

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.35]: In moving the adjournment of the debate on the second reading of the Bill—

The **PRESIDENT**: The hon. member cannot speak in moving that motion.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I merely wish to make an explanation, if I may. The Industries Assistance Board's report for 1929 is on the Table, but that for 1930 is not yet before us. I wish to ask the Leader of the House whether he can make arrangements which will render it possible for members to have before them the latter report prior to the resumption of the debate. I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed; the debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [5.36]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 30th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21th September, 1930.

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

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. WILLCOCK (for Mr. Panton) asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the number of people being ejected from their homes, will he consider providing a camp for married men similar to the Blackboy camp for single men?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: No. This is not practicable.

QUESTION—TRAMWAY SERVICE, LEEDERVILLE.

Mr. WILLCOCK (for Mr. Panton) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the new tram time-table for the Leederville line is causing much inconvenience on Sundays. 2, Will he consider increasing the number of cars on Sunday mornings?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 1, No. In common with all other routes the Leederville service was reduced recently owing to the extra cost of Sunday operations, the drop in revenue, and the necessity for economy. 2, Not at present.

QUESTION—PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

Mr. ANGELO asked the Premier: 1, Has he seen a copy of the graph which was presented with last week's issue of the "Western Mail", illustrating the fluctuations in the prices of wool and wheat and in the basic wage since 1912? 2, Will he have an

enlargement made and hung in the Chamber for the information of members, and to convince some that other people besides workers are being called upon to make sacrifices at the present time?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, This is a matter for consideration by the House Committee.

QUESTION—SALVATION ARMY HOME, GOSNELLS.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of the article in the "Mirror" of the 13th September dealing with the treatment of a boy at the Salvation Army Home, Gosnells, will he cause a complete inquiry to be made into the matter? 2, Is it permissible to place boys in dark cells in solitary confinement? 3, Is any person allowed to administer corporal punishment without an order of the court and without a medical officer being present? 4, Is any medical examination made of boys sent to the institution by order of the court? 5, In view of the whole of the circumstances, will he have the case re-opened? 6, Did the boy concerned attempt suicide in Perth rather than return to the institution?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The boy concerned is 16½ years of age and received punishment after being cautioned for defiance and for absconding whilst on parole. He has been interviewed at the Home by the Secretary of the Child Welfare Department and the Probation Officer and appeared to be in good health. Every care has been taken of his health. It is not considered necessary to make further inquiries. 2, No. The detention referred to cannot be described as a cell. It is one of two partitioned rooms removed from the main buildings and is without windows, but has ventilators, and is used on very rare occasions only. 3, Yes, for absconding and other offences in accordance with the regulations made under the provisions of the Child Welfare Act. 4, Every child is medically examined before admission to an institution. In this case, owing to the boy's statement that he was not fit to go to the institution, a special examination was made by a medical man who knew his case. 5, Not recommended. The circumstances stated are not bona fide. The character of the

parents previously was known to the department and every consideration has been extended to them. 6, No serious view can be taken of this aspect of the case. The boy took good care not to hurt himself on this and three previous occasions.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

PRESENTATION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that this morning, accompanied by the member for North-East Fremantle, Mr. Parker, I waited upon His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-reply. His Excellency handed to me the following message to the Assembly:—

I thank you for the expressions of loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King and for your Address-in-reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament. (Signed) W. R. Campion, Governor.

BILL—EDUCATION ACT. AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Minister for Education and read a first time.

MOTION—FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Convention to Amend.

MR. ANGELO (Gaseoyne) [4.38]: I move—

That this House is of opinion that the Government should immediately communicate with the Federal and other State Governments urging that a Federal convention, of the same numerical representation as the convention that framed the Federal Constitution should be held as soon as possible, such convention to determine what amendments to the Constitution are necessary, based on the experience of thirty years of Federal life.

I should like to explain at the outset that, in giving notice of this motion, I was not in any way antagonistic to the motion already moved by the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse). In fact, it was my desire to amend his motion by inserting words after the first word of his motion. The amended motion would then have read that the Government should urge this convention and, in anticipation of the request being granted, a select committee should be appointed to prepare the case for the convention. However, you, Mr. Speaker, told me that as my

motion sought the opinion of the House, and as the motion of the member for Katanning was a definite request, you could not accept such an amendment. That is why I am moving mine as a separate motion.

The Premier: Why not speak on the motion of the member for Katanning? You can say all you want to say on his motion.

Mr. ANGELO: Very well; I have no objection.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not hear what the Premier suggested.

The Premier: I suggested that the hon. member should discuss the matter on the motion moved by the member for Katanning, I being the next one to speak on that motion.

Mr. ANGELO: I take it, then, that the Premier is accepting my motion.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Mr. ANGELO: Then I had better move my motion.

The Premier (in explanation): The two motions are so nearly alike that I think members can say all they wish on the motion of the member for Katanning. Otherwise we shall have two debates on the one question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion is in the hands of the House.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not think my motion will require very much urging, and so I shall adopt the Premier's suggestion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. member must ask leave to withdraw his motion.

Mr. ANGELO: I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Point of Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: When this Bill was last before the House I reserved my decision on a point of order raised by the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo). He submitted that the provisions of the Bill, by restricting advances made by the Agricultural Bank to machinery manufactured in this State, virtually offered a bounty, and was therefore contrary to Section 90 of the Commonwealth Constitution. I now rule that the hon. member's contention cannot be upheld and that the discussion of the Bill may proceed.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 17th September.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.41]: I do not quite understand the object of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) in submitting this Bill for the consideration of the House.

Mr. Munsie: I think he made it very clear.

The PREMIER: I do not know that it was very clear. He knows full well that if the Bill be carried, the farmers throughout the State who want machinery purchased by the aid of Agricultural Bank funds will not be able to get it. He is aware that machinery is not now manufactured in the State in sufficient quantities to enable his desire to be complied with. Just imagine if the Bill were passed and a thousand farmers required harvesting machinery! What would happen? They certainly could not get it made in this State. I should like to see all agricultural machinery manufactured in the State, and I hope that some day it will be made here, but the hon. member is certainly asking too much in moving a Bill such as this. A great Australian, he calls himself, and yet he does not want anything to be manufactured outside of Western Australia. This great Australian says, "Enough of things made outside Western Australia or in the Eastern States!" I shall not labour the matter, because the House would surely never pass a Bill that would work great hardship and injustice to the farmers. Why does not the hon. member move that everything else bought with money advanced by the Agricultural Bank be made within the State? There are many things so purchased. Sometimes farmers might buy with Agricultural Bank money butter or boots or other things imported from the Eastern States. In expressing the hope that the day will come when we shall use machinery made in the State, I hope everything will be done to encourage firms who wish to manufacture machinery here. I should like to see McKays manufacturing agricultural machinery here. Some day, I have no doubt, they will do so. But they say conditions of employment here are not the same as conditions in the East.

Mr. Marshall: How do they know that before approaching the Arbitration Court?

How do they know what the conditions will be?

The PREMIER: If we are to obtain factories of this kind, the sooner we get down to meeting the conditions necessary for the manufacture of machinery, the better. If the hon. member can show the House that there are people who, in the event of the Bill passing, will immediately proceed to erect factories capable of producing machinery equal to the best that is made in Australia—and the State is entitled to that—we might consider the Bill seriously. The truth is that we cannot manufacture machinery just now, and therefore it would be ridiculous to pass the Bill. I feel sure the hon. member has not considered the results of the measure. It is quite true that years ago I asked Parliament to authorise advances of £100 to be made by the Agricultural Bank to clients for the purchase of machinery made in Western Australia. That is the first time anything of the kind was done. In those days of small things many of the ploughs, for instance, used by farmers were made in country towns. At that time, indeed, harvesters, strippers, and ploughs were made in Northam sufficient to meet the requirements of the district; and similarly at Narrogin and other country centres. That, however, is a thing of the past. Machinery now comes from factories, as the hon. member knows full well. We could not possibly supply the requirements of Western Australian farmers through the State Implement Works. A factory would be needed. If the hon. member will help towards the encouragement of people who know how to do this work, and who are now doing it in Eastern Australia, so that they will come here and set up in business, I shall co-operate with him in every possible way. A client of the Agricultural Bank always has the option of buying machinery made in the State. Our motto ought to be, "Buy Western Australian goods if you can get them, and buy Australian goods if you cannot; but always see that you get value for your money." One must realise that the patents of a firm like McKay, and other considerable manufacturers, could not be adopted by people starting to manufacture in Western Australia. It would be wrong to consider the Bill seriously.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [4.50]: I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, that you ruled as you did, for it does appear to me that the Agricultural Bank might well revive the policy of preference to locally manufactured machinery when applications are made by clients for assistance towards the purchase of machinery.

The Premier: But surely they cannot be dictated to?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I do not know about that.

Mr. Marshall: They are dictated to in many other ways.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I should say that an applicant to the Agricultural Bank is asking the State to stand behind him in his business. Whenever one applies for a loan to be used for any purpose, the person advancing the money has the right to lay down certain conditions. It is quite in keeping with the policy of the Government that preference should be given to local manufactures. What would be the effect of passing the Bill? I quite agree that at present Western Australia does not manufacture the variety of machines required for farming purposes. Every member regrets that. It is quite true, also, that for many years to come we cannot hope to export machinery. But surely it should be our objective and our policy to endeavour to manufacture the machinery, and also any other article, used in this State. Western Australia is recognised as a primary producing State, and certainly our policy should be to endeavour to manufacture the machinery required in the primary industries. The Premier says it cannot be manufactured here. That is a fine statement to come from the Premier. How does he know the machinery cannot be manufactured here? In the past, true, we have not been able to do it; but to say that in a State like Western Australia we shall not be able to do it! What are we coming to? There is too much of the business of placing the primary producer on a pedestal. It is true that primary production has extended in this State, and that we have now reached the stage when we are dependent on the primary producer. We have also reached the stage when it is highly doubtful whether primary production can be carried on at a profit. In view of our claiming to be a superior people, it should be our objective to launch out to a

greater extent in primary production. While not suggesting that we can compete with the outside world, I do suggest that we can compete with the Eastern States. If preference in respect of locally manufactured machinery becomes the pronounced policy of Western Australia and is broadcasted as such, it will be an encouragement to firms manufacturing machinery to come here and manufacture.

Member: What about the Sunshine people?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Those who do not want machinery to be manufactured here can manufacture difficulties. That is about all we are manufacturing in Western Australia just now, always talking about our disabilities. If we got to work in doing things we really can do, it would be better. Here is a ready market for machinery. For many things we have not that ready market. The first necessity for the growing of any product or the manufacture of any article is a market. In this case, I repeat, we have that locally. If we sit back and say that we will depend on the Eastern States, we shall never advance. It amounts to saying that other people who are smarter than ourselves, have more enterprise, initiative and energy, shall do the manufacturing for Western Australia, and that we shall merely grow products and market them in their least valuable condition. A country continuously adopting such a policy will not make much headway. Perhaps this Bill of one clause should be altered slightly. What the mover desires is that preference should be given to our own product, instead of preference being given, as at present, to outside products. I am not satisfied that machinery cannot be manufactured here. On the contrary, I am satisfied that it can. Otherwise we are not the people we claim to be. In times past machinery was manufactured in Western Australia. It is true that the influence of the importer, and the money behind him, operated in such a way as gradually to crowd out local machinery. As a result it is now said that Western Australian manufactured machinery is second-rate; and that belief is apparently accepted by most people. Let us alter all that. Let us make use of the Agricultural Bank for that purpose. I do not suggest that all this can be done in a day, but I do suggest that the hon. member introducing the Bill

has done a service to the House and to the country by drawing attention to the objective. We should set out earnestly to achieve the objective. I am satisfied that a pronouncement from the Agricultural Bank as to preference being given to locally manufactured machinery in the case of their clients will have the effect of inducing machinery firms operating in the Eastern States to open branches in Western Australia. I am aware that in agriculture quite a variety of machines is required. I am also aware that some of those machines are not manufactured in Western Australia at present. It is no use attempting to hoodwink people. However, there is no sufficient reason why we should not set to work in dead earnest to manufacture machinery. As a result of the introduction of the Bill, there should be co-operation of both sides of the House to establish the manufacture of agricultural machinery here to a far greater extent than has been the case. No doubt certain machinery becomes popular, and I am willing to assume that its popularity is due to its superiority. When I was engaged in the business, I always recognised that it was a serious matter to purchase an agricultural machine. It becomes very serious indeed if one obtains a machine that is not suited for one's particular requirements. The general practice is to take a leaf out of one's neighbour's book, to take advantage of his experience. The consequence has been the booming of certain implements, and the introduction of newer ones. All that, I suppose, will continue; but I am not satisfied that Eastern machinery firms could not be induced to open here. It is just a question whether we are sufficiently earnest in the matter. If we adopt the Premier's policy, drop our arms and say "We cannot do it," it will never be done. That would be not only a short-sighted policy, but one disastrous to the State and its industry. I do not know of any country in history that reached the zenith and was merely a primary producing country. Surely as the result of the application of science and the technical training we have here, the people of Western Australia should be able to launch out not only as a primary producing country but also as a country with secondary industries. We are always devising ways and means of employing our people. I see little prospect of full employment for them if we are to continue to be only a primary producing State. I can, however, see

