Legislative Council

Thursday, 14th November, 1957.

CONTENTS

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

LAND AGENTS ACT.

Convictions and Amounts Involved, etc.

Hon. L. C. DIVER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many persons have been convicted for offences under the Land Agents Act, 1921-53, for the years 1954, 1955, 1956?

(2) Did the Treasury on each occasion recover a fidelity bond for £2,000?

(3) Would he supply particulars of the amount of money involved in each case?

(4) What number of individuals sustained loss by reason of any breach of any condition of the bond?

(5) How many claims for compensation have been met by the Treasurer in each year under review?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) 1954—3; 1955—5; 1956—3. In addition, 5 licences were cancelled in 1954; 1 in 1955; and 1 in 1956.

(2) No. All cases under the Act were heard in courts of petty sessions and were for minor offences not involving cancellation. In addition to these cases, there were two Supreme Court prosecutions against two land agents under the Criminal Code (one in 1954 with a bond of £500, and one in 1956 with a bond of £2,000). In each case the bond was recovered by the Treasury.

A land agent who was to have been prosecuted in 1956 under the Criminal Code died before action could be taken. The amount of the bond of £2,000 was recovered by the Treasury and a pro rata payment made to claimants.

(3) 1954 case approximately £11,200.
1956 case approximately £6,253 16s.
Deceased agent £2,180.

(4) 1954 case—22 persons as far as known.
1956 case—2 persons as far as known.
Deceased agent—39 persons as far as known.

(5) 1954—8; 1955—nil; 1956—41.

COUNTRY STUDENTS.

Holiday Railway Travel Concessions.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Have the holiday rail travel concessions to country students between 14 and 16 years of age been withdrawn?

(2) If the answer is "Yes," will he give consideration to the restoration of these concessions, remembering the increasing cost to parents of maintaining a child at school after the compulsory leaving age of 14 years?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Concessions still apply, but they are restricted to travel between school and home of students and vice versa when enrolling or leaving school or during vacations.

(2) In the interests of railway economies, it is not intended to extend concessions.

RAILWAY ACCOUNTS BRANCH.

Economy and Accuracy of Accounting Machines.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he of the opinion that the installation of the accounting machine in the accounts branch of the Railway Department has justified the expense involved?

(2) Has the installation of the machine resulted in economies being effected in the accounts branch?

(3) Have there been more, or less, adjustments of under-payments and over-payments of employees' wages than under the old system?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Less.

UNIFORM BUILDING BY-LAWS.

Date of Operation.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the fact that another place yesterday disallowed the uniform building by-laws made under the Municipal Corporations Act, will he now give consideration to curtailing the operation of the regulations under the Road Districts Act until something can be done to bring the two things into conformity?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Being always abreast of the times, this morning I took action to postpone the coming into operation of the regulations until the 15th December.

TRAFFIC ACT REGULATION.

Postponement of Disallowance Motion.

Order of the Day read for consideration of the following notice of motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith:—

> That Regulation No. 352A, as subsequently amended, made under the Traffic Act, 1919-1955, published in the "Government Gazette" on the 21st December, 1956, and the 1st July, 1957, and laid on the Table of the House on the 9th July, 1957, and the 16th July, 1957, be and is hereby disallowed.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [2.24]: I desire to ask permission to postpone this notice of motion for a further week. In view of the fact that 35 of the 36 objections have been satisfactorily attended to by the Minister for Transport, there remain—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must not make a speech in asking for leave.

Notice of motion, by leave, postponed.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Noxious Weeds Act Amendment.

2, Basil Murray Co-operative Memorial Scholarship Fund Act Amendment.

Passed.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—LONG SERVICE LEAVE.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [2.26] in moving the second reading said: This Bill seeks to confer on employees in private industry the benefits of long-service leave. As members are no doubt aware, various groups of workers in Australia—in the main, though, employed by Government and semi-Government organisations—have enjoyed the benefits of long-service leave for very many years. In the last few years the principle of long-service leave has been adopted in other States of Australia. Western Australia is the last State of the Commonwealth to introduce such a measure.

A survey of the Australian position discloses that in 1951 a scheme of long-service leave was inaugurated in New South Wales. This was followed by one in Queensland in 1952; in Victoria, in 1953; and in Tasmania, in 1956; and a Bill was recently presented to the South Australian Parliament providing for a measure of long-service leave.

In Western Australia the Labour Government in 1927 conferred upon all Government wages employees in Western Australia a long-service leave benefit. This benefit was three months' leave after 10 years of continuous service, and those who had completed 10 or more years prior to the 1st January, 1928, were automatically entitled to the leave.

We contend that one of the most important developments in employer-employee relations over the past 10 years has been the introduction of long-service leave. The Government fails to see any adequate reason why workers in private industry in this State should be denied long-service leave rights. Let us consider the position in Western Australia at the present time.

Firstly, we have the Government wages employees who are granted long-service leave on a 10-year basis. Next there are workers employed in semi-Governmental positions, or what are usually called local government employees. In regard to these local government employees, I find that there are 147 local authorities in Western Australia. They comprise 21 municipal councils and 126 road boards.

Of the 21 municipal councils, all but two have definite long-service leave provisions; and of the remaining two, one has a system of long-service leave which is not in the form of a registered document. Of the 126 road boards, 114 have provided a long-service leave scheme for the employees. The basis in every case is three months' long-service leave after 10 years' service. Strangely enough, I noticed in the "Government Gazette" dated Tuesday, the 5th November, a long-service leave by-law for the Plantagenet Road Board; and this provides for three months for each period of 10 years' continuous service, dated from 1st January, 1947.

Each of these by-laws granting long-service leave to local Government employees has granted some measure of retrospectivity. I notice that one of the latest is the Bruce Rock Road Board concerning which a notice appeared in the "Government Gazette" dated the 30th

August, 1957; and here there is retrospectivity to the 1st January, 1951. The Melville Road Board, although it granted long-service leave only a few years ago, allowed retrospectivity to 1936.

