

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. L. Thorn—Toodyay—in reply) [11.4]: I am glad to have the support of the hon. member.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 7th December, 1948.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Electoral Districts Act—Commissioners' Final Report.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban): The final report of the Commissioners appointed under the Electoral Districts Act was promulgated by the Governor in Executive Council this morning, and I did hope to have one copy to place on the Table of the House for members to see. I anticipate getting it during the afternoon. Unfortunately, there will be only one copy for this House and one for another place, but when the printing can be done—it is expected to be in a week or a fortnight—each member will get a copy.

QUESTION.

NATIVE ADMINISTRATION.

As to Citizenship Rights Granted.

Hon. R. M. FORREST asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many full-blooded aborigines and how many half-castes, respectively, have been given citizenship rights above the 26th parallel since the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act was passed?

(2) How many full-blooded aborigines and how many half-castes, respectively, have been given citizenship rights below the 26th parallel during the same period?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) No full-bloods; 135 other bloods.

(2) 3 full-bloods; 110 other bloods.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Third Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.5]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: As it is necessary to have a constitutional majority, I shall divide the House.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	7

Majority for 9

AYES.

Hon. L. Craig
Hon. J. M. Cunningham
Hon. H. A. C. Daffen
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt
Hon. R. M. Forrest
Hon. Sir F. E. Gibson
Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. W. J. Mann

Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. H. Hearn
(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. G. Bennetts
Hon. R. J. Boylen
Hon. E. M. Davies
Hon. G. Fraser

Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. E. M. Heenan
(Teller.)

The PRESIDENT: There being the necessary majority, I declare the question duly passed.

Question thus passed.

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

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd December.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [3.13]: I have carefully studied and checked this Bill with the original Act and there are many clauses in it that will facilitate the conduct of elections and will assist the Chief Electoral Officer and his staff. It contains 29 clauses and one big feature of it makes provision for absentee voting on the same lines as the Commonwealth Act. That, of course, will be of great assistance to another place, but I view it with mixed feelings in its application to the Legislative Council because I do not think it is suitable—

The Chief Secretary: It may not be used.

Hon. E. H. GRAY:— for the franchise of this House. However, on principle we cannot object to it, and I will say very little on the point. There is one big sting contained in this Bill to which I wish to express violent opposition, and that is the alteration to a clause making it compulsory for electors to be three months in residence before they are qualified for enrolment. In ordinary times it would effect a number of people, particularly those who work in the country and shift about from place to place. At present it will not give the electors, particularly the young electors, a chance to vote

for the districts in which many of them bought blocks some years ago. Many of them are prevented from building homes and they will be compelled to register votes in electorates in which they have no interest.

That will apply very largely to a great number of ex-Servicemen. I do not know how many thousands of young people are living in their parents' homes but thousands of them are married and, with their wives and families, are compelled to live with their in-laws or in rooms. This applies particularly in the metropolitan area and the larger towns. I hope the House, in its usual benign and benevolently detached attitude, will alter the clause and revert to the original one month's provision in the Act. The Federal Constitution has been in existence for nearly 48 years and no-one has ever advocated the alteration of the one month term. The Parliament of this State has been in existence for about 100 years and this Government, for some reason or other which I cannot fathom, puts up an extraordinary provision such as this, which will compel people to reside for three months in an electorate before they are entitled to a vote for that constituency.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: But they can vote for the other one.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It affects the young people, and we must consider them. There are many hundreds of young folk affected and they have been unjustly treated in many instances by being compelled to pay high rates. The original reason for levying high rates was to compel owners to build and thus escape heavy rates on unimproved land. If the Bill passes, they will not be allowed to cast votes unless their homes are built and they have been living in them for three months. We must consider these people because they are hoping to spend a lifetime in their homes when they are built, and such people are the cream of the State.

Hon. H. A. C. Daffen: It will not make much difference in their lifetime.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The hon. member is a comparatively young man, but I consider it is the most important time of their lives. When people are just married they want to get into their own homes, and they want to have some say in their representatives and wish to express opinions, whether they be Liberal or Labour supporters. This is not giving them a reasonable chance to give

effect to their views. They have no interest in the districts in which they are now living because they want to get away from them and into their own homes as soon as possible.

I take it the Government has not considered that angle or the fact that these people will be penalised on election day. That is the big objection I have to the Bill, and I hope that serious consideration will be given to the aspects I have mentioned, because I do not think there is any other State in the Commonwealth that has a similar provision. I would like to know from the Chief Secretary the reason why it has been included in this Bill. It is absolutely unnecessary and it is a slap in the face to all these young people. This is an occasion when this Chamber can do a good turn for the young people of the State and I hope it will take the opportunity.

Another objection I have—this will affect the country areas more than the city—concerns Clause 28, which provides against canvassing within 50 yards from the nearest street or way. It is very fortunate that no such provision was embodied in the Act when I was farming, because it would have meant that canvassing could not be undertaken within a mile and a half from the house where the polling booth was centred. I do not think this part of the Bill will operate successfully in the country areas. I regard it as unnecessary and shall vote against it. With the reservations I have mentioned, I support the second reading.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [3.21]: It seems to me that the Bill may be quite all right, but on the other hand, it may be like the egg that was good in parts only. Legislation of this type, which is so important and requires some time to study and understand, should be submitted to us at an earlier stage of the session. Personally, I was not ready to continue the second reading debate, and apparently other members are in the same position, which indicates to me that my ignorance as regards the full implications of the various amendments suggested is shared by others.

In introducing the Bill, the Minister spoke for about 20 minutes. The measure itself consists of 18 pages and the amendments set out are certainly not consequential. They are all fairly far-reaching proposals that will affect in vital ways the

existing Act under which we have been working for many years and which, in spite of abuses, has stood many tests. Mr. Gray has mentioned certain features that are distasteful to him. I shall not deal with the various provisions, except to say that I feel disposed to vote against the second reading for the reason that a Bill of this nature could quite easily have, and in my opinion should have been presented to us much earlier in the session. In that event we would have had ample time to study its provisions and investigate the various proposals from several angles.

I do not know how it will affect the Goldfields or outlying places such as Laverton, Wiluna and Esperance. It is a measure that should be left over for consideration next year. Certainly, we should hear more speeches on it that we have listened to so far. Then again, I think a Bill like this should have been submitted to a Select Committee. It is largely a non-party measure, and our aim and object should be to evolve electoral laws that will function smoothly and satisfactorily to all concerned. This is an instance when we should have observed the time-honoured practice of handing the Bill over to a Select Committee so that it could call evidence and investigate the various proposals, with a view to evolving a Bill that would meet with the unanimous approval of all concerned. These are my reactions to the Bill, and I shall vote against the second reading.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [3.22]: I have been running through the clauses of the Bill while Mr. Heenan was speaking. In the circumstances, one can be pardoned for not having a complete grip of its contents. There are one or two objectionable features that I noted. Although I listened attentively to the Minister when he submitted the Bill to the House, I do not know that he gave any solid reason why we should depart from time honoured practices in some directions.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Did you not take the Bill home in order to study it during the week-end?

Hon. G. FRASER: I have too much to do, and besides, with so many Bills coming forward, it would mean that in order to study their provisions, one would have to take the Acts home as well; and that would

necessitate the engaging of a carrier. The only other way of checking-up would be to do the work here.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You should do as I do—have the Acts at home.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have many of them, but not those that go back over 20 years. I have quite enough now, without cluttering up my home with more. The provision embodied in the Bill that seeks to impose the residential qualification of three months in lieu of the one month that prevails in every other State and in the Commonwealth, requires serious consideration. I do not know why we should depart from a practice that has worked well here and is observed in other parts of Australia. I cannot imagine any reason why we should adopt a change to a residential qualification of three months.

It is quite easy for people to know when they have been in one place for a month, but it is different when it comes to a matter of three months. The Minister certainly did not advance any reason for the change. We should be given some cogent reasons before we agree to that provision. Another feature of the Bill is the time provided for the North-West seats. I can understand an increase in the electoral times in the provinces which are very extensive, but I cannot understand why extra consideration should be given to one of the northern seats for the Assembly. Why should differential treatment be meted out to that constituency? The present arrangement has continued down the years since it first found a place on the statute book in the days when drays and buggies were used.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: There has been an alteration in that respect.

Hon. G. FRASER: In these days of rapid transport, there is no possible reason why any extra period should be provided for an ordinary Assembly constituency, and so I shall move to delete that provision when we deal with it in Committee. There is another clause in the Bill to which I am opposed. In this respect I have to rely on what I read in the Press concerning the debate in another place. I suppose I shall be allowed to refer to it.

The PRESIDENT: Only incidentally.

Hon. G. FRASER: I refer to the proposed alteration with regard to the postal vote method for absentee voters. It is now proposed that if a man is away from the polling booth in his electorate he can go to any other booth and record his vote. This will give an opportunity to a person to walk into any booth and vote on election day. I can visualise quite a lot of delay in the completion of an election, particularly an Upper House election, because until word is received as to absentee votes from all over the State it will not be possible to declare the result of the election. A writ may be returnable by the 21st May and some elections do not take place until the 11th or the 12th May; I think one of my elections was held on the 12th May.

One can see the delay that would occur if it were necessary to wait until such time as the returning officer receives advices about the absentee votes that have been recorded in other parts of the State. The present system of postal voting has worked satisfactorily and I can see no reason for the change. In the case of Assembly elections, where voters are compelled to vote, it is a different matter.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Do you think it would take too long to hear the result?

Hon. G. FRASER: It would hold things up indefinitely. An election could not be declared until it was known whether someone had recorded his vote at Mukinbudin or elsewhere in the State. It will complicate matters.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Your majority is so big that the absentee voting would not matter.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not speaking from my own point of view. I am considering how best we can get the Act to work.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Would it affect the metropolitan seats?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. I have been looking through the Bill to see whether it contains a provision preventing members of Parliament from acting as scrutineers. I am wondering what the reason for that is, and why members of Parliament should be singled out.

Hon. H. Hearn: They are not intelligent enough.

The Chief Secretary: I thought you had not seen the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: I said that I had seen a report in the Press.

The Chief Secretary: Do you not take notice of what members of your Party say in another place?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know what they say. They can say what they like. I do not know whether that provision is in the Bill and perhaps the Minister will tell us why members of Parliament should be singled out in this manner. I can see no reason for treating us differently from other persons. As a matter of fact, it is very wise for a member of Parliament to act as a scrutineer.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It depends on the polling places.

Hon. G. FRASER: A member of Parliament would know whether something going on in the booth was right or wrong. Many things happen in a booth. I have sometimes given a hand at an election and a scrutineer has reported to me that certain people had told him they were not on the roll. A member of Parliament knows most of the people and could immediately give some information.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do you think that members of Parliament should attend at polling booths?

Hon. G. FRASER: They should not be debarred.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: It is *infra dig*.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not think it is.

The Chief Secretary: Where is that provision in the Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: That is the complaint I am making.

The Chief Secretary: It is something like the man who fell out of the balloon. It is not in the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: It was originally.

The Chief Secretary: Will you move to put it in?

Hon. G. FRASER: No. If it is in the Bill, I want the Minister to give me some reason why it should remain in. If not, we can let it go. The Bill imposes some restrictions as to the people from whom postal vote officers may be selected. Has that been adjusted, too? The Minister is silent, so I presume it has been. The classes of persons from whom postal of-

ficers may be selected seem to me to be too restricted altogether.

Hon. L. A. Logan: That provision is not in the Bill, either.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is the second provision not in the Bill. It bears out what Mr. Heenan says, that we are being asked to deal with most important legislation without having had an opportunity to examine it. I know the usual "end of the session" excuse will be made. However, I suppose when we reach the Committee stages we shall have a better chance of discussing the measure and gripping exactly what it means. I think some explanation is required of the point raised by Mr. Gray regarding some clarification of the clause dealing with the distance from a polling booth. In the metropolitan area there are some polling places, such as schools, which stand well back from the street, and people approach them from all angles.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Why not do away with the provision altogether?

Hon. G. FRASER: That may be the hon. member's opinion. I do not believe that people are annoyed at polling places.

Hon. W. J. Mann: People do not change their minds.

Hon. G. FRASER: Representatives of the various parties should have the right to have their men stationed near the booth in order to hand people a card showing them how to vote. As a matter of fact, the greatest complaint in the past in my electorate has been about the canvassers on behalf of the Liberal Party. They will not keep to the distance and have had to be spoken to on numerous occasions.

The Chief Secretary: Abolish the lot.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: The Bill will make the position much better.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not want these people placed too far away from the polling booth. If the distance is intended to be where the gate is situated, that might be a quarter of a mile from the polling booth. I think that is wrong. Either cut the system out altogether or make it reasonable, so that the public can be contacted by the people we put there. At this stage, I intend to support the second reading.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I move—
That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	17

Majority against .. 6

AYES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. I. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. R. J. Boylen
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. L. Oraig	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. M. Cunningham	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. A. C. Daffen	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir F. K. Gibson	Hon. P. R. Welsh
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. J. A. Dimmitt
Hon. W. J. Mann	(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South) [3.43]: I do not intend to speak at length on the Bill. I support it, but would like to say a few words on one clause which has been giving members food for thought. I refer to the three months' residential qualification. There is one point which I think should be borne in mind regarding this matter. It may not be exercising the minds of the States up to the present, but I suggest that it will in the very near future.

In Australia today, as in other countries, there is a growing tendency for a section of the population to become migratory, or seasonal workers. We have new industries in the southern part of the State, where it is proposed to establish meat works, while in the northern part of the State we have the new agricultural area where bananas, tomatoes and such like are grown. It is, therefore, logical to conclude that, as in the Eastern States, a section of the population will migrate to these parts of the State when work there is available for them.

The new boundaries of the various electorates tend to run east and west, which will mean that people migrating in order to follow seasonal jobs will cross from one electorate to another. There is the fruitgrowing in the north, and perhaps the salmon fishing season in the south. Because of the seasonal nature of the work offering, some difficulty will be caused. Under the present set-up, such people would be entitled to a vote in Albany, for instance, but six weeks later

they might be working in Geraldton, and qualify for another vote.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you want to deny them the vote altogether?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No. With the three months' residential qualification, they would have their vote wherever their home was, but I do not think they should be entitled to another vote somewhere else—

Hon. G. Fraser: Those people probably would not remain three months in one place.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That problem exists in the East, where there was a big debate about it. People living in Newcastle, for instance, go north for the cane-cutting season. Under the present conditions they would be entitled to register a vote in each of those parts of the State, with the qualification that they had been there for a month. There is also to be considered the growing tendency today of people to live in caravans. That problem has arisen in America, where it has assumed such proportions that in certain States there are whole cities of caravans. Such people are entitled to vote, but we must be careful in deciding what the qualification should be; otherwise we will find them exercising the right to vote in more than one part of the State. I think the three months' qualification is an excellent provision and I support the Bill wholeheartedly.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Central) [3.47]: I congratulate the Government on having brought down the Bill. Mr. Gray and Mr. Fraser said that the Act this measure will partly supersede—if it is passed—had a great deal to recommend it. Apparently, as it has functioned for some time, it is entitled to respect on the score of antiquity. As we go along we learn that certain things require rectifying from time to time, possibly to meet changed conditions. The alteration of the qualifying period from one month to three months seems reasonable enough. It will not deprive anyone of a vote, because the person concerned can always vote in the electorate from which he has come within the last three months.