vast avenues for the extension of our industries if only we were alive to possibilities. For that reason a measure such as this should not be treated lightly. Let us rather take the Bill as a basis of consideration and endeavour to give it some practical application. I know of no greater inducement than the support of those who supply the funds. In certain districts the farmers of Western Australia have been inclined to dictate to the bank. When in trouble they used to come along and ask for assistance. That assistance was and is given conditionally. Therefore, on an applicant for assistance towards the purchase of machinery the Agricultural Bank trustees can exercise great influence if they so desire. At one time the bank did so. It was the recognised practice of the Agricultural Bank to give preference to local machinery when advances were made. My opinion is that because the machinery at that time was not as up-to-date as it should have been, the practice was not continued. It has to be remembered that one firm will not engage in the manufacture of a variety of machines, particularly in respect of some machines in which other firms have excelled. But that is not the point. The fact remains that the manufacture of agricultural machinery in this State declined. In those circumstances we should endeavour to manufacture the particular classes of machines that are required, and then if it cannot be done by the State, firms that can make those machines should be encouraged to establish factories here and manufacture them locally. The Agricultural Bank could be a large factor in encouraging that tendency, and in fact would stimulate the use of locally-manufactured goods. If there was some sort of a guarantee that locally manufactured machines would be granted that preference, then manufacturers would be encouraged to commence operations in the State, and so this branch of secondary industry would make headway in Western Australia. I certainly commend the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) for introducing the Bill and everyone must agree with the principle underlying its provisions. Although it may not be possible to give effect to those provisions to the fullest extent at present, it should be our policy, when clients go to the Agricultural Bank for assistance, to encourage this movement to the utmost. We must remember that farmers making application to the bank are asking for assistance from the public through a public insti-

tution. In those circumstances, we should expect the institution to conform to the public policy of the country, which, I say, should be to recommend the purchase and use of locally-manufactured machinery. This is not a question to be dealt with lightly; it is one well worthy of consideration. To people engaged in primary production, I say it is to their advantage that we should have in this State a population able not only to consume their primary products, but to manufacture the requirements of the primary producers. By adopting that policy, all will help, to the utmost extent possible, to make Western Australia an independent State. While Western Australia is particularly suited for primary production, and has been encouraged and assisted along those lines, it is interesting to note that similar assistance has not been rendered to secondary industries. We should have a policy sufficiently broad to develop the whole of the resources of Western Australia and the whole of the State's industries. Our secondary industries have not received much assistance from State Governments in the past, but there is nothing to prevent an alteration being made and assistance being rendered to those who are prepared to start factories within our boundaries. I cannot conceive of any hon. member voting against the Bill, and when we deal with the measure in Committee we shall be able to devise ways and means for altering it in the directions I have indicated. I have not consulted the member for Fremantle, but I am satisfied he is anxious to secure preference for locally-manufactured articles and believes that the Agricultural Bank should be utilised as a medium for encouraging local production. I am pleased to support the Bill, and I hope the Government will realise the importance of the principle embodied in it. Just as the Government say they are desirous of giving preference to all goods manufactured in Western Australia, so they should be prepared to give encouragement and assistance in the establishment of factories for the purposes indicated during the debate. If they adopted that attitude, they would do more than give mere lip service to the principle; they would indicate their willingness to extend practical assistance in the establishment of industries. I hope the House will support the Bill, and that we will get back to the policy adopted in earlier years when preference was given to locally-manufactured machinery rather than to machinery manu-

factured by outsiders in competition with our own industries.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.5] I support the principle embodied in the Bill, to which no member of the House should object. I wonder, however, what the motive underlying the action of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) may be. It seems most remarkable that such a Bill should be introduced in this Chamber when we realise that it was not so long ago that the head of one of the largest manufacturing firms in the Eastern States endeavoured to establish a factory in Western Australia, but the opposition of the unions was so grave—they refused to work under piecework conditions—that the individual concerned became afraid and did not commence operations. Now the member for Fremantle has introduced a Bill and seeks to insist that the Agricultural Bank shall give preference to articles manufactured in Western Australia. The underlying motive, to my mind, is the hon. member's desire to promote the interests of the State Implement Works. I was rather pleased to hear the remarks of the ex-Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Millington) regarding preference to goods made in Western Australia for agricultural purposes. Those views are by no means uncommon, because we know that the Labour Government, recently in office, insisted that all implements bought for group settlers in the South-West should be procured from the State Implement Works. The ex-Minister for Agriculture must know, as members representing the South-West know, that throughout that part of the State are to be seen depots where machines bought from the State Implement Works have been left.

Mr. Withers interjected.

MR. J. H. SMITH: The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) is aware of that fact and so are we all. The fact that so much agricultural machinery is lying here and there throughout the South-West shows the result of the action of the Labour Government in giving preference to work done in Western Australia. The secession movement does not enter into this question, but I presume that the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) spoke as an Australian. Why should he insist that the Agricultural Bank, which is a public institution, should give preference to locally-manufactured

agricultural machinery, unless at the back of his mind he had the interests of the State Implement Works in view. Perhaps the ex-Minister for Lands will deal with that phase of the subject. We members from the South-West know what has happened to State implements, particularly the ploughs and harrows. They are now thrown on the scrap heaps scattered all over the South-West, and they show that thousands of pounds have been wasted, simply because the Labour Government insisted upon machinery being purchased from the State Implement Works.

Mr. Doney: Surely that was never insisted upon.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It was insisted upon absolutely.

Mr. Doney: I had not heard that before.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That policy was actually insisted upon.

Hon. M. F. Troy: That is not correct.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I say definitely that when the Labour Government, of which the hon. member was a Minister, were in power, the settlers in the South-West could not get an agricultural machine except from the State Implement Works. That was the position at one period.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I again say that your statement is not correct.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not correct! All I can say is that I am well aware of the fight we had to get the Minister to alter the policy.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I am in a position to know what happened better than you.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I know the fight we had to get the ex-Minister to alter his policy and allow settlers to please themselves regarding the purchases they made. Perhaps the Minister will deny that we had to fight to get that policy changed.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I deny it. I say you are utterly incorrect in your statement.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am utterly incorrect?

Hon. M. F. Troy: Yes. I was in charge of the department at the time and know better than you what happened.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then I hope the ex-Minister will explain to the House the directions in which my statement is incorrect and that he will explain why the then Government insisted for a time upon the purchase of State-manufactured machinery.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We never insisted upon that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Oh, dear me! Why, there was no such thing as a choice for the group settlers!

Hon. M. F. Troy: Again you are utterly incorrect.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not, and I defy the ex-Minister to say that I am incorrect.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Of course you are incorrect.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There was no choice about it at all. The State-manufactured machinery was sent to the settlers irrespective of whether they wanted the machine or not. If they wanted a harrow or a plough, the State machines were sent to them. The ex-Minister will not deny that.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I do deny it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Oh, very well! While I admit the laudable object the member for Fremantle has in view in the direction of providing work for people in this State, I regret that when we did have an opportunity for large works being started in Western Australia, that opportunity was lost to us because the unions would not accept the labour conditions that would have applied.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [5.12]: I hope the House will not agree to the amendment suggested to the Agricultural Bank Act. It is not a question of principle, but of compulsion. I do not think hon. members will agree to insist upon any man, who has to borrow money from the Agricultural Bank, purchasing machinery that may not be acceptable to him. What amount of money does the Agricultural Bank advance for the purchase of machinery? Do hon. members realise that the advance for machinery and horses amounts to £150 only? The principle underlying the Bill is entirely wrong. We can all agree to support local industry provided we get value for our money. If any section of industry is prepared to give full value to the farmers for the money they pay, those in charge of such industry will certainly get the trade. At the same time we do not want anything in the form of compulsion to be included in legislation such as that suggested by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). It will amount to holding a pistol to the heads of Agricultural Bank clients. It is like saying, "If

you do not buy Western Australian goods, we shall not provide you with the money you require." We could carry that principle a bit further, and say that the Associated Banks should adopt a similar policy. If such a proposal were put to the member for Fremantle, I am sure he would not agree to it. While I admit the present Premier, when Minister for Lands many years ago, did have included in the Act a provision similar to that suggested by the member for Fremantle, the fact remains that the provision became a dead letter. I think it was a Labour Ministry who subsequently secured the deletion of that provision from the Act. While we are all anxious to help Western Australian industries, there is a price that we cannot afford to pay. Even should the Bill be agreed to, I do not think it will have any effect at all. If a harvester is required by a farmer, we must remember that the cost of that machine to-day ranges from £190 to £230. Yet the total advance that the Agricultural Bank can make for machinery and horses is £150 per settler. Hon. members can easily realise how little money will be available for the purchase of agricultural machinery under such conditions.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you know the amount authorised last year?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know the total amount. But as for the amount for machinery, no client of the bank is advanced sufficient money to buy a machine straight out.

Mr. Kenneally: The Bill deals only with money spent on agricultural machinery. It is limited to agricultural machinery.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, I know that.

Mr. Kenneally: Are you against the use of local products?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not a question of being against the use of local products. I am not going to have any compulsion in that direction. The principle is altogether wrong. If a business house can put up an article that warrants people buying it at the price, we do not need any legislation compelling them to do so. I certainly am not going to compel by legislation any person in this State to buy locally what he can buy better outside the State. I want to see Western Australian industries progress, but at the same time I want to see value given to the purchaser.

Mr. Raphael: The same thing applies to the imported article.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I venture to say that in this State one can buy the best imported article, and buy it at a very much lower price than the locally manufactured article. I do not think the hon. member would want to pay any more for the local product than the price for which he can get the best. While we are anxious to help secondary industries, we are not going to allow the proposed clause to go into the Act to impose additional hardships on the farmers. It would mean additional hardship for the farmers, for it would compel them to go to the private banks for their advances. The Agricultural Bank was established for the purpose of providing cheap money for those engaged in primary industries. This is not going to assist that purpose, but is going to handicap the primary industries. I suggest to the hon. member that while he might advocate the use of Western Australian manufactured farming machinery, he has no right to come to the House and ask us to compel Agricultural Bank clients to buy it for themselves. I hope members who have not given any consideration to the question will look at it from that viewpoint. It has been said we ought to pass the second reading at least. But if we pass the second reading we must in consistency pass the Bill through all stages, for it is only a one-clause Bill; and so the second reading should be made the real test. I hope the House will not agree to legislation of this kind. The Associated Banks would have just as much right to say to any of us, "We will not make any advances to you unless you purchase your goods from so-and-so." If it came to a matter of clothes, those banks might well say to us they would not make advances unless we purchased the material from the Albany Woollen Mills.

Mr. Sleeman: Have you not heard of a bank dictating on those lines to its clients?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, I have not.

Mr. Marshall: Does not the Agricultural Bank dictate to its clients as to the area to be cropped?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Agricultural Bank, having due regard to the people's money, does advise the farmers

on sound lines. But there is quite a big difference between compulsion and advice.

Mr. Millington: The Agricultural Bank dictates to the farmers absolutely.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member has occupied the position of Minister of the Crown. If he can tell me where the bank has dictated to its clients, I should like to know of it. It is true the bank has told farmers in certain districts that it will not make advances to them. The bank is not compelled to advance to anybody.

Mr. Millington: But the bank has dictated other conditions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know of them.

Mr. Millington: Then you do not know the practice of the bank.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Possibly not. Yet I have dealt with the Agricultural Bank for some 20 years. During the whole of that time the bank has not dictated to me, although on occasions it has given me sound advice which I have found profitable. But this Bill has nothing to do with the giving of advice. This is a definite instruction to the bank not to make any advance for machinery unless the client buys Western Australian manufactured machinery. Western Australian manufactured machinery will be able to hold its own when it is equal to the imported article. Western Australian manufacturers cannot make an article that stands equal in every respect to the imported article.

Mr. Millington: You do not suggest that that is going to continue?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but neither do I suggest this remedy for the existing difference. It is not a remedy at all. This will only handicap those who have to come to the bank for monetary assistance, for under the Bill they will be told, "You have to buy the local machine, whether it is suitable or not." There may be a chaff-cutter on the market totally unsuited to the requirements of the man who is in need of one. Yet under the Bill if he requires money from the bank he will have to go to one of the local manufacturing firms and buy the chaff-cutter. There might be an imported chaff-cutter which would serve his purpose quite well, but we are going to compel him to take the unsuitable local one. I am sure the hon. member sponsoring the Bill has not thought this subject out very carefully, else

be would not seek to impose a hardship on the industry.

