing their perspiration to drop into the dough, thus saving salt for the boss! People have to eat that bread. It is cleaner and more hygienic and better for all concerned that bread should be machine-made. Nevertheless, there is nothing in the Bill preventing the operation of small bakeries. There is no need for misunderstanding as to the principles of this legislation. They are—

1. To provide a remedy for the exploitation of zoning by unscrupulous bakers who do not and will not make good quality bread and give the public a decent service.

Under this Bill the public could be assured of a reasonable choice of bakers. The Minister could order a baker into a district, or any part of a district, and thus do away with complaints made by the public about not getting a fair deal.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Did you not tell us this when you introduced the previous Bill?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Zoning was not in operation then.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Your words seem very familiar to me.

Hon. L. Craig: The Bill says "the Minister may."

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Minister is given power.

Hon. L. Craig: He may, or he may not!

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member can make the Bill more effective in Committee. Continuing with the principles—

2. To provide uniform starting and finishing times of baking operations. All persons in the industry, whether employers or workers, will be controlled by the starting times provided in the appropriate Arbitration Court award.

That is just and fair. It will stop the operations of those people who are taking advantage of the Act. The people who are competing unfairly control one-eighth of the shopping trade in the metropolitan area.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Why not deal with them?

The HONORARY MINISTER: This Bill will deal with them.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It will not.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It will stop them at once.

Hon. L. Craig: Will it stop me baking a batch of scones in the middle of the night, if I cannot sleep?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Continuing with the principles of the Bill—

3. To provide the foundation for the organisation of a bread research institute by the creation of a trust fund from license fees paid by the master bakers.

This follows the recommendations of Sir Herbert Gepp, the Commonwealth Royal Commissioner on the bread industry, and also the recommendations made by Judge Kinsella, as a Royal Commissioner, in his report on the bread industry of New South Wales, published on the 31st May, 1945.

"The West Australian" ridiculed this suggestion. That shows how much the leader-writer knows of the business. He failed to recognise that in every State of the Commonwealth and also in the United States and Great Britain, time and money are being spent on scientific research into bread and flour. The formation of a research organisation in this State will help not only to give the public better bread, but will improve the quality of flour. It will do an even bigger thing; it will make our farmers, as well as the farmers in the other States, realise that something must be done to improve the quality of our wheat on the world market. We are gradually slipping behind. If for no other reason, members should support the Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Hear, hear!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Every student of wheat and flour in the Commonwealth supports that statement. Both Judge Kinsella and Sir Herbert Gepp made reference to it. New South Wales is bringing out from the Old Country an outstanding scientist, Dr. Kent Jones, to assist in the starting of a research institute in that State. It is our intention to get his advice while he is in this State. In the United States things are done differently. That country has a tremendous food institute, with its headquarters in Chicago, which operates all over America. It is financed by the bakers, cake-makers and other firms manufacturing food-stuffs. These people are paying for the research. In the Old Country the same thing is being done.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You have indigestion already!

The HONORARY MINISTER: I absolutely challenge any contradiction of any statement I have made with regard to wheat and flour. The Government is introducing the Bill to deal with urgent problems in the bread industry. It is introduced in this Chamber because, as I said, the administration of the Bread Act is my responsibility. The responsibility is now that of the members of this Chamber. They can reject the Bill and allow the public to be exploited by careless and irresponsible bakers through uncontrolled zoning of bread deliveries. They can reject the Bill and allow decent employees and bakers to be subjected to unfair competition, which will increase unless it is checked now and imperil the livelihood

of both employers and workers. On those grounds, I ask the House to pass the second reading.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central—on amendment) [10.27]: I am with the Minister in his references to the wheatgrower, the miller and the baker. Today I was waited on by one of the biggest master bakers in Perth, who finds it necessary, in order that he may manufacture or bake a decent loaf of bread, to have his own flour-mill. He complained to me that it was difficult for him to get wheat of the quality he desired in order that he might bake bread of which he could be proud.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: The wheatgrower gets no more for premium wheat than he does for other wheat.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is a very pertinent interjection. There is much in what Mr. Bolton says. We have in Geraldton a practical farmer producing wheat. He happens to be the chairman of the Victoria District Flour Milling Company and takes a delight in writing letters to a local paper advising, or exhorting, his fellow-wheat-farmers to improve the quality of their wheat. It is well known that the wheat-growers of this State are apt to produce the kind of wheat which will give them the biggest yield. One of those breeds of wheat is known as Glueclub. The farmers have been advised that if they wish to maintain the excellent quality of the wheat which this State produces, they will have to look to its quality not only for the oversea market, but for the master bakers of the State. I did not meet the gentleman to whom I previously referred until this evening, when he came to see me at Parliament House about this Bill.