Three months is a short enough time for a man to develop a real interest in the community at the centre to which he has moved, and a shorter period undoubtedly does lend itself to the possibility of abuse. I can recall

an occasion some years ago when a certain man was defeated at an election and at the next election fought back in an effort to regain his seat. The Government of the day sent a lot of workers up to a job in that electorate in order that they might qualify for enrolment. When they arrived at the site they had practically no tools and little or no camping equipment, but there were men there to meet them with claim cards, so that they might enrol. The number of men so enrolled turned the scales in that election.

When Mr. Forrest first entered this Chamber he pointed out that the period of time between nomination day and polling day was not sufficient in the North-West, where postal vote officers are fairly remote from the Chief Electoral Officer. He thought time should be allowed for the lists of candidates to be sent out so that men desiring to avail themselves of postal voting facilities could exercise their franchise. The result of insufficient time being allowed in that direction was that over the years many men had been denied opportunity of voting. Mr. Forrest introduced a Bill to overcome that disability, but the Government of the day apparently did not like the measure. It was placed at the bottom of the notice paper and was finally discharged by the effluxion of time. Members who know the circumstances of those remote areas will not deny the right of such persons to reasonable facilities for exercising the franchise.

The clause providing for absentee voting is a move in the right direction. I have had a lot of experience as presiding officer at polling booths and I know there has always been an element of confusion in the minds of many people wishing to exercise the absentee vote. They were familiar with the Federal system and could not understand why they could not exercise the same right under the State voting system. This move to bring our practice on polling day into line with that under the Federal system will be appreciated by those electors who desire the facility of being able to record absentee votes. On the whole, I think the Bill is a distinct improvement on the present Act, and I have much pleasure in supporting it.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban—in reply) [3.52]: I am surprised at the re-

marks of members in opposition to the Bill. Mr. Fraser said he has not had time to read the Bill or to know anything about it and that all he knows of it is what he has seen in the Press. It is remarkable that that should be so, when in another place one clause of the Bill was decided on the casting vote of the Chairman. I have here the "Hansard" report of the debate on the Bill in another place, yet Mr. Fraser knows nothing of it. That debate commenced on the 25th November.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Is it in order to read from "Hansard"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not reading from "Hansard." That debate commenced on the 25th November and was resumed at 5.23 p.m. on the following day, finishing at 12.30 the next morning. It was a very heated debate and, as I have said, one clause was agreed to on the casting vote of the Chairman. The Bill was thoroughly thrashed out in another place and it came to this House last Wednesday and was read a first time. Now members who object to the measure say they have not had time to read the Bill. Obviously they have not been interested in it, as two of the main points to which they object were struck out of the original Bill in another place and do not appear in it as we have it before us today.

An adjournment has been asked for, because the Bill has been brought down so late, but I can give members who seek an adjournment the reason why this and some other Bills have arrived in this Chamber so late in the session. It is due to so much time being wasted in another place by certain members abusing this Chamber instead of getting on with their work. I would point out forcibly that if assistance were given to the Government to expedite its business in another place, Bills would be received here more quickly. Unfortunately, in another place, the numbers of members on each side of the House are almost equal and, quite within their rights, the Opposition endeavour to delay the business of the House. However, it is no use members complaining of Bills arriving late in this Chamber when their colleagues in another place have delayed the bringing forward of those measures.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: When was this Bill introduced in another place?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On the 25th November. It could not be brought in earlier owing to the extraordinary amount of time wasted there in an endeavour to delay Government business.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: When were we supplied with copies of it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Last Wednesday; six days ago. It was introduced on the Thursday, so that members could study it over the week-end. Mr. Gray referred to the sting in the measure—the fact that a three-months' residential qualification is provided for. I was pleased to hear him make that remark because that provision was inserted with a view to altering the procedure that has obtained in the past, under which at the last minute people have, on occasion, been rushed to some place and put on the roll. This provision will prevent that sort of thing being done.

Another reason for the amendment is to give the Electoral Department the opportunity of putting the rolls in order in a straight-forward manner. A further reason is that it will prevent the stuffing of the rolls. I do not accuse only the Labour Party of doing that. I have accused two individual members and have given their names, but, unfortunately, the Electoral Department said it could not get the necessary information within the time available. Hence it will be noticed that the time limit for prosecuting that offence has been extended from six to twelve months, so there will not be such false enrolments in the future. The whole object of the amendment is to clean up the rolls and it will not affect any honest person. Mr. Gray said that the measure would prevent a person voting in the new electorate to which he had moved, if he had been there only one month.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why alter it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Let them vote intelligently in the district they know, and not in the new district about which they know nothing. They will not be deprived of their votes, but will be allowed to vote in the electorate of which they have a knowledge. The provision simply lays down that they must be resident in an electorate for three months, as is the case in England and New Zealand.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is not so in Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then it is time it was, and we are starting it off. This is something in which Western Australia should lead. If there are any matters that I have not dealt with, I trust members will bring them forward when the Bill is dealt with in Committee. If there is any further information I can supply at that time, I will be glad to do so. Mr. Fraser also raised the question of persons handing out cards within 50 yards of the entrance.

The provision is perfectly fair. In the case of a cottage, it refers to the garden entrance, but in the case of Mr. Gray's farm, the distance would probably be $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles and I do not think in fact anyone would hand out cards within 50 miles of it. I would like to see the handing out of "how-to-vote" cards entirely eliminated. It is just like advertising, where one man is compelled to advertise simply because his competitor does. Its elimination might assist the Government more than the Opposition, as we claim that those who vote for the Liberal and Country Parties have a more intense knowledge of politics than have some of those who vote for Labour. For the information of members, I propose to lay the maps and the Electoral Commission's report on the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 4.0 to 4.15 p.m.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 17:

Hon. G. FRASER: I should like to hear the reason for extending the residential qualification from one month to three months.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Briefly, to stop roll-stuffing. It would prevent the putting of people into a district a month before the closing of the roll and then enrolling them. The Bill proposes that they shall have resided in the district for three months. No hardship will be inflicted, be-

cause those people will have a vote in the district they know well. This is the practice in England and New Zealand.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have not known of any roll-stuffing.

The Chief Secretary: Oh, oh!

Hon. G. FRASER: I have heard wild rumours which, on being investigated, were proved to be groundless. In order to prevent alleged roll-stuffing, we are asked to sacrifice people who move from one district to another. They will have lost their interest in the old district, and yet will be denied a vote in the new district for three months. The Minister's explanation is not sufficient justification for penalising quite a number of people.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The period of one month has operated so long that to extend it to three months would represent a radical alteration. There are arguments against a period of one month, but there are many more arguments against the drastic alteration proposed. A period of two months would be fair and reasonable. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (a) the word "three" be struck out and the word "two" inserted in lieu.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I thought that half the period proposed would be reasonable. I have had to re-enrol many people who had been living in the district for years, and they were voters of one class. I support the amendment.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The amendment represents an acceptable compromise. I should say that some 4,000 young people in the metropolitan area would be affected.

The Chief Secretary: How?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Thousands are waiting for building permits. Why should they be compelled to vote in the district in which they have practically no interest? Had they been able to get permits two years ago, they would have been enrolled for the new districts.

Hon. H. Hearn: They will still be on the roll.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I know very little of the allegations of irregularities. Most of them have been committed by opponents of the Labour Party.

The Chief Secretary: Whoever was responsible, such things should be stopped.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Why break away from the established practice? With people being brought to the State and new industries starting, one month's qualification should be sufficient. I consider that the allegations of irregularities have been exaggerated. We should not penalise people by adopting such a conservative proposal.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I members of the Liberal Party or Country Party have been responsible for irregularities, why does not Mr. Gray support the three months' proposal? We know they are not the offenders. I do not like to see me leaving my district, and this Bill will give a man an opportunity to vote in his former district for two months longer. Nobody will be deprived of a vote under the provision. Really, people will have a vote for the candidate they know far better than if their names were slipped on to another roll at the last minute. I have seen large numbers of claims handed in at midnight.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: No time to check up on them.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: When a man claims a residential qualification of one month, it is difficult in the time to remove his name from the other roll. There is risk of duplication.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Names have been removed when the people have been living in the district for 20 years.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then obviously that is the district in which those people should vote. It is only fair that they should be allowed to vote in the district they know rather than force them to vote in a district where there may not be a representative of their political thought amongst the candidates. Mr. Gray referred to a person who has a block of land in one electoral district and is forced through circumstances to live under rather distressing conditions in a second district; but who, one month before the election, is able to shift to the first district. We have provided for such a man, because he has a vote for the Assembly in the district where he has lived a long, and, by virtue of owning land, has also a vote for this Chamber, which has a very big say in politics. So we have made provision for the man who has bought his home in another district. I cannot accept

the proposal to make the period two months. What difference does one month make? Three months is the recognised period and it is much simpler for the Electoral Department.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes	7
Noes	19

Majority against	..	12
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AYES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. E. H. Gray	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. M. Cunningham	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. H. A. C. Daffin	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 42:

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (b) be struck out.

I think the effect of putting the proposed warning in red lettering on the card would be to deter people from filling in claim cards. The Act already provides that if anyone makes a false claim he has committed an offence and may be prosecuted; and penalties are provided. Why claim cards should contain these warnings or threats in red letters, which can only frighten people, is beyond me. It is something quite foreign to the accepted way of doing things.

Hon. G. FRASER: I cannot see any reason for this provision. Quite a number of people are ignorant of electoral laws, and it is very often difficult for them to remember how long they have been in a place. It is easy to frighten them. I know that some political parties in this State, with which I have nothing to do, induced a number of people in my area to claim enrolment for the Legislative Council when they did not have the necessary qualifications. It is quite possible something similar will happen again; and that, through the instrumentality of agents, people will be induced to

sign cards, when possibly they will not be clear as to whether they have been in residence in a particular place for three months.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I would like to ask the Minister whether the period of three months means three calendar months or three periods of 28 days each.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Interpretation Act indicates that when a month is referred to, a calendar month is meant. I am rather struck with the arguments that have been advanced against this provision. I would point out that the Commonwealth Government has inserted warnings in red letters for years. Perhaps Mr. Heenan thinks we have followed a bad example, but I consider that a warning in red is very good, because, strangely enough, when people see something written in red, they read it. We desire to cover the very people Mr. Fraser has mentioned. Agents, who are not as scrupulous as they might be, endeavour to get people to sign claim cards and we want to warn such people in plain language against doing this if they are not qualified.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—Amendment of Section 44:

Hon. G. FRASER: I am wondering why there is not a penalty of £20 or £50 in the case of people making a mistake in the date of their birth! It would be in keeping with the rest of the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 to 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Amendment of Section 70:

Hon. G. FRASER: I move an amendment—

That in lines 3 and 4 of the proviso to paragraph (b) the words "or in any District situated therein" be struck out.

I have no objection to 35 days for a province as I realise the vastness of the territory involved in the provinces, but I cannot see why the Assembly districts should be given that period. The time permitted at present is ample. In view of the improved transport facilities, I do not see why extra time should be allowed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is to give an opportunity to those who are far outback to vote. People in the backblocks are just as far out for Assembly electoral

purposes as they are for the Council. In fact, they are more so because, generally speaking, the man who has a vote for the Council is in a more accessible position at a homestead or in a town. The man who has a vote for the Assembly is much further away in the outstations. He should have the right to vote for the Assembly, and that is the object of this proviso.

Hon. G. FRASER: Back in the days when there was no air transport—

The Chief Secretary: There is no air transport to these places.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is to most stations now. It is possible that the votes come in quicker from the outback stations than they do from country areas where they are sent by train and motor car.

Hon. R. M. FORREST: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. I know of people in the North-West who have not recorded a vote since responsible Government, simply because they have not been able to exercise their franchise. To hear Mr. Fraser, one would think an aeroplane called at every homestead in the North. Many do not even get a fortnightly mail service. We should make provision so that everyone is capable of exercising his franchise. Many postal vote officers do not receive their electoral papers until the day of the elections and sometimes afterwards.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Whose fault is that?

Hon. R. M. FORREST: It is because of the communications in the North.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The hon. member has given reasons why we should stick to the original time in the Act. Every station owner in the North-West could vote on the day of the election if he so desired. This will assist the wealthy Liberal Party candidates. I am speaking for the candidates who cannot spend all their time campaigning the North. Mr. Forrest can stay there for six months, but the working class candidate has not the funds to do that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: An important point is that the elections are generally held during the rainy season, so that many people are isolated by flood waters. With the provision of 35 days they would have a greater opportunity to record their votes.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I oppose the suggestion to alter the time. In 1936 we were

given 10 days between the date of nomination and polling day. That disfranchised the men outback and made it possible for those in the ports to cast their votes. The reason was so that Mr. Heenan, on reaching 30 years of age, could nominate as representative for the North-East Province. If we have this provision in the measure no Government can indulge in hanky-panky so that one of its young men can nominate on reaching the age of 30 years.

Hon. G. FRASER: I like the crocodile tears that have been shed by the members representing the North-West! All we are doing here is to alter the length of time between the date of nomination and the election day. But what did we hear from the same members when we took one day from them last year? They voted for it to be done.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Who did?

Hon. G. FRASER: There was no protest.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Miles mentioned my name, and referred to something that was done in 1936 so that I could enter the House. I tell members that I was born in 1900, and in 1936 I was 36 years of age.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If that is so, I certainly will withdraw the statement I made about Mr. Heenan.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am somewhat surprised at the arguments raised by Mr. Gray. The Bill is not for the benefit of any candidate, but for the electors, irrespective of who are the candidates. The hon. member said it was for the wealthy squatter. It has nothing to do with him. We should have a long period between the nomination and election dates so that electors may know who the candidates are and allow a margin in case of storms and the rainy season for the sending in of their votes.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 14 to 25—agreed to.

Clause 26—Amendment of Section 18

Hon. G. FRASER: I move an amendment—

That in lines 4 and 5 the words "from nearest street or way" be struck out.

What I am trying to do is have the distance calculated from the door of the hall in which the polling booth is situated, and I think that can be achieved if my amendment is agreed to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope this amendment will not be agreed to. There are some polling booths where the entrances to the buildings are right on the street, but the polling booths are some way back; take the Perth Town Hall, for instance. We should do our utmost to avoid electors being annoyed by people handing out tickets.

Hon. G. FRASER: The clause as it stands would be quite all right in places such as the Perth Town Hall, but I am worried about places that stand right back from the street. Take the Technical School at Leederville. That building is a tremendous distance back from the street and if the clause is agreed to, it will mean that people handing out cards will be about 400 yards away from the polling booth.

Hon. H. Hearn: What difference does it make?

Hon. G. FRASER: In complicated elections such as the Senate where there are a number of candidates, it is of assistance to the public to have a card given to them showing how to record their votes.

The CHAIRMAN: I would draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that this Bill does not deal with the Electoral Act governing the Senate. It deals with the State Electoral Act.

Hon. G. FRASER: I was emphasising that in the Senate there are a large number of candidates and it is of assistance to voters to have cards showing them how to vote.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 27 and 28—agreed to.

