

such land with people, who to-day are not only workless, but homeless. I am of opinion that men of 55 years of age and onwards at present unemployed will never get back to work again. It is a gloomy view to take, but one has to regard the position squarely. Even though we get around the corner, of which we hear so much, and enjoy economic recovery—

Mr. Marshall: By borrowing and spending.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The work in future will be absorbed by the young men. The men of over 55 will have no hope of getting back to a reasonable standard of employment. They may get a proportion of the work and a proportion of the dole, but they will become old prematurely because of the anxiety arising from their deplorable condition and that of their families. We should not build railways merely to provide temporary employment for men on railway construction. We should save that money and husband our resources in order to give permanent employment to as many men as possible, particularly those men who are getting up in years and have large families to maintain. The man suffering the greatest anxiety in the present economic stress is the man of 55 or more whose family have grown up. He provided for his children in their younger days, thinking that they would be able to contribute to the needs of the family when he had grown old, but instead of their being able to contribute, they have become a liability. The number of young men and women out of employment is depressing indeed. The anxiety of the parents, however, increased by the fact that many of them have not a home. There are large areas of unutilised land adjacent to existing railways. It is a crime that such land should be monopolised and unused while so many people are in need. We should endeavour to make the land available for them. We shall never succeed in getting people into homes unless we associate with the homes some work of a reproductive kind. I know the State fairly well; I travel extensively through the agricultural districts and am associated with organisations that have enabled me to acquire a knowledge of the productivity of the land, and I have been impressed with the small production from large areas. I have no hesitation in saying there is abundance of land highly suitable, already

partially cleared, that could be made available for providing homes for men of large families without homes and without work.

Mr. North: You are arguing in favour of more commodities and less capital works?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. Consider the psychological effect of such a scheme. If the young people were satisfied that their parents had a home in their old age, they would be relieved of considerable anxiety. If the breadwinner were out of work, but had a home, he could till the soil and produce a considerable proportion of the necessities of life, and the young people, during any period of their unemployment, could help the parents to establish themselves. The parents would be settled permanently in a home and would not be competing for the limited amount of work available. As I consider it wrong to proceed with this railway proposal, I move an amendment—

That the words "now read a second time" be struck out and the words "deferred until the Government have submitted to Parliament a report upon the area of unused or only partially used land within reasonable carting distance of existing railways and also a scheme for the more complete utilisation of such land" inserted in lieu.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th September, 1933.

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, EVICTION NOTICES.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Are the Government aware that eviction notices have been issued by the Workers' Homes Board to tenants who are, and have been for some time, financially embarrassed through the depression? 2, Will the Government endeavour to extend further consideration to those who, upon inquiry, are found to be deserving of relief?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, The Board has issued eviction notices only in a very few extreme cases. In these cases the applicants received every consideration which could be shown by the board. Heavy arrears have accumulated beyond the applicants' equity in the property. In the event of a resale, a loss will fall on the Board. Continued possession by the applicants will increase the ultimate loss which will be sustained. 2, Every consideration is extended to all deserving cases.

SECESSION—JOINT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Extension of Time.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, the time for bringing up the report of the joint committee on Secession was extended for one week.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.37]: When speaking on the second reading of the Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill, I felt it would be unnecessary to address myself to the measure now before the House, and that one's speech on the former Bill would cover one's remarks on the latter Bill. There have, however, been certain occurrences since which make it necessary that I should say something during the present debate.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am glad the hon. member has mentioned that fact, because, as a result of conversations I had with the Chief Secretary and other members, it was agreed that the two Bills should be discussed together on the second reading of one of them. I am glad Mr. Baxter recognises that, whilst it is in order to refer to any new aspects of the question, and, incidentally, to the Bill itself. Both Bills were supposed to have been fully discussed before.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I thank you, Mr. President. The most important factor is that more information has been obtained in the House, and I have been able to gather more outside, regarding the incidence of taxation under the different groups. There is, however, a good deal yet to learn in that respect. I hope before the second reading of this Bill is carried, we shall be fortified as to the amounts that will accrue from this tax as it affects the different groups mentioned in the Bill. In consequence of what has occurred since last week, I have amended what I brought forward in the first place. I then suggested that those in receipt of from £1 per week to £2 should be taxed at the rate of 1d. in the pound, and the tax should rise until it amounted to 7d. I find this graduation will not give the money that is necessary to enable the Government to carry on. The amount they are asking for is something in the vicinity of what the Mitchell Government obtained from the emergency tax in the last financial year. I intend to move an amendment that the tax shall commence at 2d. in the pound on incomes from £52 a year to £104 a year, and rise to a limit of 8d. in the pound. That should give the Government more money than the Mitchell Government had in the last financial year. There are two important features about the Bill before us. First of all we have to decide what the Government will receive in taxation by this means. They have asked for a little less than £400,000. In the second place, we have to see that the tax is spread equitably over the community, and will not bring in more than is absolutely necessary. If both Houses of Parliament had been sufficiently informed on this question, less time need have been spent in discussing the subject. The Chief Secretary took me to task for a statement I made concerning the carry-over into the present financial year from last year's

emergency tax. I said it would be well for the Government to remember that they would receive a substantial amount from the emergency tax of last year, in addition to the proceeds of any tax that might be approved by Parliament this year. The Chief Secretary said it was a pity I was not fortified by accurate information, that the amount outstanding to the 30th June, 1933, was £9,250, that to this should be added a further sum, say, £10,000, and that this would represent a total amount received during the current financial year from last year's tax of £20,000. In actual fact I mentioned no specific amount that would be received from last year's tax. Surely an amount of £20,000 was worth mentioning, as accruing from the last financial year. It is a great deal of money, even to the Government who are fond of spending so much. I cannot understand why there is not more than £20,000 accruing from last year's incomes. If that is all that is to come, incomes must have fallen very much below what was anticipated. I do not know how that amount is arrived at. It represents one-third of what the Premier stated the Government would lose if the retrospective clause of this legislation were struck out of the Bill, as has been done in this House. After all, it was not really a matter of inaccuracy on my part.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I should have thought that the amount would have been more than £20,000.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I cannot understand why it should not be more.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I presume the Minister referred to the carry-over.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is so, but no incomes have been assessed for the next year.