Members can be assured that the basis of long-service leave for all these local government authorities is three months after 10 years or better; and in all cases, retrospectivity. I find also that in the Eastern States legislation retrospectivity is allowed in every case. The State Arbitration Court has already, in the Iron Ore Production Industry (Yampi Sound), Award No. 17 of 1955, prescribed long-service leave on a 10-year basis.

So the standard, as far as Western Australia is concerned, is three months' long-service leave on a 10-year basis. The Government therefore makes no apology for submitting, in the Bill now before this Chamber, that the basis of long-service leave should be three months after 10 years' service.

In submitting this basis the Government is also in line with the Commonwealth Government, which to its employees allows 4½ months' leave for 15 years' service, which I submit is three months for 10 years. In addition, under the Commonwealth scheme, if an employee works for 20 years, he receives another 1½ months' leave, so that for 20 years these Commonwealth employees would, in the aggregate, receive six months' long-service leave.

A recent survey of the position operating in Western Australia, discloses that the approximate work force in Western Australia is 178,000, of whom approximately 48,500 are already enjoying long-service leave on the basis of three months for 10 years or better.

If, therefore, approximately one-quarter of the work force in Western Australia are, at the moment, enjoying long-service leave on a basis of three months after 10 years, surely it is not illogical for the Government to submit that it is right and proper that the balance of workers in industry in Western Australia should be given the same treatment. Members many consider that a system of long-service leave could be costly, and that it could disrupt industry. I am confident, with the experience gained elsewhere where long-service leave operates, that such is not the case.

In 1956 a member of the Industrial Service Division of the Federal Department of Labour and National Service conducted a survey into the position as far as Queensland and New South Wales were concerned. It was established at that time that there was general agreement that the long-service leave legislation would have little effect on production planning, mainly because of the comparatively small number of people involved at any one time. The general opinion was to the effect that the gaps could be filled by reallocating duties without any need for adjusting production schedules.

In regard to effects on personnel policies, the survey disclosed that most organisations had not considered it necessary to institute changes in personnel policy or procedures following the passing of long-service leave legislation. The main change in personnel policy observed by the person conducting the survey into individual organisations, was that training procedures were being examined for the purpose of ensuring adequate replacements to fill gaps, when key people were absent on long-service leave.

Generally however, the surveyor pointed out that there were no particular problems involved immediately, and all were adopting a policy of dealing with difficulties as they arose. In general it was stated that there was little evidence of long-range planning to meet the effects of legislation. In fact, there was a general implication that any new practices required could be absorbed into existing personnel arrangements without much difficulty. It is considered this would be the picture as far as Western Australia is concerned.

The scheme would not be as costly as, at first glance, employers would imagine. There would not be the interruption and effect on production that they may have imagined; and I am quite sure that the impact of long-service leave, with the legislation which we are now introducing, could be safely cushioned. Surely the experience of the other States, where there have been no serious difficulties, would be the same in Western Australia.

To deal now with the main provisions of the Bill, as already indicated, its basis is the benefit of three months' long-service leave on full pay for 10 years' continuous service with the one employer; and it is retrospective to the 1st January, 1951.

The qualifications are that any person who, at the time of the passing of the Act, has had more than seven years' continuous service and whose services are terminated by him before the 1st January, 1961—when leave will first commence to operate—on account of illness or incapacity, or whose services are terminated by the employer, with a view to avoiding his long-service leave obligations under the legislation, will be entitled to pro rata leave from the 1st January, 1951, to the time of the passing of the Act.

An employee who, after the 1st January, 1961, has worked for at least three years continuously and whose services are then terminated by the employer for some reason other than wilful misconduct or serious negligence, will be entitled to pro rata payment for the three years from the 1st January, 1961, onwards and also for the period from the time of the passing of the Act to the 1st January, 1951. Any employee, for example, who started

work on the 1st January, 1956, and worked until January, 1964 would be entitled not to the whole of the pro rata period, but to the period from the time of the passing of the Act—say, the 1st January, 1958—up to the time of termination of employment.

Under the Government regulations, where an employee works for three years continuously and has his services terminated for any reason other than wilful misconduct, he is entitled to pro rata payment. There is provision in the measure that if an employee dies whilst in employment and was entitled to long-service leave benefits, the requisite payments are to be made to his personal representative.

The Bill contains provision that any employee, whose services have been terminated within six months prior to the passing of the Act, will, if he has reason to believe that that action was taken by the employer to avoid the long-service leave obligation, have right of appeal to the appropriate authority set out in the Bill.

If it is shown that the action taken by the employer was for the purpose of sidestepping the long-service leave obligations, the employee will be entitled to pro rata payment from the time of his commencement of employment; but the earliest commencing day is the 1st January, 1951—up to the time of the passing of this Act. It is to be hoped that there will be no such cases; but if an employee feels aggrieved, he will have right of appeal to the appropriate tribunal.

The time of taking of the leave will be a time mutually agreed upon between the employer and the employee, within 12 months; and if there is any dispute as to the employee's right to take leave, or the time within which he is entitled to take it, an appeal can be made to the appropriate authority set out in the Act. There is provision, also, that no employee is to accept other employment while on long-service leave.

The Bill contains certain exemptions and exclusions. The exclusions include all Government employees except Commonwealth employees, who are dealt with under Commonwealth law. Included in the exemptions are all Government employees, and that embraces fire brigades and those employed by State instrumentalities, all of whom receive the three months' leave for 10 years' service.

The Bill provides that an employer may be exempted from the provisions of the Act where it is shown that his employees are, under the conditions of employment with him, entitled under any scheme conducted by the employer or on his behalf, to benefits not less favourable than those prescribed in the measure. Exemption may be granted for a period of a maximum of five years and the exemption can be renewed. There is a definition of continuous employment.