Clause 29—Amendment of Section 205:

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: This is a vital amendment and I hope the Committee will give it careful consideration. Section 204 provides that offences against this Act punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year are indictable offences. Indictable offences are ones which cannot be dealt with in the Police Court but must be determined in the Supreme Court. Any serious offences are indictable and it is now proposed that in the case of simple offences against the Act a complaint can be lodged within 12 months. The existing law states that complaints

must be lodged within six months. That applies to everyday offences. If someone assaults, abuses or perhaps even steals from someone else—I notice the Chief Secretary making a note and, as I am speaking without notes, I may be wrong—but I will say that any complaints lodged in the Police Court are ordinary everyday offences.

The Chief Secretary: You are on safer ground there.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The reason for inserting the period of six months is to protect the public because a person might be charged after that period and find it difficult to get himself acquitted. The change proposed in connection with electoral offences constitutes a radical alteration of a provision of long standing. No one has a higher appreciation of the obligations of good citizenship and the need for the honest implementation of our electoral laws than I have, and I agree that prosecutions should follow breaches of the Electoral Act. However, the proposal embodied in the clause might place the public generally, as well as members of Parliament, in positions from which it would be very difficult for them to extricate themselves. The Committee should consider this matter very carefully.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What Mr. Heenan says is quite correct in that any complaint made before a justice in the Police Court must relate to an offence committed within six months; but there are many exceptions that extend the period to 12 months. In this report, we are following the Commonwealth law. There is another good reason for the proposed amendment. If an electoral offence occurs in the far North, by the time the complaint has reached headquarters and the requisite investigations are made, the period of six months passes extremely rapidly, and there is no possibility of action. The clause is merely precautionary and will harm no honest man.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I trust the clause will be deleted. Before the Committee agrees to any such alteration, we should have a record of the offences that have been committed. As a matter of fact, electoral offences in this State have been very few.

Hon. G. FRASER: I oppose the clause. If there were any particular offences that required the longer period and the Minister

had been prepared to tell the Committee of them, we might have considered the 12 months' period. As a matter of fact, if an offence were committed and no prosecution took place for 12 months, the person concerned would have great difficulty in proving his innocence and securing the necessary witnesses. Most of the offences that occur should result in prosecutions straight away.

Clause put and passed.

Personal Explanation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a personal explanation. I was wrong in referring earlier to 1936 and Mr. Heenan was correct when he said that what I mentioned occurred in 1930. It was at the 1930 election when there were ten days between nomination day and polling day. That was when Mr. Heenan opposed Mr. Cornell for the South Province.

Committee Resumed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1) JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report Presented.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM brought up the report of the Joint Select Committee, together with a typewritten copy of the evidence.

Ordered: That the report be received and read.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, resolved: That the Bill be considered in Committee at the next sitting.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Coal Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment.
- 2, Bush Fires Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 3, Hospital Benefits Agreement.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—WHEAT POOL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—East) [5.36] in moving the second reading said: This is a most important Bill. It deals with one of our most important items of diet. We must be most careful and particular with milk, because we know it may be the means of spreading disease unless it is of the highest quality and distributed to the consumer in the best and cleanest way possible. We have a milk board. When that board was reconstituted under the Act, we thought everything would be well and that the industry would be carried on as we desired it to be. We have found that that is not so. That has been a great disappointment to me, especially when I consider the way in which the board has functioned in recent months. If there is one thing that I have taken great interest in, it has been our milk supply.

While in the other States of the Commonwealth, I took the opportunity to inspect the way in which the milk industry was conducted there, with a view to seeing whether I could improve our methods here. I reluctantly—very reluctantly—came to the conclusion that the set-up of our milk board was wrong and that we ought to have a new board. Members will realise how I feel on the subject when I tell them that I have had to forego a principle which I have been advocating for many years, and that is producer-representation. I have been successful in my fight in this respect for the producers. I assure members that it took a mighty lot to convince me that that decision was right.

The principal feature of this amending Bill is the change in the constitution of the Milk Board. I realise—and so has the Government—that the present position has become intolerable. The Milk Board is the most important board we have in the metropolitan area. For the benefit of members of my own party, I am making an explanation of my change of front.

Hon. G. Fraser: It will have to be a good explanation.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It will be. I am prepared to lay all my cards on the table for inspection by supporters of the members of the Country Party. That has always been my policy. The Milk Board differs from other boards. As members are aware, we have many boards, such as the Barley Board, the Wheat Board, the Egg Board and so on. I propose to compare the Milk Board with the Barley Board. So far as barley is concerned, the grower puts it on the train and that is the end of it; the board deals then with the marketing of the barley, but only with the marketing. The Milk Board, however, comes into the picture before the milk is produced. The producer is required to observe hygiene in his dairy and comply with certain regulations. The Barley Board does not care how the barley grower produces the barley or whether he takes it off by hand or by harvester. The milk must then be placed in clean containers and transported under the best conditions possible.

Members may not be aware of the tremendous advance that has taken place in the transportation of milk. In New South Wales, the milk is transported in huge railway trucks made of stainless steel. No-one sees the milk until it gets into the consumer's hands the following day. A hose is fixed to the tank and the milk goes through various processes and is bottled. We hope to have the same system here and are gradually getting it. Quite a lot of the milk in this State is transported in tanks now. I hope to see the day when it will all be transported in tanks by road, not by rail, in the same way as it is in New South Wales, and when it will go through the same processes.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Why do you prefer road to rail transport?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: So far as the metropolitan area is concerned, I prefer road transport because it is quicker. I have always advocated it. However, if we were to transport milk to Kalgoorlie, as I once heard suggested, it would have to be sent by rail. No-one would consider transporting milk to Kalgoorlie by road. But the milk coming from Byford, Armadale and Brunswick to Perth can best be conveyed by road. I have yet to be convinced that that is not the best method. It certainly

is the quicker method. Even if it is carted in ordinary cans, that method is better, because the dairymen get their cans returned more promptly.

There is not the delay that there would be on the railways. I have been told that when cans have been sent by rail to Perth, almost a week has elapsed before the dairymen got their cans back. When the milk arrives at Perth, it goes through the treatment plant. All this is under the control of the board. One job that the board has done is to improve the standard of the treatment works. After the milk has been treated, or pasteurised, or whatever is done to it, it is taken by the retailers to the consumer. This, again, is under the control of the board. I mention this to show how different the Milk Board is from other boards. Other boards, generally speaking, are merely marketing boards; but the Milk Board has many other things to do aside from marketing. In furtherance of my argument, I desire to point out how difficult it is to get producer-representation on the Milk Board. We have two milk districts, No. 1 and No. 2. No. 1 district consists principally of producers; No. 2 district, I think it is no exaggeration to say, consists of 95 per cent. producer-retailers.

It is almost impossible to get a real producer on the Milk Board, owing to the predominance of retailers in that district. A candidate goes out as a producer, seeking producer-representation, but the district is dominated by retailers. We, therefore, find a man who is more interested in retailing milk than in production, telling the people, "Although I am standing as a producer, I will look after your retailing interests also." And so they put him in, and the real producer is not in the race. That state of affairs will continue for a long time under the present set-up. It is for that reason that producers will never get their proper representation on the board unless this measure is passed.

No. 1 district could send a real milk producer representative to the board; but without this legislation, I visualise the producers having at most one representative on the board, with at least two retailer members, because the No. 2 district will return a retailer or a man whose main interest is in retailing. The real retailers, the

transport workers, the depot keepers and consumers will also be represented by the new form of board. How will the producer representative get on—

Hon. G. Fraser: He will not get on the new board at all.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There will be no predominating interests on the board, which will consist of three independent men with no particular interests to look after. They will be free to look after the interests of all concerned.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Will they be experienced dairymen?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If the hon. member reads the Bill, he will see that nobody directly interested in milk is to be on the board. That is not to say that there will not be on it men who know something about milk.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I referred to a man with a knowledge of the industry.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: As far as I am concerned, they will have a general knowledge of it. If the board seeks knowledge from the experts of the Department of Agriculture, that advice will be available to it. We propose to set up a board of three independent men not interested in the production, distribution, or anything else connected with milk. It will be the same set-up as that now obtaining in Victoria.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What is the position in New South Wales?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There they have one producer and two other representatives, but I believe what is proposed here is the best set-up. I have spent a great deal of time and thought on the Milk Board under present conditions, and surely no-one thinks I would ask the Government to make this drastic change unless there was real necessity for it. That is the principal reason why I, as a representative of the Country Party, am asking the House to agree to a board on which there is no actual producer-representation. Members know what happened in the case of the so-called producer representative on the board. He had quite

a lot to do when the recent strike was on. We know he went out in the middle of the night and got among the pickets when they went along to make trouble at the property of one dairyman.

Hon. A. Thomson: He was alleged to be a producer representative.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He was the producer representative, and was put in by the producer-retailer votes. I have given great thought to how we could alter the set-up. There was no way of getting rid of that member under the Act and this measure is the only solution. I do not see how any opposition can come from the Labour Party in a matter such as this, because we have not heard in the past great advocacy from Labour members for producer-representation on such boards.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We look after the producers as well as you do.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Labour Party has never helped us with producer-representation on boards in the past. I am sure members of this House will not try to make political capital out of these issues.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is nothing political about it at all.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Certain members in another place tried to make political capital out of it, but I am sure that will not be done here. The producers of milk are agreeable to the change and, in view of that, why should we worry about it? The Minister for Lands received a letter from the secretary of the dairy section of the Farmers' Union. It read—

It is desired to convey that the following resolution was carried at a meeting of the Milk Council of this organisation held today. "That the Milk Executive, taking into account all the existing circumstances, approved of the board being reconstituted as suggested in the Bill."

Hon. E. M. Davies: Are those people all milk producers?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Hon. G. Fraser: Are you sure there was not among them a preponderance of butter-fat men?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, it was the milk executive. I have had interviews with farmers everywhere from here to the South-West and have at times told them something of what I had in mind. On every occasion they heartily approved of it. That approval has extended back over many months. They have had plenty of time to think about it and they are so dissatisfied with existing conditions that they are prepared to accept what the Government is offering for the reconstitution of the board.

Hon. G. Fraser: Have you interviewed producers in the West Province?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. I did not know there were many there, but I have met those in the districts from which most of the milk comes—all the way from here down to Roelands, where I interviewed a number of them recently, and they are agreeable to the Bill.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Have there been any applications from women's organisations for representation on the board?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have received some such representations. Does the hon. member advocate that course?

Hon. G. Bennetts: Yes.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I do.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Chasing women's votes! If there were available a woman with outstanding qualifications I would have no objection to her going on the board, but I fear it would be wrong to lay down in the Act that there shall be a woman on the board. There is no woman representative on the Milk Board of any State in Australia, or in New Zealand.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is no reason why we should not have it.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but I do not think we should stipulate that a woman must be included. Members will recall the strike that took place a few months ago. In spite of the fact that it failed ignominiously, I wish to do something, by means of this Bill, to assist the board in the event of any future strike. The proposal is not put forward as a strike-breaking measure, but

merely to make it easier for the board to handle milk in the event of such trouble occurring again.

During the recent strike I promised the people they would get milk. I was accused by a member in another place of having cleared out to New South Wales as soon as the strike occurred. I had to go there, but I made a record trip there and back, owing to the strike. The first information I got on arrival back here was from the chairman of the board and my secretary, who told me that the strike had caved in and that everything was all right. I could have spent more time in New South Wales with great advantage. That is the answer to what was said in another place. Should there again be a strike, the Government and the board will make every effort to see that people get their milk.

After about the first day of the recent strike no-one went short of milk. I authorised the board to break the law and take over the milk and sell it. The Bill provides for the vesting of the milk in the board for the time being in the event of another emergency. I favour the vesting of the milk in the board altogether, just as is done with wheat and certain other commodities, but that is by the way. All that need be considered in relation to this provision is the temporary power for the board to take ownership of the milk in order to see that people receive supplies.

Hon. A. L. Loton: It is an emergency power only?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, definitely. There is no intention of using it as a strike-breaking weapon, as there are other powers available in that respect should they be necessary. That will not be the effect of the vesting of the milk in the board. The board has done a wonderful job in relation to T.B. testing of cattle. Twenty thousand odd head of cattle have been tested and the incidence of T.B. has been found to be very high in some districts, and particularly the metropolitan area, where up to 43 per cent. of reactors were reported, showing the necessity and desirability of doing this great work. I am happy to say that in other districts from Albany to Northam the incidence was lower. This work must go on, but there is doubt about the legality of the levy being imposed. Provision is

therefore made for what is to be a voluntary levy. The person who does not pay the levy will have his cows tested, just the same; but will not receive compensation if they are destroyed.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Does that apply to the Goldfields?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, it applies to all parts of the State coming under the measure. I would like to see every cow in the State T.B. free, as is the case in New South Wales. I read the other day that 2,000 children die every year in England through the effects of bovine T.B. The Milk Board is to be highly commended for its efforts in this direction, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture. This work of testing must go on, whether it is legal at present or not, and I hope to make it legal by means of the provision contained in this measure. It seems a great pity it has not been made legal; the levy is not a heavy impost. I do not think anybody worries much about it, but perhaps some big men do. Not only are we being assured of having T.B. free herds, but it will also mean that the average production of milk will be much higher. That was found to be so, particularly in the Hospital for the Insane where the herd was T.B. free after the reactors were culled out and up went the production of the cow.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It might have been the period of the year that caused the high production.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think it was entirely that.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It would.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but we do not do those things. We do not want to confuse the issue. We just want to get the true facts of the case and the period of the year was taken into consideration. Another provision is that the board shall give approval for the transfer of a license.

Hon. A. L. Loton: That is long overdue.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, it is because we found people trafficking in licenses, and paying up to £24 per gallon. Who is going to pay for it? Either the producer or the consumer will pay. The only man likely

to get any benefit is the man who will sell the license. Another feature is that the treatment depots are scattered all around the metropolitan area and suburbs. A man may want to sell out at Guildford solely with the object of setting up in a place where a dairy is not desired, and the man that pays for his place will have to stay in Guildford.

It is desirable that treatment depots should not be scattered all over the place. What is the good of having half a dozen places all over Victoria Park? Someone must pay for that. All these treatment depots are going to spend a great deal of money to improve their treatment by using hygienic methods. We had this enforced because we want to keep the treatment plants down to 12 to handle about 20,000 gallons of milk per day. I want to assure members that in Sydney there are only two depots handling 220,000 gallons a day. There is a very fine set-up in that State and it is desirable to have a similar one in Perth.