The Chief Secretary: I paid nine months ago.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have not received my assessment yet.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Perhaps they went for the bad marks!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: However, the Chief Secretary also accused me of exaggerating, but that does not alter the position. I dealt with the amount of money the Government would receive during the present financial year, so there is nothing in the point that the Chief Secretary raised. He challenged me

with having confused the loan funds with revenue, and said—

How could the fact of the present Government having £600,000 of loan money more than the Mitchell Government had, be said to provide the necessary funds with which to reduce the deficit in accordance with our contract with the Loan Council.

There was nothing wrong in what I said. The Chief Secretary is aware of the fact that all Governments having loan funds at their disposal, spend them in such a way that revenue is benefited; that has always been done. Every Government has juggled the expenditure in that way to meet the deficit, so there was nothing wrong in what I said. I would remind the Chief Secretary that he misquoted me when he said that the figures I had dealt with were based on the incomes for 1929-30. He considered that I had made a mistake, but I did not do as he suggested. I based my figures on the latest details available. So far as I was aware, no later figures were procurable. I do not know whether other members are better informed than I am. I pointed out that we had nothing to guide us to show how the incidence of the various taxation groups would work out. I had no other figures that could be considered more up to date. The figures I dealt with were those taken from the report of the Commissioner of Taxation submitted to Parliament in 1932. That report dealt with the financial year 1930-31.

The Chief Secretary: Based on the incomes for 1929-30.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Minister will see that he misquoted my statement. The Minister also referred to the scale of figures that I had used. I agree with him that there should not be any need for me to refer to them at all. The fact is that, even up to the present, we have not had the information we require in that respect, and I plead with the Minister to let the House know what amounts will be derived from the different groups of taxation referred to in the Bill. So far, we have nothing to guide us from that standpoint. I placed before members the latest figures that I could procure. I want the Minister to understand that members of this House desire to provide the Government with the amount that is necessary to enable them to carry on. There is no doubt about that point, but members can do that only if they have the assistance of the Government in placing before us the information we deem

necessary. On the other hand, it is like having a tooth extracted to draw information from the Government. The Chief Secretary also referred to the suggestion to deal with the Bill by means of a select committee, and, in the course of his remarks said—

Apart from the delay involved in a matter of grave importance to the State, it would be an unwarranted confession of incapacity for a House having such a knowledge of finance as this has, and being so closely in touch with all sections of the community, as this Chamber undoubtedly is, to send a taxing Bill to a select committee. Setting aside their political leanings, I think I can say that we have here many gentlemen with a sound business training and a good grip of finance. They should be quite capable of dealing with the question, without invoking the aid of a select committee.

I agree that that is the position—if the information we require were available. I do not know whether the business men, who are members of this House, have information that I do not possess. I have yet to learn that they are satisfied that they have the information they desire to enable them to arrive at a decision. I cannot arrive at any decision other than is indicated in the amendments I have placed on the Notice Paper. Certainly I cannot arrive at a decision to support the Government on the information we have before us so far. Contrary to his usual practice, the Leader of the House was inclined to be rather facetious and, in referring to the proposed select committee, asked—

Who will be called as witnesses? Would any Jack, Bill, Tom or Harry be summoned to say what he thought of the tax?

That is just a little bit of subtle humour on the Chief Secretary's part. If the select committee were appointed, and called such witnesses, would their evidence be of any value at all? Of course not. If the select committee were appointed, they would probably secure the attendance of the Commissioner of Taxation, who would supply information regarding the amount of money likely to be received by the Government under the different groups of taxation outlined in the Bill, and also some Treasury officials—I do not think more than three or four would be necessary—to supply other information that would be required.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Could the select committee secure information that the Government say they cannot provide?

Hon. C. F. BANTER: I cannot see why the Chief Secretary should not supply us with the information we require, even at this late hour, and thereby save the necessity for the Bill being referred to a select committee. All we desire is to get that information so that we can hurry on with the Bill itself. Regarding the incidence of the tax, I am convinced that the Government's proposals will produce much greater revenue than they claim for them. I am not prepared to agree to their request, and, in fact, I regard the Government as being in a very fortunate position. They have at their disposal more loan money for expenditure than their predecessors had, and the revenue is much more buoyant now than it was 12 months ago. The outlook is better, and I believe it will be still further improved. We should not provide the Government with money by taking it out of the hands of private individuals, who are in the position to render the State much better service than any Government would be likely to do. It is from the activities of private enterprise that economic recovery is more likely to arise. The more money we give the Government, the greater help will be rendered to men who are at present out of work, but that will not help the State back to the road leading to recovery. At the present time, it is Government expenditure that we should endeavour to curb, and certainly we should see that they do not get too much money so that they can spend some on fancy schemes, such as the beautification of the river. That particular scheme might be all right 50 years hence when Western Australia is financially solvent. The State is not solvent now, yet Government expenditure is increasing. Some members have claimed that a Cabinet of six portfolioed Ministers is sufficient to deal with the affairs of the State. I agree with them that six Ministers should be sufficient. In the past, six Ministers have undertaken the work, and they laboured hard in the interests of the people. I cannot agree with Sir Edward Wittenoom in his references to the position in the old days, for those conditions do not apply today. Of course Ministers have to be workers, otherwise they would not accept their portfolios. We now have nine Ministers—eight full portfolioed Ministers and one Honorary Minister. That means additional expenditure, and I am convinced that it

would not have been forced upon the State had another Government been returned to power. Almost every week we read of a Royal Commission being appointed, or some board being set up. All that means additional expenditure. In my opinion, the appointment of boards means that they are used by Ministers to shelter themselves behind rather than undertake responsibilities that they should shoulder. That should not be necessary if Ministers and officials know their jobs. If they do not know them and cannot carry out their duties, they should vacate their positions. That, of course, is no so. I know that all departments are well served with good, solid, capable officials. I know, too, that the present Ministers are good men, quite capable of carrying out the duties attached to their respective departments. That being so, I cannot understand why they should appoint boards, the effect of which is to take responsibilities from Ministers' own shoulders. As to the Bill now before the House, members should have additional information supplied to them. If that were done, they would be able to arrive at a decision without further inquiry. My own investigations convince me of the necessity for the amendments I have placed on the Notice Paper, and I am sure that, as a result of them, the Government would receive an amount in excess of that which was raised under the financial emergency tax legislation last year.

Hon. H. Seddon: What amount would be received under the various groups mentioned in your amendment?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Between £380,000 and £400,000.