The Minister is on sound ground when he exhorts members of this House to introduce legislation which will help to improve the quality of our wheat. But I cannot possibly follow the Minister, or the Government, in the proposal to hand over the bread industry of the metropolitan area to one individual. I must break with the Minister there. I think it a pity that he has provided in this Bill for such arbitrary control, such dictator-control. I would be in favour of the master bakers and the consumers forming a board, notwithstanding that we have had much hos-

tile criticism of boards; but I regretfully say that I cannot follow the Minister when he wishes to hand over to a dictator the bread industry of the State. Therefore, the Bill does not commend itself to me.

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

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 15 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 9 |
| Majority for | | | | 6 |

AYES.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. R. M. Forrest | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. A. L. Loton | Hon. J. A. Dimmitt |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. E. M. Haenan |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. W. J. Mann |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. W. R. Hall |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | (Teller.) |

Amendment thus passed; Bill lapsed.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY (HOUSING OF EMPLOYEES).

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 3rd December.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [10.35]: I am surprised at the opposition exhibited to this Bill. I would have thought, in view of the report of the Royal Commission and the fact that employers generally recognise the necessity for a better type of home for timber workers, members of this Chamber would have been more sympathetic towards the requirements of those workers. If members have read the Bill they must realise that it provides only for an ordinary weatherboard home, generally consisting of four rooms, the type of house that one sees on the new mill sites, and the type that is seen in many other places and which cannot be described as anything extraordinary.

By means of this Bill it is proposed that where new houses are erected for timber workers they shall be of that type. It must be admitted that the Royal Commission was thorough in its work. It visited a large number of centres and took a great deal of evidence from the parties concerned. In its

final report it says that the houses which it inspected were in many cases poor, in a number of cases very poor and in some cases mere hovels. The commission also found that the tendency at the newer mills is to alter that state of affairs with the object of obtaining workers for the industry and retaining many of those already in the industry who would be likely to leave it.

What is wrong with a Bill which provides that workers in an industry such as this should be provided with decent houses? It does not say that every worker in the timber industry shall be provided with a house of this kind, but it does provide that where new houses are built they shall be up to a certain standard. It also provides that the older houses, some of which have been in use for 40 or 50 years, shall be made habitable, that they shall be made waterproof and that certain other improvements shall, if possible, be provided. Where the life of the mill concerned is likely to be of short duration, the owner is exempted almost entirely from the provisions of the measure. Why should we raise objection to men employed in an industry of this kind having reasonably decent accommodation? One member made reference to the accommodation provided for single men in the hush, and was critical of the provision in that regard. The Bill provides in such cases that some ablution facilities must be provided. That is practically the sum total of the references in the Bill to single men's quarters. The provision of electric light has been criticised, but that is only to be installed where reasonably possible.

The measure asks for nothing more than we should be prepared to give to any worker anywhere, and when criticism of the Bill takes the line that it is sectional legislation, that we should not be prepared to agree to it because it deals with one industry only, and that we should not accept it because workers in some other part of the country are not receiving the benefits mentioned in this measure, I say that argument is futile. It is well known that improvements are taking place year after year in the conditions of government workers, but that it is impossible for any Government to carry out those improvements at 24 hours' notice, or even in one year. There is no merit in such an argument.

Here we are dealing with many hundreds of workers who are employed in an industry that provides material with which houses are built elsewhere. Are we to say we are not prepared to ensure that these workers shall have decent housing, though they are providing the materials with which to build decent houses for other sections of the community? That would be an illogical attitude and one that I think would be resented by the timber workers. I was surprised to hear the opposition to this measure by Mr. Mann, who said that he had been into a number of the houses. To hear him speak one would gain the impression that they are little palaces.

Hon. W. J. Mann: They are.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Some, perhaps.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There are many such.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are some that would come within that category, and there is no reason why all timber workers should not be housed in the same way. If the Bill is agreed to, it will at least ensure that within the next few years the timber workers of this State will be housed decently. Exemptions are provided in the case of mills that have not a long life ahead, but the Bill ensures that where timber workers are occupying houses that are sub-standard, those dwellings shall be put in order, at least to the extent that they are made weather-proof, and in some cases that other facilities or amenities shall be provided. I do not propose to deal with the various clauses of the Bill, unless it goes into Committee. I hope those who have been so critical of the measure will change their minds and agree to the Bill being given consideration in Committee, so that we may show that we are willing to provide a decent standard of housing for timber workers and are prepared to go as far as possible in order to meet the special requirements of those employers who might find difficulty in complying with some of the provisions of the Bill.