Hon. E. M. Davies: If these depots cease to exist will they receive compensation?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Most of them were told that they were not wanted. They have amalgamated their depots. We used to hear a lot of talk about combines in Perth from the Fremantle dairymen, but they have now combined themselves and rightly so, too. I have seen some of these depots in Fremantle and I would not like to drink milk out of them. I was there about 15 months ago. It is a good thing they have combined, for that is to their own benefit and everybody else's.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Did the combine work out satisfactorily?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: More so than they did before. I understand they intend to combine still further. This Bill is to avoid having depots established all over the place. The provision is that a man cannot traffic in licenses without the approval of the board and that is desirable. I think I have convinced members that the present set-up of the board is not very desirable and that the new milk board to be constituted will be different from the present one. I am keen to get this Bill through Parliament because I know it is desirable and I trust that members will agree with me that it is

most important to have a well set up board in Perth to deal with milk. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [6.5]: This is an important Bill on a very important subject. I agree with what the Minister said regarding the consumption and distribution of milk and I have taken a great personal interest in it for many years. The good work performed by the board in the examination and testing of cattle is most creditable and it bears out what quite a number of people said awhile ago that the metropolitan area is not the place in which to encourage people to keep dairies. In another place it has been frequently said that in the metropolitan area the reactors were over 43 per cent., which proves that the policy of the board in attempting to abolish these metropolitan dairies is the correct one. The chairman has done a remarkable job for the Milk Board—

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Nobody knows that more than I do.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: —and deserves every credit. Over the years he has gained a great deal of experience and I hope he will be appointed as chairman when the new board is constituted. He has proved his capacity and has done a wonderful job for the consumers, the producers and the retailers. He is not very popular, of course, with the retailers, but if he had been popular with them he would not have done the job that he has. Therefore, he deserves to be congratulated upon the progress the Milk Board has made. With all due respect to what the Minister has said, the Government has gone too far in this Bill. Subsection (3) of proposed new Section 11 is very drastic and if carried out will tend to weaken the constitution of the board. It says—

A person shall not be eligible for recommendation or appointment to, or to hold any of those offices if he—

(a) is a dairyman, milk vendor or holder of a treatment license;

That is rather drastic.

Hon. L. Craig: It goes further than that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The next paragraph is more drastic. It reads—

(b) is a member of any partnership or firm, or a director, officer or member of, or receives, or is entitled to receive any benefit, remuneration or fees from, any association, society, company or other corporate

body, directly or indirectly carrying on business of, or having for or among objects, the production, supply, treatment or distribution of milk.

As with all industries, the head of the concern generally lays the foundation of a prosperous business or a dairy. If he is a progressive farmer he would join a Western Farmers' co-operative society, and if a dairyman, he would be a shareholder in the Pascomi Co. which is a subsidiary body of the Westralian Farmers Ltd. Members note that paragraph (b) which I have quoted eliminates any shareholder in Westralian Farmers Ltd.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What a howl there would be if I put on!

Hon. L. Craig: He said "any member shareholder."

Hon. E. H. GRAY: A member of any co-operative society of the Westralian Farmers Ltd. would not be eligible to be a member of the board under this Bill. Therefore the paragraph is too drastic. In the South West—even Mr. Craig will agree with this—the dairying industry is only in its infancy. I want to see this board formed and given enough power to make our methods of distribution and production of milk absolutely fool-proof in order to increase the consumption of milk by many thousands of gallons.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I am with you there.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I have always advocated that. In the Old Country, through the difficult war years, the composite Churchill Government and the Labour Government paid particular attention to the distribution of milk throughout Great Britain. Considering the troubles during the war, the shortage of food since—Doctor Hislop can tell on this better than I can—and the hardships under which the people have to suffer, it is absolutely amazing, according to the literature I have read on the subject, that the health standard of the children there is higher than ours. Distribution of milk has been the standard thing in all the public schools in Great Britain.

Hon. L. Craig: The milk production in England has never been higher than it is today.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is so. Twelve years ago I encouraged and advocated increased consumption of milk. In the

days I was one of the few people who used to advocate improved distribution methods of milk and I think I was one of the first to encourage its distribution in schools in this State. In the schools from Fremantle to Swanbourne, I had under my own guidance the distribution of milk from a Jersey herd. This was sold at 1s. a gallon.

I got into trouble when that scheme was introduced because I made every married man on the relief committee—I was the secretary of the married men's relief committee—buy a pint of milk every day and in return the committee gave him a pint. There was a terrible argument about that. Sir Charles Latham knows all about it. With a desire to increase the consumption of milk we should be able to call upon a retired dairy producer in the South-West to act as a member of the board.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: There is nothing in the Bill to say that you cannot.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If he is retired from his business or is a member of a co-operative society, he is debarred from serving as a member under the Bill.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: If he is retired, he has no axe to grind.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If the hon. member knows anything about co-operative societies, he would know that the members of such concerns receive an annual dividend, and therefore are financially interested. I hope the Minister will widen the provisions of that clause.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I am prepared to consider that.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I was referring to Clause 3 and I gathered from the Minister's interjection that he was favourable to toning it down. I think it will be necessary to re-draft the provision, because there will still be the embargo further on in the clause where it states "is a member of any partnership or firm, or a director, officer or member of, or receives or is entitled to receive any benefit, remuneration or fee from any association." Under that provision, any member of a co-operative society in Western Australia would be barred from being considered for selection.

The statement that the milk producers' section of the Farmers' Union has approved of the Bill came as a surprise to me. I consider that the producers should have representation on the board. However, the opinion expressed by the producers must be respected. I can fully understand that, in the light of experience, it is necessary to be careful not to elect anybody who is prominently connected with a big firm. However, I think the Minister could re-draft the provision in order that the Government might be able to choose the best men available. The fact of the union's having favoured the proposals shows clearly that there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction with the membership of the board.

I approve of the proposal to empower the board to control and prevent trafficking in milk rounds, because the basis of the latest trouble in the industry was the ridiculous prices that people were paying for these rounds. That was how they built up their arguments for an increase in the price. If the board is empowered to control these matters, it will be able to intervene and see that justice is done as between the seller and the buyer. I agree that it is necessary for the board to have power to take over the milk supply.

We cannot afford to have thousands of women and children exposed to the danger inseparable from a break-down in the distribution system, and the welfare of the women and children should be the paramount consideration. I support that portion of the Bill. I shall be keen to see how the new board functions and hope the result will be that the industry will be expanded, that the consumption of milk will be increased and that modern depots to handle the distribution will be provided. I do not think we can go far wrong if we follow the example of Wellington, New Zealand, in that direction. With the reservations I have mentioned, I support the second reading.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South) [7.35]: I support the second reading. I am pleased to see that provision has been made for dairymen to contribute to a compensation fund in respect of their herds. On the Goldfields some years ago, we formed a board of local authorities, and I was appointed the representative of the Kalgoorlie

Municipal Council. There had been a lot of trouble over the milk supply, and we found that before an inspector could arrive and see the cows suspected to be suffering from tuberculosis, they would be shifted into the bush and later taken to the abattoirs and disposed of in that way.

A son of mine was a butcher at the abattoirs and the information he gave me showed that such cattle had been sent there. He told me that sometimes the carcasses were so badly affected that they had to be put into the incinerator. That sort of thing happened because the dairymen had no compensation fund and it was a hardship to them if their cattle were found to be diseased and were destroyed. The provision of a compensation fund is certainly a step in the right direction.

Another matter for concern to the Goldfields people is the increase in the price of chaff. There the price is now £15 per ton, and most of the cattle have been put on dry feed. There is one man at the sewage farm who has green feed, but the other dairymen have practically nothing but dry feed. When I was in the railways, the milk cans sent from Perth would arrive spread over the floors of brake-vans and mail vans and often covered with mail-bags and other goods. We felt considerable concern about the milk being transported under those conditions. Then, when the empty cans were returned to the station from the depot, dogs made use of them because there were no trees available. Further, some of the milk did not arrive in sealed cans, and we did not like that.

During the last couple of years, a dairyman has set out to install a depot. He has been granted a site by the Railway Department and the municipal council has approved of his plans, but the plant has not yet been obtained. I inspected a milk treatment plant and I would recommend members who have not done so to pay a visit and see what takes place. I feel sure that they would then support the pasteurisation of milk. This, I believe, is something that must come.

Reverting to disease in dairy cattle, there was a person in Kalgoorlie who owned a cow, the milk from which was given to the children of the family. The cow was found to be suffering badly from T.B., and both the children died. If compulsory examina-

tions are adopted, much good will be done, particularly in the interests of those people who do not appreciate the danger likely to arise from impurity of the milk supply. I am of the opinion expressed by Mr. Gray that provision should have been made for a representative of the producers on the board. However, the Government has decided otherwise.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [7.41]: I congratulate the Government on having introduced the Bill and am pleased at the reception accorded it. I can endorse all that the Honorary Minister said about the dissatisfaction that has been felt in whole-milk circles for a considerable time about the existing set-up. Most whole-milk producers have long since arrived at the conclusion that, if the industry is going to give them the return they desire, they must ensure that not only their herds and sheds but also their equipment and all their activities are such as will give the public a milk supply of the highest quality.

Surprise was expressed by Mr. Gray that the milk section of the Farmers' Union had endorsed the Bill. This morning I had a ring from one of the leading producers at Byford, who begged me to support the Bill in its entirety. He told me that so far as he could ascertain, at least 75 per cent., but probably 85 per cent. of the producers were looking eagerly for the passing of this measure. We should take notice of those men, because their livelihood and reputation are involved. In their desire to improve the milk supply of the city and of the greater metropolitan area, we should do everything possible to assist them.

Reference has been made to the method of bringing milk to the city by road. When road transport was first suggested, there was a feeling of uncertainty about the method, but today it would be difficult to find a producer who does not subscribe wholly to road transport because it is quicker, much more hygienic, does not knock the milk about nearly as much as when transported by rail and, I think, is also more economical. Those who have moved in whole-milk circles have always taken an interest in transport. Many times we have seen milk in cans just thrown into railway vans that have not always been clean. Sometimes even the smell of them would turn one away. The milk, though

more or less sealed, has remained in that atmosphere for some time; and we all know how susceptible milk is to disease.

One can easily realise that under those circumstances, no matter how clean and how careful the producer has been and how well equipped his establishment, his product has been allowed to deteriorate through that means of transport. I do not propose to discuss the various clauses of the Bill. I am satisfied the measure is one of the best we have had. It was drawn up as a result of previous experience; it will clear up anomalies; it will improve technique. I have great pleasure in commending it to the House in its entirety.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South) [7.48]: I have the greatest pleasure in supporting the Bill and I admire the Minister's courage in introducing it. He himself stated that it—or at least a portion of it—was against the principles he had held for some years. The difficulties involved in this matter are very hard to understand in face of the position existing in the metropolitan area today. We realise that for the last 12 months there have been problems that have led to what appeared to be merely the usual type of strike engaged in by one section of the community which has wanted a little greater return for its labour. But it boils down to something more involved than that.

Recently I interviewed bodies interested in milk matters. I admit I am not too well versed in the subject of milk; but, to obtain a better idea of what the trouble was about I interviewed interested people. If the present set-up continues, the level-headed, moderate section of the milk-producing community will not be able to control the hot-headed section, who are at present working under a sense of injustice; and I am afraid that drastic action will be taken by a certain section who, when all is said and done, definitely have a grievance. It has been said that the representation on the board has been pretty general; that there has been a man representing the producers and one representing the retailers. That is not so.

As has been pointed out, the so-called producers' representative is probably more interested in the retail end of the show and does not honestly represent the producers. There is a finger point involved. "Producer" is a very broad term. It is the Whole Milk

Council—which comprises roughly 75 per cent. of the producers—that wants this measure. They are the people who desire protection and who should have a greater say in what is to be done with their product. They are the ones who may ultimately suffer if sensible control of their product is not instituted. Up till now, the producers have had little say and little pay, and there has been a good deal to commend their present action in regard to this measure. Concerning T.B. control, I am 100 per cent. in favour of compulsory testing.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: It is compulsory under this measure.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I understand that to be so. The reason I mention the matter is that I had a shocking experience three years ago. I brought my family to Perth for a holiday at Christmas. Within a fortnight, my little boy, five years old, went down with an apparent infection of the knee. He was taken to the Children's Hospital, and Dr. Radcliffe Taylor pronounced the complaint to be bovine tuberculosis contracted in Perth during the period we had been here. He spent nine months with his hip disfigured by plaster as a result of the infection. Luckily, it has now disappeared. I remember that when I was in the service reports were received by the health section that milk produced on the Goldfields from the herds there was the purest in the State, and the freest from bacteria. I understand that is still so.

At present, I think there is only one man on the Goldfields who is producing milk from a local herd. That man is concerned as to what his position will be under the measure. He cannot afford to install an expensive plant and he wants to know what he is to do with his product. I understand that a section greatly concerned about this measure feels that the Bill has not gone far enough. Many members shy clear of anything that savours of socialisation or nationalisation of an industry, but this Bill does not in any way touch on socialisation or nationalisation. With regard to qualification for membership of the board, I feel that probably men with a knowledge of the industry should be appointed.

Hon. L. Craig: They can be.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I use that word "knowledge" with reservations. It was said that probably a man who had

been in the industry in years gone by and had retired would be suitable to rope in for membership of the board. But I suggest that any man who has been connected with the industry, either from a producer's or a retailer's point of view, could not help having his judgment coloured in any matter connected with milk by sympathy carried over from his earlier association with the industry.

Hon. L. Craig: You do not want an old man.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Admittedly. I agree that in the circumstances, men who have no connection with the industry, other than a general knowledge of it, should be appointed to the board. In that way I believe the three sections of the industry would have reasonable expectation of getting fair and unbiassed control; whereas if any one of the men on the board derived his knowledge from a previous connection with a particular portion of the industry, then that section would have an unfair advantage over other sections not so represented.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Would you favour the appointment of either men or women?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Definitely. I am not one of those who contribute to the idea that women are no use other than in the home. I am definitely in favour of women being appointed, if they are qualified for the job. There again, I suggest the qualification should be not that they have had direct connection in any way with the industry, but rather that they have a good sound general knowledge of health matters and of control of the industry in some form. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [7.55]: One sometimes feels, as a private member of Parliament, that there is little use in pursuing one's ideals because one achieves so little. But every now and then there is an illusory feeling that keeps one going that some day one may convert someone to one's views. When it takes only four years, one must rise to speak of it with a sense of satisfaction. Only four years ago, mine was a voice crying in the wilderness.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you call this a wilderness?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It was then. It became repastured now. Mine was a voice crying in the wilderness at that time; now I find member after member expressing views which I expressed, and which received so little support. And, to crown it all, conversion of the Minister, if ever it is necessary, is complete. I congratulate on the rapidity with which he summed the whole-milk position when he acquired authority as Honorary Minister for agriculture. I know from my private conversations with him that it was not long before he was able to say, "I have altered my views."

Tonight we have the spectacle, which I applaud, of the Minister saying that after having given years of thought to this matter he is prepared to alter his views. I congratulate him for it. My idea has always been that the board should be a body of independent men, because a board of sort deals with a commodity which is entirely different from any other commodity controlled by a board. I say that for reason that the results of the producer's efforts depend entirely on the method which the retailers present the product to the public. In the past, the producer suffered considerably because of the public's lack of faith in the methods used to bring milk to their homes.

Therefore, in my opinion, the only requirement in connection with this board is that its members shall be men capable of learning all there is to be known about production, treatment and distribution of milk. A man with an open mind will be able to render a service for which he will earn the thanks of the community. This proposed board will be able to double the quantity of milk consumed by the community and in that way will have done a fine service to the producer, because the amount that is consumed in our city is still very small. Approximately 20,000 gallons a day for the metropolitan area—I do not think the figure has increased very much of late—is, to say the least, an inadequate quantity. We need, for medical purposes, for the health of the people, a consumption approximately four times that quantity and it can be achieved.