Mr. Marshall: Are the local manufacturers not to be supported at all?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the Western Australian machinery could be sold any cheaper than the imported article—and considering that the local manufacturers have protection in the transport charges from the Eastern States they ought to be able to sell at a lower price—it would get all the business, provided it were as good an article.

Mr. Millington: Do you think we would have been able to establish the wire-netting industry if the Government had not given preference to it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know what preference was given to it, but I know the Government rendered the manufacturers financial assistance. Successive Governments have rendered considerable financial assistance to industries in this State, and a great deal of it has had to be written off. It did not require an Act of Parliament to give preference to the wire-netting manufacturer. He put up a good article, as has been proved by those who have had to use it. The same thing should apply to the manufacture of machinery. I hope the House will not agree to the Bill.

Mr. McCallum: Have the people who are supplied with wire-netting under the Commonwealth and State scheme any choice as to where they get the wire?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. The Government call tenders for the supply.

Mr. McCallum: Then the users of the wire-netting have to buy what the Government get.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, because it suits them to do so. They get the same article at a lower cost by reason of the quantity purchased by the Government. There is no compulsion about that. If the Agricultural Bank advances money, it does not insist upon the use of locally made machinery. I do not think the hon. member on his farm would like to borrow money from the Agricultural Bank on the terms contained in the Bill.

Mr. McCallum: I have Western Australian netting around my farm.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So have I. I would buy everything of local manufacture if only it suited me as well as did the imported article. I am not going to

support a provision that will compel anybody to purchase the local article. There would be no need for legislation if only the manufacturer would turn out a suitable article at a price which suited the consumer.

Mr. Raphael: What about those companies that dump their articles here at a lower price than they obtain in the country of origin?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think the hon. member knows very much about the Federal Anti-dumping Act.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Federal law encourages it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member had come along and said he was going to put through the House, to be forwarded to the Federal Parliament, a resolution against any dumping on our local manufacturers, I would have supported it.

Mr. Kenneally: The hon. member must know that the Federal law does not permit of interference in such a case.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Federal laws do a lot of things objectionable to Western Australia. I am merely saying that in reply to an interjection; it is not necessarily my fixed opinion.

Mr. Millington: You would support a resolution against any dumping here by manufacturers in the Eastern States.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course I would.

Mr. Millington: Then you support a revolutionary Government.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Nothing of the sort. If we could see how it was possible to protect our manufacturers from dumping from the Eastern States, I would gladly assist them. But this Bill is not going to do it.

Mr. Millington: Well, assist them to the extent of three cheers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think the hon. member can be considered any more loyal to the manufacturers of Western Australia than I am. But I am not going to use my position as a member of the House to support a clause like this, compelling people to do something which, I say, is quite wrong for us to attempt.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [5.26]: Probably I should not have spoken but for the personal attack made on me by the member

for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). When it comes to a question of politics, I think a member might well leave out of the discussion another member's private business. Let me read to the House the remarks made by the hon. member:—

Mr. Sleeman: It is all right for the Minister for Works to sit in his seat and grin. He has always been a most bitter opponent of the manufacture of farming machinery at the State Implement Works.

The Premier: That is not so.

Mr. Sleeman: On every occasion possible he has made that clear.

The Minister for Works: I have bought many more of the State manufactured machines than you have, and you are a farmer.

Mr. Sleeman: The Minister has not bought too many of them.

The Premier: Do you use Western Australian-made articles?

Mr. Sleeman: The Minister for Works has made the statement on several occasions that he has bought a lot of the State manufactured implements, but that is not so. Statements have also been made by the Minister for Works which led me, if not the House, to believe that quite a lot of State machinery was to be found on his farm. I do not think he has too much on his farm.

The Premier: Not now.

Mr. Sleeman: No, and he never had.

Mr. McCallum: I know what he bought; he bought very little. I looked up the accounts. He misled the House.

Mr. Sleeman: I am glad that I am right for once.

When the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) says he has looked up my accounts. I should like to know what right he or any other member has to see my accounts with the firm. I say he has no right at all. To let a statement like that go out to the public means that anybody who buys machinery from the State Implement Works is likely to be treated as a political opponent whose accounts may be investigated. As for the member for Fremantle, he is the one member in this House who knows what machinery I had on my farm. He has been there. The hon. member applied for a block he had never seen. He got it. He came to me to ask me for advice, just as many other members on that side of the House have done. I have always given the benefit of my experience to any member who asked for it. Knowing that the hon. member was interested in farming, on one occasion when I was going to my farm I invited him to go with me. He went, at my expense, in my motor car. It was not a Government car.

Mr. Wilson: That is not personal, is it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Incidentally we went down to see my farm. I showed him all over it and, knowing that he was vitally interested in the State Implement Works, I showed him every machine I had on the property. When the member for Fremantle talks about the statements I have made, he should read them. I have a cutting from "Hansard" to show what I said about the machinery I own. It is taken from the Parliamentary debates of the 13th December, 1928, page 2473. It is as follows:—

Mr. Lindsay: The works are manufacturing certain machinery such as windmills, drills, cultivators, harrows, poison carts, road-making machinery, etc. I am partly responsible for the manufacture of that road-making machinery. I have a considerable quantity of machinery on my own farm.

I am partly responsible for that road-making machinery. I have told the House before why that is so. I can see a member in the House now who was with me on that occasion. The extract continues—

In the early days of the establishment of the works I tried to assist them. I have a windmill now in operation.

Mr. Sleeman: And a good one.

Mr. Lindsay: Yes. I have two different ploughs and a set of harrows. One of the difficulties I found was that the plough, though a good one, contains too much material, and is on the heavy side. That is the only objection I have to it.

That is the statement I made to the House. Have I got that machinery or not?

Mr. Sleeman: Have you any more statements like that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Fremantle said I had not got it. I have sent to the State Implement Works for my accounts, and have them here. There is nothing to be ashamed of.

Mr. Marshall: Are they all paid?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, strange to say. When the matter was brought up, I began to think about my accounts. I now find that the State Implement Works owe me £2 10s., and I am going to apply for the money. It is a peculiar thing that I should have missed that credit, being Scotch, as I am.

Mr. Angelo: They will show a bigger loss than ever this financial year.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I called the Under Secretary for Public

Works into my office on Thursday morning, and told him I wanted my file from the State Implement Works. He has told me since, the result of his application. On Monday morning last I received the following letter from Mr. Frank Shaw, the General Manager of the works:—

The Hon. J. Lindsay, Public Works Department, Perth,—On Friday last an officer of the State Treasury called at our office seeking information regarding your account. The matter was referred to me, and I instructed that no information regarding our clients should be handed out except upon the written order of the client. I do not know the objective of the inquiry.

I want members to note these few words "except upon the written order of the client." The member for South Fremantle says, "I have seen his account." I would point out that I gave the hon. member no written order for that purpose. The letter continues—

This morning I had a note asking for your sales file. This is not signed by Mr. Munt, but evidently on his behalf. It would be unpardonable for me to send to Perth Records a sales file of one of our clients. I am therefore forwarding it to you—which incidentally is most unusual—and will be glad if you will see what channels it passes into, and have it returned to me at the earliest possible moment. You will, of course, realise how highly improper it would be for us to reveal our clients' transactions to any promiscuous caller.

It is rather remarkable that the member for South Fremantle should make the statement he has made, "I have seen his account." He made that statement with the lovely sneer he always has on his face when he says anything relating to me.

Mr. Kenneally: He is not the only one who has that sneer.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perhaps we cannot avoid that which it is our nature to show.

The Minister for Railways: Did you ask how it was that matter was handed over previously?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, no.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will repeat what the member for South Fremantle said, "I know what he bought. He bought very little. I looked up his accounts. He misled the House." If there is one thing I pride myself upon it is that I speak the truth. I get very annoyed when anyone

suggests that I am not doing so. I have made this statement to show that I did not mislead the House. These files show that I have bought more machinery than I had previously admitted. I have a poison cart as well as two ploughs, harrow and windmill. I have been on the farm of the member for Fremantle on three occasions. He invited me to look at it and to advise him. I say now that he has not one pennyworth of State machinery on his farm, or if he has it is well hidden.

Mr. Sleeman: The Minister for Works is trying intentionally to mislead the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member rising to a point of order?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I ask that the Minister's statement should be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Fremantle objects to the statement of the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I withdraw the statement. I do not know what has occurred on the farm during the last six months because I have not been there during that time. The position may have altered since. At the time when I was there about six months ago the hon. member was not working his own farm. The work was being done from outside, and he had no machinery at all on it.

Mr. Sleeman: That entirely alters the position.

Mr. Millington: You need not now withdraw the statement.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I said the hon. member had no State machinery on his farm. I now say that he had no machinery at all there. The motion is to the effect that any money expended by the Agricultural Bank through its clients shall only be used in the purchase of machinery made in Western Australia. We are at a serious disadvantage compared with the Eastern States. In the other States many firms are manufacturing machinery and are doing so protected by the highest tariff in the world. In no other part of the world is the tariff on agricultural machinery so high as it is in Australia. We in Western Australia are in the unfortunate position that we also have the highest freights in the world along our coast. The farmers of Victoria may get some benefit from the local manufacture of machinery, but we in Western Australia have to pay the piper. A harvester made by McKay in Melbourne costs £175, but in Western Australia it costs £181. In other

words, anyone wishing to start out in the manufacture of such implements here has that amount of protection against the Eastern States. A 20-disc drill in Melbourne costs £80, and in Perth £88 10s. A combine 16, 33 tyne, in Melbourne costs £76, and in Perth £88 10s. Why should it be necessary to pass an Act to compel people to buy machinery made in Western Australia? Why is it not manufactured here, with that great advantage as compared with the cost in the Eastern States? We pay at least 10 per cent. more in this State for agricultural machinery used on our farms than the farmers do in Victoria. I have told the House this story before, and I will tell it again. McKay did attempt to establish works in Western Australia. He, or his son Sam, came over here three years ago. The son is the manager of the works in Melbourne. I met him and he told me he had tried to buy out the State Implement Works some years before but had not succeeded. When we were discussing the question he agreed with me that more agricultural machinery would in future be sold in Western Australia than in all the rest of Australia, because of the great development of our agricultural industry. He said he intended to establish works here provided he could get the same conditions he was working under in Melbourne, that is, payment by results. Shortly after his arrival a conference was held by him with the Fremantle Trades and Labour Council, the Metropolitan Trades and Labour Council, and the Midland Junction Trades and Labour Council. He asked what the conditions for his employees would be, and the reply was, "You must accept the conditions that apply in Western Australia. We refuse to agree to piecework." The result of this was that he did not establish his works. I agree we should do all we possibly can to manufacture agricultural machinery in Western Australia.

Mr. Withers: Would the extra cost of the labour amount to more than the equivalent of the extra freights on the machinery?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So Mr. McKay said. Under no conditions would he start an industry here if he had to pay day-labour rates. He said he was prepared to adopt the system of payment by results. He pointed out that 90 per cent. of the men and women in his workshops were paid under that system. He gave me his books to look at and showed me that the average wage paid was 15 per cent. above the arbi-

tration award. I cannot understand why he was not permitted to establish his works here. In any case he would have to pay according to the award. He could not pay less, for it would have been illegal to do so. All he said was, "I want the same system that exists in Victoria, namely, payment by results." The local unions refused to allow it. I agree that people probably have to work harder on the basis of payment by results, but they make considerably more money than others. We are still paying 10 per cent. more for our agricultural machinery than we would be doing if McKay's had started to manufacture here. I have been asked about the freight to Western Australia. I explained to the House why the cost was so high. I said there was a big floor where the combines were laid out. I asked the young man who took me over the works whether these implements were for Western Australia, and he replied in the affirmative. He went on to explain that they were not shipped in the completed form, but were pulled apart, put into crates, shipped to Western Australia and rebuilt here. That is why we are paying the greatly increased price in addition to the high freight. I do not think this proposed amendment to the Act will do any good. Nor do I see why, because a man is a client of the Agricultural Bank, he should be compelled, if he wants to borrow money, to spend it on a particular kind of machinery that may be unsuitable for his operations. The man who is trying to grow wheat cannot be asked to pay more for a thing than is necessary. When he buys an article he must be sure that he gets one that is the most suited to his conditions.

MR. MCCALLUM (South Fremantle) [5.43]: On page 2473 of "Hansard" in 1928 the Minister for Works, when the private member for Toodyay, said—

I have two different ploughs and a set of harrows.

He meant that he had this machinery on his property and that it had come from the State Implement Works.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Mr. MCCALLUM: On page 1404 of "Hansard" of 1929 the Minister said—

I have hundreds of pounds' worth of machinery on my property, and I can speak from experience. I have three State ploughs on my farm.