Hon. H. Seddon: Have you the figures worked out under the various headings?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, although I have not those details with me at present.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, debate adjourned.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [4.57]: Last session the then Minister for Mines, Mr. Seaddan, applied himself very diligently to the onerous task of introducing

Bills to amend the Mine Workers' Relief Act and the Mining Act. The Bill to amend the latter Act dealt almost solely with tributing conditions on the gold mines. The former Bill was passed in the form it reached us and the passing of the amendment to the Mining Act was regarded with some degree of satisfaction on the goldfields, particularly amongst the section of those who were interested in tributing. After the Bill had been circulated, the Chamber of Mines, representing the mining companies, issued a circular letter addressed to members of both branches of the Legislature. Some members of this House regarded it adversely and claimed that it represented a threat on the part of the mining companies. It may be appropriate to quote the letter at this stage. It contained the following—

In the event of the Bill becoming law, the two principal tributing companies on the Golden Mile—the Great Boulder Proprietary Gold Mines, Ltd., and the Lake View and Star, Ltd.—will determine all tribute agreements and will not re-let them as the conditions laid down in the Bill are deemed to be unworkable. Moreover, all tributers and outside mine owners who do not possess their own treatment plants would be unable to get their ore treated, as the customs mills would not treat ore on the terms laid down in the Bill.

That communication was received by every member and when the Bill was debated in the Legislative Assembly, I notice, from a perusal of "Hansard" dated 10th November, 1932, that the present Minister for Mines (Hon. S. W. Munsie) in discussing the measure, said—

I ask members not to take notice of the threat or direction that has been issued that tributes will be out of work, for I assume them the existing method is no good to the tributers.

The Act of 1932 provided for tributing in two ways, one on a royalty basis sliding scale and the other on a fifty-fifty basis on the gold won. When the measure was in Committee in another place last year, a discussion ensued relating to the scale of charges which is now the subject of the Bill before us, and an amendment was moved. So that members might grasp the point at issue, I think it well that I should quote a few brief extracts from the debate on that Bill. When in Committee Mr. Smith, the member for Brownhill-Tvanhoe, moved an amendment dealing with the maximum

charge which should be provided for crushing, air and hoisting, and said—

I suggest that the maximum crushing charge should be £2 per long ton; for compressed air 5s. per long ton; and for hoisting 5s. per long ton.

Mr. Munsie, the member for Hannans, said—

I oppose the amendment. Neither the warden nor anyone else should be allowed to fix the sliding scale of charges for air or haulage. That, to my mind, would be ridiculous; in plain language it would be robbing the sub-lessee.

That formed the basis of the discussion and subsequently the then Minister for Mines, Mr. Scaddan, said he thought he could meet the wishes both of the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe and the member for Hannans, and subsequently moved an amendment which read—

Provided that the cost of treatment and realisation may be fixed on a sliding scale, varying with the value of the gold or the quantity of gold per ton of ore, or otherwise; provided further that the cost under such sliding scale shall not exceed a maximum of 40s. per ton.

Those two provisos were afterwards embodied in the Bill we are now seeking to amend. Unfortunately, however, the provisos were inserted in the wrong place through a misunderstanding on the part of the Crown Law authorities. The Bill before us seeks to remedy the defect, and Clause 3, in other language and in extended terms, will now apply to those tributes on a royalty basis. The amendments in the Bill are the result of two or three conferences held in Kalgoorlie between the Minister for Mines, the mining companies and the tributers. There was some difficulty in reconciling the various viewpoints, but eventually the amendments were framed in such a way as to meet the wishes of all parties. Clause 4 is a new proviso that was agreed upon at the conference. We cannot do better than pass the Bill and express the hope that in practice the amendments will prove as satisfactory as the parties concerned anticipate. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 1, 2 and 4, made by the Assembly and had agreed to amendment No. 3 subject to a further amendment, now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 3. New Clause. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 10, as follows:—(10.) Section 70 of the principal Act, as amended by section 12 of the Act No. 35 of 1932, is amended by deleting from subsection (2) all the words after the words "such declaration shall be made," and inserting in lieu thereof the words "on the nomination day, but in the case of an annual election the person then declared to be elected shall not take office until after the day appointed for the annual election."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's amendment on the Council's amendment is as follows:—

After the word "person," in the ninth line, insert the words "or persons."

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the Assembly's amendment on the amendment be agreed to.

This Chamber's amendment would apply to one person only, whereas in some cases it would need to apply to two or more persons.

The CHAIRMAN: Would not that be governed by the Interpretation Act?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not know whether it would. I presume the amendment on our amendment is necessary; otherwise it would not have been made.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: It was pointed out in another place that the Interpretation Act would apply, but the mover of the amendment on the amendment said he did not think so. There ought to be a ruling on the point.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amendment on our amendment makes it clear that our amendment applies to all persons where necessary.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Section 26 of the Interpretation Act covers the present case, as it provides that every word in the

singular number shall be construed as including the plural number. The Assembly's amendment on our amendment is therefore unnecessary.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It seems to me there is no need for the amendment on our amendment. By inserting unnecessary words this Chamber would stultify itself.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I fail to see that the amendment on the amendment represents any detriment.

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

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL — MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Received from the Assembly, and read a first time.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [4.27]: I am somewhat surprised at the attitude adopted by the majority of hon. members on this Bill. If there is a case to answer, certainly it can be answered with ease. The speech of the Minister for Works elsewhere has been misunderstood. The hon. gentleman stated that the passing of the Bill was a condition of any further amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Did the Minister make that statement?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The Minister was misunderstood. That is what I am endeavouring to explain.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It is a bit difficult.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It would be a retrograde step to hand over large undertakings like water supply, sewerage, electric lighting and tramways, as requested by local governing bodies in the metropolitan area especially and also by members of all parties, to a body of men elected on a restricted franchise.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Why?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It would be dangerous to the people in the metropolitan area.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Show us how.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon. members will have opportunities later to reply to the speech of the hon. member.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: As far back as 40 years ago in the Old Country absentee property owners could not vote in a municipality unless they resided within 15 miles of the borders of the city or town, as the case might be. Surely we should go as far forward as the Old Country in this respect. Great Britain has experienced no disastrous results from broadening the franchise. The proposal in the Bill, therefore, is perfectly fair and reasonable. The passing of the measure will encourage young people to take an interest in public affairs. What would happen if in the City of Fremantle, for instance, there was a sudden disappearance of owners of the main block of the business section of the city? They would not be even missed, from an economic point of view. Again, what would happen if a great epidemic fell upon the port and killed hundreds of men and women? It would be a disaster of the first magnitude. The conservatism of property owners is strangling the port of Fremantle.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Good old democracy should take charge.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Fremantle is being slowly strangled by the short-sighted policy of Fremantle property owners. Mr. Holmes, who knows something about Fremantle, can substantiate my statement. And many other parts of the metropolitan area also are being retarded by the greediness of the property owners, whose rents put such a strain on the tenants that they cannot compete in commerce.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Some of its representatives here may be responsible for Fremantle's stagnation.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No, it is due to the greed of the landlords, and since that is the predominating feature with most of the landlords, it is necessary that we should restrict their voting powers to those of ordinary citizens.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Does the law of supply and demand affect those people at all?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No, it does not. By good luck or heritage those landlords are fortunate enough to own valuable sites in