There are listed a number of factors which do not break a worker's employment and they include the taking of annual leave, and the taking of long-service leave. Other types of factors which do not break a worker's service for long-service leave purposes include—

> Absence in respect of any period during which an employee shall serve as a member of the naval, military or air force of the Commonwealth of Australia, other than, of course, as a member of the permanent forces.
>
> Service under the National Service Act.
>
> Absence necessitated by personal sickness or injury, in which case not more than 15 working days a year count as service.

Then there is a provision for certain service not to break continuity of employment for long-service leave purposes, but the period does not count as employment. Such instances as—

> Absence following any termination of the employment by the employer on any ground other than slackness of trade if the employee is re-employed by the same employer within a period not exceeding two months from the date of such termination.
>
> Absence through any stand-down of an employee in accordance with certain provisions of an award.
>
> Absence following any termination of the employment by the employer on the ground of slackness of trade if the employee is re-employed by the same employer within a period not exceeding six months from the date of the termination.
>
> Absence by the employee authorised by the employer at any time.
>
> Absence arising directly or indirectly from an industrial dispute, but only if the employee returns to work in accordance with the terms of settlement of dispute.
>
> Any other reasonable absence of the employee on legitimate union business in respect of which he has requested and been refused leave.

There is in the measure provision for what is known as transmission and the terms are "transmittor" and "transmittee." Where the ownership or otherwise of a business passes from one employer to another, the person disposing of the business is the transmittor and the person acquiring it is the transmittee. The services of an employee who was working for the transmittor is not to be broken by reason of the transmission.

The method of taking long-service leave will be in one continuous period, or, if the employer and employee so agree, in not more than three separate periods in respect of the first thirteen weeks' entitlement, and not more than two separate

periods in respect of any subsequent period of entitlement. There is provision for the method of paying the employee whilst he is on long-service leave. Payment will be either in full when the employee commences the leave, or any other way agreed upon between the employer and the employee.

The administration of the Act is conferred on the holder of the office of Secretary for Labour and the functions of that office are clearly set out. That officer, on request and application to him, will determine a number of matters that will undoubtedly arise in connection with legislation of this nature. It will be found that he has no power to issue directions, and appeals can be had from him to the industrial tribunal; in this case the Arbitration Court. In effect this therefore means that the final decision in regard to all matters affecting long-service leave will be with the Arbitration Court or the State Conciliation Commissioner.

The Bill clearly discloses some of the administrative matters that will be dealt with. I will not at this stage go into detail, but they are matters of general administration such as the question of whether the employee has had 10 years' continuous service; whether he is an employee within the meaning of the Act; whether he has been dismissed by the employer to avoid long-service leave, and so on. All such matters will be subject to appeal to the Arbitration Court.

Inspectors under the Factories and Shops Act will be empowered under the Bill to carry out certain inquiries, and in case it is said that these inspectors should have nothing to do with this measure, I will remind members that under the Factories and Shops Act those inspectors have the powers of industrial inspectors under the Arbitration Act. On page 9 of the Factories and Shops Act, it is shown that these men have full powers of inquiry; and where it is necessary, as in cases of obstruction in the course of their duty, they have power to be accompanied by a police officer.

Disputes and appeals will be dealt with under the administrative section of the Act and the employers will be obliged to keep records. I doubt if that will entail any great amount of additional work, because for taxation purposes and for industrial arbitration purposes the average firm or employer has continuing and up-to-date records of the names and addresses of its employees at the moment. Representation of the parties before the industrial tribunal or before the appropriate authority is provided for.

I suggest that members study very carefully the provisions of this measure. They will find that—possibly apart from the 10-year provision and that dealing with the seven-years' pro rata payment, and the provision referring to retrospectivity—the measure is practically on all fours with those operating in the Eastern States at the moment, and to a large extent with the much discussed code.

It has been said that the code has been accepted by the various unions, but that is not the case. The code has not had the reception that we have been led to believe by the comments in another place. The code was merely used as a basis and I have yet to learn that it has been adopted in its entirety.

Hon. H. K. Watson: It has been adopted in principle, has it not? It is only awaiting signature.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; the code was only the basis laid down for discussion or negotiation between the parties. It has not been adopted or agreed to by anybody.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Have you seen it?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have read a little about it in the Press.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Have you seen the document as agreed to by the A.C.T.U.?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That document was merely a basis for negotiation.

Hon. H. K. Watson: It is more than that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is contended that the measures contained in this Bill are realistic and workable; and we as a Government can see no reason why the Bill, as now presented, should not meet with the approval of this Chamber. We contend that the interests of both employer and employee have been carefully safeguarded. The definitions of whom the Bill is to apply to are carefully set out, and have been given careful thought.

We have allowed for exemptions. We have allowed for all types of contingencies. We have taken into account our experience in Government employment, and we feel that the measure now submitted is practicable. I commend the Bill to the House, and move—

> That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. K. Watson, debate adjourned.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to amendments No. 1 and 3 made by the Council and had agreed to No. 2 subject to a further amendment.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by Hon. G. E. Jeffery, read a first time.

BILL—LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [2.51] in moving the second reading said: It will be remembered that last session this House agreed to the imposition of a tax on farming lands, provided the tax operated only until the 30th June, 1958. The main purpose of this Bill is to continue the tax for a further period of two years, that is, until the 30th June, 1960.

The amount of revenue which is being obtained under last year's legislation is very considerable—so considerable, in fact, that the State cannot do without it for some years to come. The total amount of increased revenue it is estimated will be received during the full financial year as a result of last year's amendments is approximately £500,000.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Is that on last year's collections or is it the old rate collections?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is the total amount of estimated increased revenue, taking everything into account, I should think.