I do not know which of his statements is correct.

The Minister for Works: I will split them up and say I have two and a half.

Mr. McCALLUM: It is well known that the hon. gentleman has never lost an opportunity to decry the State Implement Works. Let me ask any member sitting opposite what he would do if he were in charge of a business, and one of his clients publicly stated that he had hundreds of pounds' worth of machinery which he had bought from the business in question, and that client lost no opportunity of decrying the implements in question. What would the hon. member do? Surely his first step would be to inquire what was the nature of the implements against which the cry was being raised, and what was wrong with them. If he did not do that, how could he expect successfully to manage the business or rectify mistakes? Is it not a logical thing to do? How could the hon. member carry out his obligations if he did not do that? A member of Parliament gets up in his seat here and says, "I have hundreds of pounds' worth of machinery." It is the same speech he always makes when he sets out to decry the State Implement Works and advertise their position to the world. To emphasise the remark, he gives out that he is one of the biggest clients the State Implement Works have. Will it not be regarded as an obligation cast upon the Minister in charge to get at the facts, to find out what implements the hon. member had, and to ascertain where the weaknesses were? Naturally I made inquiries and found just what implements the hon. member had purchased. Perhaps I was not absolutely correct when I said that I saw his account; I asked what implements he had had. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Cunningham) was the Minister in charge of the State Implement Works at that time, and I asked him to let me know what implements the present Minister for Works had purchased from the State Implement Works. I am sorry the member for Kalgoorlie is not in his seat at the moment. I am sure he will bear me out when I say that the list supplied to us showed that the Minister had bought two sets of harrows and a poison cart. Those were the only implements, according to the information we received, that the Minister had bought. I am not going to say that he did not buy other State implements indirect-

ly, but when we remember that he told us time after time in this House that he had spent hundreds and hundreds of pounds in the purchase of State implements and when he lost no opportunity of denouncing the State Implement Works, and when investigations indicated that his purchase of State implements had been confined to two sets of harrows and a poison cart——

Mr. Munsie: There are not a great many hundreds of pounds involved in the purchase of that machinery.

Mr. McCALLUM: Of course not.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But did you not look through his account.

Mr. McCALLUM: I did not say I looked through his account. I said I had made inquiries.

The Minister for Railways: That is not so.

The Attorney General: You said you had seen the Minister's account.

Mr. McCALLUM: Then I was not absolutely correct. I replied to interjections. I asked what implements the Minister had bought; I did not see his account. If I said that I saw the Minister's account, I was wrong, because I did not examine it at all. I was concerned about the hundreds of pounds the Minister said he had spent in the purchase of State implements. I wanted to see what was wrong with the machinery, so that if I found out where they were at fault, I could have them rectified. That was my job. I am not ashamed of anything I did in that direction. In view of the Minister's statements about spending hundreds of pounds and his denouncement of State implements, I made inquiries as to what purchases he had actually made, and when I got the information I kept it by me in the House and have had that information for many months awaiting an opportunity to remind the Minister of the actual position. This is the first opportunity I have had of making use of it.

The Minister for Railways: That is a very different attitude from that which you took up earlier. You now say you merely asked what machinery the Minister had bought, whereas you formerly said you had looked through his account.

Mr. McCALLUM: What is the difference? I wanted to find out what machinery he had bought, particularly seeing that he had been so bitter every time he spoke about the State Implement Works in the House.

The Minister for Railways: That is all right.

The Attorney General: But where have we had signs of the bitterness you refer to?

Mr. McCALLUM: Every time he spoke on the subject he indicated that bitterness.

The Attorney General: Is that indicated in "Hansard"?

Mr. McCALLUM: Of course it is.

The Attorney General: The extracts you read just now did not furnish any such indication.

Mr. McCALLUM: I could not read all of them. The Minister himself has heard it often enough.

The Attorney General: I have never heard anything to suggest bitterness on the part of the Minister.

Mr. McCALLUM: I will leave it to hon. members to determine whether the Minister has not shown bitterness when attacking the State Implement Works.

The Minister for Works: My remarks were generally in reply to the member for Fremantle who made references to me time after time.

The Attorney General: I remember that the Minister said that some of the machines were not as good as others, and I think that fact is admitted.

Mr. McCALLUM: He said the plough was all right, but a bit heavy.

The Attorney General: And I think that is the view of most people.

The Minister for Works: I admitted the windmills were all right.

Mr. McCALLUM: And the harrows and poison carts were all right.

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Mr. Wansbrough: Then apparently everything was all right.

Mr. McCALLUM: Now the Minister admits that some of the machines were all right, yet when he said he had spent hundreds and hundreds of pounds on State implements and showed himself so bitter in his criticism that I was prompted to make inquiries, it is now suggested that I did something dastardly and wrong.

The Minister for Works: I said I had spent hundreds of pounds, and so I have.

Mr. McCALLUM: On a poison cart and a set of harrows! That machinery will not equip a farm.

Mr. Kenneally: But now he says the harrows are all right.

Mr. McCALLUM: Again the Minister has repeated this afternoon the old assertion that the unions prevented McKay from starting operations here. I do not know how often we have corrected that misstatement. It seems useless to attempt to put members right, because as often as we correct them, they repeat the old assertions. The fact remains that neither a trade union, McKay nor Massey Harris is in a position to say what industrial conditions shall apply to the manufacture of agricultural implements in this State. If the tribunal set up by Parliament to decide the industrial conditions to apply in this State said there should be no piecework, it was not for McKay or anyone else to say that those conditions should obtain.

The Attorney General: But was it necessary to leave that matter to the court?

Mr. McCALLUM: An application could have been made to the court.

The Minister for Railways: But McKay could not have gone to the court for an award until he had established his works and had men in his employment.

Mr. McCALLUM: Of course not.

The Minister for Railways: Then how could he have approached the court?

Mr. McCALLUM: But he had men working at that time.

The Minister for Railways: Assembling, not manufacturing.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is so, but he could have been joined with other firms who could have applied for a decision of the court.

The Minister for Railways: I think he did try to get a decision.

The Minister for Works: He asked for the men to accept payment by results, and the unions refused.

Mr. McCALLUM: And who would have been the judge as to the results? McKay himself?

Mr. Kenneally: That was what he wanted.

Mr. J. H. Smith: McKay apparently gets on satisfactorily in Victoria.

The Minister for Works: He has not had a strike there since he started.

Mr. McCALLUM: If the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) knew the feeling between the unions and McKay, he would not make such an assertion.

The Minister for Works: If the question were left to the employees, the position would be different.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is what you people always say. McKay offered payment by results and he was to be the judge of the results! Parliament has set up its own tribunal to arrive at such a decision, yet McKay did not take any steps to approach the court.

The Minister for Lands: He could not approach the court until he commenced operations.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have already explained how he could have approached the court.

Mr. Munsie: What is the good of explaining to them! They will not believe you if you do.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have explained the position dozens of times.

Mr. Munsie: And still they will go on repeating the story, irrespective of whether it is right or wrong.

Mr. McCALLUM: Every year the applicable award is open for revision. Unions and other parties often apply for a revision. Even McKay himself has established works at Maylands for assembling purposes.

The Minister for Lands: But he did not have that establishment at the time you refer to.

Mr. McCALLUM: He did.

The Minister for Lands: Not there; it was at Fremantle.

Mr. McCALLUM: It was in Western Australia, and therefore McKay was entitled to be heard in the Arbitration Court as an interested party. Why did he not take that step? He could not expect his word to go. He could not expect his decision to remain unchallenged merely because he thought he was right. Who is McKay that he should usurp the authority of the Arbitration Court? If he is to adopt that attitude, will not the unions have as much right to say what conditions they will accept? Parliament has said that neither the employer nor the unions shall have that right, but an independent Arbitration Court has been set up for that purpose.

Mr. Parker: Did not Parliament say that they could agree?

Mr. McCALLUM: But if the parties cannot agree, what is to be done?

Mr. Parker: But if given the opportunity, the men would have agreed.

The Minister for Lands: As they did in Victoria.

Mr. McCALLUM: Is the attitude to be that the men must take what is offered or they will get nothing? Should not those who have to do the job have some say regarding the conditions under which they will perform the work? Should they not have that right if the employer is to have the right to say under what conditions he will employ those who are to do the work for him? If hon. members take up that attitude it means going back to the very beginning in industrial matters.

Mr. Parker: The argument put to me by some of the employees of the State Implement Works before McKay came here was that they should make their own arrangements.

Mr. Sleeman: When did they put that to you?

Mr. Parker: During the election.

Mr. McCALLUM: The hon. member knows that irrespective of what individuals may say, we have a law controlling the position. What happened in Victoria? If McKay had been prepared to accept the industrial laws of the country, he could have started here. If he was prepared to accept the laws of Victoria, why was he not prepared to obey the law in Western Australia? Our laws set out the conditions under which he could work, and our laws are not the laws of Victoria.

The Minister for Railways: But you cannot compel a man to work by law.

Mr. McCALLUM: Nor can that be done in Victoria. What happened there? When an award was made applying to his operations in Ballarat, McKay said he would not accept them and he closed down his works and transferred them to Sunshine, thinking he would be able to dodge the operations of the law. Later it was applied to the Sunshine district, and so he gained nothing.

Mr. Raphael: Has he not shifted again?

Mr. McCALLUM: Although this position has been explained time after time, we have this constant reiteration of the assertion that the unions were to blame. The pity of it is that we have to put forward the same arguments in rebuttal to the same men who continue to repeat the assertions. That shows how prejudiced members opposite are and how completely they close their eyes to the facts, and will not examine the position. Personally I was anxious for McKay

to start operations here, and I believe the unions were equally anxious. The unions have definite principles, just as McKay may have. Our law provides for what shall apply, and McKay refused to accept those conditions. I believe McKay had an application before the Federal Arbitration Court to secure an award laying down uniform conditions to apply to his works throughout the Commonwealth. I do not know how the matter stands; I believe applications were received from two or three States to be struck out of the plaint. I hope the Bill now before hon. members will not be decided on the issue of the State Implement Works because that institution is not mentioned in the measure at all. The principle at stake is the encouragement of the manufacture of machinery and other articles locally. Although the amount advanced by the Agricultural Bank to an individual client is small, when we consider the money so advanced for the purchase of machinery it amounts to a substantial sum in the aggregate. If McKay or some other manufacturer knew that the bank would give preference to locally-manufactured machinery when making advances to clients, surely that aggregate amount would represent a big inducement to those manufacturers to commence operations here.

The Attorney General: But that is not what the Bill provides for.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Bill will mean the encouragement of our secondary industries. The Minister for Lands must admit that at any rate in this instance we are dealing with the manufacture of an article for which there is a home market. There should be a better opportunity for the manufacture of agricultural implements in Western Australia than there is for any other form of secondary industry.

The Minister for Lands: I am willing to do anything I can to help in the furtherance of local manufactures.

Mr. McCALLUM: The hon. member may suggest some modification of the Bill that will meet his objection. It may not be that the Bill is drafted in a form upon which the member for Fremantle will insist.

The Attorney General: But after all, should not this matter be left to the Agricultural Bank trustees themselves? It is hard to imagine any such law that would not lay down a policy for the trustees.

Mr. McCALLUM: I should think that if it were provided in our legislation that this course should be adopted, that in itself would encourage manufacturers in the Eastern States to commence operations here. They know that the State has developed considerably in recent years, and that the demand in Western Australia for agricultural machinery must be at least equal to, if not greater than, the demand in other States. In those circumstances they know that if preference is to be given to locally-manufactured machinery—

The Attorney General: That is not provided for in the Bill.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have not consulted the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), but I think he would amend the Bill to that extent.

Mr. H. W. Mann: When the Bill is in Committee, I intend to move an amendment to leave this matter to the discretion of the trustees.

Mr. McCALLUM: The fact that it was on the statute-book for some years proves that there was no harm done. We cannot point to any progress made under it, because it remained a dead letter. But surely we could get something out of the Bill if we all agreed to the policy that we should encourage secondary industry. Surely we could devise a way of getting something into the Act, so that the huge expenditure now going on would assist in establishing our industries. I hope we shall be able to come to some agreement between both sides of the House. First let the principle be accepted, so that in some way we can embody it in the law.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [6.2]: I am sorry the member for Fremantle brought this Bill forward at all, for it can be of no use and it suggests to me the greatest lack of consideration for those most concerned. The hon. member through his Bill says in effect that if a farmer in this State desires financial support from the Agricultural Bank, he shall hand himself over to the bank body and soul. No longer will he be allowed to exercise his own discretion. He shall purchase machinery made in Western Australia, whether it suits him or not.

Mr. Withers: Well, it is a State institution and the farmer is backed by the State.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have nothing to say against the State Implement Works. They are known as manufacturers of farming

machinery and, unfortunately, there are not very many other manufacturers of farming machinery in the State.