I feel certain that a sound milk supply is a supply in which the public has faith, and I mean that the public will soon begin

use milk as a beverage. It will not be long in this community, I trust, before we see what can be observed in many other communities—both children and adults sitting down to meals and asking for bottles of milk as their beverage. I feared it would be a long time under existing conditions before we saw that achieved. I believe this board will have a full-time job, if it is to do as I think it will and renders a service to the community by increasing the quantity of milk consumed by raising the standard of the milk supplied and investigating all the latest methods of production, treatment and distribution.

It will be indeed a busy board if it does those things. I therefore cannot see how any man can remain a producer with high ethical standards and at the same time take a seat on this board. For that reason I am delighted to know that at last the board will be truly independent. I am pleased that trafficking in depots is something over which the board is to have control. I would point out again that the treatment of milk is a very expensive business. From inquiries made during the week I have learned that the cheapest bottle-washing machine available—it is said to be an inefficient machine—costs over £3,000, and if there is one essential part of a treatment plant it is a bottle-washing machine. We see all sorts of bottles that we know not to have been properly washed—bottles in which pasteurised milk is delivered to the public for sale.

Only last week I saw one bottle which was obviously dirty on the inside. On holding it up and rotating it one could see the sand in the bottom of the bottle. There is something radically wrong in a treatment plant that allows a bottle of that sort to be placed at the door of a householder. It means that there is improper or inefficient supervision over the bottle-washing machine. With an efficient automatic machine there should be no possibility of a bottle of that kind getting past the watchful eye of the person conducting the operations of the machine. I estimate that it would cost £25,000 or more today to install a treatment plant capable of handling 5,000 gallons of milk per day. Yet, having undertaken that expenditure it would be more than likely that the plant would be able to pasteurise double or treble that gallonage. If we are to have a dozen treatment

plants scattered throughout the city in order to pasteurise 20,000 gallons a day, the cost of pasteurised milk to the public will be considerable, or failing that, the treatment plants will soon go out of action.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Some people want 22 of them.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It cannot be done. The tendency is more and more towards the amalgamation of treatment plants and I estimate that we will probably end up with a maximum of four efficient plants in this city.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I hope you are right.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It will be all right so long as we do not get monopolies.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am more worried about securing a clean and pure milk supply than I am about monopolies. A monopoly would be the lesser of the two evils. In discussing this question I hope the Milk Board will give consideration to modern methods of milk treatment, and I congratulate it on having taken the step, at the earliest possible moment, of declaring itself in favour of compulsory pasteurisation. I would like it to go further and discuss the homogenisation of milk. Under that treatment the milk is submitted to such pressure that the fat globules are broken down and mixed throughout the rest of the milk. The result is that the milk loses its cream line but the fat is distributed equally throughout all the milk and therefore each person participating in its consumption receives an identical amount of fat per given quantity of milk.

The method is inexpensive as only a small piece of machinery that can be attached to a pasteurisation plant is required. When milk is pasteurised and sealed in bottles the effect of homogenisation is to ensure that the public receive milk that is of a definite standard throughout and not such that one member of the family can take the top milk containing the cream while the remainder get more or less skimmed milk. Viewing milk as a food, it is essential that those participating in its consumption should receive the full benefit of the constituents of the fluid.

There is another question that I would like the board to consider. A great proportion of the bottles used in our community are of a dark brown colour, while I understand that most of the bottles used in the

Eastern States are of colourless glass, as they all should be. I understand there is considerable difficulty in that regard in this State. I do not know whether it is true, but I have had it on good authority that in this State we have to take what we are given by the bottle companies, and they have said that our bottles shall be brown in the main. If that is so, I think the Minister and the board should take a most emphatic stand and ask that the milk bottles used in this State be of colourless glass.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I saw some white bottles the other day on the Commonwealth railway.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I ask the Minister to make whatever inquiries are necessary in order to see whether the whole of the milk supplied in Perth can be delivered in colourless bottles. I would also like to see investigated the provision of a standard cream mixture such as it common in many countries and in the United States of America. It is a 12 per cent. fat mixture and is arrived at by reducing the fat content of the milk to a standard and allowing the use of the fat extracted above that standard in the forming of a 12 per cent. cream mixture.

At first sight it might look to be an adulteration of the milk and it might be thought that as a result depots could willy nilly extract the cream from the milk, but that is not so if a sufficiently high standard is laid down. It would necessitate certain changes and the board would have to be very firm about the purchase of milk on a fat content basis rather than on gallonage. It would eventually mean a general tendency to cultivate in this State cows yielding a higher butterfat content rather than a high gallonage. Those with herds of that sort would in the end gain considerably because they would receive payment on the butterfat content of their milk.

Again, that might be thought to be a simple matter whereby the treatment depots could extract the extra fat from the milk while the public would not be certain of the standard, but it would have the advantage that in all these big pasteurisation plants where the milk is bought on a butterfat content basis, a full-time bacteriologist is employed on the staff. Unless a chemical and bacteriological analysis of the milk is

made regularly it is impossible for such plant to continue buying milk on the butterfat basis. If we were to do that we would raise the standard of milk in the community and when the regulations were lifted, could provide a cream of known butter content, and we would be providing directly a scientific basis for the treatment of the milk supply. It will be completely impossible for the pasteurisation plants to continue without having on their staffs persons capable of doing chemical and bacteriological analyses of the milk.

It is an eye-opener to go into some of the big pasteurisation plants on the other side of the world and see how every now and then the bacteriologist comes to the bottling washing plant and takes away a bottle in order to make a bacteriological survey and a check of the efficiency of that plant. What a comparison there is there with the conditions that exist in our own State! I support the Bill with the utmost pleasure and ask that the measures I have outlined be given further consideration by the board. I applaud that body for its action in declaring itself in favour of compulsory pasteurisation and I feel that within the few years we will be able to offer further congratulations to the new board.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [8.12] I am amazed at the easy passage this Bill having through the House. I can imagine what would have happened three years ago had a similar measure been introduced. Our friends of the Country Party would have raised their hands in horror at the suggestion that there should be no producer representation. However, it is fine to see the discipline that exists in the ranks of the party.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you think they have cracked the whip on them?

Hon. L. CRAIG: No. I think they have seen the light and are voluntarily accepting this Bill on its merits. I give them credit for accepting voluntarily the complete change that has taken place in the attitude towards boards controlling commodities.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture Only towards this one.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Is that a threat or promise? I have always opposed section control, because sectional control becomes

control over a section, and that was proved in the past by the attitude of certain members of the board when the strike took place. It was a very poor show. The recent testing for T.B. bears out a contention I made a good many years ago, when I said that eventually the production of milk must move towards the country. There is no comparison between the conditions under which milk is produced in the real dairying districts, and especially in the irrigation areas, where the cattle are healthy, and the metropolitan dairies where practically the whole of the feed is purchased. They are fed sometimes under dirty conditions and with dust rising about them, but today in the irrigation areas milk can be produced under the most hygienic conditions possible.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You ought to see the Goldfields conditions.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am talking about lust, although I know that the Goldfields members have some knowledge of it; but in the irrigation areas today it is not even and there are one or two model dairies in that area. I hope the time will come when no producer of milk for the metropolitan area will be allowed to produce milk unless he has dairy premises conforming to standards set down by the board and that those standards will be very high. The production of milk is profitable and many of the small farmers with good properties are doing very well.

Some time ago Dr. Hislop told us the best protection against T.B. in children is to be found in proper feeding and hygienic conditions. The same thing applies to dairy cattle. There is no difference. Cattle that are fed and given natural pastures and kept clean under decent conditions, will not be affected in the same way as are cattle fed in unhygienic and unnatural conditions in the metropolitan area. I do not know of any part of Australia where cattle are doing better than they are in our dairying districts. We have the warmth of summer, and irrigation has brought pastures equal to the best English pastures, with cocksfoot, rye grass, white down, summer paspalum and a number of others. I hope that in time we will see the elimination of sand patches where milk is produced, and that it will be produced entirely in our country districts.

I think it is a good thing that the wholesale production of milk should be separate from the retail distribution. That applies in almost any industry, and it is almost unknown for a manufacturer to be a retailer as well. The man whose whole thought and labour is concentrated on the production of milk should not be worried about the retail distribution of it. That is a special trade or industry on its own. I hope the board will bear in mind the gradual, if perhaps slight, elimination of metropolitan dairies to the more hygienic country districts. People that have clean herds—and there are some herds with no reactors at all—feel that they are making contributions to a fund which compensates people mainly in the metropolitan area. I can imagine the time when a man with 40 or 50 cows, which he keeps under the best conditions and tests from time to time, will be complaining that he is making a considerable contribution to the fund and all the compensation, or most of it, is going to people in the metropolitan area, because the cattle in the metropolitan area are not kept in such healthy and hygienic surroundings.

There is one provision in the Bill which seems to be a little drastic. I refer to proposed new Section 26B. It deals with the selling and purchasing of businesses and sets out that no person shall acquire or attempt or prepare to acquire any business, or part of any business, without first having obtained the consent of the board.

Hon. E. H. Gray: A very effective check.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I entirely agree but the new section says that he shall not attempt, or prepare to dispose of a business without the consent of the board. That means that if a man wants to sell out his business, he must not even look for a buyer, or even mention it to anyone, without first consulting the board. Nor must a man wanting to buy a business make any inquiry at all about it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is a protection to him.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Those licenses are worth a lot of money today. If a man wants to buy or sell a business, he usually noses around. If he is a seller he may discuss it with any likely purchasers, and those purchasers can then go along to the board and state that they have a chance to

buy a business and discuss the matter. But under this Bill he must make no attempt whatever to discuss it or make any inquiries at all. It seems to me that it could be covered completely if we struck out the words "or attempt or prepare to dispose." It is natural business instinct, where a man wishes to buy or sell a business, for him to nose around and inquire as to what sort of a business it is, and it seems rather harsh that he cannot do that without first consulting the board.

Everybody knows what happens when one consults a body of this description. One usually sees either a typist or a clerk and before one knows where one is, that typist or clerk tells his or her friend that John Smith wants to sell his business. In no time the news is all round the country. I shall heartily support the second reading of the Bill, and I am pleased that it is receiving such a cordial reception from the House.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [8.21]: I have no desire to throw the apple of discord into this debate, but I would like to support the objection Mr. Craig has raised to the proposed new Section 26B, which prohibits persons selling, or attempting to sell, on the one hand, or buying, or attempting to buy, on the other hand. This applies not only to the business of a dairyman but to the business of milk vendors and milk treatment plants. It seems to me that the provisions of that section could reasonably be reduced. Another point which I view without much enthusiasm concerns those portions of the Bill which refer to the socialisation of the industry.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Where is that?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Clause 9 deals with the attempted socialisation of the industry and it covers 90 per cent. of the Bill. Members will notice it is drawn up almost as comprehensively as the Bill under which the British Government took over the steel industry or the transport industry. It permits of a complete taking over and it appears to contemplate the board raising loans, providing sinking funds to repay loans, and a host of other things, in addition to the acquiring of milk and the disposing of it in such a manner, having re-

gard to the purposes of this Act, as the board determines.

When we recall that the Royal Commissioner on the milk industry, who is the chairman of the Milk Board, expressed the view that the vesting of milk in the board—or otherwise nationalisation—would be a question well worthy of consideration; and when we hear the Honorary Minister freely and frankly admit, as he has tonight, that he is in favour of the vesting of milk in the board—or otherwise socialisation—consider that the House is entitled to full and clear assurance that nothing is intended, under this Act, to provide the first leg for the nationalisation of the milk industry. The Honorary Minister may say that this is intended to apply only in cases such as we experienced some months ago when the milk producers withheld the delivery of their milk.

So long as it is intended to apply to circumstances such as those, the clause would have my support. However, I would suggest to the Honorary Minister that if he reads the proposed new section he will find it goes much further than he would have us believe. The criterion for the bringing into operation of the four or five pages of the Bill relating to the socialisation of the industry is this—

When in the opinion of the board there is or is likely to be, anything affecting, or likely to affect, the production or distribution of milk . . .

A breakdown in the railway system might conceivably affect the distribution of milk. A breakdown in the power-house might affect it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Neither of those two make any difference.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: It may be that the milk carters were having an argument with their employers, and that might affect the distribution of milk. Under none of those circumstances would it warrant interference by the board, because they are purely matters affecting the employees and the employers engaged in the industry. The board could no more effectively arrange for the delivery of milk than could the employers.

I suggest to the Honorary Minister that it should be made clear that this section will come into operation only if there is a threat

to withhold the production or the distribution of milk either by the producers or the distributors, and that as soon as the trouble or danger has passed, the order shall be withdrawn. This merely provides for the introduction of the order, but it makes no provision as to when it shall be withdrawn.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I have an amendment to cover that.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am glad to have the Honorary Minister's assurance on that point. Subject to those remarks I support the section to cover, but only to cover, a case of disruption such as we had a few months ago. If I may do a little thinking aloud, I would like the chairman and the members of the Milk Board to bear in mind the vast powers they have under this Bill. The number of people who are affected by their decisions and the absolute necessity for them to carry out their duties with wisdom, justice and impartiality and even with a certain amount of tolerance.

Hon. G. FRASER: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [8.29]: If ever I was sorry in my life that I assisted the Minister in passing a motion for the suspension of Standing Orders, I am now. One of the reasons I supported the Minister the other day was that he told us that there would be no attempt to rush through contentious measures. Now we have a Bill before us to amend the Milk Act and which was brought here only a few hours ago. The Minister expects it to go through all stages in the one day. The Bill was only printed today and there has been no possibility whatever of placing any amendments in the notice paper. There is no immediate rush about it. This is only Tuesday. I could understand the rush if this was the last day of the session.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Is this the first time anything of this sort has happened?

Hon. G. FRASER: It is the first time we have had a Bill printed today and an attempt made to rush it through like this.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We had to suffer it in the days of the Labour Government.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the hon. member suffered in those days, I hope he will show a friendly spirit and assist me on this occasion. What necessity is there to rush the legislation through? I know the desire is to finish the session this week but there is no reason why we should do so. If this is a sample of what is to happen during the rest of the week, some of us may adopt a different attitude in dealing with legislation. Up to the present, we have been quiet and have allowed Bills to go through.

I am surprised at the House refusing the adjournment of the debate on a measure of this description. I could understand the Minister's objection if the Bill came to us from another place without being amended there. It was altered in various directions and the Bill had to be reprinted before being submitted to this Chamber. In the circumstances, the right to the adjournment of the debate should not have been refused. It is not for that reason alone that I oppose the measure, but I shall do so as strongly as I possibly can. I thought Hitlerism went out after the last war. After a glance through the Bill, I am satisfied that that system has been imported to Western Australia.

The Chief Secretary: Go to Canberra! You are gagged there.

Hon. G. FRASER: Members in this Chamber hold up their hands in horror at anything savouring of socialism, and yet I have heard them congratulate the Government on introducing this Bill!

Hon. W. J. Mann: We know a good thing when we see it.

Hon. G. FRASER: Is that so?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Where is there anything savouring of socialism in it?