Hon. H. K. Watson: The figure seems to be a bit ambiguous.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of that total about half will come from the tax upon farming lands, and the balance will come from the increased rates which Parliament agreed to last year in connection with other lands, particularly city lands and other land in the metropolitan area.

Members are aware that there is an estimated revenue deficit of approximately £2,660,000. I would point out, in connection with the revenue estimated for the current year, that the full amount to be received under this land tax proposal is included in the Budget Estimates. Therefore, if the amount of additional revenue, which the State would receive under these proposals, is not to be received, the estimated deficit would increase considerably over and above the amount now set out in the Budget tables. The necessity to continue to receive this revenue is quite clear and adequate.

There are some other amendments in the Bill, only one of which is important and requires any explanation. When last year's legislation was passed, it was thought that it could have the effect of placing land, other than farming land, on the same basis in regard to improvement or non-improvement as that on which farm land is placed; in other words, the town lands, if they can be so described, can legally be regarded as being on the same basis as rural lands as regards improvement or non-improvement.

That, of course, is not desirable. The Bill aims to remove that situation by restoring the position which existed prior to the introduction of last year's amendments by Parliament. At present, lands used for primary purposes, or rural lands, are regarded as improved where improvements have been carried out to the extent of at least £1 per acre, or where the improvements carried out over the total holding represent one-third of the unimproved value of the land.

The principle which did apply to town lands was that they were regarded as unimproved where less than one-third of the unimproved value had been spent on improvements, with a maximum expenditure of £50 per foot of frontage. It is not desirable that this situation should continue, if it, in fact, existed legally as a result of last year's amendments. For that reason there is a provision in this Bill to restore beyond any shadow of doubt the position which existed before last year's amendments were introduced. It is desired that this matter be placed on the correct basis again.

One other amendment brings up to date the relationship of the land tax and the exemptions, mostly in regard to Commonwealth pensions covering repatriation widows, etc. This Bill makes no variations in connection with exemptions, but merely brings them up to date. I emphasise again that the finances which would be derived by the State as a result of the passing of this Bill is money which the State needs urgently. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith, debate adjourned.

BILL—ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS).

Recommittal.

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

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Short title and citation:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Last evening we were discussing a proviso I moved to be put into this Bill on page 13 after the words "fifty-eight" in line 20. I well remember the exchange of words which took place on this matter; and I succeeded in having an amendment agreed to which I think might have some bad effect upon the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act

and the Government Employees (Pensions) Act. That was not my desire by any means.

In order to rectify the matter, I intend to move to delete the proviso which was inserted last night, with a view to inserting another proviso in its place. I would also like the Chief Secretary to tell the Committee whether he has any departmental information on the proviso which I moved last night. I move an amendment—

> That the proviso to paragraph (b) inserted by a previous Committee be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—
>
> > Provided that any pension payable prior to the coming into operation of this Act under the Superannuation Act, 1871-1951, Act 35 Victoriæ No. 7, shall not be reduced notwithstanding any of the provisions of this Act, and shall continue to be payable at the rate now payable.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What I thought might happen has happened. When the amendment was first proposed I raised an objection and suggested that I would like to have it looked at to make quite sure that from a legal aspect it was all right. However, I did suggest some slight amendment which was acceptable to the mover and agreed to by the Committee. We found out afterwards that my fears were well founded, and that the amendment which was carried would interfere with some portions of the relevant Acts; and that is something the hon. member did not want to do.

The hon. member asked me whether I had had any word from the department. I discussed the matter with the officer who was here last night; but other than that, I have not heard from the department. The amendment looks as though it will meet the situation; and I will raise no objection to it, because we have until tomorrow before the report is adopted, and in the meantime the amendment can be examined. With these reservations, I offer no objection.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I cannot help but be surprised at the spirit of co-operation and the plausible way that the Chief Secretary has put this up. One would have thought, this being a Government Bill, that the Chief Secretary would move to recommit the clause to take out the obnoxious portion. I let members judge for themselves the salesmanship the Chief Secretary is putting over.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have had so few supporters—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is about time members got on with the amendment before the Chair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: —in this Chamber that I have had to rely on another place to draw attention to the faults here, and I have just adopted the usual procedure.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I say quite seriously that I propose to have the amendment inserted to make sure that no similar set of circumstances occurs to what has happened previously where the Government gave an undertaking, through the Chief Secretary, and fell down on it the next minute. The Chairman will not allow me to discuss that particular matter now.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think that is fair and I cannot allow the remark to go unchallenged. The hon. member has made a bald statement accusing the Government of not playing the game. What he has said will go into Hansard. Silence is taken to mean consent; and if I do not speak, it will be assumed that I agree to what he said as being the truth. I do not know even to what he was referring.

The CHAIRMAN: We have gone far enough.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is a simple safeguard.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Why not accept it generously?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am; but I have been let down before in this Chamber.

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

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [3.7] in moving the second reading said: This small Bill is related to the Land Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill the provisions of which I have explained. Members will recollect that last year when the Bill was introduced to reimpose the land tax on improved farming land, action was taken to suspend the operation of the vermin tax. The amount raised at that time under the vermin tax was approximately £100,000 a year. It was provided in the land tax legislation that £100,000 per annum should be paid from the land tax into the vermin fund to make good the loss which was occasioned by the abolition of the vermin tax.

Just as this House placed a time limit on the amendment to the land tax legislation, so it put a similar limit on the vermin tax legislation which will expire on the 30th June next, unless during this session of Parliament action is taken to alter that situation. So as to achieve uniformity with the Land Tax Assessment

Act Amendment Bill this measure proposes to continue the deferring of vermin tax payments for a further two years; that is, until the 30th June, 1960. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [3.9] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to endeavour once more to remove one of the last relics of colonialism and Victorianism which exist in this State, and which apparently do so because of our great distance from the world centres of modern thought and regard for the ordinary people who are the backbone of the State. I have heard that visitors from other countries have expressed amazement at the archaic methods of election of our upper House.