The Minister for Railways: If they did come into the argument, we might be able to show why they cannot make progress.

Mr. SAMPSON: My sympathy is always with the manager of the State Implement Works. He is in a most unfortunate position. He is running a Government concern, and there is more than a suspicion that the works are subject to some political influence. The man would be a genius indeed if he could make those works pay. It has been said on more than one occasion that the plant was obsolete before it came to Western Australia and that, consequently, the management was handicapped from the very beginning. But the member for Fremantle is prepared to do this dis-service to the farming community who have to depend on the Agricultural Bank he wants to compel them to buy Western Australian machinery in any circumstances. It was suggested that any private concern could exercise such a power over those to whom advances had been made. If it did it would be claimed, and rightly, that the concern was soulless and unconscionable. The Bill is impracticable from every standpoint. It cannot possibly help the hon. member in his desire to advance Western Australian industries, because the only effect of the Bill will be to impose a hardship upon those who require all the assistance we can give. The Bill will have the very opposite effect. The whole trend of the debate on it has been to set up comparisons to suggest that Western Australian machinery is not equal to imported machinery, and much bitterness has been exhibited. In all the circumstances, I hope the hon. member will withdraw the Bill. Alternatively, it will be defeated. I could never find it in my heart to support a Bill which is going to shackle those who should have the best assistance it is in our power to give.

On motion by Mr. H. W. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Wagin Hospital Validation.
- 2, High School Act Amendment.
- 3, Roman Catholic New Norcia Church Property Act Amendment.

Received from the Council.

BILL—EGG MARKETING.

Second Reading.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Midland-Guildford) [6.10] in moving the second reading said: I want at the outset to say I really do not think a Bill of this kind is a private member's Bill in the ordinary sense of the term. It has been a difficult Bill to draft, considering the limitations of the Standing Orders regarding members' rights. When the Bill was first drafted I soon discovered that it was outside the scope of a private member because of the limitations referred to. Then it took quite some time to get the drafting into a shape that would make the Bill comply with the Standing Orders. But it was necessary for a private member to introduce the Bill, because the Government could not see their way clear to comply with the almost unanimous, if not unanimous, desire of the poultry farmers of this State to obtain legislation which would put them in line with legislation operating, in their opinion highly satisfactorily, in Queensland and in New South Wales. They made their representations by a representative deputation to the Minister for Agriculture, and went to a great deal of trouble in obtaining data, so as to give the Minister full information as to the Bill that was required, and the value that they estimated it would prove to them and to the State if such a Bill were introduced by the Government. They made their representations at that time because they thought the Bill was urgently needed. The Minister kindly consented to consider the matter, and no doubt he had to consult Cabinet about it. Later the Minister conveyed to the Poultry Farmers' Association, and to the other poultry farmers of the State, that the Government could not see their way clear to introduce the legislation as requested. A good deal of disappointment was expressed by the poultry farmers at various meetings held, and ultimately it was decided that I, in my capacity as a private member, should be requested to introduce the Bill, so as to appeal on their behalf to Parliament to realise that legislation of this kind is urgently necessary to enable the poultry farmers of this country to get from their labour a reasonable reward. The position of the industry to-day is deplorable. It is not necessary that it should

be in the position it is in to-day. We have a glut on the local market, while at the same time there is a very satisfactory demand, satisfactory both as to quantity and price, for export eggs for the British market. But it is very difficult indeed to organise the export market, or to get the maximum quantity of eggs for export, because of the difficulty of co-ordinating an industry of this kind on a voluntary basis.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was pointing out the difficulty of getting the maximum result for the industry by organising on a voluntary basis. In this industry there are a number of large producers conducting up-to-date poultry farms with many head of poultry, but there are also a large number of very small producers with a limited number of birds. Where there are such a large number of small producers and a comparatively few large producers, it becomes very difficult to organise the industry on a voluntary basis. Some small growers take a keen interest in the marketing side of the industry, but unfortunately many are interested in production only and do not realise the importance of the marketing side, with the result that they produce eggs and send them to the market, leaving it to the agents or merchants to get for them the best possible price. Where production exceeds the capacity of local consumption, it is very difficult to avoid gluts. Last year there was a voluntary organisation, which tried to relieve the position by exporting eggs. Some little progress was made, but nothing compared with what has been accomplished in other States, particularly in Queensland and New South Wales, both of which have a better marketing system. Those two States have legislation on the lines of the Bill I am asking members to pass here. The voluntary efforts of last year did not give satisfaction and did not permit of obtaining the best results from the export market. Early this year an effort was made to do better by profiting from the experience of last year. The producers, mainly the poultry farmers' organisation, made representations to the co-operative movement through the central organisation—Western Australian Farmers' Ltd.—requesting assistance to remedy the failures of the previous year and obtain better results

this year. The co-operative organisation decided to help, and in that way I became interested particularly in the marketing side of the industry. I was appointed by the co-operative movement, together with Mr. T. H. Bath, who is well known to members, to co-operate with the poultry farmers in creating some kind of voluntary organisation. Our ambition at the time was to embrace all interested in the marketing of eggs, the Producers' Markets, which is a co-operative concern, and the private firms who were also dealing extensively with the poultry farmers of the State. We arranged a conference to discuss the prospects of those interested in the marketing of eggs coming together to form a pool, by which better attention could be devoted to export and to the preparation of pulp, and generally to put the industry on a better footing for the producers. We met with much encouragement from the private firms and a certain amount of progress was made. We also got together the principal users of egg pulp. In the previous year they had imported from the Eastern States a fairly large quantity of egg pulp, which could have been produced in the State. Owing to lack of organisation last year, the poultry farmers were not able to guarantee the quantity, and possibly the quality, desired by the users of pulp, and so Eastern States' pulp was imported. Representations were made to those people this year to buy the local product. When we met them, they were quite pleased to discuss the matter and said they would prefer to buy the local product, but they pointed out that previously this had not been possible because of lack of proper organisation. We came to certain understandings, and it was arranged that they would give preference to Western Australian-prepared pulp. I think that arrangement is being honoured to-day. Having accomplished that, we brought the egg marketers together to finalise an organisation for a pool system of marketing, which we had contemplated when we first met them, but we found there were difficulties in the way. The unanimity at the outset had faded and there were differences of opinion and ultimately we realised the impossibility of getting the whole of the merchants to combine. Consequently we were compelled to report to the poultry farmers that our ambitions had not been realised and that we could not proceed along the lines orig-

inally submitted that all interested in the marketing should combine for the general good. After meeting the merchants in the first place, we had called a meeting of poultry farmers at which there was a large attendance. A report was submitted to the meeting embodying the understandings arrived at in the conference with the merchants, and we anticipated that we could go ahead. Good feeling was displayed, and I thought we would have achieved some kind of organisation on a voluntary basis which would have functioned with some degree of satisfaction to all concerned. Ultimately, however, we had to abandon the idea. At the big meeting of poultry farmers—the largest I have seen in the State and I suppose the largest held in the State—a motion was carried in favour of a pool on the lines set out in the Bill before members. The motion expressed the desire that Parliament would agree to the organisation of a pool on the lines of that sanctioned by the New South Wales Act. Although we failed to bring in all the merchants, the poultry farmers' organisation requested us to go ahead, work in with the Producers' Markets, place the marketing on a better footing than last year, make full use of the export market and arrange for the supply of pulp. To-day we have what is known as a voluntary egg marketing board. To protect the individual, it was necessary to register the board under the Companies Act. The whole of the work is purely honorary; those who constitute the board receive no pay. The company was formed for the protection of the individual and not to provide reward for those persons appointed to the board. The board is operating to-day, though not altogether as one would like, trying to help the industry over a troublesome time. The question we have to ask ourselves, when considering legislation of this kind, is whether it will really accomplish anything, whether it will help the producers, whether it will be to the advantage of the industry. If we agree that legislation will help the industry, then we have to ask whether the industry is worth helping. Let me point out that the industry is one that lends itself to the work of incapacitated or partially incapacitated people, enabling them to earn a livelihood which otherwise might be impossible. Quite a number of returned soldiers and men who have lost limbs are as-

sociated with the industry. Many people who are quite capable of running a poultry farm, where they can regulate the work to the limit of their capacity, would probably be quite unable to compete in any other industry.

Mr. Marshall: Quite a number of worn-out miners have entered the industry.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, quite a number were associated with the industry, and got through as well as low prices would permit. The industry will never flourish without some form of marketing organisation. I have often stated in this Chamber that the problems of the country are not the problems of production. There really are no problems of production. We successfully produce all those primary products required by the State. Production has not presented any very grave problems. It seems that the producers are capable of overcoming the problems of production, but are not capable of dealing with the more difficult problem of marketing. As times goes on, the marketing problem becomes more acute. I do not say it is limited to eggs. We have had discussions of this kind before, and we have had a somewhat similar Bill to this dealing with dried fruits. I wish to express my appreciation of the contribution of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) in regard to the working of the Dried Fruits Act under the control of a board, and functioning on somewhat the same lines as will be followed in the Bill I am now presenting. The hon. member is directly interested. He has been in the industry of grape growing, and knows the difficulties of it. He is well versed in the difficulties of marketing prior to the passing of that legislation. He has profited by the organisation that was established by the authority of Parliament, and paid a tribute to the board that I was very pleased to hear. The tribute from a gentleman who is directly interested in the industry and has had cause to devote special attention to it, demonstrates that this kind of legislation is of advantage to the producer. What we have done for dried fruit marketing we can to a greater extent do for egg marketing by the same kind of legislation.

The Premier: How would you deal with the imports from the Eastern States?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They can better be dealt with by organisation than by disorganisation. A certain amount of dumping is going on, but by organisation we have a

chance to cope with it. Individuals cannot fight organisations. It is organisation which does the dumping into Western Australia of all products. It is not the individual producer or the individual manufacturer who does it. It is always done by the big combinations. These people concentrate upon a certain product, and dump the surplus. Against this sort of thing the local individual producer can only protest. He cannot compete against a combination of that sort. When the producers possess a strong and vigorous organisation they can do something to protect themselves against that dumping.

The Minister for Railways: How would they deal with the competition that arises from the farmers' consignments?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They too can be dealt with.

The Minister for Railways: Not unless those particular producers voluntarily come into the pool.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They could vote themselves into the pool. I have no desire to force anyone into it. All I want is to give the producers the opportunity to come in, provided we can obtain a three-fifths majority vote in favour of the pool system of marketing. The farmers can be organised. I do not say we will attempt to do that, but we have an organisation in the metropolitan area where the position is more acute. The country egg is a problem, but the difficulty to-day is found chiefly in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Railways: The egg market is affected by the eggs that come in from the country. How will you prevent that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The organisation could be extended, as has been done in New South Wales and Queensland. I do not wish the House to think I am going to advocate that. If we get the Bill through we will organise all the poultry farmers of the State. This will have to be done gradually.

The Minister for Railways: I am not speaking of the poultry farmers.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They are poultry farmers in a sense. They own a number of fowls, such as will entitle them to be registered as poultry farmers. The protection they will have, until the organisation has been perfected, arises from the fact that we will have to create districts. If the Bill is passed, the poultry farmers will perfect their organisation in

the metropolitan area, and gradually extend it to overcome the difficulty in the country districts.

Mr. H. W. Mann: How will you deal with importations from Adelaide if the Adelaide market is easier than the local market?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: These are problems which present themselves to-day. We can deal with them better with an organisation than we can without any. The individual cannot protect himself against that sort of thing, but organised producers can do something. The Premier knows we would have had difficulty in connection with our butter to-day. We are not having it because we are sufficiently well organised to appeal to the Premier and others to help us to prevent the importation of Eastern States butter. We can create public opinion and we have done so, thanks to the Premier.

The Minister for Lands: Put your thumbs up.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Whilst the position was difficult a fortnight ago before we went to the Premier, considerable relief has been afforded to-day. As one who is associated with the marketing of butter, I am pleased at the result and at what we have obtained.

The Premier: People can do without eggs but they cannot do without butter.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But for the steps that were recently taken, a considerable quantity of Eastern States butter would be coming into the State, although we are producing within the State as much as we can consume. We have a considerable quantity of butter in cool storage over and above the requirements of the State. This is Western Australian butter produced locally. A considerable quantity of Eastern States butter was being brought in. It is not superior to ours, but the Eastern States organisation had created the connection here. It was only because we were organised in a better way than the poultry farmers that we were able to deal with that competition, with the result that the anxiety of Eastern States competition in butter is to-day not as acute as it was a fortnight ago.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Has this not something to do with the production of a better article?