Hon. G. FRASER: In the first place—

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Who introduced the Milk Bill in 1946?

Hon. G. FRASER: This legislation was introduced by a Coalition Government in 1933.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I asked you about the Bill of 1946.

Hon. G. FRASER: I supported the legislation then. I believe the establishment of the Milk Board was well worthwhile. I still support the Act with, perhaps, some

minor amendments necessary because of circumstances that arose during the year. I would be prepared to support a Bill of that description.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Tell us what you do not like about the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is nothing in it that I like.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Then why did you want to adjourn the debate?

Hon. G. FRASER: I wanted to go through it more thoroughly in the hope that I could satisfy myself that my first impressions were wrong.

Hon. L. Craig: You could not believe your own eyes.

Hon. G. FRASER: No, nor could I understand that the Government would propose anything of the sort. Here we are asked to confiscate property, books and so forth.

Hon. W. J. Mann: That is your idea.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is there.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You have all the wisdom in the House!

Hon. G. FRASER: There has been a complete somersault by some members, who advocate on every possible occasion that producers should have representation on boards dealing with their commodities.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Now we are getting to it.

Hon. G. FRASER: Does this Bill give the producers representation on the board? Of course, I know the Honorary Minister for Agriculture said he was departing from that principle on this occasion only.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: We will deal with the matter as it arises from time to time.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am telling the Honorary Minister for Agriculture what he has done on this occasion.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Do you ever change your mind?

Hon. G. FRASER: Not on matters of this description. I always advocate the representation of parties concerned on boards set up to deal with their commodities.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You have never assisted to get producer representation on boards.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have never opposed direct representation by those interested on such boards. The Bill, however, seeks to cut out the representation of those producing the commodity that will be handled.

Hon. L. Craig: Would you put a producer on the board?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Who would you have on it?

Hon. G. FRASER: My idea would be the board as constituted today.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What about the retailers?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, I would have representative on the board.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They are not on the board.

Hon. G. FRASER: I would favour the board as at present constituted.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What about depot-keepers?

Hon. G. FRASER: Their representation on the board is not warranted. I certainly think a representative of the producers should be on it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: How many would you have on it?

Hon. G. FRASER: It has been said that 75 per cent. of the producers are in favour of the Bill. Where did that figure come from? How do members know that 75 per cent. of the producers favour the measure?

Hon. L. Craig: Is it like the 25 per cent. reduction in fire insurance?

Hon. G. FRASER: It is just the same a haphazard guess.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: That is right so.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Cunningham comes from the Goldfields, and he has been everything and knows all about everything.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I admit I know nothing about this business, and I want to the people who do. Did you know that?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, and I met them in conference today.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I got my information from them.

Hon. G. FRASER: Seventy-five per cent. of producers are supposed to be in favour of the Bill.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Absolutely in favour of it.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is a guess.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is not a guess. They were canvassed. Stand up to it!

Hon. G. FRASER: Who did the canvassing?

Hon. W. J. Mann: The people who produce the milk. You cannot squib out of it like that.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member knows that they do not want whole-milk producers and others engaged in various forms of the industry as well.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The men who are in favour of the Bill are those who produce the milk.

Hon. G. FRASER: A lot of those engaged in the industry produce milk for butterfat only. I suppose they are the ones who are in favour of the Bill.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You don't suppose anything of the sort.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am supposing that some of those are included in the 75 per cent. that have been referred to.

Hon. W. J. Mann: That is not so.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am talking about the producers in my own district.

Hon. W. J. Mann: How many are there?

Hon. G. FRASER: A fair number. They are 100 per cent. against the Bill.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Why did they not approach me about the matter?

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: At any rate, how did you guess that percentage?

Hon. G. FRASER: It is no guess at all.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: How many are there?

Hon. G. FRASER: There are 21 producers in my district.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Why did they not communicate with me?

Hon. G. FRASER: The Bill was introduced only last week.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They knew the Bill was to be presented.

Hon. G. FRASER: They knew about it only last week, and I met them in conference this morning. There were 21 members of the organisation present, and they are 100 per cent. against the Bill. It was suggested that we should attempt to move certain amendments, and that is why I desired the adjournment of the debate so that I could put them on the notice paper. They desired to retain producer representation. A lot has been said about the attitude of a particular producer during certain incidents that occurred.

Hon. W. J. Mann: A nice chap!

Hon. G. FRASER: I am prepared to accept the contention of that individual that he went there to save trouble.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is a funny story.

Hon. G. FRASER: It may be.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You did not swallow that, surely!

Hon. G. FRASER: I believe that a newspaper report indicated that he had had some effect in stopping trouble on that occasion. I am prepared to accept his statement.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I would not be prepared to do so.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is where we differ. I believe also that the Honorary Minister for Agriculture referred to the representation of Zone 2.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The producer-retailers represent 95 per cent.

Hon. G. FRASER: Is it a fact that 85 per cent. of all milk vendors in the district are producer-retailers?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Yes.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then, it is in order for them to have representation; I cannot see any objection to it. If 75 per cent. of those concerned in the industry are in favour of the Bill, they had the say as who should be elected to the board?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You are mixing that up with No. 1 district.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And what happened there was to their sorrow.

Hon. G. FRASER: Is that so?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I said there was only one dinkum producer on the board.

Hon. G. FRASER: And the Honorary Minister also said he was satisfied.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I said so regarding him.

Hon. G. FRASER: What is the proposition now?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: A good proposition.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is to put on one man as chairman and two other persons who shall not be interested in the industry at all and have no dealings with it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is a very fair proposition.

Hon. G. FRASER: If I were appointing a board of this description, I would want people who knew something about the business. What use would I be on the board?

Hon. W. J. Mann: None at all.

Hon. G. FRASER: I would not know anything about the business.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do not carry that argument too far.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yet here we have members prepared to support a Bill to constitute a board to deal with the milk trade, and yet those to be on it are to have no experience in the trade at all.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: There is no qualification for a member of Parliament. You might get a job on the board.

Hon. G. FRASER: There may be no disqualification except that this may be an office of profit under the Crown. The Government asks that we shall agree to put two persons similarly situated to myself on a board to manage the milk industry.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I know a lot about milk, but I am not financially interested.

Hon. G. FRASER: To put people on the board who know nothing about the milk industry is absurd. It is an extraordinary somersault by members when they agree to cut out those who know something about the trade to put on the board men who know nothing about it. The Bill will not get my vote. In Committee I shall move to delete that provision.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: We will not seek to prevent your moving the amendment because it is not on notice paper.

Hon. G. FRASER: But what opportunity I would have of gaining port will be lost, because the amendment cannot be placed on the notice paper given consideration by members. I am favourable to the appointment of a chairman to the board for a period of six years. A term of four years would be satisfactory.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I would not accept the chairmanship less than a seven-year period.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think four years would be more reasonable. The chairman to be appointed for seven years and one of the other two members for three years and one of them is to retire at the end of the first two years. If a chairman were appointed for four years, then it could be arranged that one member would retire a year. That would be a far better proposition. I am absolutely opposed to fixing long a period.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I thought you would agree with that vision.

Hon. G. FRASER: I join with Mr. Vason in his contention regarding this matter not from the socialisation point of view course—and I think the proposition is quite wrong. The board will step in and take control of all the milk belonging to the people. I ask members who have been supporting the Bill whether they have read various clauses thoroughly.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Do you not want people to get milk in emergency?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. But what is the proposal? It is to vest the milk in the board. It will relieve the vendors of their contractual obligations and hand them over to the board.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: If you were present when I made my second reading speech—

Hon. G. FRASER: I was. Then what will happen? After a lot of palaver, the board will send a cheque to the producer for the milk supplied. The proposal goes too far. I spoke earlier about the provision.

for the production of books and documents. I consider this to be an outrageous proposal. What businessman in the House would support it? I doubt whether the Taxation Department has the power which it is proposed to give to the board in this connection.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You do not know much about the Taxation Department.

Hon. G. FRASER: I wanted an adjournment so that I could check what the differences in the powers were. So far as my knowledge goes, this is a power greater than the Taxation Department possesses. Yet we find members who call themselves businessmen supporting this proposal. I am pointing out the attitude adopted by some members.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: How can you arrive at a fair price if the board has not that power?

Hon. G. FRASER: There are various ways of arriving at a price without commandeering books. If a person has 50 head of cows, the board would know approximately what the cost of fodder would be. They know all the other phases of the industry. It is not necessary for the board to take control of a person's books of account in order to arrive at a fair price. Heavy penalties are provided by the Bill, as much as £50 and £100. A person cannot even sell his business under this Bill. Heavens above, this is putting greater power in the hands of the board than is given by the Licensing Act!

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What is for the protection of the people.

Hon. G. FRASER: A person is not even allowed by the Bill to make arrangements for a sale. As I said before, Hitler is not dead while this Bill lives. Yet in 1948 we are asked to pass it! It is going back to the ark ages.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You are overdoing it. You are protesting too much.

Hon. G. FRASER: If I liked, I could draw a long bow and say that a person could not sell a cow if this Bill is passed.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Here is that provided for in the Bill? You have the wrong measure, I think. You are talking about the sale of diseased cattle.

Hon. G. FRASER: No. I refer the Minister to proposed new Section 26B which provides—

No person, carrying on the business of dairyman, milk vendor or milk treatment under the authority of the appropriate license issued by the Board pursuant to the provisions of this Act shall dispose or attempt or prepare to dispose of the business or any part of it without first having obtained the consent in writing of the Board.

A cow is a part of a dairyman's business.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You are reading a lot into the Bill that I cannot see.

Hon. G. FRASER: If he sells a cow, he is liable to a penalty of £50, and we are asked to pass legislation of this description! However, I think I have said enough. I have explained how I feel about the measure. In Committee, I shall try to get some amendments passed—if I cannot get the Bill defeated on the second reading.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [8.51]: I do not intend to speak at length on the measure. I support the remarks concerning the objections raised to the adjournment of this debate by Mr. Fraser. I, in common with other members, have not had an opportunity to examine the implications of this measure; and there are certain phases of it which, as Mr. Watson said, would cause the ordinary businessman very grave misgivings. I feel that a little courtesy in the way of an adjournment of the debate would have done quite a lot of good. However, the adjournment was refused and so we have to go into the Bill and do the best we can, using our judgment.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—East—in reply) [8.52]: I am sorry that I had to oppose the adjournment of the debate. I make this suggestion, however, that the Bill can be recommitted tomorrow if any member desires to deal with a particular amendment; but I would remind members that we are getting to the closing stage of the session, and if we keep on adjourning measure after measure, I do not know where we shall be.

Hon. H. K. Watson: We have had other Bills on the notice paper for a longer period than this Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Most members are aware of the contents of the Bill and have made up their minds on it.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: This Bill is on a par with the electoral Bill, yet no-one wanted an adjournment of that Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have one or two amendments which I think will meet what Mr. Gray desires in regard to the disqualification clause.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Have you an amendment of new Section 26B?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am quite prepared to agree to an amendment of that provision, if members feel it is too drastic. I am not unreasonable in these things. The general principles of the Bill have, I think, been accepted by the House, and it is not for me to be adamant and demand 100 per cent. of the measure.

I shall reply briefly to one or two remarks that have been made on the Bill. Dr. Hislop raised a most interesting point, one with which I have been at fault for a long time. He mentioned that an adequate bottling machine would cost £3,000 and an adequate treatment plant, £20,000. I agree with him. That is an argument put up by the Milk Board against a multiplicity of treatment depots scattered around the city. It would not be possible to have a number of treatment depots, each costing £20,000, to treat 20,000 gallons of milk per day. That would lead to no end of trouble, and probably to applications to the Government for financial assistance. Sydney has two depots to treat 200,000 gallons of milk per day.

The point raised by Dr. Hislop is interesting and I am convinced that adequate machinery is necessary. I ask members who have not already done so to inspect some of the depots in the metropolitan area, particularly the new one in course of erection for Brown's in Charles Street. Mr. Fraser said that only 75 per cent. of the dairy-men wanted this measure. I have not heard anything about the other 25 per cent. Surely to goodness, if they had any objections I would have heard of them, but I can assure the House I have not. There has been plenty of time to lodge objections. Those in the industry knew that the meas-

ure was before another place last week, have discussed the measure, as I said, with producers away down in the South-West. I told them what was in the Bill and asked what they thought about it. They replied that it was long overdue. Mr. Fraser's friends must have known last week what was mooted, but I got no communication from them.

Hon. G. Fraser: You said by way of introduction this afternoon that you had seen a lot of them, but you did not visit those in the West Province.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have not heard of any objectors in the West Province.

Hon. G. Fraser: They did not know anything about the Bill until Saturday.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The producers further down knew a week ago.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, as far as the Boyup Brook. I had a telegram from the producers there. People came from as far away as Brunswick Junction to urge the Minister in another place to get the Bill through, and they gave him all the information and help they possibly could. Yet the producers in the West Province did not hear about it until Saturday!

Hon. G. Fraser: You said you had been there and told them about it. You had not been in the West Province, however.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But, as I said, I have not heard any objectors to the Bill. With regard to the so-called socialisation suggested by Mr. Watson—

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is what it is.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Surely the provision is plain enough; it speaks of a state of emergency.

Hon. H. K. Watson: It does not say so.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It does. I am not going to argue that point.

Hon. H. Hearn: The board will have grave power in interpreting that provision.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Even so, the Government has to be satisfied before he makes the order.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What a fine loop-hole it would be for a socialistic Government to take advantage of.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If a socialistic Government were in power, it might bring about absolute socialisation. I do not intend to argue that point, as I said. I have an amendment which ties the thing even tighter. I say definitely that the power is necessary and I cannot understand Mr. Fraser's objection to it. The board, during the last strike, did things which were illegal, and I do not mind telling the House that I approved of what it did in a state of emergency. It was never challenged, but this will put the issue beyond doubt, and if the board has to do these things it will do so legally.

Hon. H. K. Watson: You do not use the word "nationalisation" anywhere.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. As I said before, I believe in the vesting of milk in the same way as we have vesting of barley, wheat and eggs. Measures in connection with those commodities have passed this House at the request, of course, of the producers. I do not wish to say any more, but I do thank members—90 per cent. of them anyhow—for their reception of the Bill.

The Chief Secretary: That is a guess.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. It is desirable as time goes on to find out the mistakes that are made. It is possible that at the end of 12 months we shall again have to amend the Act. We should not be too proud to change our minds when it is necessary. I make no apology to Mr. Fraser for that. We shall deal with future legislation when it comes along.

Hon. H. Hearn: I would like to ask the Honorary Minister whether, before we go into Committee, he will indicate to the House the nature of his amendments, so that we will know what is in his mind.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: One of the amendments is quite simple. It was suggested in another place that a member of the board might become incapable of acting as a board member through drunkenness or other causes, and I shall move an amendment at the appropriate place to add the

words, "or becomes incapable of carrying out his duties." Another amendment deals with the disqualification clause, and it has been brought forward at the request of Mr. Gray. I am hoping that the House will delete the whole of paragraph (b) of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 11 with a view to inserting the words "is directly financially interested in the production, transport, supply, treatment or distribution of milk." I also want to move an amendment to tie up the matter in which a period of a state of emergency exists. I do not think there will be any objection to it. I think my amendment in this respect will meet with the wishes of Mr. Watson.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	25
Noes	..	..	..	3

Majority for .. 22

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. M. Cunningham	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. H. A. C. Daffen	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir F. E. Gibson	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. E. Gray	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. H. Hoarn	Hon. F. E. Welsh
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. Tucker
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. R. J. Boylen
Hon. G. Fraser	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Repeal and substitution of Section 11:

Hon. G. FRASER: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 11 the following words be added—"one of whom shall be a representative of the producers who shall be elected by the licensed milk producers."