the city, and thus they have a stranglehold on the business community.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you seen any increase in vacant premises in Fremantle?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I know that unless those property owners come to their senses, there will be a lot more vacant places, because their demands are grossly exorbitant.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you suggest the passing of the Bill will put that right?

Hon. R. G. Moore: The landlords have not the votes now.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes, they have.

Hon. R. G. Moore: No, the tenants have them.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Only if the tenants claim them. If we take notice of people who visit other countries, we find there is something wrong in our system of local government, that it is not progressive enough, and that the franchise is responsible for the killing of interest in the voters. Why should a property owner have a bigger say in local government than is allotted to an ordinary citizen?

Hon. A. Thomson: Why should he have to pay more than the other fellow?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: He does not pay more; the tenants pay everything. Every man who pays rent is paying rates, and should be entitled to a full say in the affairs of the town.

Hon. R. G. Moore: He has the vote now.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: But the advantage given to the property owner is altogether too great—two, three and four votes to one. It is not even sensible.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But it is when it comes to taxation, is it not?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The man who has the money should pay the taxation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But he should have no say.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I want to place all the people on one level in point of voting.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would you do that with shareholders of companies?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I would have but one franchise for them. Single voting has always proved to be of advantage to the towns and municipalities. It has been to the good of local government in other countries, and that is a perfectly good reason why we should try it here. No one can deny that the public are apathetic towards local governing bodies and that consequently we are very

much behind other countries. It is only fair to say the franchise is responsible for that apathy. Why should we not do everything possible to encourage young people to take an interest in public affairs? It is not to be expected that they would, when we have the old conservatives, with big ideas of the importance of their own property, voting against anything progressive. The general attitude of the property owners is expressed in the words, "Why, this will increase my rates!"

Hon. A. Thomson: I wish you could encourage young people to take an interest in their representatives here to-day.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The Bill is strictly in keeping with progress. Several progressive municipalities, including East Fremantle, have expressed themselves in favour of the Bill and opposed to plural voting. Personally, I am not in favour of the handing over of water supplies, sewerage, electricity supplies and tramways to boards, although a big body of citizens are; but I do contend that in the constitution of such boards there must be no suggestion of plural voting, which in such boards, charged with big undertakings, would be absolutely dangerous. If the Bill passes, people will take a greater interest in local affairs, and as a result we shall have young men coming forward in increasing numbers as candidates for local authorities. I hope members will reconsider their conservative attitude towards the Bill, and be persuaded that it carries no danger to the people, that on the contrary, it will be of benefit to the ratepayers and the local authorities alike. I will support the second reading.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [5.40]: The Bill is the thin end of the wedge to bring about one man one vote for local authorities. In my opinion democracy has failed.

Hon. G. Fraser: It has never had a chance.

Hon. G. W. MILES: It has had a very fair chance. This House is the only protection the thrifty honest worker has against mob rule. The purpose of the Bill is to bring about payment of members of local authorities, and under it we shall have party politics in all municipalities and road boards, which will be the curse of the local authorities. Its result will be that, as in Queensland, we shall have payment of members,

the Lord Mayor receiving £1,000 a year, and members of municipal councils drawing salaries, and under that system municipalities will borrow wherever they can and at any price, as in Brisbane. In consequence of that, the public debt of Brisbane to-day is £18,000,000, and they have a million-pound town hall, which could never have been erected under the system in Western Australia. Brisbane has borrowed from America and has paid 89 per cent. exchange on some of the borrowed money. Labour members here talk of bringing down interest rates, but at the same time they are in favour of borrowing at any price. In Queen-street, Brisbane, there is a bank with a frontage less than that of the Union Bank in St. George's-terrace, Perth, and on that building in Brisbane there has to be paid £4,000 per year in rates. How can any business carry that burden? Arbitration courts fix artificially high wages, and the unions bring down the work output of the men, and the result is what they call prosperity. It is an artificial prosperity, and Queensland is feeling the curse of it to-day. There people cannot pay rates and maintain their property, and so in many instances they are glad to get rid of it. I hope the House will reject the Bill.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.43]: I will support the measure. So far this Chamber has maintained its reputation of being the protector of the property owners. One would have thought that by this time members would have been educated up to the tone of public feeling, which is altogether towards the abolition of plural voting. We are told that a person with a plurality of votes has a greater interest in his district than has the single voter. Emphatically, that is not so. In many instances in the metropolitan area it takes four decent, industrious men rearing families in the district to equal the voting power of an absentee property owner, who, because he has invested in some bricks and mortar, is supposed to have the interests of the district at heart. Yet members here are prepared to urge that the existing system should be maintained. We in this State have always prided ourselves on our progressive legislation, and yet members would retain this old-fashioned system of plural voting.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The old-fashioned systems are sometimes the best.

Hon. G. FRASER: In my experience, the old-fashioned is not too popular with the people of this State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You are aiming at popularity?

Hon. G. FRASER: No; what I want is something in accordance with the will of the people. The will of the people, as expressed to me, is that the time has long passed when plural voting should have been abolished from municipal and similar elections. Members here are prepared to go so far as to give individuals greater powers when voting for local governing bodies than when voting for this Chamber. Irrespective of the value of a man's property, he is allowed only one vote in any constituency for this Chamber. Yet to vote for the election of a minor chamber, a local governing body, the same man is to have four votes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is a pity there were not four for this Chamber to keep a check on the finances.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the hon. member had his way, there would be ten.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And the State would be in a much better position.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. FRASER: It is an unbalanced system that permits only one vote for this Chamber, while for a minor body the same individual is allowed four votes for the same property. I hope members will reconsider their attitude to the subject. We will forgive them if on this occasion they reverse their attitude and vote for the Bill.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Perhaps members would agree to an amendment to that effect.