The Bill proposes that suffrage for the Legislative Council shall be the same as that for the Legislative Assembly. To put it mildly, it seems farcical—and indeed, Gilbertian—that the adult people of the State elect persons to represent them in Parliament and to make laws for all to live and work under, and that one-sixth of those adult people can elect representatives to consider—and, possibly, veto—those laws agreed to by the representatives of all the people.

In this State, as a result of this aged and thin-blooded system we have an upper House that, instead of being the representative and servant of the people, has set itself up as the master of the people. The same result was achieved by force in totalitarian countries where representatives of the minority rule the country. What has been done in those countries by dread is done statutorily in Western Australia.

Glaring anomalies exist under our present system. A person occupying a small office or room is entitled to a Legislative Council vote even though he may have no interest in the property and may not have been personally responsible for the payment of rates. I am advised there are many such persons in the City of Perth who are entered on the roll.

The passing of this Bill would place Western Australia on the same footing as our great ally—the United States of America—and the State of Victoria, where adult suffrage and compulsory voting have existed since 1950. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILL—PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—in reply) [3.11]: If I have to weary the House for some little time, it is only because I must reply to certain statements that have been made. I shall deal first of all with those made by Dr. Hislop. From the start I want it to be understood that the information supplied to the House by the hon. member came from one source only—the board. Naturally one must take the view expressed as being that of the board and not the personal view of Dr. Hislop.

The hon. member said that the information I had obtained came from only one source; but that is not so. My information came from five highly qualified people, plus a petition from 25 physiotherapists, three of whom are superintendents at the main hospitals in this State. Dr. Hislop referred to one person—I did not want to mention the name—who, he said, had received a considerable amount of help from the board; but, in fact, she received very little help from the Physiotherapists' Board. This lady, Miss Hammond, who was said not to have the requisite amount of post-graduate experience before she went to St. Thomas's College in England, received this much help: a letter was written by the board asking St. Thomas's College if it would accept Miss Hammond for training as a teacher as this State was short of physiotherapy teachers.

That was the only help Miss Hammond received from the board. The reason why the letter was requested and written was that Miss Hammond was of the opinion that there would be many applications for the vacancies at St. Thomas's and that a little assistance from the board would help her to get in. But when Miss Hammond applied to take her teacher's training course in the college there were only herself and one other applicant, and there were three vacancies.

So this great song that has been made about the large amount of assistance that Miss Hammond received is a myth. Miss Hammond had been at St. Thomas's doing additional post-graduate for six months prior to when she applied for the teacher's training course, and she was fully qualified to do the post-graduate work.

Reference was made by Dr. Hislop to the appointment of Miss Hammond as an assistant in Western Australia. That appointment was granted while Miss Hammond was in England, and she accepted it and was prepared to take it up on her return to Western Australia in February of this year. The board stated that Miss Hammond then knew all the facts; but the facts that Miss Hammond knew at the time came from letters she had received from her father on information gained

from the secretary-registrar of the board. The fact that she had was that the supervisor at the school, Mr. Keating, was resigning; but that cannot be proved, because nothing was written down about it —it was all verbal, and the board denies that any conversation in that respect took place.

But it is borne out by the board's own correspondence in that the board wrote to Miss Hammond and asked her if she would accept the appointment. She replied to the letter 10 days after receiving it. The board also wrote a letter to the chartered society, dated the 21st September, 1956. The letter to Miss Hammond was dated the 3rd September. In the letter to the chartered society, the board stated that it had obtained the services of one physiotherapy teacher, and possibly those of another. There is room for only two teachers in this State, a main supervisor and an assistant teacher; and in the face of that letter, it was unlikely that the board intended to retain the services of Mr. Keating.

From the reading of the letter it was quite clear that the board had in mind, as early as the 21st September last year, that Mr. Keating was leaving, and he himself had intimated to the students who were then in training that he was leaving the teaching position to take up private practice.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: It is a mass of supposition.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It is not; the board's own letter confirms what I have said. It said that it had obtained the services of one, and possibly two, physiotherapy teachers. The one whose services it had obtained was Miss Hammond, and the other person to whom it referred was Miss Ganne, to whom it had written on the 3rd September, 1956, in the following terms:—

> With reference to your recent letter, the possibility of teaching in association with Miss Hammond can be viewed with a little more hope. On your behalf I have applied to the Royal Perth Hospital for a position at their annexe, which is associated with the School of Physiotherapy, advising them that the board would possibly require your services either full-time or part-time during the coming year, and requesting that if this is the case you would be made available for the purpose.

So the board's clear intention was that Miss Ganne was to be the second teacher. I cannot see why Dr. Hislop says that it is a mass of supposition in view of the facts I have quoted.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: It is still a mass of supposition.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It is not. At that time the board had appointed Miss Hammond, and the letter I have just read was to Miss Ganne, who was to be the second appointee. There is no supposition about it at all. The board told the chartered society that it had two recognised teachers who were taking up appointments. They could not employ three because there was not sufficient work for them, and the whole thing was cut and dried—these were to be the two teachers. The outcome of it was that Miss Hammond was unaware of what had gone on, except what she had heard through her father from Mr. Robertson, the secretary-registrar.

She returned to Western Australia of the opinion that Mr. Keating would be resigning early in the New Year. She was told by the board to interview Mr. Keating about her appointment; and during her discussion with him, although he did not state straight out that he was not resigning, his wife brought the matter up and it transpired that Mr. Keating had no intention of resigning, but intended to carry on indefinitely. So it was not until February of this year, just after Miss Hammond had returned from England, that she knew Mr. Keating was not resigning. When she returned to Western Australia the board did not advise her that Mr. Keating was not resigning; it left it to her to find out for herself.