The Minister for Railways: The point is in respect to the patent wrappers that are used.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I would be out of order if I talked about butter now. I intend to devote a fair amount of time to the subject of marketing problems generally when we come to deal with the Budget. I will promise hon. members to devote special attention to the position of Western Australia from the butter marketing point of view. For the moment I desire to deal with the subject matter of this Bill. We have a number of large producers and a considerable number of small ones. The small men are always a menace to the large producers. We have no great difficulty in dealing with the big men. They naturally favour organisation. They have to devote more thought to marketing problems, because the subject is an important one from their point of view. It becomes very important to a man when he is possessed of, say, 1,000 birds. He, therefore, favours organisation. The trouble lies with the large number of small producers. They do not try wilfully to injure anyone. They say, "The few fowls I run and the few eggs I produce cannot affect the position. I do not want to be bothered about preparing them for export. I am prepared to put the eggs on the market." They do not realise that there are so many others doing the same thing that they cause a serious glut, and unconsciously they do a great deal of harm to the large producers. Even the best of the producers have a certain number of eggs which must be marketed locally. They are injuring one another. The only way to prevent that competition, and the unconscious injury of one by the other, is to create some kind of organisation such as I propose by this Bill. A considerable amount of State money is invested in the industry. Soldier settlement funds are invested and a considerable proportion of the Agricultural Bank funds. In the interests of these institutions it is just as well to make the effort to get the best results we can for the poultry farmers. Unless they can market their produce profitably, and can get for their eggs a price that will pay production costs, they cannot meet their obligations. I believe the Government realise there is a grave danger of not getting interest payments while eggs are at their present price. A few years ago we were able to cope with the marketing problem because the industry was growing, and the local consumption in comparison with production was fairly large. We also

had the goldfields market then to a greater extent than we have it to-day. Those in the industry to-day comprise returned soldiers, incapacitated miners and others. Those people have built it up until within the last year or two there has been an increase in production of about 50 per cent. I think last year the increase was about 33 per cent. over the previous year. There has been a substantial increase in this direction, and in the number of birds bred and maintained by the poultry farmers, without, however, an appreciable and corresponding increase in the local consumption of eggs. Again, the poultry farmer realises that as prices become lower it is essential for him to increase the number of birds held, so as to reduce overhead charges. A good deal of that has been going on during the last year or two. That again has swelled production, and created marketing difficulties, consumption not having increased proportionately. Local consumption is not being increased to any extent. It is only by organisation that we can create interest in the local consumption of any commodity. Individuals cannot appeal to the public for support in regard to commodities of this kind. Organisations, however, can successfully appeal and secure public support, as well as recognition of quality, and of the value of using eggs to a greater extent, possibly to the exclusion of meat. These results can be obtained only where there is a combination of those interested, all of them contributing towards the expense of advertising and organising. While there has been no increase in the local market for eggs, there has always been, and there is to-day, a highly satisfactory market overseas. So far as one can judge, there is a market available for all the eggs that can be exported from Western Australia. So far as can be observed to-day, the overseas price would net to the producer a higher return than is being obtained from local sales to-day.

The Minister for Railways: What are the prices?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is hard to say. There should be no difficulty in marketing eggs at prices in Britain which would give the grower an ultimate return of 10½d. to 11d. per dozen, and possibly the return would be greater. Being associated with a marketing board, I do not like quoting figures which might possibly cause disappointment.

The Minister for Railways: Have you an organisation?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: Then what do you want this Bill for?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Because we cannot get enough producers to authorise us to export their eggs. There are so many small producers whose eggs are up to export standard but who will not be bothered with exporting them. They are selling their eggs in the local market to-day, whereas the same eggs, if exported, would bring 10½d. or 11d. per dozen.

The Minister for Railways: There is an offer of about 1s. 2½d. for eggs delivered in London, and eggs are selling here for 8d. Do you think it would be wise for exporters to buy eggs locally and ship them to London?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is too big a risk, though there is a nice margin in the business to-day. No doubt the poultry farmers would be pleased if the hon. gentleman would take on the business.

The Minister for Railways: I am not very busy at the moment, and I think I will.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is quite a decent business proposition. However, the movement I am associated with does not go in for anything of that description.

Mr. H. W. Mann: It is not much of a gamble to buy at 8d. and sell at 1s. 2d.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister is quite at liberty to take on the business. However, it is no function of a voluntary egg marketing board to buy and sell eggs.

The Minister for Railways: Did you get such an offer?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: Did you pass it on?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The position is that we started in the early part of the season by advancing 7d. per dozen. Then the market turned, the exchange difficulty clarified, and certain other difficulties existing at the time were gradually removed. Competition from British buyers also became greater, with the result that the advance to-day is 9d. The Westralian Farmers Ltd., at Fremantle, who do a certain amount of business in eggs on commission, advance 8d. To-day the advance generally made for the 15-lb. pack is about 9d.

The Minister for Lands: Eggs, then, are being sold here for less than they will net in London?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Undoubtedly, that is the sad side of it. We are losing a considerable amount of money by not being able to take advantage of a good export market to-day. That is why I want Parliament to realise that some kind of organisation is needed. The thing cannot be done on a voluntary basis.

The Attorney General: That is what I want to hear you prove, that it cannot be done on a voluntary basis.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know that would be difficult to prove to the hon. gentleman. All I can say is that an arrangement on a voluntary basis was tried last year.

The Minister for Lands: Why did it break down last year?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Simply because there was not the patronage that one would have anticipated, considering the satisfactory export market available. It is exactly the same thing to-day. The position is most extraordinary. One can hardly realise it, but the fact remains that exportable eggs, eggs thoroughly up to export standard, are being sold for 8½d. and 9d. per dozen in the local market to-day, whereas the producers could get an advance of that amount for export.

Mr. Angelo: One does not hear many housewives grumbling.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No; but it is a bad position for the industry and for the State. We could export considerably more than we are doing if the poultry farmers could only be got to realise that the export market is available for every poultry farmer. I do not like repeating myself, but I say again that there are so many small producers who consider it is not worth their while to trouble about exporting. Such a producer should say to the board, "There are my eggs; market them to the best advantage." If the small man did that as well as the big man, the quantity of eggs suitable for export would be increased considerably. There would still be abundance of eggs left for the local market. All the eggs produced here from fowls and ducks cannot be exported.

The Minister for Railways: Now you are touching the point. If there is a satisfactory overseas market and these people organise themselves into a board, why cannot they take advantage of that overseas market and leave the local market alone?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not deny that if all the eggs suitable for export were removed from the local market, there would be neither the quality nor the low prices that obtain in the local market to-day. What I want to do is to secure to this industry a reasonable price for its commodity. I do not want the industry to go out of existence. The point is that the industry cannot exist under present conditions. Men cannot go on producing eggs to be sold at 9d. per dozen when it costs 10d. per dozen to produce them.

The Minister for Railways: Why worry about a man who can get 11d. per dozen for his eggs?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have put more time than I can really spare into this question because it does worry me to think that this State produces eggs suitable for export, and that there is the quantity of eggs for export, and that still the exporting cannot be done simply because there is no organisation to attempt it.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Are the producers agreeable to this?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) will support me in the statement that these proposals have the support of the largest meeting of poultry farmers ever held in the State. It was the largest meeting of poultry farmers that I have seen.

Mr. Wells: Is there more than one organisation of poultry farmers?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. This was a mass meeting of poultry farmers. The meeting was representative of both the poultry organisations, and of many producers not attached to either. The resolution in favour of a Bill on these lines was carried, and, so far as I am aware, carried unanimously. Possibly there may have been one or two hands held up against the resolution. However, one or two merchants were present.

Mr. Wells: Did that meeting represent the two organisations?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Undoubtedly. Before the Bill is disposed of, the two associations will no doubt express their views. Within the last three days I have been in touch, through the marketing board, with the numerically large body of organised producers; and they appointed a special committee to assist me in regard to the Bill. There was absolute unanimity at that meet-

ing, and I have heard nothing to indicate that the other organisation, the Poultry and Egg Producers' Society, are against the measure. It may be taken, I think, that there is practical unanimity in the industry for the Bill.

Mr. H. W. Mann: If the producers are unanimous, why will not a voluntary pool meet the case?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is the great trouble. I have been associated with this kind of thing for a number of years, and know how remarkably difficult it is to get producers organised. It is impossible to get absolute unanimity. The wheat-growers, in spite of all the success and the wonderful organisation of their pool, when appealed to were only 60 per cent. in favour of it.

The Attorney General: Is not the difficulty of getting 100 per cent. organisation the only protection the poor public have as against any organisation?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. The wheat pool is operating to-day without compulsion.

The Minister for Lands: The growers have never asked for it, have they?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They were organised by compulsion in the first instance. If Parliament passes legislation giving boards certain powers for the purpose of organising industry, and if the boards operate to the detriment of the community, Parliament is here to protect the community. It is difficult to assert that the public will not have to pay a little more.

The Attorney General: There will be increased prices, surely.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I can say honestly that the object of the Bill, as in the case of the dried fruits legislation, is to take advantage of the export market that is available.

The Attorney General: Yes, and put the loss from the export trade on the local consumer. Has not that been done with dried fruits?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. The price of dried fruits on the local market is not fixed.

Mr. Thorn: Dried fruit prices are lower to-day than they were when the legislation was introduced.

The Attorney General: You send the dried fruit out of Australia at a price substantially lower than that at which it is sold

on the local market, and the local consumer pays the difference.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That might be possible. The only way in which we could be locally penalised would be by leaving the local market bare. If we exported to such an extent that we did not leave available sufficient for local consumption, then of course the price could be regulated. If the board failed in any way, Parliament could draw attention to the fact and public opinion would soon alter any administration that was not in the interests of the people. I ask the Attorney General to remember the debate that took place in connection with dried fruits. It took us some time to convince Parliament that the legislation should be agreed to, but eventually that was done. No protests have been heard against the operations of the board controlling that industry because the board has been popular with both the grower and the consumer.

The Attorney General: I emphatically deny that the board is popular from the consumers' point of view.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There have been no protests from the consumers.

The Attorney General: The public are long-suffering.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The fact remains that the legislation had to be brought before Parliament again for review, and when the Bill was before Parliament, there were no protests from the public. Local consumers by their silence gave consent to the re-enactment of the legislation, and I do not remember reading any letters in the newspapers, or reports of resolutions from meetings, protesting against the re-enactment of that legislation.

The Minister for Lands: Have you heard anything about the price of sugar?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are dealing with eggs, not sugar.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was endeavouring to point out that unless we have an organisation that will enable us, while doing justice to the local market, to take advantage of the export market, then increased production will be self-destructive. The more we increase our production, the more difficult our position will become. We have tried the voluntary basis, but have not been able to overcome the difficulties. There are difficulties now as great as those apparent before any voluntary organisation was established. I believe the

Bill will remedy the present depressed state of affairs, if the poultry farmers will take advantage of it. I would emphasise to hon. members that the measure is merely an enabling Bill. It is not one to establish the board and give it power to control the industry; the measure is merely introduced for the purpose of taking a vote of the poultry farmers in a declared area on the question whether they think they would get better results from their industry by the creation of a marketing board.

The Minister for Lands: Then you had better alter the title of the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is not proposed that the question shall be decided by a majority vote of all the poultry farmers, but if there is a three-fifths majority vote in favour of its establishment, the board will function as outlined in the Bill. The measure is based largely upon the New South Wales Act. It is not so comprehensive, but will meet the situation here. It does not go as far as I would like, but it goes as far as I think possible within the four corners of our Standing Orders. It is a measure that ought to be introduced by the Government, not by a private member. I believe the industry is worthy of encouragement and protection. I believe the cry of the industry should be listened to and the appeal for help granted if at all possible. While the policy of the Government is what it is to-day, they cannot see their way clear to introduce such a measure.

The Minister for Railways: But have you not already a board dealing with the marketing of eggs?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We have a kind of board, or rather a board dealing with the marketing of eggs in a kind of way.

The Minister for Railways: Does not the board accept offers for export at prices that are better than the local prices? Is that not the purpose of the board?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If the Minister were a poultry farmer and put his eggs through the Producers' Markets, we could not touch them. The Minister would have to authorise the board to deal with them. Unless we get the contract form signed, we cannot touch eggs, which must go on the floor of the market and be sold in the ordinary way under general marketing conditions.

Mr. Marshall: Haphazardly.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so. If the board desired to step in and take the eggs, it could not be done.

The Minister for Railways: Do you not think that anyone with eggs in cool store would not accept 11½d. with the prospect of a further 3d. or so when shipped, rather than sell for less locally?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have been pointing out that people will not do that.

The Minister for Railways: Because they do not know.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But it is known. We have advertised the fact and have had mass meetings of the poultry farmers. We have explained the position to them over and over again, but the sad thing is that while we may explain it, the poultry farmers will not sell their eggs at what they could get for them, if exported, because they will not sign the contract form authorising us to handle their eggs.

The Minister for Railways: And you ask us to protect them.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There are others dealing with them as well.