I am reminded that we are not asking the employers to provide this accommodation free. They are to get a return for any expenditure incurred. I am advised that they would be entitled to receive a return of about 9 per cent. on the capital outlay,

which, in those districts, is not too bad. I am told that within 12 years the houses should have paid for themselves. I believe that information to be correct.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: That is news to me.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The workers will have to pay additional rent for these homes. The report of the Royal Commission stated that in every instance where the worker or his wife was asked whether he or she was prepared to pay a higher rental for one of these homes, the answer was "Yes." This is not surprising. Over the years I have visited homes on various timber mills. Some of them, as Mr. Mann stated, were very nice little places, but the great majority could not be described in that way. The report of the Royal Commission is very illuminating on that point, and if any member has not read it, I recommend him to do so without delay. I hope the Bill will be taken into Committee and that we shall achieve our purpose of securing a measure that will ensure for timber workers a better standard of housing than they have had in the past.

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

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 9 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 13 |
| Majority against .. | | | | | 4 |

AYES.

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. W. R. Hall |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. E. M. Heenan |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. W. H. Kitson |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. G. W. Miles |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. R. M. Forrest | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | (Teller.) |

PAIR.

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| AYE. | No. |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |

Question thus negatived; Bill defeated.

BILL—WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILISATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th December.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan)
[10.50]: I have very few remarks to offer on this Bill. The wheat position changes

so rapidly that one never knows in the morning what might happen before the day is out. One thing, however, is quite patent to the farming community, and it is that the Commonwealth Government is determined to maintain its control of the wheat-farming industry, no matter what the growers themselves, or the various State Governments, may say.

Until a few days ago, I had practically made up my mind to oppose the Bill. I believe that a majority of wheatgrowers in this State favour a stabilisation scheme, but I feel that the one put up to them by the Commonwealth Government is anything but satisfactory. Before the farmers could be expected to agree to it, extensive amendments would be necessary to ensure that the farmers shall receive at least a fair return for their product. We have to bear in mind that, irrespective of what the commodity might be, when prices are good, the producer expects to share in the good times. The wheatgrowers have had many bad seasons. On this I can speak feelingly, because I have been a wheatgrower for a considerable time and know something about the poor prices which the farmer has had to put up with in the past.

I think the most disastrous time the farming community experienced was when Mr. Scullin was Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and promised 4s. a bushel which, in those days, was quite a reasonable price. It was a price that we were perfectly happy to accept. On that promise, many farmers throughout the Commonwealth increased their acreage under wheat. I was very proud that year. I cleared hundreds of acres of land and cropped it, and put into the pool or sold 10,000 bags of wheat, and realised 1s. 10d. a bushel for it.

Hon. G. B. Wood: It is a wonder you survived.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: It is. I may have been fortunate in having had a good bank and a second string might have helped, but hundreds of farmers were forced out of wheatgrowing on that account. Since then, although the farmers have received a tremendous amount of help from the Government lately and particularly in the Federal sphere, the Government has been very careful to take back with the right hand whatever it gave with the left. At any rate, that has been my experience.

Had I been required to record a vote on this measure some little time ago, I would probably have opposed it, but my intention now is to support the second reading. My reason for changing my mind is that the growers—I assume that the Bill will be passed—will now be given an opportunity, through the medium of a poll, to say whether they favour this stabilisation scheme or not. However, I want to see the Bill amended in Committee to ensure that when the poll is taken a majority of the votes will be those of registered wheat-growers. I should also like the form of the ballot proper to be altered. The proposed ballot paper has two blocks with "Yes" above and "No" below.

Hon. G. B. Wood: No, the other way round.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Well, whichever it is, it is wrong, and in saying that I am serious. I want to provide for the farmer to write the word "Yes" or the word "No." That is the proper way for him to record a vote on this question. I think it goes without saying that a majority of farmers in the Commonwealth definitely want stabilisation of the wheat industry. The condition of affairs throughout the world makes this almost a necessity, but they certainly want a fair price for their commodity.

Much has been said about the price of wheat and the cost per bushel of growing it. There have been so many changes and so many improvements in machinery, plant and other things that it is very difficult for any fixed cost to be maintained. I suggest that some method should be devised to ascertain accurately the cost of production in each of the States. That is the only way to reach a reliable figure. I was interested in a paragraph in "The Daily News" a few evenings ago containing a quotation from the paper of 25 years ago, as follows:—

The W.A. State Wheat Pool reports the sale of 1,000,000 bushels of wheat at a fraction better than 5s. 2d. per bushel f.o.b. Fremantle, which is regarded as eminently satisfactory.