If it had told Miss Hammond in a proper way that Mr. Keating was staying on at the school for a period, and that it would be happy to have her assistance at the school and her co-operation until the whole matter was straightened out, Miss Hammond would have been prepared to work under Mr. Keating until the question was resolved. In its approach to the chartered society in England, in an endeavour to get reciprocity, the board intimated that Mr. Keating was resigning; otherwise there could not have been reciprocity.

If that was not the intention, why did the board even bother to write to the chartered society about reciprocity? If Mr. Keating was being retained as the supervisor and main lecturer at the school, the chartered society would not have granted reciprocity. As far as the board knew, Mr. Keating was going to leave.

Miss Hammond's reason for not then accepting the position, after knowing that Mr. Keating was not resigning his position as a teacher, was firstly that she would have been in an untenable position. She would have had to carry on teaching under somebody less qualified to teach than she was, and knowing that she was working at a school which could not obtain reciprocity. Although Mr. Keating's standard of teaching may have been quite good, it was not the standard of the chartered society. Naturally she felt that had she accepted the position she would not have been doing justice to herself or to her position as a teacher.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did she ever undertake to accept a three-year course of employment as assistant teacher?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Miss Hammond was quite prepared to accept the position as assistant teacher for three years, provided the school was under the direction of a qualified teacher, or one recognised by the chartered society and who had obtained the society's diploma in teaching. Members can understand the untenable position she would have been in had she gone there as a teacher with a chartered society diploma, and had to work under a man who, although a qualified physiotherapist, was not a recognised chartered society teacher. The only circumstances under which she could have carried on would have been if the position was to be a temporary one only.

Hon. A. R. Jones: How did Mr. Keating get the job in the first place if he was not a recognised teacher?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Mr. Lyall, the original teacher at the school, was appointed from England, and he had a teacher's qualifications. After teaching at the school for some time, he resigned, and the board advertised for a teacher to take his place. One of the applications was from Mr. Keating. On receiving his application form the board wrote to a certain doctor in Melbourne, where Mr. Keating was residing at the time, and asked him if he would be good enough to interview Mr. Keating and advise the board as to what he thought of Mr. Keating's capabilities as a teacher at a physiotherapy school.

On the same day that the board wrote the letter to this doctor, it also wrote to Mr. Keating, stating that a letter had been sent to the docor, but at the same time offering to pay his air fare both ways from Melbourne to Perth in order that he could come to Western Australia for an interview. When the interview was over it was agreed to appoint Mr. Keating.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Then the board knew that he did not have a diploma?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes. He returned to Melbourne, packed his goods and chattels and came to Western Australia as the teacher; and the board found him a house, although it did not pay the rent. I agree that that is the fair thing to do if a teacher is coming here. But as Mr. Keating could have been interviewed in Melbourne by the doctor to whom the board had written, and the board could have had his opinions of Mr. Keating's capabilities, why did it go to the expense of paying his fare both ways in order to interview him? I think it was a complete waste of money.

Miss Hammond refused to accept the position for a second reason. After finding out that Mr. Keating intended to continue as the permanent teacher, she wrote to the board and asked if it would give an undertaking that within six months the direction of the school would be placed in the hands of a qualified and recognised teacher. Perhaps Miss Hammond may have been a little presumptuous; but she had to protect herself, because she did not want to work under a person who was not qualified, and she wanted to see the school carried on at a high standard. This is the reply she received from the board—

> Your letter of the 24th ult. was considered at the last meeting of the board, when I was directed to advise that the board is not prepared to give any undertaking as to future directors of study or tuition.

The board was not prepared to give any undertaking that at any future time it would employ a teacher with a recognised diploma. The letter went on—

> In the circumstances therefore, the Board has no alternative than to accept your decision not to commence duties, and any contract of employment which may have existed between the Board and you, is now cancelled.

So it can be seen that the final cancellation of her appointment was made by the board. The board would not assure Miss Hammond that at a later date the school would be taken over by a recognised teacher with a diploma. She was not acting for personal reasons.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: If you had been a member of the board, would you have agreed to give consideration to a person on the reception of a letter written in such vicious terms?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It depends on what one calls "vicious terms." Her letter to the board was an inquiry as to what was going to happen to the school in the future as regards the director of studies. That is an inquiry which any physiotherapist in this State, especially one who is interested in the future of physiotherapy, is quite entitled to make.

This board has not at any time cooperated with the physiotherapists when they sought information. As I said when speaking on this matter previously, when a trainee rang the secretary for information, that trainee was threatened that if she asked for any more information she would not be registered. That is the type of thing that is being handed out.

Dr. Hislop said that Miss Hammond's letter was vicious. There was nothing vicious about Miss Hammond's letter; nor is there anything vicious about Miss Hammond. She is a decent person, and there is no viciousness in her at all. But this attitude that the board has taken towards her is not in the best interests of physiotherapy. There are no personalities involved in this. Miss Hammond had nothing personal against Mr. Keating—indeed, she liked him and thought him a decent type of man. Dr. Hislop might

