

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 26th November, 1935.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

- 1, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.
- 2, Financial Emergency Tax.
- 3, Wiluna Water Board Further Loan Guarantee.
- 4, Financial Emergency Act Amendment.
- 5, Workers' Homes Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 6, Pearling Act Amendment.

MOTION—HEALTH ACT.

To Disallow Meat Inspection Regulation.

Debate resumed from the 21st November on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter (East):—

That Regulation No. 4, made under the Health Act, 1911-33, as published in the *Government Gazette* on 1st November, 1935, and laid on the Table of the House on 13th November, 1935, be and is hereby disallowed.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson (West) [4.37]: The regulation specifies the places at which meat may be inspected and branded, and the point of the new regulation objected to by Mr. Baxter is that the meat inspection depots at the Perth City Markets and at Fremantle in Newman-street have been omitted. If the

motion is agreed to, it will mean reverting to the old regulation No. 4 which included those two depots as receiving places where meat might be inspected. Depots were established in the metropolitan area some time before the Abattoirs Act came into operation and at a time when butchers in the metropolitan area, to a very great extent, were doing their slaughtering in private slaughter houses. With the coming into operation of the Abattoirs Act, the private slaughter houses were closed down and, in the ordinary course of events, those depots would probably have been closed down too, but for the fact that it was argued that they were convenient to many small producers on the fringe of the metropolitan area particularly, who wanted a place where they could dispose of their surplus stock. So, in order to provide such a convenience, those depots were allowed to be carried on. They were a convenience to the people referred to, but the number of stock passing through those markets at the time was very small. During the last year or two, however, the numbers have increased considerably, running into many thousands, and the whole position has been giving the Public Health Department and the Department of Agriculture a great deal of concern. Over a fairly lengthy period conferences have taken place between the two departments with a view to devising ways and means to bring about an improvement of the conditions that exist. As a result of those conferences between the departmental officials and the Ministers, the amended regulation to which objection has been taken has been tabled. There can be no doubt that, from the point of view of inspection, the present position leaves quite a lot to be desired. I think every member will agree that where animals are to be slaughtered for human consumption, at least sanitary conditions should prevail. I think I am correct in saying that in a large number of instances where slaughtering takes place outside the metropolitan area, the conditions are anything but satisfactory. Any member who has had experience of the small slaughter yards will understand what I mean. It is impossible for them to adopt in those slaughter houses the same method that is adopted in the abattoirs in the metropolitan area. Another point which must be taken into consideration is the method whereby the carcases are transported from the country to the city. They are carried in all manner

of conveyances, under all manner of conditions, and, to say the least, most undesirable methods are adopted for the transport of carcasses from districts outside the metropolitan area to the depots in the metropolitan area.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Does not that apply somewhat in the metropolitan area also?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I would perhaps be prepared to agree with the hon. member, but with this qualification, that it applies to nothing like the same extent. There is probably room in the metropolitan area, just as there has been in the Eastern States, for an improvement in the vehicles used for the transport of meat.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Are not there special railway wagons for transporting meat?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Carcasses coming to the city from many of the districts of the South-West and Great Southern never see the inside of any particular meat van.

Hon. W. J. Mann: They are well protected.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I dare say they are protected to the best extent possible in the circumstances, but that does not imply that it is a condition to which we should agree. In any criticism that has been offered from a public health point of view, there has been no intention whatever to reflect on the qualifications of the inspectors operating at the depots. Any criticism has been offered in a way which I think shows that the main object of the Public Health Department is to ensure that there shall be a proper inspection of the carcasses, and that that proper inspection cannot possibly have taken place if the organs belonging to the particular carcasses were not taken to the depot with the carcasses.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That does not apply to calves, does it?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, just as to any other carcasses, though not to the same extent.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Yet the authoritative works I quoted say no.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member has quoted from what he termed an authoritative work. I will not challenge that statement, but I will quote what our own chief inspector has to say. I consider that our own chief inspector can be accepted as an authority to the same degree as the inspector quoted by the hon. member in his speech.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It was a doctor I quoted, not an inspector.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I believe the hon. member quoted a municipal inspector as an authority.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And a doctor—Dr. Reid.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is all right. Regarding the inspectors I merely wish to say that we agree they are men well qualified to carry out their duties. They cannot, however, do their work properly if they have only the carcass to inspect, and not the internal organs. Carcasses sent in from outback will not contain the internal organs.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Animals have been sent down alive.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, on the hoof.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And under the new regulations they will be destroyed on the farms, or at least a lot of the calves will.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is the argument. Whatever regulation may be promulgated, some persons will be affected adversely. The main point to be considered, though, is the public health of the metropolitan area. That is a weightier consideration than the interests of a few individuals.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is a matter running into many thousands of pounds. I was astonished when I inquired into the subject.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Naturally the hon. member was astonished. The matter has become a menace to the public of the metropolitan area.