Hon. G. FRASER: Unfortunately the amendment could not be made in this measure. I support the second reading.

HON. C. H. WITTENOOM (South-East) [5.47]: I oppose the Bill. In my opinion, the measure is totally uncalled for. For a good many years I have been associated with local governing bodies, and during all that time I have not heard any demand for such a measure, and I have hardly ever heard it mentioned. Various Labour Governments have introduced similar Bills on three or four occasions, and each time very little interest has been manifested in the subject, either in Parliament or outside. What the local governing bodies have been wanting is an amendment to the Municipal Corporations Act.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: We want a new Act.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: That is right. The existing Act is out of date.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you want it up to date?

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: We have been asking for a new Act for several years. The Mitchell-Latham Government are to blame for the absence of an up-to-date Act, because they were asked year after year to have the necessary amendments made. They had the opportunity, but did nothing to alter the Act, although they promised several times that amending legislation would be introduced.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We could not get the municipalities to agree on the amendments.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: One large organisation—the country municipalities—prepared a Bill, and the previous Government were asked to introduce it.

Hon. A. Thomson: They suggested many amendments.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: Yes, many amendments were suggested. It is regrettable that nothing was done, because apparently many years must elapse before we shall get an improvement on the existing obsolete Act. The present Government evidently are prepared to do nothing. The Minister in another place said that if we would agree to the abolition of plural voting, he would be prepared to consider amending the present Act. It is wrong of the Minister to adopt that attitude. To impose that condition is sufficient in itself to condemn this Bill. In effect, the Minister says that he will consider amending the Act if we, like good boys, do as we are told.

Hon. G. Fraser: You say you want an up-to-date Act?

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: Yes, an entirely different Act from that under which we are working at present.

Hon. G. Fraser: You cannot have it both ways.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: The hon. member represents one of the ports and he must realise that the existing Act operates against the interests of a port in that it is impossible to advertise the place and do other things that would attract visitors. The Minister in another place admitted his faith in the ability of members of local governing bodies, not only of municipal councils but of road boards, and said he was prepared to grant them further powers because in many

directions the work could be done more effectively by them than by the Government, but he would favour the granting of additional powers only on condition that plural voting was abolished. The Minister added that he could not agree to taking the power from a body elected on adult franchise and giving it to bodies elected under a system of plural voting. Surely if a person is prepared to invest large sums of money in building business premises and suchlike, he has the right to a larger share in the management of the municipality or road board. That at any rate is my opinion, but apparently the Government do not agree with it. The justice of that claim, I believe, is generally admitted. What is wrong with the work being done by the municipalities? The system has always operated very satisfactorily. On the whole, the members of municipalities have worked well and have relieved the Government of much work and much expense. To refuse to extend their powers, as the Minister has done, is wrong. The Minister went on to say that in some of the other States plural voting had been abolished. I cannot see that that is much of an argument; we have not been told that in any State is the work of the municipalities superior to the work of similar bodies here. I have received quite a number of letters from municipalities and a majority of them—Fremantle is not included—are totally opposed to the Bill. The manner in which the Bill has been presented showed indiscretion on the part of the Minister.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [5.54]: It was wrong of a member to say that nobody wanted this measure. The members of one intellectual body in this State have discussed it and have favoured it.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The Trades Hall?

Hon. T. MOORE: I refer to the Geraldton Municipal Council.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Boulder, too.

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Gray told us that the Fremantle Council also favoured it, and was twitted on the score that that body included some members of Parliament. There are no members of Parliament in the Geraldton Municipal Council, and they are perhaps as intellectual and have as much at stake as any other members of the community. Those representatives, on having the position explained to them, were quite satisfied that, with the abolition of plural voting, the method of electing municipal

councils would be quite fair. The argument advanced there would certainly carry weight with me. If a man has saved his money, has built up a modest little home not carrying a high rateable value, and reared a family, I regard him as being just as good as, if not a little better than, a property owner who may live outside the district and may not have reared a family. Members should ask themselves whether the man who has reared a family is not worthy of consideration. That is a test of his citizenship: there is no other test that can stand beside it. It is ridiculous to assert that because a man has been lucky, as some of the older families have been, and has amassed property worth a good deal, he is entitled to greater voting power. It is no indication that such a man is more intellectual than another.

Hon. A. Thomson: He might be unlucky in possessing some of the property.

Hon. T. MOORE: History shows us that one generation has often started with little and has been able to amass wealth and a succeeding generation has inherited it. The fact of a man having amassed wealth does not weigh with me, and would not weigh with anyone who sized up the position properly. According to Mr. Miles, democracy has failed, but I remind him of the years when we sent away thousands of our best men at the behest of Mr. Miles and others, to save democracy. Had democracy failed in 1914, or has it just failed? Most of the men who went overseas were reared in modest homes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They were all equal.

Hon. T. MOORE: Many of those who went to the war had nothing to defend except democracy. They believed democracy was threatened and they took up arms in its defence.

Member: They did not think of democracy.

Hon. T. MOORE: The talk of saving democracy was voiced daily. I believe the time will come when similar circumstances will arise. Some countries are carrying on trade wars, and trade wars lead to other wars, and I am afraid the time will come, perhaps sooner than some expect, when the men who are being decried to-day because they have not a stake in the country, and whom some members would give as little voice as possible in the conduct of affairs, will be hailed as heroes. When those conditions again arise, the scene will be changed temporarily. To anyone who contends that

the property-owner is the only man entitled to receive consideration, I would reply--

Hon. G. W. Miles: No one said that.

Hon. T. MOORE: It has been argued that he is the only one who should receive a vote.

Hon. R. G. Moore: The owner does not get the vote; the tenant gets it.

Hon. T. MOORE: There is no doubt the man with the property gets the vote, just as he gets it for this Chamber.

Hon. G. W. Miles: So he should.

Hon. T. MOORE: According to the hon. member, democracy has failed despite the fact that he has a vote in this Chamber, or else this Chamber must have failed.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It has.

Hon. T. MOORE: Not only democracy, but plutocracy has failed in this State, because we have had both a democratic and a plutocratic Chamber. We cannot, however, blame democracy for that. I have given my humble opinion of how things are and will be in the times ahead. Citizenship in this country should be conferred upon the man who rears a family, and it should not matter what habitation he exists in, for, however humble it may be, it is his all and it is all he has to lose.