smile, but it is a fact. The majority of the physiotherapists like Mr. Keating personally. Their only complaint is that he is not a qualified teacher.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would you place more emphasis upon qualification than ability?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: In this case one has to place emphasis upon qualification plus ability; that is where the emphasis comes in. One cannot have the qualification unless one has ability. When people attend colleges like St. Thomas's and others and receive their training, they do not get their diplomas because they have passed examinations alone; they receive their diplomas because of their ability as well as the fact that they have passed their examinations.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He got honours.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: He may have.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: They are not teachers.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: We have teachers in our schools. Do they not go through a training college and pass a certain standard before they are allocated to the various schools? Do not our professors attend the universities to pass a certain standard before they are permitted to lecture; and is it not necessary for doctors to attain a certain standard before they can practise as surgeons or physicians or as specialists in a certain line of medicine? I think Dr. Hislop will agree that that is very necessary.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: I have not got a teacher's certificate.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: But the more they study the more they qualify, provided they follow up their training. Dr. Hislop said he has not got a teacher's certificate, and possibly he is less fortunate than other doctors who may have gone further and got a teacher's certificate. There is no question of personalities being involved in this; it is merely a matter between the physiotherapists and the board. The physiotherapists believe the training has not been on the right lines and the board believes it has.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: All physiotherapists?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Over 50 per cent. of the physiotherapists in the association. I do not propose to say anything more on that aspect. Reference was made to the fact that Miss Hammond referred to Mr. Keating as an unqualified person; and naturally the board in its statements in this respect inferred that Miss Hammond meant that Mr. Keating was not a qualified physiotherapist. All physiotherapists in this State know that he is a qualified physiotherapist and the intention in the letter that Miss Hammond wrote in that connection was not meant to convey that Mr. Keating was not a qualified physiotherapist. She was merely referring to the teacher's qualification when she wrote in that vein, and the inference should have been that he was not a qualified teacher.

But as we all know, if we choose to do so we can read all sorts of things into a perfectly simple statement. Dr. Hislop said that he would assume from the remarks that every school in Australia had a qualified teacher. He believed that including Miss Hammond, there are two or three who hold teachers' qualifications in Australia. There are three of them in this State—namely, Miss Hammond, Mr. Lyall and Miss Ganne. In addition, there is one in South Australia, one in Brisbane and three in New South Wales. We are not certain how many there are in Victoria.

So in that respect there are quite a lot more teachers in Australia holding diplomas in physiotherapy than Dr. Hislop seems to be informed about. There is only one other school where the board controls training as is done in Western Australia, and that is Victoria, and it is anxious to change to a system similar to that which operates in the other States. I mention that in passing.

I do not propose to deal with Mr. Lyall's resignation, because I think we thrashed that out previously; in any case Mr. Lyall is not in Western Australia to tell us what the pros and cons of it were. One can draw one's own conclusions from his resignation as to whether the interference was from the board or from the parents. I imagine it was a bit of both, although I think there was perhaps more from the board.

There was a reference made to the assisted passage which was given to Miss Ganne; but I would like to point out here and now that this assisted passage was not provided by the Physiotherapists' Board; she obtained it through the immigration authorities. When she came here she was not obliged to stay with the board if appointed for a period of two years. There was no obligation on her to do so at all, because she did not come here to an appointment.

There was a further reference by Dr. Hislop to the appointment of Miss Ganne as assistant teacher because Miss Hammond had not been appointed. This arose from the fact that the education committee, of which Dr. Phyllis Goatcher is chairman, held a meeting and asked Miss Hammond at one time, and Miss Ganne at another, to attend that meeting in connection with posts which had been advertised, and for which each of them had applied.

When Miss Hammond attended the meeting the education committee, she was questioned by Dr. Hill—who was not a member of that committee but was at the meeting purely as an observer—and asked if she would accept the position if Miss Ganne were not appointed. The same procedure was adopted towards Miss Ganne and she was asked if she would accept if

Miss Hammond were not appointed. If that is not pointing the bone, I do not know what is.

Here we find Dr. Hill—who is not even a member of the committee but merely an observer—putting these suggestions to Miss Hammond and Miss Ganne. I think it was grossly unfair of him to have made those suggestions merely as an observer and it led to more trouble than could be imagined so far as this matter was concerned.

Dr. Hislop said that these two people felt that they could control the activities of the Physiotherapists' Board. I do not know the source of his information, but it is pure imagination on someone's part. That was never intended. How can these two ladies control the activities of the Physiotherapists' Board? The board comprises Dr. Henzell, Dr. Hill as medical representative, and a member from the University Senate. So there are three such members as against two physiotherapists on the board. How would it be possible, therefore, for these two ladies to control the Physiotherapists' Board? At the present time, in addition, there are Miss Seward and Mr. Rosen as physiotherapists on the board. It is too silly to imagine that these people can control the activities of the board.

Another remark passed by Dr. Hislop was that the board would not accept Miss Hammond because she did not have administrative qualities. I can assure the House that I have seen references on the file concerning Miss Hammond, and they are couched in the hightest terms possible. These stories that are put about are just so much eyewash.

I now want to deal with the matter of reciprocity. Dr. Hislop said that the board now has reciprocity with the chartered society. That is not so. I received information from the secretary and it reads as follows:—

> The chartered society has written to advise that they are willing to advise the Ministry of Health in England to restore reciprocity when sufficient evidence has been supplied that the staff of the school have adequate qualifications.

That does not mean there is reciprocity at present; it means that it will be considered when information is supplied to the effect that the staff have adequate qualifications.

It is not my intention to condemn everything done by the board. To a degree it has done a reasonably fair job, but it has fallen down on the main issues. My intention, and the sole purpose of the Bill, is to improve the standard of physiotherapy in this State, and to ensure that a complete and efficient training is given.

I would now like to touch on the lecturers who were referred to by Dr. Hislop. We all know that they are men of the highest repute and they deserve all credit and praise for the work they have done. But they do not lay down the syllabus. All they do is lecture in their particular field. The syllabus is laid down by the board. These men cannot spend their time finding out what the syllabus contains. They are good enough to give lectures and they do a marvellous job. It is up to the lecturers to accept that the physiotherapy teachers are the ones who will deal with physiotherapy and therapeutic work.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Don't you like the syllabus?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have nothing against it; it could be improved.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Are you in a position to say that the syllabus could be improved?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I have had a glance at the syllabus, although I have not studied it fully. When I intended to do so I could not find it. It may be all right, and it may conform with the standard laid down by the chartered society.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: We are not interested in that.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: We are. That is the whole point. To quote Dr. Hislop's words, the aim of Australia today is to have a uniform standard, a standard that will be recognised on a world-wide basis. Unless we have a standard that is suitable to the chartered society we cannot obtain a world-wide standard.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Who are the doctors on the board?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: There is Dr. Hill besides Dr. Henzell, who is the chairman. Mr. Sinclair who is on the Senate of the University is also a member of that board. In addition, there are two physiotherapists.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Is Dr. Hill highly qualified?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: To my knowledge he is. Dr. Hislop said that schools in Australia are not working so much for registration or reciprocity with the chartered society, as for reciprocity throughout Australia and for a standard which is acceptable in the United Kingdom. I would like him to understand that unless this State has reciprocity with the chartered society, it will not obtain reciprocity with the United Kingdom. That is as plain as a pikestaff, because that society recommends to the Minister of Health in England which schools are to be recognised. With the high standard of training required, quite a number of schools in England are not recommended. If there is to be reciprocity with the United Kingdom, there must be reciprocity with the chartered society.