Hon. L. Craig: Why cannot you specify stock two months old? That will cover the calves.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Criticism of these regulations has been based on entirely wrong premises. Mr. Baxter said that these regulations would not provide any additional safeguard for public health, and that the arguments used could not be substantiated. I claim they can be substantiated. The hon. member remarked on the number of carcasses coming into the market. I agree that the number is astounding. During the last two years it has increased to fully 21,000 in 12 months. For 1934, 130 cattle carcasses were received at Fremantle, and 670 at Perth; 1,881 calves at Fremantle, and 10,881 at Perth; 1,307

sheep at Fremantle, and 3,027 at Perth; 1,307 pigs at Fremantle, and 1,903 at Perth; or a total of 4,685 carcasses at Fremantle, and 16,487 at Perth. Of these totals, it will be noted, no fewer than 12,700 were carcasses of calves, representing an average of about 250 per week. Hon. members will recollect that Mr. Baxter and Mr. Macfarlane, in speaking against the regulations, said hardly a word about anything but calves. From inquiries I have made I am able to inform the House that there is less risk of disease in the case of calves than in the case of sheep or cattle or pigs.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Pigs are the worst of all.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Pigs are a long way the worst. The Minister for Health, Mr. Munsie, has already received deputations on this subject, and has indicated his readiness to give consideration to the question of calves, at the same time intimating that he is not prepared to give consideration in regard to any other carcase meats which come to the depot without prior inspection. Even as regards calves there is room for considerable improvement in the method of transport to market. Perhaps that is an aspect we need not go into at the moment, but I wish to quote from a report made by an inspector last week. That report gives an indication of the conditions at present prevailing, conditions which no member with a regard for the public health of the metropolitan area can possibly attempt to justify. I have said that the Minister for Health has promised deputations that he will give consideration to the question of calves. He has not come to any decision as yet, but I understand there is every possibility of his rendering a favourable decision in that regard. Moreover, these regulations do not come into force until the 1st January next, so that there is time for the matter to be adequately considered before the amendments take effect. Mr. Baxter referred to the fact that certain authorities have stated there is no necessity for the viscera of carcase meats to be available for inspection; that did not matter. Our own Chief Inspector takes an entirely different view. Mr. Baxter quoted the City of Perth Health Inspector as stating that examination at the Perth depot was quite efficient, and that it was not necessary for the viscera to be available to determine the health of

an animal. The Chief Inspector's comment on that phase is brief—

Every meat inspector who knows his job knows full well how incorrect such a statement is.

From further inquiries I have made, I am prepared to support our own Chief Inspector. Mr. Baxter, going a little further, took the Minister for Health to task for having made a statement to the deputation regarding horse meat having been placed on the market in the metropolitan area. Mr. Baxter was definite in what he said on that point, that the Minister either had been very badly advised or had been told only half the truth; that it was a fact that a certain butcher had attempted to place horse meat on the Perth market, and that what the Minister had failed to state was that this horse meat had been passed by a Government inspector. That was rather a serious statement to make, and I thought it advisable to clear the matter up, so that the people of the metropolitan area may be satisfied that the inspection which takes place at the metropolitan abattoirs is efficient. To quote the Chief Inspector on that point—

This statement is certainly untrue. The only instance we have of horse meat being marketed as beef was in 1918. Our inspector, Clutterbuck, diagnosed it at once. The meat was seized, and the person who marketed it was prosecuted. The complaint was heard in the Perth Police Court on the 1st May, 1918.

That is 17 years ago, it will be observed.

The defendant was fined £20, with £1 8s. costs. The carcase had been specially dressed and trimmed up to resemble beef, but our inspector was not deceived. If I remember rightly, our inspector was complimented on his perspicacity in detecting the fraud. I think, therefore, that Mr. Baxter should withdraw his statement. It is difficult to understand where he obtained his information. Mr. Clutterbuck discovered the carcase, and Mr. F. Higgs laid the complaint on behalf of Mr. Clutterbuck.

There is a great difference between that case and the allegation made by Mr. Baxter. Allegations of that nature convey an entirely erroneous impression. The only inference to be drawn from the assertion here in question is that our inspection is not as satisfactory as it ought to be.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The source from which I got the information is supposed to be very reliable.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Supposed to be! The hon. member should see that it is reliable.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We shall see that later on.

Hon. J. Cornell: The departmental officers are infallible if the matter is left to them.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I shall correct my statement in due course, if it is wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member made a wrong interpretation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do not be too sure of that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have seen the file.