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have not the slightest hesitation in opposing the amendment. It cuts across the whole spirit of the measure

with respect to the board. If this is agreed to, there is no reason why someone should not move for a representative of the transport interests, the depots, the vendors or the retailers. I am prepared to take all the blame from my producer friends in the country for opposing this amendment. I am surprised that Mr. Fraser has not moved for a representative of the retailers.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am sorry the Honorary Minister has such an elastic conscience. The principle of a three-man board has been adopted. I possibly could move that the other two members of the board should be representatives of the retailers and of the producers.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What about a woman as well?

Hon. G. FRASER: The Honorary Minister has not heard me move an amendment of that description. I have never suggested it. A producer-representative should be a member of the board. The producers are doing all the hard work and should be represented on this tribunal so that it could act for them in all respects.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no necessity for a producer to be on the board merely for the sake of giving it certain information, because that information is already available at the office of the board or in the Agricultural Department. I do not feel I am being put on the spot in opposing the amendment. What is required is an independent board that can, in an unbiased manner, examine any section associated with the industry. In any event, a producer would be hopelessly outvoted because at least half a dozen other sections would have a right to be represented on the board.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Although I do not like the form of the amendment, I must admit that I have always fought for the principle of producer-representation on any board dealing with the products of producers. The Honorary Minister, having regard to the principle which is accepted by the organisation to which I belong, might have drafted a Bill to allow of producer-representation on the board, with, of course, the necessary safeguards. I am inclined to support the amendment.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is argued that producers want the Bill as it is. I would

not support any proposal to put producers on the board unless the consumers were also represented.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I would again refer to the resolution carried at a meeting of the Farmers' Union and signed by Mr. Sullivan, secretary of the dairy section. This states—

Taking into account all existing circumstances this executive approves of the board being reconstructed as suggested in the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: The information given to me is that the Farmers' Union is composed of men who provide for the whole of the metropolitan area and of those who produce only for butter. I am speaking on behalf of the branch of milk producers who are 100 per cent. opposed to the Bill.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The few you have met.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is a branch of 21 members in my district and they are unanimously against the Bill.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Do they belong to the union?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, they belong to the milk producers. In the Farmers' Union numbers of them produce only for butter-fat. Does the 75 per cent. that have been referred to embrace suppliers of milk?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The resolution to which I have referred was carried by the whole-milk section.

Hon. G. Fraser: That includes the butter section.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Mr. Sullivan is secretary of the dairy section. This is the whole milk executive.

Amendment put and negatived.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That subparagraph (b) be struck out and the following paragraph inserted in lieu:—

“(b) is directly financially interested in the production, transport, supply, treatment or distribution of milk.”

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I have no objection to the amendment but would point out that the paragraph the Honorary Minister proposes to insert in lieu of the one to be

struck out is very mild. Evidently he wishes to ensure that members of the Milk Board shall not be financially interested in the distribution of milk. I think the better words to use would be "directly or indirectly financially interested." The present proposal might permit of a man using his wife as a dummy to get around the Act.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Minister's present proposal would mean that no man who is a shareholder in the Westralian Farmers would be eligible to become a member of the board. There are hundreds of suitable people in that position, and it is a great pity that they should all be excluded by such a provision. The principle could be expanded to include a man who had shares in Boans Ltd., a place at which milk can be purchased by people. It would be safer to allow the Minister to have as free a hand as possible. We would be quite safe in accepting the amendment.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I shall not press the point further but there is a principle involved. Under the municipalities Act, a member of a council is precluded from entering into a contract with that body, and members of this board should be entirely above question and should have no interest whatever in any phase of the industry, which might affect their judgment as members of the board.

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

Clause 4—Repeal and substitution of Section 12:

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: How much time will the two members of the board devote to the work? We shall not get the type of man desired if he is to be appointed for only three years and then be subject to political reappointment. I would rather see appointments made for five years with one member to retire in four years. The board will have to lay down a policy, and time will be required to do this. Men totally independent of the industry will have to give considerable time to making themselves au fait with the multitudinous duties required of them. Will the Minister accept five years and four years as suggested?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is much in what Dr. Hislop has said. I believe that the new board will be substantially a full-time body.

That is one reason why the chairman should be appointed for seven years. I think I can agree that the other two members should be appointed for five years and four years respectively. We shall not stick at a few pounds in order to get suitable men. If Dr. Hislop moves as suggested, I will leave it to the Committee to decide.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of the proposed new Subsection (2) the word "three" be struck out and the word "five" inserted in lieu.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I hope members will not accept the amendment. The chairman is a man of experience who has been tried and found not wanting. I do not think it will be more than a part-time job for the two members, and to appoint for five years men who might prove unsatisfactory would be very risky. Three years would be a very generous term for new members. If experience of three years showed that they had proved themselves, they could be reappointed.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The question is not whether it will be a full-time job, but what the term of office shall be. I have in mind two people whom I hope will be appointed. One has already had experience on a board in connection with milk and another is connected with the dairying industry, though not financially. He does receive a salary from a certain organisation. Members need not worry that men will be appointed who have not been tried. I have endeavoured to build up the prestige of other boards and, I think, successfully.

Hon. H. Tuckey: What will the salary be?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a matter to be determined by Cabinet after considering the duties. No appointment will be experimental; the matter is too important for that.

Hon. G. FRASER: Notwithstanding the remarks of the Honorary Minister, this will be an experiment. The proposal is to get two men who have had no experience of the industry and they may not possess the administrative ability required of them. They might even make an unbloody mess of the job, and yet they would be there for five years. If they proved themselves to be competent in three years, there would be no difficulty

in reappointing them for another term. Adherence to the term of three years is a necessary safeguard.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It seems as if the Honorary Minister has decided who shall be members of the board.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I have decided on one.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Then the Minister will have two men whom he knows he can trust. Surely in these days men look for greater security than a three years' term of office would give them! I feel they would do better work if they were not called upon to censor some of their thoughts by having to face reappointment so soon. The board will have to lay down a policy for the distribution of one of the most dangerous foodstuffs, and surely should have continuity in order to fulfil the task. Any short-term policy would be ruinous for the industry.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is much to be said for a long-term policy. To bring the milk supply and distribution up to standard will entail much work and the members of the board should be given some security. When the trouble occurred in the industry, we had the sorry spectacle of men damaging the roof of the chairman's home by stone-throwing, which shows that the job is somewhat precarious and not at all an enviable one. The least we can do is to give these people a number of years of security of office. I do not propose to recommend somebody who has not been tried in some sort of job such as this. I will not pick up a man in the street on account of his looks.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Do you advertise?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: As a rule, we do not. The appointments I have made to other boards have been picked men. It is hard to secure men for these boards. Generally, only men who have made good and have not very much to do are prepared to assume office. Ordinary men in business will not do so. The more I think of it, the more inclined I am to favour the amendment.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The more I think of it, the more I am inclined to consider we should stick to the three-year term. The argument in favour of five years is that the members will be given security of tenure.

The argument against that is that if one or the other or both were not the success they should be, the shorter term would be an advantage. I consider it is preferable to stick to three years. If they do a good job they will be reappointed.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I support Mr. Heenan's remarks. There is a fact that no-one has mentioned. The members of most boards are appointed for three years. Members of Parliament in another place have to stand for election every three years. Municipal councillors and members of hospital boards are appointed for a similar term. If the amendment is agreed to, it may result in a request to the Government for an extension of the period of office of members of other boards.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Amendment of Section 26:

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Committee will not agree to this clause. It goes too far. It provides that the board can require persons to produce books of accounts and taxation returns and other documents which the board may retain for 14 days.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: For the hon. member's information I would point out that reference to taxation returns has been removed from the Bill. The hon. member has the wrong Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: That shows the hole members can get into! I have been dealing with the Bill I obtained yesterday, and now I am referred to an entirely different one.

The CHAIRMAN: I would advise the hon. member to destroy the incorrect Bill. He has been quoting from it a good deal.

Hon. G. FRASER: I consider that the period of 14 days is too long.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The period is not too long at all. A Royal Commission can obtain the books of any person and keep them for a considerable time. The board will have the powers of a Royal Commission in regard to this matter, and 14 days is not a very long time for the board to go through a person's books. The board has a big job to do in discovering the cost of production

and the reason it is given power to examine documents is to enable it to arrive at a true estimate. No board would retain books or documents any longer than necessary.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—New Section 26A added:

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: With a view to meeting the point raised by Mr. Watson, I move an amendment—

That in lines 2 to 4 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 26A the words "affecting, or likely to affect, the production or distribution of milk, or both," be struck out with a view to inserting the words "to prevent or be likely to prevent the distribution of milk so that a state of emergency has in the opinion of the Board arisen or is about to arise."

I propose later to move for the insertion after the word "Governor" in line 6, of the words "as soon as the state of emergency has terminated."

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The Minister's amendment is not so artistic as it might have been had he had more time to consider it, but it reaches the kernel of my objection.

Hon. L. CRAIG: There are some unnecessary words in the subsection. I am not sure whether it is proposed to take them out. I refer to the phrase "or is likely to be" in line 2.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not proposed to delete those words.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think there is still some duplication of wording.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 26A the words "or is likely to be" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That in lines 2, 3 and 4 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 26A the words "affecting, or likely to affect, the production or distribution of milk, or both" be struck out, and the words "to prevent or be likely to prevent the distribution of milk so that a state of emergency has in the opinion of the Board arisen or is about to arise" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That in line 6 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 26A after the word "Governor" the words "as soon as the state of emergency has terminated" be inserted.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I suggest that those words could well appear in a further subsection.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think the amendment will achieve what I desire. If necessary, the Bill can be recommitted tomorrow.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. G. FRASER: Does the provision for the vesting of milk in the board give power over the whole of the milk produced? Some dairymen may have pigs and may desire to use some of the milk to feed them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is provided for.

Hon. G. FRASER: It does not appear in the Bill.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: It is provided for in the parent Act.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is no provision here for the producer to retain milk for his own purposes, other than for food.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He is licensed to deliver a certain amount of milk, and is entitled, under the parent Act, to retain the balance on his farm. This provision is to vest in the board for the time being the milk that, in the ordinary course of events, would come to the metropolitan area.

Hon. G. Fraser: I think the power given here would debar the dairyman from keeping milk on the farm for his pigs.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think so. This refers only to the milk covered by his contract.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Is the Honorary Minister prepared to agree to the recommitment of Clause 9 for the further consideration of Section 26A?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Hon. L. CRAIG: When speaking on the second reading, I raised the question as to whether it was advisable to restrict a man wanting to sell or buy a business, from look-

ing around for a buyer or a seller as the case may be. In view of that, I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 26B the words "or attempt or prepare to dispose" be struck out.

It is not possible to sell a business today without submission to the Sub-Treasury and if a man finds somebody who wishes to buy his milk business, that man can go to the board and advise it of his decision to sell. The board can make inquiries as to the suitability of the proposed purchaser. If the amendment is agreed to, it will not prevent any man from making inquiries as to the buying or selling of a business.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I propose to move an amendment that in line 6 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 26B the words "or any part of it" be struck out. If that were agreed to, it would obviate restrictions on people wishing to sell any part of their business.

Hon. L. CRAIG: If that is agreed to a man might sell four-fifths of his business and form a partnership.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: He will be able to sell his cattle, but not his business. If such an amendment is not agreed to, it could mean that a man would not be permitted to sell even a poddy calf without first obtaining the permission of the board.

Hon. G. FRASER: That could be the construction.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am afraid that if the suggestion were agreed to, it would have disastrous effects. I think the intention of the proposed section is that no man shall dispose of his license, or any part of it, without first obtaining the permission of the board. The board would not want to prevent a man from selling part of his equipment, but if we agree to such an amendment it will mean that a man could sell nine-tenths of his business and form a partnership without consulting anybody. If the hon. member feels that the proposed section will prevent a man from selling any part of his livestock, then he should move to put in the word "license" in lieu of the word "business." However, I think it requires further consideration.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am strongly opposed

to any such amendment. If it were agreed to, a man would be able to sell 99 per cent of his business and so form a partnership.

Hon. W. J. MANN: What do you mean by his business?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not hold that a poddy calf or a beast is part of a business. It is part of the floating stock.

Hon. A. THOMSON: In these days with the shortage of staff, a man might find that he is not able to carry on without assistance and that he can carry on only part of his business. Are we going to say that he shall not be permitted to sell that part of the business to someone unless it be approved by the board.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The board can approve.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I know of two country towns, Katanning and Narrogin where the men supplying milk were unable to obtain assistance and they were compelled to give up their dairies. An amendment such as that suggested is well worthy of consideration because surely a man should be permitted to sell portion of his business if he so desires.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is provided in the Bill that the board can give him permission.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, but we are making this a very close preserve.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think any board in the world would prevent a man selling portion of that business if a man found that he could not carry on. I have heard of the cases quoted by Mr. Thomson, but this is a most desirable provision. It is a privileged industry, and the board must have some say as to what goes on. A very pernicious system has been worked up over the years in the trafficking of these licenses and as much as £24 a gallon has been paid for them. Someone has to pay for that. There must be a certain amount of restriction and direction as to these businesses.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Honorary Minister has not yet explained the point raised regarding portion of the business. I might be that the milk vendor has an old motorcar which he wishes to sell. That is part of his business and it is going too far if a man has to make application to the board for permission to sell that motorcar.

It has been suggested that a man could dispose of quite a large portion of his business but people would not buy a business unless they could get the license, and the safeguard is there.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The only business in question is that of a dairyman, milk vendor or of milk treatment. It does not refer to his stock, plant or equipment. I am inclined to think that this portion of the Bill could have been more plainly drafted. Obviously the subsection has been inserted to prevent trafficking in licenses.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is so.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I do not doubt that that is the purpose of the proposed new subsection and I do not desire to embarrass the Honorary Minister. I would like him to give further consideration to this provision with a view to clarifying it. It seems to me that if a man is in business as a dairyman, part of that business is his stock that produces the milk.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Mr. Craig always says "No." I do not think the amendment I suggest would be as dangerous as the Honorary Minister thinks. If a man were to dispose of 90 per cent. of his business, that would obviously affect the value of his license. I am afraid the subsection will prove too restrictive. The Honorary Minister says that no board would dream of doing what has been suggested, but if he were a private member he would not always be so sure.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I claim the board has no power, for instance, to prevent a man from selling a poddy calf. That would be part of his stock in trade, not part of his business.