The Minister for Railways: Hasn't that been arranged?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No. I have already referred to that point. I do not know if the Minister was in his seat. Dr. Hislop mentioned that there was reciprocity, but that is not a fact.

The Minister for Railways: That was the advice we received a few weeks ago.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I quote the information received from the secretary of the board only today. He said, "The chartered society has written to advise that it is willing to advise the Ministry of Health to restore reciprocity when sufficient evidence has been supplied that the staff of the school has the added qualifications." There is no reciprocity as yet.

All I am asking in this Bill is that the two physiotherapist members of the board, after their effluxion of time, be reappointed from a panel of names submitted by the association and selected by the Governor. One of these members will retire next January. The Bill proposes that a panel of two names be submitted at that time to the Governor from whom he can select the board member. He may select the member who is now on the board, or he may select another person. That has nothing to do with me. What I am putting forward is a fair and reasonable basis for selection of the board member. The people concerned, the physiotherapists, should have the opportunity to nominate the names from which one is chosen.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Earlier in your speech you said that more than 50 per cent. of physiotherapists were satisfied with the Bill. Doesn't that mean that they will be able to out-vote the existing board members?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Quite possibly. Being more than 50 per cent. of the total number of physiotherapists they would be able to do that.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Isn't that the reason for the Bill?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Where there is smoke there is fire. If over 50 per cent. of the physiotherapists are dissatisfied with the existing board members and want to force them out of office, that is the democratic way. There is no statement that they are dissatisfied with the present members. They are dissatisfied with the training in the school. For all we know, they may return the member who next retires.

It is not my aim to do anything other than to assist the physiotherapists in this State. The amendment in the Bill which provides that the standard shall not be less than the standard set out in the syllabus of training of the chartered society is a safeguard to the training of physiotherapists in this State, in that they will be assured that the training will be at least up to the standard of that society and not below it.

If we are to have a world-wide standard, we will have to adopt that syllabus. In that respect this Bill will do no harm. If the chartered society accepts our syllabus it will be all right. We have to ensure that the standard of training here will turn out successful practitioners.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	13
Majority against	1

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. W. R. Hall *(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	*(Teller.)*

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

Sitting suspended from 3.55 to 4.20 p.m.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (Suburban) [4.20]: I support this measure, which is an attempt to bring the Electoral Act of this State more into line with the Commonwealth legislation. This is a good measure; and although some people do not agree with its provisions, I would remind members that some of us are always prone to question any suggested change. I hope this Bill will not meet the fate of the previous electoral measure dealt with in this House, which was not even accorded the second reading.

I believe that the least we can do, in dealing with legislation of this nature, is to allow the measures to be read a second time, so that their provisions may be fully debated in Committee. There is a great deal in the existing Act that requires amendment; and here I would refer to the postal voting provisions, which are dealt with in the measure now before us. I repeat that the defeat of the previous electoral measure dealt with in this Chamber was a retrograde step. This is another example of the opposition majority in this House being used in brutal fashion.

The PRESIDENT: Order please! The hon. member must address herself to the Bill before the House.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It is the Electoral Act Amendment Bill which is before the House, and I would have thought that that would allow me to deal with the provisions in the Act. The attention of this Chamber must be directed to the need for amending our electoral law. Most of the debate on this measure should take place during the Committee stage; and although this Bill is not as important as the other electoral measure that was defeated, I hope it will receive far greater consideration. There are all kinds of regulations in this House, under which one may not say this, that or the other thing; but I came here to say what I think is fair and just, and when any injustice is done I intend to protest about it.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must observe the Standing Orders.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Then I think we should deal with the Standing Orders.

The PRESIDENT: At present we are dealing with the Bill that is before us.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The House can deal with me if it wishes; but at the moment I am burning under a sense of injustice at the impertinent way this legislation has been dealt with. It is a measure that was introduced in two parts, and the first part has already been defeated. I would point out that officers of the Electoral Department have prepared this measure, quite apart from political considerations, for the good of the State.

Our present electoral law is a very patchwork affair; and I think the least that Opposition members in this House could do is to be fair to the officers of the department, who have spent so much time and trouble on preparing these measures, and at least extend to them the courtesy of dealing with this Bill in Committee.

If I am to be so handicapped that I cannot speak on the injustice which I think has been done, by the throwing out of the last electoral measure that we dealt with, I will wait until the Committee stage of this measure and then raise the points with which I wish to deal—

Hon. H. K. Watson: This Bills deals only with postal voting.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Yes; but that is part of the Electoral Act. I think that what has been done is only a ruse to gag speakers, on this side of the House, who want to deal with things that matter to them. I am not doing any political kite-flying, but am genuinely antagonistic to what has been done. If we will not even consider a measure brought forward after preparation by officers paid by the State to do that work in the best possible manner, we are simply wasting time and public money. I repeat that the existing Act has many faults and requires tidying up. I support the second reading.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	7
Majority for	10

Ayes.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. G. MacKinnon
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. W. F. Willesee	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. Cunningham

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 4.32 p.m.