If the farmer received 5s. 2d. a bushel for his wheat 25 years ago when it cost perhaps a little more than half to produce it, it must have been eminently satisfactory. I am perhaps one of the few farmers who keep accurate costs of producing wheat, wool and other commodities. My books are perhaps peculiar, but I point out that I am really a manufacturer, not a farmer. Probably the

reason why I have made a success of farming is that I have kept accurate costs: If more farmers had taken the trouble to keep costs of their production, more of them would have been successful.

The farmers are being asked to trust the Commonwealth Government. I, as a wool-grower, feel very sore at the Commonwealth's retaining the £7,000,000 that definitely belongs to the woolgrowers of Australia. That money should have been handed over to the growers and not retained by the Commonwealth. Those of us who have received our wool cheque this year—and most of us have had an excellent wool season—will have their joy spoilt by the fact that an additional five per cent. is being deducted from the amount for further research work.

Hon. L. Craig: Are we dealing with the Bread Bill or with wool?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am dealing with wool as well. To make a success of wool-growing, a farmer must grow wheat. The five per cent. that is being deducted from the woolgrowers' cheque will yield the Commonwealth another £4,000,000 this season. I do not think that is playing the game. At one time I favoured a State pool. Most farmers have doubtless read the wonderful statement published by Mr. J. S. Teasdale, who is a wheat authority in this State and of whom we are very proud indeed. He has made a study of wheatgrowing, wheat selling, costs and so on. I do not propose at this late hour to quote extensively from his statement; members who have not had the pleasure of reading it can do so—it was published within the last few days. Mr. Teasdale proves conclusively, by figures which cannot be controverted, that had the wheatgrowers of Western Australia had their own pool in 1945-46, they would have received not less than £3,083,333 more for their wheat than they will receive from the Commonwealth pool. A State pool would have yielded 10s. 1.2d. per bushel, compared with 5s. 6½d. per bushel from the Commonwealth pool. Surely that should make us think. I consider there is no possibility of a State pool, but I am of opinion that the wheatgrowers of Western Australia are entitled to a little more justice than they have received in the past.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Why do you think there is no possibility of a State pool?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: In reply to my friend, I said in my opening remarks that

I felt the Commonwealth Government would get control and retain it. It has the power. It will get control over the wheat of the Commonwealth and will not favour a State pool. We would not have much chance of getting a State pool which, under Mr. Teasdale's scheme, would suit us so much better and give us a much bigger return.

Hon. G. B. Wood: We have a barley pool.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: We were fortunate in getting that pool, but barley is a commodity of which we do not grow sufficient for our own requirements. The whole of our barley crop is required for local consumption and even then it is insufficient.

Hon. G. B. Wood: We will not be in that position much longer.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I said earlier that one does not know from day to day what is likely to happen so far as the wheat position is concerned. Members will recall that a few days ago the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture introduced an excise duty or tax on wheat. I am advised by our Minister for Agriculture that he has now seen a copy of that Bill. He assures me that it will have no effect whatever on the stabilisation Bill now before this House. I agree with him that the Commonwealth Bill is introduced really as a safeguard. The right of wheat acquisition machinery dies at the end of the present year, or with the lapse of the National Security Regulations. It will thus be seen that the Commonwealth Government would have power only to acquire wheat of the 1946-47 season up to the point when those regulations lapse. That means that only a percentage of this season's crop could be acquired by the Commonwealth Government; the balance of the crop would be the property of the growers if there were no stabilisation scheme or if the Commonwealth Government had no power to acquire it.

Hon. G. B. Wood: No.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: That is what the State Minister for Agriculture told me. It would be possible for the growers to sell that wheat at local consumption price. They could manufacture it, if necessary, and export the commodity and secure a higher price. Since the Bill to which I referred was introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament it has been amended. Instead of

its applying to export wheat only for the 1946-47 season, it now applies to all wheat grown in the 1945-46 and the 1946-47 seasons. That is the position as explained to me by the Minister for Agriculture this evening. The measure introduced by the Commonwealth Minister is really a safeguard to prevent anything like that happening. In the circumstances I have stated, and in view of the fact that the wheatgrowers should be given an opportunity themselves to say whether they desire this Bill or not, the House will be wise in passing the second reading. I intend to support it.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (WAR TIME) ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Annulment of Proceedings.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [11.9]: I move (without notice)—

That the provisions of Standing Order No. 243 having been overlooked in connection with the second and third readings of the Legislative Council (War Time) Electoral Act Amendment Bill, the proceedings on the Bill subsequent to the first reading be annulled.

I might say it is necessary that we have a constitutional or absolute majority for the purpose of passing that Bill. Unfortunately, we all overlooked it and must now retrace our steps and put the Bill through the second and third reading stages at a later date.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

House adjourned at 11.11 p.m.