Hon. E. H. Gray: And he has to stop here; he cannot get away.

Hon. T. MOORE: The man with much property has no more to lose than that property, because it is his all, and the same principle applies to the man whose sole property is a humble dwelling. If is all he has to lose.

Hon. V. Hamersley: This measure is not confined to married men.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am not worrying about single men. The Bill has been bandied about in this Chamber, and has in effect been held up to ridicule. Mr. Gray had not been on his feet for three minutes when one member said, "Why do you not tell us what this is for?"

Hon. E. H. Harris: He baited us.

Hon. T. MOORE: He had scarcely started his speech when interjections came at him from all parts of the House. This Chamber is supposed to be the bulwark of the constitution, the place where we do everything right. It is spoken of as the one place that will save us when all else fails. In my opinion, not the slightest harm will come from the passing of this measure. We should give the full rights of citizenship to the people who really deserve them.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [6.2]: I do not intend to record a silent vote on this measure. I wish to correct the statement made by the last speaker, that this is a property House. I wonder how often we have to contradict that statement! It is well known to the hon. member that this is not a property House, that the rent payer has an equal vote for this Chamber with the man who possesses property worth many thousands of pounds. It is true that the Geraldton Municipal Council did decide to write to the Minister and other members of Parliament that it was in favour of the Bill, but I would point out that the decision was arrived at on the casting vote of the Mayor. That, however, does not weigh with me. I am in entire accord with my colleague of the Central Province in the opinion that what should count with us is the man who has taken upon himself the responsibility of rearing a family. That is the only man to whom I am prepared, consistent with other things, to give preference, the man with a wife and children to rear, educate and bring up. For this Chamber the rent payer has the same vote as the biggest property owner, and those who put forward that argument are advancing a good reason for broadening the municipal franchise. It appeals to me, and, were there nothing else, I would be very much inclined to vote for the second reading of the Bill. I am, however, actuated by another reason. When bringing down this Bill for the approval of Parliament the Minister in charge of it made certain remarks to which I take exception. Men have given up years of their lives in an honorary capacity to serve the localities in which they live, and for years past have urged Ministers of the Crown to introduce amendments to the Municipal Corporations Act. Yet the Minister who introduced this Bill treats them with contempt and says, "First pass this Bill, and I will then consider doing what you want me to do." It is enough for me to say at once that I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [6.5]: If there is one thing that would incline me to vote against the Bill, it is the assertion of the Minister in control that if Parliament would do certain things, he in his almighty goodness would be so condescending as to consider doing other things. When

a Minister of the Crown treats Parliament in that fashion, he has only himself to blame if he invites hostility.

Hon. G. Fraser: It has been said that we want a Mussolini.

Hon. W. J. MANN: In answer to Mr. T. Moore, and his intellectual municipal council at Geraldton. I would point out that there are other intellectual bodies of men in this State. I am the proud representative of a body of men who are equally intellectual and intelligent, representing the port of Bunbury which is equal in importance to that of Geraldton, and although that council is perhaps handicapped by having amongst its members a member of Parliament, it has passed a resolution as follows—

That this Council enters an emphatic protest against the proposed abolition of plural voting provided for in the Bill.

In other towns in my province similar resolutions have been passed, and they have also been passed by numbers of road boards. To say that there is a public demand for the abolition of plural voting is not stating the question correctly. I have not yet met three men, outside the members representing the Labour Party in this Chamber, who have espoused this cause. Every man I have met has prayed that the Legislative Council would give this Bill short shrift.

Hon. T. Moore: What do they fear?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I do not know what they fear, but they hope this House will prevail. Mr. Miles gave expression to a thought that took root in my mind, that this Bill resembled something in the nature of the thin edge of a wedge. The Bill is for an Act to amend the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act relating to the qualifications of the electors and plural voting. I dare say if we studied it a little more we would find there was something in it, as Mr. Miles has suggested, and that it would have a more far-reaching effect than appears on the surface. I would not be surprised if this were a long shot at the franchise of this House. For that and other reasons, I shall record my vote against the Bill.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [6.10]: This is a Bill for an Act to do certain things. It contains 16 clauses, 15 of which relate to plural voting, and one which I think is contrary to the title. The parent Act has served a good purpose for 27 years. For year after year Governments have been

requested and have promised to amend it and bring it up to date. On the eve of an announcement by the Minister that he would introduce this Bill, it was thought that a consolidation containing numerous amendments to the Act would be submitted to Parliament, as desired by municipalities all over the State. Apparently that is to be pushed into the background if Parliament does not pass the Bill, including certain clauses relative to plural voting. It is to be sacrificed on the altar of an alleged principle contained in the platform of the Labour Party to abolish plural voting.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is not an alleged principle; it is a principle.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Let us examine the principle, and the Labour constitution. I am indebted to a member of the Australian Labour Party for supplying me with an up-to-date copy of the constitution and Standing Orders of the A.L.P. That constitution does not provide for anything different from what is provided in the Municipal Corporations Act.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Oh yes!

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The principle contained in the Act is, no property no vote. The principle of the Labour Party is no union no vote. The Municipal Corporations Act provides for one vote for a small property, and for a big property a maximum of four votes. In the case of industrial unions, a small union gets one vote, and a big union gets ten votes. In the case of the municipalities, according to the rates that a man pays, so shall he be granted votes from one to a maximum of four. In the case of the Labour Party, according, not to the rates that are paid, but to the affiliation fees or dues that are paid by a union to the head body, so are the votes given.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not right.