Hon. G. Bennetts: His business would be no good if he had no cows.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, no more than a shop would be any good if it contained no shirts. Rather than waste any further time on this matter, I am prepared to postpone the further consideration of the clause until tomorrow.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would support an amendment such as Mr. Roche has suggested. In fact, I would like the whole of

the proposed new Section 26B deleted. A producer may have a license but he must have cows, equipment and other property that go with it. If he has been in business and built it up over a period of years, he has created a certain amount of goodwill and it is unfair to deny that he is entitled to some extra remuneration should he dispose of his license. He is entitled to sell his license at a premium, for that is not trafficking. I disagree with the assertion that anything of that sort would increase the price of milk. If a purchaser knows the price of milk and what quantity a herd is turning out and he pays more for the property than it is worth, he has no-one but himself to blame, and he cannot claim an increase in the price of milk because he has paid out too much.

I think the proposed new section is objectionable because it seeks to place too much power in the hands of three men. It is an interference with a man's right to deal with his property. Another angle is that certain contracts have to be approved by the Milk Board. In the past the board has dilly-dallied in dealing with such an application and a vendor has lost a perfectly good sale. I think if the word "license" were substituted for the word "business" it would meet the situation.

Hon. L. CRAIG: We are dealing with the right of a dairyman to sell his license. His cattle do not constitute part of his business, but merely part of his stock in trade. The Rural Reconstruction Commission, in one of its reports, warned Governments against giving farmers the right to sell licenses made available to them by boards constituted by Governments. They were warned not to allow men to traffic in licenses and make money out of them when they had done nothing for them. If that were allowed, it would mean that when difficult times arrived, the farmers would seek financial assistance because they could not carry on in view of the excessive prices they had paid for their businesses. We know that for the right to sell papers that cost 2d., agents have paid as much as £3 per paper for the delivery rights.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Up to £4 10s.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Honorary Minister says that as much as £24 has been paid for a license; and if a man has a big contract, members can see what that would mean. As

a matter of fact, all the small producers who have contracts for eight or ten gallons, very often produced under the most unhygienic conditions, should be eliminated. It is in the interests of all concerned that the production of milk should be in big units, certainly not less than 50 gals. The board could then insist that such dairymen installed the essential equipment.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The small man would never have an opportunity under such conditions.

Hon. H. Hearn: You would stifle private enterprise.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Nothing of the sort. I am speaking against the uneconomical production of milk in unhealthy conditions. We know what happened in the metropolitan area when milk was being produced in filthy little dairies. The board got to work and, in the interests of the public, cleaned them up. The new subsection will prevent a man from selling any part of his milk business without the consent of the board. His cattle, assets and equipment are no part of his business, any more than sheep represent part of a farmer's business or shirts part of a haberdashery concern. They are merely stock-in-trade. The ambiguity would be removed if the proposed new section referred to "licenses" instead of "businesses" and it would then deal with trafficking in licenses. I contend that in this provision "business" really means "license."

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: To clarify the position, I move an amendment—

That in lines 5 and 6 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 26B the word "business" be struck out and the word "license" inserted in lieu.

How does a man build up this class of business? He has a monopoly and is under the protection of the Milk Board. The board should therefore have some say in what he does with the business. The provision is not aimed at the dairyman, but at proprietors of the treatment depots and retailers in the city.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: On the question of "part of the business," I would mention an actual case I have in mind. A dairy firm at Kalgoorlie recently purchased a plant that had been condemned and declared obsolete. It was the intention of the firm to get the milk producers on the

Goldfields to send their milk to be treated by this plant. This provision would have the effect of giving the board power to say whether the firm should be permitted to use the plant.

Hon. W. J. Mann: That is absurd. Suppose a man had a 4 h.p. engine to drive his milking machine and it became too small for his business, he would not be prevented from buying a 6 h.p. engine and selling the 4 h.p. engine.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I was dealing with the plant that had been declared obsolete and had been condemned and sold elsewhere, which it was proposed to put into operation.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Might I suggest that the point is already covered by the words in Subsection (1), "milk vendor or milk treatment under the authority of the appropriate license issued by the board pursuant to the provisions of this Act?"

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 26B the words, "or attempt or prepare to acquire" be struck out. This is a consequential amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 22B the word "business" be struck out and the word "license" inserted in lieu.

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

Clauses 10 to 14, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT AMENDMENT.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read for first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [10.58] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has been recommended by the Pharmaceutical Society of Western Australia.

lia for the more efficient administration of the Act. The Act imposes two principal functions upon the society, firstly, the responsibility for controlling the registration and the professional conduct of pharmaceutical chemists and, secondly, the policing of the sale and distribution of poisons. Opportunity is taken to provide in the Bill definitions of "medical practitioner," "veterinary surgeon" and "veterinary practitioner," which do not appear in the Act at present; also to amend the definition of "wholesale dealing," which has been proved to be inadequate.

The Pharmaceutical Society has requested that the retirement of members of the council be staggered. The advantages of this are obvious as it ensures a continuity of experienced members on the council which is composed of a president and six other members. The Bill provides that such staggering shall come into operation at the completion of the present members' terms of office, and that the varying terms shall be prescribed by regulation. Under the Act the only disciplinary action that can be taken by the council is to strike a man off the register. That is thought to be rather severe, but at the same time the council desires to have the power to take disciplinary action. The Bill, therefore, gives it power to censor or suspend chemists guilty of offences, or to require them to give undertakings, and also to pay the costs of any proceedings taken against them. Any person objecting to action of this nature by the council may lodge an appeal to a magistrate.

The Bill adds further conditions in regard to the sale of poisons. These will prevent sales to persons apparently under 18 years of age, and to anyone unknown to the vendor unless such person is accompanied by a witness known to the vendor and who shall enter his signature and address in the sale of poisons book. As members will be aware, all containers containing poisons for sale must be clearly marked "Poison." The Bill provides that regulations may be made prescribing the nature of the warnings to be placed on the containers. Section 41, which deals with wholesale dealers in poisons is repealed as it is inconsistent with other provisions of the Act. A new provision is inserted to deal

with the situation. The Bill provides that a license for the sale of poisons will not be issued to a corporation or partnership, but to an individual. It also provides that the licensee and also any employees will be jointly responsible. In other words, if a chemist employs a lad and that lad sells poison against the provisions of the Act, the licensee will be responsible as well as the boy.

An important amendment provides that certain new drugs and preparations shall be subject to the provisions of the Act. These include for human use penicillin, benadryl, phenobarbital and sulphonamides. Items included in regard to veterinary work are penicillin and sulphonamides and substituted sulphonamides. There should be control over these drugs which can prove deleterious if used indiscriminately. Penicillin, under the Health Act, requires the obtaining of a doctor's certificate before it can be supplied. Veterinary officers used quite a lot of penicillin, but before they can get it they have to obtain a medical certificate. They are, therefore, placed in a rather invidious position. The Bill seeks to allow them to be supplied direct. The habit has arisen of people collecting prescriptions, having them made up by a chemist, and then handing them out again. There has been some abuse of that, and the wrong people have got the medicines. The Bill provides that a person cannot collect prescriptions from a chemist and hand them out. In other words, no-one can act as an agent for a chemist.

There are some amendments in connection with the deletion of various sections which have been found not to meet the purposes for which they were originally placed in the Act. Poisons at one period could be sold by a person 20 miles away from the nearest chemist's shop. That provision is sought to be repealed so that the Pharmacy and Poisons Act will apply throughout. There are clauses clarifying the position in regard to schools and apprentices. Some sections are repealed and reinserted in a different form in some other portion of the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [11.7]: There are certain things in the Bill to be looked at. It might be possible, there-

fore, to proceed with the Committee stage at a later date.

The Chief Secretary: Tomorrow, if you like.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is one very wrong principle in the Bill, namely, that an elected body shall be the one to have disciplinary control over a profession. Under the Medical Act, the members of the Medical Board are appointed by the Governor and not by the profession. I would not vote for a provision to allow an elected body to be a disciplinary one. I hope the Minister will look at this provision from the point of view of whether the function of disciplining the members of the pharmaceutical profession should not be taken out of the hands of the council and given to a body appointed by the Governor. I cannot see how we can get from an elected body the mature judgment of the senior members of the profession who would be appointed by the Governor. I would be very sorry to see disciplinary action taken by the council of the B.M.A.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: It has been in existence since the Act was first introduced.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Then it is time it was altered. I would like to look into the measure to see if an amendment along those lines can be moved. The Bill contains one or two typographical errors. On page 2 the word "practitioner" is mis-spelt in line thirteen. Also in the Tenth Schedule the word "phenobarbital" is wrongly spelt.

The Chief Secretary: The Title is wrong, too.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am not clear whether the Tenth Schedule is an addition. I cannot imagine that it is, because phenobarbital has been under control for some years.

The Chief Secretary: It is a new schedule.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think it might be amended by deleting the word "phenobarbital" and inserting in its place the words "the barbituric acid derivatives." There are many of those drugs and of the lot, phenobarbital is probably the least harmful. I doubt whether it does much harm to anyone. I have known of people suffering from epilepsy who have taken two or three grains a day for years without any ill effect. Instead of controlling the least difficult one, we might control all

the barbituric acid derivatives. The point I wish to stress here is that it is wise for these drugs to be under control. I mention the matter in case country members object to the control of penicillin and sulphonamides being restricted to veterinary surgeons. The difficulty one faces always with new drugs used to control infections is that if an inadequate dose is given a bacterium may be built up resistant to that particular drug.

We feel that because of the ill-use of sulphonamides and also penicillin there are now types of bacteria which we must regard as being penicillin and sulphonamide resistant, whereas when the drugs were first introduced they had a controlling effect on them. We can find articles in the medical journals on the decreasing potency of such things as penicillin. Therefore the practice of giving small doses is unwise from many points of view. Many of us feel quite certain that if sulphonamides had been under strict control from the day they were discovered, they would have been a much more potent factor than they are in the control of venereal disease.

When the drugs were first introduced into this State there is no doubt that they were effective. But because the friendly troops who invaded our shores were provided with small doses of sulphanilamide as a precautionary measure, the types of infection prevalent in this State became resistant to the drug. Unless these drugs are used in adequate doses we may soon lose the benefit that they now confer. This must surely apply to veterinary use as well as to medical use. Therefore, the giving of small doses or the unwise handling of these drugs in the treatment of diseases of cattle, and so forth might have quite the reverse effect to what is required. It would, as a result, be wise in passing the measure, to ensure that these drugs are under such control that they will be prescribed and used only in adequate doses. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but shall review the matters I have mentioned.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South) [11.15]

I am pleased to see that there is to be control of poisons because about 14 years ago an exciting incident occurred at my place. My mother happened to be with us at the time, and she was a great believer in sulphur

for children affected with sores. Anyhow, we sent down to the shop for sulphur. The child was sent home with the supposed sulphur, which proved afterwards to be sheep dip, which has a similar colour to sulphur.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It smells differently, though.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: When thrown on the fire it has a similar action to sulphur. My wife gave this supposed sulphur to each of the four children. When I came home the children were in a very bad state and, being a first-aid man, I realised that something had to be done. I took the necessary steps to treat them and, after sending for the doctor, we managed to save the four children. One of them was in an exceedingly bad state. On the second day the children went blind as a result of being given the sheep dip. However, they pulled through.

The storekeeper told me later that it was the fault of one of his employees who took the sheep dip out of the wrong bin. Under the Bill these poisons will now be under proper supervision and control. In many grocers' shops, children who are under age are employed and they do not know one poison from another. Although the proprietor of the store was very sympathetic in the matter, it was just our bad luck, and nothing could be done. I support the Bill.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South) [11.17]: I support the second reading. Unfortunately, as with the previous Bill, we have not had much opportunity to consider this measure, but the Minister assures us that it will not go into the Committee stage this evening because some amendments may have to be proposed. The alteration in the election of the members of the council by staggering the periods is a good one. As pointed out by the Chief Secretary, we might be faced with a completely new council, which would find it difficult to take over the disciplining of members of the profession.

The Bill deals with disciplinary measures concerning chemists and the holders of licenses to sell poisons. There are many different types of poisons. Take the case referred to by Mr. Bennetts. That sort of thing could occur with other shops that carry poisons in large quantities of the types used in industry rather than in

medicine. It is proposed that the new council will not issue new licenses to people who do not make proper provision for the storage and distribution of drugs.

I am pleased to see included in the Bill an extra schedule dealing with the control of such drugs as penicillin, benadryl, phenobarbital and sulphonamides, and preparations containing any of these drugs. By people constantly buying, say, sulphamylamide, and taking small doses of it, it is possible for them to nullify the effect of the drug when it is prescribed by a doctor in cases of necessity. Indeed, the phenobarbital group referred to by Dr. Hislop should undoubtedly be brought under control. It is possible, at present, to purchase these particular drugs without a prescription from a doctor.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I do not know where you can do that.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: They are not under control in Western Australia as yet, and people are able to buy and take them ad lib, usually in small doses. Only recently we have seen cases of people taking overdoses of sleeping tablets. These may not have consisted of phenobarbital but probably belong to the group, because these are more popular than many of the older types of sleeping tablets that were previously used. I support the Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban—in reply) [11.20]: I trust members will look through the Bill because if amendments are desired, there may not be an opportunity to put them on the notice paper and if they let me have them as soon as possible I will be able to make the necessary inquiries.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

RESOLUTION—STATE FORESTS.

To Revoke Dedication.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 30, 34 and 38 laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 3rd December, 1948, be carried out.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [11.21]: I move—

That the resolution be agreed to.

Under the Forests Act a dedication of Crown land as a State forest may only be revoked, in whole or in part, in the following manner:—

(a) The Governor shall cause to be laid on the Table of each House of Parliament a proposal for such revocation;

(b) after such proposal has been laid before Parliament the Governor, on a resolution being passed by both Houses that such proposal be carried out, shall, by Order in Council, revoke such dedication;

(c) on any such revocation the land shall become Crown land within the meaning of the Land Act.

The particulars are these:

Area No. 1 lies approximately four miles south of Greenbushes. About 19 acres are in the area which was applied for by an adjoining landholder. He has lived on his small holding for nearly 20 years. The area he now seeks from the State forest has been held by him under forest lease for more than 10 years.

Area No. 2 is 12 miles south-east of Yournup and is approximately 5½ acres, being one of Lots 1-23 south of the Donnelly River on Town Planning Board Plan No. 138-5-3. It is required as a town-site for the construction of houses under the Commonwealth-State rental scheme on the site of Bunning Bros' new mill, which is to operate in that vicinity.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Where is that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On the Donnelly River, 12 miles south-west of Yournup. The third area is 12 miles south of Manjimup. Approximately 46 acres are being taken from the forest in exchange for portion of Nelson Location 701 which contains 59 acres. Some of the advantages of the exchange are:—

(1) The area to be added to State Forests is carrying much better quality forest with plenty of advanced growth, whereas the portion of State Forest which the applicant desires is better soil for agriculture.

(2) It would facilitate access in State Forest for logging and fire control.

Area No. 4 is about four miles north-east of Bridgetown and is of approximately 40 acres, within reasonable distance of that town. It is the only possible site which is

suitable for the construction of a large sports ground. In the interests of the people of the town and district it is thought that this area might be made available as a ground for sporting fixtures as apparently no other site can be obtained which has the necessary features for a major sports ground.

Question put and passed and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TROTTER ASSOCIATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

House adjourned at 11.29 p.m.