The Minister for Railways: Are you aware that there is one London firm that has established a credit of £20,000 in this State?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: And are you not aware that the poultry farmers can get 11½d. on their eggs from cool store and a further 3d. when shipped?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is an explanation of that, but I do not desire to make it here.

The Minister for Railways: That is known publicly.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I refuse to make a public explanation as to why we cannot fall into line with that offer. I have had quite enough anxiety over that particular order. It has been canvassed throughout the city. The Minister has been associated with me before and if he but knew the source from which that offer came, and he were to brush up his memory a bit, he would recollect that he and I experienced great anxiety arising out of something of the same kind. If he wants his memory refreshed, I will help him, but I shall not go into the details here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The fact remains that we are facing great difficulties and all efforts to get over them so far have failed. We could sell considerably more eggs than we can get, and we could dispose of all the eggs available in Western Australia if we could but get authority to handle them.

The Minister for Railways: If you exported all the local eggs, what would the people here do?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We cannot sell all the eggs produced in Western Australia because we have not got the necessary authority, hence the desire for the Bill. If the Minister for Railways realised the position, he would know that we cannot meet the demands of various other representative firms, with the limited means of control we have to-day. There are others dealing in eggs and it is clear we shall not export from the State anything like the number of eggs we could sell if the industry were properly organised. Both the representative organisations of poultry farmers made requests to the Government for the creation of a pool, and I desire to read the outline of the case in favour of the pool that was subsequently put up in writing for presentation to the Minister and which, no doubt, went to Cabinet when the request for a pool of this description was considered. The statement clearly outlines the advantage of legislation of this description and I propose to read it for the information of hon. members. The statement is addressed to the Minister for Agriculture and is headed—

Statement relative to the benefits it is expected the creation of the Marketing Board would confer upon the poultry industry—
Submitted by the Poultry Farmers' Organisation.

Then the statement reads—

The effect of control.—It has been found that voluntary organisation of the industry cannot be made effective owing to several reasons, the principal of which are:—(1) The wide-spread area of production; (2) the number of producers involved; (3) the number of producers who do not gain their livelihood from the industry—

The Minister for Railways: That is the trouble.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The statement proceeds—

(4) the necessity for export and storage; (5) activity and antagonism of speculators. With the creation of a marketing board all eggs

vest in the board, and must therefore be marketed through channels either established by or approved by the board. A consequent improvement of methods of distribution, presentation and standards is anticipated.

Method of operation.—The proposed Bill (following the legislation of other States) proposes to leave this question largely to the discretion of the board. It is anticipated, however, that the board would aim to create the shortest channel of supply between producer and consumer, and to grant such exemptions as may be necessary in this direction so as to prevent its operations becoming cumbersome in the matter of supply as between country centres. The largest avenue of consumption is through the metropolitan area where eggs would be marketed either by the board or by agents licensed by it and subject to its direction. It is considered that the board would adopt the latter course. Where economy can be effected by supply direct to retailers or others the board can so arrange, whilst governing the methods of supply and prices. The board would be free either to undertake such processes as pulping, export packing, cool storage, etc., or to delegate such powers. Presumably, the firms experienced in this class of work would be asked to undertake this on its behalf.

Beneficial effects.—It is anticipated that economy of distribution would result by reason of organisation and simplification of the present channels and methods. That the efficiency of distributors would be ensured by reason of the fact that they would be required to satisfy the board of their ability to accept a delegation of part of its responsibilities. That the speculator would be largely eliminated, and a substantial margin would be placed in the hands of the producers through the board. The board can provide funds permitting of propaganda, etc., directed towards the expansion of local consumption. In so doing it will have the assurance of regular supplies, and a knowledge that the full benefit of such expenditure will accrue to those providing the funds. The possibilities in this direction are regarded as being of very considerable importance. The board can ensure the export of all exportable eggs constituting a part of a surplus, and that any price penalty arising therefrom is borne equitably by all those benefiting. The result of such export will modify the surplus for local consumption. A further proportion of that surplus can be looked after through pulping and cool storage. A board would best be able to deal with these by virtue of the knowledge it would acquire of the total production and of the probable consumption. The board by virtue of its knowledge of the position at any time can set the local price at a figure calculated to ensure absorption of the balance of the quantities available. The board will either handle or supervise the marketing of those eggs which are produced in quantities heavier than those from normal sources in the glut season; such eggs are mainly produced by persons who are not earning their livelihood as poultry farmers. Under existing conditions

they are mostly carelessly grown and badly presented, and mostly reach the consumer through dealers who buy at a rate which constitutes a pocket-money return, and subsequently retail at figures just below those achieved by competition in the open market. With a board such dealers would be unable to acquire such eggs except through the board or under its jurisdiction, and then only at a price commensurate with the grade required, and identical with the price paid by other buyers for similar eggs. Thus the consumer need pay no more and probably less, and the producer receive a high return.

The Minister for Railways: Are you sponsoring a monopoly?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

The Minister for Railways: That is what is suggested in what you are reading.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The statement continues—

Regulation of supply.—Returns required and experience gained by the board will provide that definite estimates may be made both of seasonal production and consumption. By control of surplus during the glut a fair price may be maintained, and provision made both for pulp and chilled eggs from such glut so as to avoid excessive prices in the short season by providing reasonable supplies throughout the year. At present every person endeavouring individually to provide in this direction has no knowledge of his competitors' activities, and in consequence the quantities stored may be either insufficient or excessive, and the market is nervous. The board will look to the two nominees of the Government both to guide its business policy and to guard the interests of the consumer. The board would create standards and avoid, for instance, the existing practice of selling cool store eggs as fresh. Power is asked that the board may act as a prosecutor under the Agricultural Products Act for the reason that it will be in the strongest position to detect irregularities and to protect the public. Finally, the fact that New South Wales has constituted a satisfactory board under a similar Act, and that the Queensland board has been re-elected after six years of office indicates definitely that such work as we seek to undertake can be effective.

Interstate.—We anticipate (if this legislation is provided promptly) that by the time the board takes office legislation will have been effected by the Federal Government supplementing the State legislation, and co-ordinating the efforts of the various State boards. This legislation has been promised by the present Federal Government, and notice of motion was given in this direction in Parliament on 21st November, 1929. The Minister for Agriculture in New South Wales in a foreword to the Marketing of Primary Products Act in that State refers to this matter in the following terms:—

Through marketing boards the way is paved for interstate understandings that

will do much towards the regulation of interstate movements of primary products. The Act is a purely State enactment, it is true; but "first put your own house in order" is a fundamental requirement of reciprocal arrangements between States. Those States that are best organised in relation to the marketing of their own products within their own borders are in the best position to deal with interstate or overseas competition. Unorganised or badly organised markets, on the other hand, are unnecessarily exposed to risks of dumping and underselling.

Suitable Commonwealth legislation can advantageously supplement, but cannot take the place of State legislation in relation to marketing within the States. Legislation, such as the Marketing of Primary Products Act, is the best possible foundation for interstate reciprocity or for Federal pooling of primary products such as wheat and butter.

In the absence of such provision we contend that one authority knowing the whole pulp requirements of the State, both in detail and total, and having control of the manufacture and quantity thereof is in such a satisfactory position to supply those requirements that it can meet any competition.

There is an existing freight advantage which, though small, is useful, and definite assurances have been given by local pulp consumers that they will give preference to local pulp. Any deviation from this attitude could well be met by publicity if necessary. Furthermore, a considerable degree of co-operation can be expected from other State boards which will almost certainly be in existence in all competing centres ere next supplying season. Any attempt to market eggs in shell from other States can well be met by providing the board with power to require the stamping of all eggs with the State of origin. Action is being taken in this direction in New South Wales, and follows the practice in Britain. If local sentiment does not thereby check the importation, obvious considerations of freshness and quality by the buying public most certainly will, once the source of the eggs is revealed.

Mr. H. W. Mann: How do you propose to stamp the egg when it is in pulp?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course we cannot stamp the pulp. But the pulp is a relatively small matter. The difficulty of the board is with the exportation of eggs in the shell.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know that New South Wales is importing "Sun-kist" oranges from California?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member wants me to discuss something that is not in the Bill. To-day we are exporting a small quantity of eggs. There has been a slight alteration in point of the size of eggs for export. The size has been reduced. The

1¾-oz. egg is exported in what is known as the 1¾-lb. pack, containing 120 eggs. But the eggs in a case number 30 dozen. That is what is termed an export case, whereas if we talk of a 1¾-lb. pack, we are dealing with 120 eggs or ten dozen. To-day we have the 1¾-lb. pack, the 15-lb. pack, the 16-lb. pack and the 17-lb. pack. The 1¾-oz. eggs constitute the 1¾-lb. pack. Eggs ranging from 1½ ozs. to 2½ ozs. make up the 15-lb. pack, eggs over 2½ oz. go in the 16-lb. pack, and relatively larger eggs in the 17-lb. pack. All those are packed separately and sent away. It is possible under the regulations to combine the 1¾-oz. egg with the 2½-oz. egg, but in this State it is not done, because we find we get a better price and establish a better name on the British market by excluding the small egg and putting it in a separate case for export, and dealing separately with the other eggs in the 15-lb., 16-lb., and 17-lb. packs respectively. Again it is found to be worth while separating the white eggs from the brown eggs and putting them in separate cases. I just mention these facts to show that the industry is fairly well organised in point of quality of stuff. The difficulty is in the quantity. We cannot get the number. What we are sending away is sent away under good conditions. We have established quite a good name for Western Australian eggs on the British market. The number of inquiries that we have for the supply of eggs is evidence that our name is good. The sad side of it is that we cannot supply all requirements as we receive them from the overseas merchants.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You would seem to suggest that this is all in the interests of the board, not in the interests of the grower.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: How can it be in the interests of the board?

Mr. H. W. Mann: You allege that you cannot get the quantities, that the growers will not take advantage of the opportunity.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: As I say, the growers will not take advantage of the market because of their disorganised position. We cannot organise without the authority proposed in the Bill. It is estimated that 75 per cent. of the eggs produced in the metropolitan area are capable of being exported, but I do not suppose we are getting away 30 per cent. to-day, simply because the growers do not seem to take advantage of the export market. The country eggs are more

difficult to deal with. Quite a number of country eggs are sent in direct to the market. They are equal to the metropolitan eggs and quite up to export standard. We have authority to lift a large number of those country eggs and arrange for their export. That is being done. But the main difficulty is where the country storekeeper buys the eggs in exchange for commodities. As many members know, country storekeepers do a large business with farmers and take eggs in exchange for goods and in payment of accounts. Those eggs are a menace to the industry. They are held too long by the storekeeper and are not properly examined, and they come on to the markets from the storekeepers in large quantities and are a potential danger the whole time. That is why I say that for a while it will be very difficult to deal with the country eggs. However, it will be just as possible to do it in this country as in Queensland and New South Wales. Now I am nearly finished; it has taken longer than I expected.

The Minister for Railways: You have quite a lot to explain about the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have explained all that I am going to explain at the present juncture. I shall be very pleased to hear the hon. member on the question.

The Minister for Railways: No, it is your Bill, not mine.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have explained the Bill to the satisfaction of the House.

Mr. Kenneally: You can only give the Minister the facts; you cannot make him understand them.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I will be pleased to explain any of the provisions at a later stage. We are not coping with the industry in the way we should. In 1916 the Producers' Markets exported 6,200 cases of eggs. Yet last year, with the market available, and with the voluntary organisation going and private firms dealing, we got away only 6,000 cases. I believe that this year it will be possible to get away up to 18,000 cases. But by the way things are going I do not think we shall send more than 6,000 cases. I am positive that we could get away 12,000 or 15,000 cases, and I am told by poultry farmers and marketing firms that if the industry were thoroughly organised we should get away 18,000 cases and leave plenty of eggs on this market for local requirements.

Mr. Parker: Small eggs.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, but eggs quite as good as, if not superior to, the large egg. It is not always the large egg that is the best, but the size counts on the British market. The market is available, as I have said. The price for overseas eggs is firmer and better than the price for local eggs, and it would be a very fine thing to do. We require money in London and we can only get it there by exporting. The great need of this country to-day is export markets. As a matter of fact we shall get over our difficulties much sooner if we can take advantage of the available markets. Here, then, is an opportunity. There are in the city to-day tens of thousands of pounds waiting to be expended in this industry if we can only get the industry organised to supply the demands made by London and Glasgow and the merchants of Great Britain generally.

The Minister for Railways: To do that you would give the board power to prevent a man from selling the eggs he has produced.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No, the board are to have power to exempt any man.

The Minister for Railways: But he must get exemption first.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member is aware that we cannot put exemptions in a Bill, but have to deal with everything on its merits.

The Minister for Railways: A man will have to get exemption from the board.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: He first has to vote in favour of the board.