Hon. G. Fraser: According to the number of members you represent.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: If it is not right I had better read the constitution of the A.L.P.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I was pointing out before the tea adjournment that there was very little difference between the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act and the constitution of the Labour Party in certain respects. Under Section 84 of the Municipal Corporations Act provision

is made whereby an elector shall have at every election a number of effective votes in proportion to the value of the land owned or premises occupied by him. That is clear and distinct. Applying that to the constitution of the Labour Party, there would be provision whereby every union would have a number of votes in accordance with the capitation fees paid on their membership.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is right.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Mr. Gray confirms the correctness of my view that the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act and the constitution of the Labour Party, from the standpoint of voting strength according to membership or property values, are very much alike. The Labour Party agrees with plural voting so far as their own interests are concerned, but they are opposed to it in connection with local governing bodies. In confirmation of my statement, it is clear that district councils of the Labour Party, industrial unions and branches of those unions have representation along the lines I have indicated, and I shall quote from the party's constitution to show that a union has one vote for 100 members or part thereof, and an extra vote for every additional 100 members or part thereof. That is made clear on page 7 of the constitution. Regarding the State Executive of the State Labour Party, we find that a delegate has one vote for every 500 members of his union or part thereof, and the union is entitled to an extra delegate for every 1,000 members or part thereof. Regarding union dues to district councils, I find there is a fee of 3s. per member of a union, and of that amount 2s. is retained by the district council and 1s. by the State Executive. With reference to district councils, provision is made whereby voting shall be on the basis of one vote for 50 members or part thereof, and an additional vote for every extra 50 members or part thereof. There is an alternative method whereby a district council may have one delegate for every 100 members or part thereof, and a further delegate for every 100 additional members or part thereof. A decision as to which method of representation is to be adopted is left in the hands of the district council. In further confirmation of my assertions, I shall give an illustration. The Eastern Goldfields District Council of the State Labour Party recently held a meeting in Boulder City to receive nominations and endorse candidates for the election of candidates for the North-East and South

Province elections. Among the candidates nominated was Mr. Williams, who is a member of this Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member can connect his remarks with the Bill before the House. I am afraid he is departing from the subject matter of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I submit that I am not departing from the subject matter of the Bill one iota. I have said definitely that the Labour Party do not believe—that is, on paper—in plural voting.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In connection with municipal matters.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: In connection with any matter that comes before them, be it political, municipal, social or anything else. The meeting I have referred to was held and seven unions were represented. Six unions had one vote each; the other was entitled to 10 delegates and they had nine present. Of those nine, two were candidates for the selection ballot in which Mr. Williams was also a candidate. By nine votes to six, Mr. Williams was excluded. Those nine votes were drawn from one organisation—the A.W.U. Of course, the Labour Party do not believe in the Legislative Council or in the Federal Senate. They are pledged to the abolition of both those Chambers. Nevertheless, in their own constitution they provide for something of a similar character, which stands in the position of an appeal court. Mr. Williams appealed to that court—the State Executive of the Australian Labour Party—and that upper house of the Labour movement decided that the minority section on the gold-fields should be put into their proper place. Accordingly, the Eastern Goldfields District Council were informed that they could not do what they had attempted to carry out, and that Mr. Williams would have to be reinstated. That was done. I mention that to indicate that the Labour Party, who are so anxious to abolish plural voting in connection with municipal matters, adopt that very principle in their internal workings.

Hon. G. Fraser: One deals with the representation of human beings, and the other with bricks and mortar.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: It does not matter to the Labour people whether it is bricks and mortar or human beings. The facts are as I have stated them. The voting strength is exercised in accordance with the arrangement I have quoted.

Hon. E. H. Gray: According to membership.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Companies Act makes provision for voting strength in accordance with interests held. Does the junior member of the management of a business exercise the same voting strength and authority as the senior partner? Mr. Holmes is an authority on those matters, and he can inform the House of the position. Obviously it would be unfair to allow the man paying the minimum rate, namely, 2s. 6d., to have the same voice in municipal affairs as the man who owns property on which he has to pay £1,000. What does the "Westralian Worker", the official organ of the Labour Party, do in respect of this matter? Provision is made for the exercise of votes on a differential basis, and in accordance with the shares held by an individual or a union. The voting strength at shareholders' meetings is determined on that basis. Does the "Westralian Worker" directorate advocate one union one vote in dealing with the affairs of the paper? Certainly not, but Labour members in this Chamber and in the Legislative Assembly advocate the abolition of plural voting when it relates to municipal matters.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There is no analogy.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: There is a distinct analogy between property owners and the industrial unions. The instincts of preservation are highly developed in both. They set out to do the same thing by the same methods, and provide for representation in accordance with respective interests.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Do I understand you to say that the "Westralian Worker" provides that the voting strength at shareholders' meetings shall be in accordance with the shares held?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Yes. If you held an interest, as I do, you would know the position.

Hon. H. Seddon: Do you hold shares in the "Worker"?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Yes, one. I venture to assert that if the Bill be passed, it will be found that people will take a very active interest in municipal government. Most members of Parliament have served a period on a road board or a municipal council. In fact I think that applies to 90 per cent of the Legislature. They must appreciate the fact that if we abolish the system that now prevails, future elections for the

various local governing bodies will develop into political fights from start to finish. I do not think that is advisable. There is a body established in the metropolitan area whose policy is "Safety first." There seems to be every justification for this Chamber, as a House of review, adopting that watchword, particularly in reference to the objective of the proposal to abolish plural voting. I draw attention to Clause 3 of the Bill, which apparently escaped the notice of members in another place. I intend to take members behind the smoke-screen that has been put up and show that the object of the Bill is not only to abolish plural voting, but to provide for plural enrolments in connection with road boards and municipalities, in order that thousands of additional names may be placed on the Legislative Council and municipal rolls—with another objective.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall interjected.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Before I have concluded my remarks, I shall be surprised if the hon. member has not altered his views.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Perhaps I have done so already.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: If I were a schoolmaster I would ask those members who have read the provisions of the Bill to hold up their hands. I venture to assert that not more than two or three of them have read the Bill and compared it with the parent Act. By doing so, I have discovered the joke in the Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Is there a nigger in the woodpile?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Not only the nigger, but a gin and a few piccaninies; I will disclose the position presently. Section 50 of the Municipal Corporations Act provides for joint owners and occupiers of premises. There may be two persons occupying a house, or half a dozen, but the names of two only of them can be placed on the municipal roll. One individual may let the place, which may then be sub-let. Subclause 2 of Clause 3 of the Bill reads—

When more than two persons are jointly owners or occupiers of rateable land, then each of two of such persons shall, for the purpose of the last preceding section, be deemed to be the owner or occupier of such land; and the said joint owners or occupiers may by writing under their hands delivered on or before the first day of September in any year to the town clerk appoint such two of their number as aforesaid to be registered as electors in respect

of such land. If no such appointment be made, then those two persons whose names come first in alphabetical order shall be registered as electors in respect of such land.

We can exclude from the parts that I have quoted, "joint owners"—"joint owners" are already provided for in the Municipal Corporations Act—because "joint owners" are eligible to enrol for the Legislative Council, as provided for in the Constitution Act and the Electoral Act. This is where I desire to show that the joke lies. Excluding the "owners," it will read as follows—

When more than two persons are occupiers of rateable land, then each of two of such persons shall be deemed to be the occupier of such land, and the said occupiers may by writing under their hands delivered on or before the first day of September in any year to the town clerk appoint such two of their number as aforesaid to be registered as electors in respect of such land.

The Municipal Corporations Act provides that if you are living in a residence you are entitled to have your name on the rate-payers' roll, but if this Bill should pass, it will provide that the two persons can be enrolled for the same property. Quoting the first words, "When more than two persons are occupiers . . ."; it does not provide that those living in a flat shall be on the roll, but a married man living with his wife and family will be enabled to have two enrolments instead of one. In the Municipalities Act I find under the definitions that "person" includes any body of persons corporate or unincorporate. Therefore I submit that two persons, a man and his wife, will be eligible for enrolment on the municipal roll, thereby duplicating the electors, the object being to capture the local governing bodies throughout the State, who, in their turn, as is provided in the Constitution Act—

Or if the name of such person is on the electoral list of any municipality in respect of property within the province of the annual rateable value of not less than £17, etc.

So we find that by duplicating the numbers on the municipal roll we shall also duplicate the numbers on the Legislative Council roll. That is what I would term the nigger in the woodpile. The Minister for Works, when introducing the Bill in another place, repeatedly said that there was only one question involved in the Bill, and that was the abolition of plural voting. The Honorary Minister in this House also said that there was only one principle in-

volved, one man one vote. The Leader of the Opposition said that the only object of the Bill was to abolish plural voting; that was the sole principle involved.

The Honorary Minister: I said one ratepayer, one vote.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That is all the people have, but we are going to put two ratepayers where there was one before.

The Honorary Minister: You have a very vivid imagination.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am merely pointing out that that is the provision. As I said in my opening remarks, the Bill does not provide in the Title for what I term plural enrolment, or two persons having a vote for one and the same property. That is an important departure from the principle before us in respect of the two rolls. I contend that this exposes one of the biggest camouflages attempted on an unsophisticated public, and we arrive at the stage of Labour deliberately and definitely attempting to double municipal and Legislative Council enrolments with the two objects I have mentioned, the capturing of the local governing bodies throughout the State and duplicating the Legislative Council vote. If the Government should succeed, the result should interest those members of this House who are retiring in May of next year, Sir Chas. Nathan, Mr. Hall, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Rose, Mr. Wittenoom, and others. Further, I submit that the object is to secure the return of the standardbearers of the Labour Party to this Chamber, who will be pledged to its ultimate abolition. If we arrive at that stage, democratic government of the people by the unions will become an accomplished fact. Mr. McCallum in another place made this threat: He said that this was the very definite and unalterable decision of the Cabinet, and that unless we passed the Bill he would not be prepared to provide for the appointment of boards to carry out certain works. His desire appears to be that by the appointment of those boards it would be possible to get behind the Loan Council. The Government point out that they cannot afford to pay the rates of interest on the money that has been borrowed; they would like to borrow more but are not permitted by the Loan Council to do so. If various boards are appointed, and the necessary money can be raised, no direct obligation will then rest on the Government. If

the Minister takes the stand that if this House does not pass his Bill, he will not do something else that he has indicated, we are quite justified in saying that he will not receive our support. Before I conclude, I desire to correct a statement made by Mr. Fraser. In the course of the debate he pointed out that owners of land had a vote. By way of interjection that was contradicted. To Section 49 of the Municipalities Act there is a proviso which reads—

Provided also that the occupier of any rateable land shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in respect of such land in preference to the owner.

The hon. member cannot pull the wool over our eyes here.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have picked the wrong one.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am referring to what the hon. member said.

Hon. G. Fraser: I did not say anything of the kind.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The occupier is entitled to record the votes, and if the premises are occupied, then the owner has no vote at all. The hon. member said that the rates were paid by the occupiers. I submit that in a great many instances the premises are not occupied. Who, then, pays the rates? No one, of course, but the owner of the property, and as the owner of such he is entitled to have the number of votes provided for in the Act at the present time.

Hon. G. Fraser: I made no mention of such a thing while I was speaking.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I say very definitely that I cannot see my way to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Personal Explanation.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: With your permission, Mr. President, I should like to make a personal explanation. In the course of my remarks on the Bill at an early stage, I referred to the resolution on this question passed by the Geraldton Municipal Council, and said that it was carried on the casting vote of the Mayor. During the tea adjournment I looked up the Geraldton newspaper and found that no mention was made of the number of votes. At the same meeting, however, there was a discussion on the subject of the mayoral allowance, and the decision on that question was arrived at on the east-

ing vote of the mayor. I mixed the two questions, and I am taking the first opportunity to rectify the error.

On motion by the Hon. Minister, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th September, 1933.

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

QUESTION—LAND PURCHASERS, PROTECTION.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Have any representations been made to him regarding legislation to protect land purchasers as recommended by the Royal Commissioner (Mr. Justice Dwyer)? 2, Will he consider introducing legislation to deal with the points raised?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. 2, The matter is under consideration.

SECESSION—JOINT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Extension of Time.

On motion by the Premier, the time for bringing up the report of the joint select committee on Secession was extended for one week.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Works, and read a first time.

BILL — MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.36]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [4.37]: I have no desire to delay the passage of this important measure at so late a stage, but I do feel it necessary to make a few remarks. I crave the indulgence of the House to permit me to do so, for the reason that the Bill was allowed to pass the second reading and Committee stages at one sitting. Having regard to the importance of the measure, and knowing what it means to the future of the State and particularly of the farming industry, I was somewhat surprised at this rapidity in passing. I have a clear recollection of the many promises made during the general election as to the extension of the Act for a longer period than 12 months. It directly affects security of tenure in the farming industry. I appreciate the sympathetic manner in which the Minister for Lands introduced the Bill. With members generally, and Ministers, I appreciate the good effect of the Act during the past two years. At the same time one must express surprise at the making of so many applications under the Act. On that point the Minister did not furnish much detail. I can only conclude that as there has been so little complaint, no hardship or disability has arisen from the operation of the Act during the past two years. I acknowledge that the measure has been of great service not only to primary industry but to the State as a whole. More especially to those who find themselves in the position of debtor under mortgage, the measure has been of considerable benefit, giving protection during a period of stress. As the Minister has pointed out, probably there would have been many foreclosures and much distress had the parent Act not been introduced two years ago. That speaks strongly in favour of the renewal of the Act; but I am sorry that the Government are not pre-