The Attorney General: But he may be forced into it against his will.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If a three-fifths majority declare in favour of the scheme, the minority will have to come into line. Each grower will then put his eggs under the control of the board. But if any grower desires exemption, he will put before the board his special circumstances, and the board will have power to deal with those circumstances by granting him exemption.

The Minister for Railways: That is a nice proposition!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If the hon. member can show me any other way of dealing with the problem I shall be glad to hear it. He has drafted sufficient legislation of this kind to know that it is impossible to put exemptions into the Bill. Take the Sales Tax Act: the problem to-day is to know what has exemption and what has not.

If we were to insert all our exemptions we should have the same problem under the Bill. It is the function of the board to deal with each application for exemption on its merits. Take the voluntary board operating at present: There are contract forms signed giving the board control of the whole of the producer's eggs, but we grant him exemption to meet special circumstances. A poultry farmer at Armadale may have been in the habit of supplying the local storekeepers, the local hotel, or private people, with eggs. He says, "For my local round I want so many of my eggs," and the exemption is granted. He continues to supply those customers as before. But in order that we may prevent any double-dealing and to ensure that the board will not be victimised, we must have control of the eggs and grant the exemption.

Mr. Parker: And if a man asks for an egg, the one who receives it is liable to a fine of £50.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is right. The hon. gentleman knows more about law than I do, but I understand that a receiver is considered to be worse than a thief.

The Minister for Railways: You do not suggest that a man who produces an egg and invites a friend in to have it is a thief?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: A man cannot produce an egg. The hon. member means a man who sells an egg.

The Minister for Railways: Well, read your own Bill. It states that "producer" means a person, apparently a producer of an egg.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If it is in the Bill, it must be right.

The Minister for Railways: There you are.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If that is a defect, it can be remedied in Committee, and I shall be glad of the Minister's assistance. It is estimated that the value of poultry and eggs produced in the State last year was £600,000. According to the Year Book, the figures for the previous years were—1924, £286,350; 1925, £305,888; 1926, £330,903; 1927, £426,422; and 1928 (estimated) £500,000. Last year, 6,000 cases of eggs were exported.

The Minister for Lands: How many dozen would that represent?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There are 30 dozen to the case. We have to appreciate what is expended by the industry on food produced in Western Australia. It is difficult to arrive at the figure, but I am told by people who should be capable of estimating it that poultry food represents more than £500,000 a year. Consequently an industry that is producing £600,000 worth of produce and is expending quite a large proportion of it locally is worthy of consideration. It has been difficult to frame the Bill, but the measure has been framed on the lines of the New South Wales Act, and I believe it will commend itself to members. Poultry farmers have been striving for years to get such legislation. They appealed to the previous Government. I led the deputation, but unfortunately. I could not convince the then Government to introduce legislation at that time. It was late in the session when we approached the Government. The poultry farmers have been asking for legislation because they know that similar measures have been operating for a number of years in Queensland and New South Wales. If members will take the Year Book and study the figures and also study poultry journals published in Australia for more recent information, they will realise that the industry is in a more healthy and stable condition in those two States than in any other part of Australia, purely because of the organisation made possible through Parliament having assisted by passing the necessary legislation. The industry is worthy of help; it is appealing to Parliament for help and I submit the Bill as a means to help it. It is the only way in which help can be afforded, and I hope I shall have the support necessary to pass it into law as early as possible. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Thorn, debate adjourned.

MOTION—FEDERAL DISABILITIES.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 17th September on the following motion by Mr. Piesse (Katanning)—

That a select committee of this House be appointed to consider the disabilities from which the State is suffering as a result of Federal enactments, more especially in re-

gard to the burden of the Federal tariff and Federal taxation; and that the Legislative Council be requested to appoint a similar committee to act jointly in the matter.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [8.52]: Earlier in to-day's sitting I moved a motion dealing with a somewhat similar subject and at the suggestion of the Premier I withdrew it with the idea of making my remarks under this motion. My motion read—

That this House is of opinion that the Government should immediately communicate with the Federal and other State Governments urging that a Federal convention of the same numerical representation as the convention that framed the Federal Constitution should be held as soon as possible, such convention to determine what amendments to the Constitution are necessary, based on the experience of thirty years of Federal life.

My motion was in no way antagonistic to that of the member for Katanning. In fact, I think it would have been advantageous if the two motions had been moved as one. If the State Governments' urging for a Federal convention be agreed to, it will be necessary to proceed in the way suggested by the member for Katanning and prepare a case for our delegates to present to the convention. I do not intend to take up the time of the House at great length, because it is well known that we have suffered disabilities under Federation. In this House there are members who are in favour of secession; others consider that we should exhaust all other methods of obtaining redress of our grievances without going to the length of secession; but I doubt whether there is a single member in this Parliament who is not of opinion that we have suffered disabilities. Not a single member would say otherwise than that the Federation has been disadvantageous to Western Australia. Therefore I shall not weary the House with a long rigmarole about our disabilities. We hear of them every day. What I wish members to consider is the proper method of starting our agitation to secure redress. Should we go bald-headed for secession without making at least another effort to obtain redress by constitutional methods? I am very glad to say that there are leading members on both sides of this House who are of opinion that we should try to obtain what we desire without going so far as to secede from the Commonwealth. I should like to quote some remarks recently made in a speech delivered

by the Chief Secretary, who is a K.C. and has made a study of the Federal Constitution. Mr. Keenan was reported to have said—

It is a matter not to be wondered at that the people of Western Australia, appreciating the fact that, no matter which political party is in power in the Commonwealth Parliament, the policy which such party carries out is a policy designed to foster and promote the interests of Victoria and New South Wales, without giving any care whatever to the fact that such a policy is ruinous to Western Australia, should turn to secession as a method of salvation. I do not blame them for doing so, nor do I presume to allege that there is not a limit to patient endurance beyond which no one is entitled to ask the people of this State to remain quiescent. But I do most earnestly urge that secession is a last resort, and that, until all possibilities of amending the Constitution in such measure as will secure fair conditions for Western Australia are exhausted and proved to be ineffective, it would be almost a crime to destroy Federation.

The other evening when I was speaking on the Address-in-reply and urging that a convention should be sought, the Leader of the Opposition interjected as follows:—

That is the sensible way to proceed. Then if we cannot get a new Constitution that will be satisfactory, we can go for secession.

Thus we have leading members on both sides of the House agreeing with my opinion. Mr. Lovekin, in his pamphlet, claims that we have exhausted all efforts to get our grievances redressed and there is nothing left but secession. But what have we done in the way of asking for a convention? We have asked for a convention once—11 years ago. I cannot trace any occasion when we have asked for our grievances to be righted by what are considered to be constitutional means, that is by the holding of a convention on the same representation as that which framed the Constitution. I should like to quote an interjection by the Leader of the Opposition, who said in reference to the suggestion of a convention—

Hear, hear! That is the only way out, but no one has ever asked for that course to be adopted.

I reminded the Premier then that 11 or 12 years ago, when Sir Henry Lefroy was Premier, the then Government asked the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, to hold a convention. The late Sir Henry Lefroy in his correspondence pointed out that the framers of the Constitution had practically promised

that after we had a Federal life of 20 years another convention would be held, to rectify any grievances or anomalies. Mr. Hughes distinctly promised that a convention would be called. Later on he went so far as to move the first and second reading of a Bill in the Federal House enabling this convention to be held. When it was found that not only Western Australia, but South Australia, Tasmania, and even Queensland, were getting data together to supply to their delegates who would present the case for those States at the convention, Mr. Hughes, I suppose on pressure brought to bear by Victoria and New South Wales, declared that there would be no convention, but that a special Constitutional session of the Federal Parliament would be held to amend the Constitution if it was found necessary.

Mr. Marshall: Mr. Bruce also promised it.

Mr. ANGELO: That was in 1921. Mr. Bruce did not go so far as to move the first and second reading of the Bill and abandon it afterwards, as Mr. Hughes did. When it was found that the four States were moving in the direction of attending that promised convention, with a properly prepared case, showing how the Constitution should be amended, Mr. Hughes went back upon his promise and declined to call a convention. So far as I know, that is the only effort we have made, or any of the States has made, for the holding of a convention. This movement, which started in Western Australia, for better treatment at the hands of the Federal Government than the States have enjoyed in the past, has gradually spread to the other States. Now, the question of amending the Constitution or throwing it into the melting pot, and trying to create out of the debris another Constitution that will be more fitting for Australia as a whole, is being talked about in all the other States. As I said the other night, on my last visit to the Eastern States I met important people from Queensland who openly talked of secession for that State. I found the same thing in South Australia. Since I gave notice of this motion a telegram appeared in the "West Australian" from Adelaide dated the 19th September, as follows:—

The Liberal Convention at its annual conference to-day confirmed the principles of Federation, but urged the calling of a Federal Convention to consider the relative positions of Federal and State rights.

That shows that in South Australia the matter is being seriously considered. As I have already told the House, I found some members of Parliament in Victoria suggesting secession. That shows that if we were to ask for a convention we would very probably get one. If the convention was held, its operations would be very far reaching. The question of reconstituting the Senate, which seems from the point of view of public opinion not to be functioning as was anticipated, could be discussed. The question of the smaller States, the future of northern Australia, and all the large questions could be discussed by the delegates at the convention, and the Constitution amended as was found necessary. Some years ago Lord Birkenhead said—

It is the height of arrogance to attempt to lay down for future generations what their Constitution should be.

The present Constitution has lasted for 30 years. We must realise that our social, political, and economic life has considerably changed during that period. We have had the world's greatest war since Federation came into existence, and the conditions of life have considerably changed. We are, therefore, quite justified in demanding that another convention should be held. Even if we ask for a convention and all the other States ask for it, I hardly think the Federal Government would grant our request. I think they would refuse us as they did before. The pressure of New South Wales and Victoria, with their 39 members in the House of Representatives out of 75, would prevent us from getting it. If, however, we ask for the convention we shall have done all that is expected of us.

The Premier: And then we would support secession?

Mr. ANGELO: I am coming to that. If we ask in a constitutional manner for the only constitutional method of having our grievances redressed, and we are refused, we shall be consistent and right if we try to get secession in what is the only way we can secure it, namely, by telling the Federal Government that after a certain date we will no longer remain in the Federation, but will put up our own customs, post offices, etc.

Mr. Wansbrough: Declare war, in fact.

Mr. ANGELO: What nonsense! Where could we find one Australian willing to

shoot another because he does not wish to belong to the same constitution?

Mr. Wansbrough: What about the case of the United States?

Mr. ANGELO: There were other features about the war in the United States, such as the slave traffic, which will never be found in Australia. I am certain that if we went out for secession in that way we should be told, "If you are prepared to take up your share of the debts, you can go." Already we have been told by one politician in the Eastern States that if we want to go, he will be prepared to let us go.

Mr. Wansbrough: A number of members who now advocate secession would be found in a hollow log if that happened.

Mr. ANGELO: Neither the Premier nor I could readily get into a hollow log, and I do not think we would make the attempt.

Mr. Kenneally: Some members have been in a hollow log for a long time.

Mr. ANGELO: The Dominion League is asking the Government to have a referendum taken in Western Australia to learn whether the people are in favour of secession or not. I hope that will be done. The argument for our case will be very much stronger if before we have the referendum we approach the Federal Government and ask for this convention. Thousands of men and women who to-day would not vote for secession would do so, after we had taken every constitutional means, including a last hour appeal for a convention, to have our grievances redressed, and the Federal Government had turned us down.

Mr. Millington: This is merely secession propaganda, is it?

The Premier: Why not, when we have propaganda for centralisation?

Mr. ANGELO: I hope it is a "gander" that will produce geese that will lay golden eggs for Western Australia. I feel sure that if we went to the British Parliament, and asked them to help us to get secession, we should not obtain anything like the same help we would get if we could say that we had exhausted every constitutional means to secure redress.

Mr. Millington: You would get what you deserved.

Mr. ANGELO: Whilst I am supporting the motion of the member for Katanning, I urge the Government to lose no time in applying to the Federal and other State

Governments for the holding of this convention. If the reply is favourable the sooner we have the case prepared for Western Australia, as suggested by the member for Katanning, the better will it be. The request for a convention need not take much time. Very often the longest way round is the shortest way home. I am glad the hon. member has brought down this motion. In any case, whether it means sending delegates to the convention or arranging for a referendum, we must have our case prepared. Committees have dealt with it and investigations have been made by the Chief Secretary. All that information could be used in the preparation of our case. I trust the Government will approach the Federal authorities, and that the motion moved by the member for Katanning, to appoint a select committee to have the case properly prepared, whether it be for a convention or for use in connection with a referendum, will be carried by Parliament.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 25th September, 1930.

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

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, CITY BEACH ESTATE.

Mr. MILLINGTON asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the cost of laying the water main to the City Beach Estate? 2, What arrangements were made with the