Hon. J. Cornell: We have seen lots of files.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have been quoting the Chief Inspector's statement on the subject, and I say definitely there can be no denying the actual facts of the case as I have quoted them.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Was the same man who is Chief Inspector now, Chief Inspector at that period?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. At that time the present Chief Inspector was one of our inspectors, but not Chief Inspector. Having disposed of those three points, I would like to offer a few observations on the manner in which carcase meat is delivered to the depot, though of course not in every case. In some cases carcasses come from the abattoirs at Perth and Fremantle. Naturally, under the amended regulations, there would be nothing to prevent carcase meat slaughtered and inspected at the abattoirs from being sold at the depot.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is being sold in large quantities.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. Under the amended regulations, if they come into force, there will be nothing to prevent that. As regards carcase meat which does not go near the abattoirs but comes direct to the depot before being inspected, I wish to quote a report compiled to show what actually takes place. On the 10th September, 1935, illegal slaughtering was discovered in a certain district very close to Perth; it had been carried on under most unsatisfactory and insanitary conditions. The man concerned was prosecuted on three charges, and was fined

£13 6s., including costs. On the 25th September, 1935, the same man forwarded 12 pigs to Foggitt Jones. Five were affected with tuberculosis. On the 11th September, 1935, 12 pigs were forwarded, three of which were affected with tuberculosis. Thus 33 per cent. of the pigs sent to Foggitt Jones by this man, who was doing the slaughtering, were affected with tuberculosis.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would they have been discovered to be defective if they had been sent to the depot?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is highly questionable.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Now you are casting reflections.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am casting no reflections. I am given to understand that it is quite possible to dress carcase meat so that an inspector has no chance of inspecting it efficiently for certain diseases.

Hon. A. Thomson: How did they discover it on this occasion?

The HONORARY MINISTER: They were sent to Foggitt Jones to be treated; but I am pointing out that there is nothing to show that if this man had been allowed to carry on, the possibilities are—I do not say this definitely—that these discoveries would not have been made. There are quite a number of cases of a similar character that one could give, but I only wish to quote one or two in connection with Fremantle to show that vigilance is necessary. In order to have up-to-date information as to the actual position, an inspection was recently carried out and one of the departmental officers was called upon to pay a visit to Fremantle with the object of having the actual facts of the case presented to the Minister in charge of the department. After stating that the building is quite suitable as a sale room he goes on to deal with the number of pigs, sheep and cows which were submitted on the day of his visit, the 21st of the present month. He says—

I wish to draw your attention to methods adopted in transporting meat to this market. In one instance I saw three pigs in bags taken out of a utility motor truck owned by This truck also contained two pig-wash drums and a dirty kerosene tin. A Mr. brought in a body of beef resting on two motor tyres on the floor of a motor truck. This meat was covered with dirty bags. A carrier from the Peel Estate brought in four calves and two pigs. These carcasses were in dirty bags and

were lying on top of milk drums which were full of milk. Another person . . . brought in six pigs placed in bags lying on the top of a load of wool. All sorts of conveyances are used for transporting the carcase meat to this market, and on only two occasions did I see the pigs enclosed in white bags. The method of handling this meat in the market is most unsatisfactory. At peak periods while two or more carts are unloading, calves and pigs are dumped on the floor until such time as they are weighed and placed on the rails.

I think I have said sufficient to give a strong indication, at any rate, of the necessity, not only for a very rigid inspection, but also for improvements to be made in the method of transporting carcase meat sold through the depots. So far as the large stock are concerned, the department take the point of view that in no circumstances can they agree that the present system is satisfactory. In respect of calves, it is admitted that there is less risk of disease and there is every possibility of something being done to provide that they shall continue to be marketed at the depot. Even so, that could only be allowed on the understanding that they were inspected by a Public Health Department officer at those depots, probably at a given time each day, or in accordance with whatever arrangements might be made. With regard to pigs, the department take the point of view that they are the most dangerous of the lot, and they cannot, under any condition whatever, agree to pigs arriving at the depots as in the past. There is no objection to pigs being slaughtered outside Government abattoirs and the arrangements existing to-day, whereby permission is given to slaughter pigs on the outskirts of the metropolitan area, can continue. When this is done, arrangements are made with the department to have an inspector present at the time. There is no objection to these slaughter houses being carried on under the arrangements that have existed in the past and which have operated fairly satisfactorily, provided, of course that present arrangements regarding the presence of a health inspector are still adhered to. So we come down to this, that the amendments to the regulations are really designed to protect the people in the metropolitan area from the risk of getting diseased meat.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: What protection have the people in the country from diseased meat that a butcher may sell?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I take it there is the local authority to see to that.

Hon. L. Craig: There is no inspection.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In places like Busselton, Bunbury and in towns along the Great Southern there are inspectors. In many places the local butcher does his own slaughtering, and probably also the farmer does a certain amount for himself. The regulation deals only with the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. J. Mann: But there are several places mentioned in the schedule.

The HONORARY MINISTER: As far as the larger stock are concerned, it seems to me the regulation is absolutely essential, and the point we have to give consideration to is whether the interests of a few individuals are to be affected or whether the health of the people of the metropolitan area is to suffer. The Health Department say that the health of the people must prevail. That is a principle with which we all must agree. I would go so far as to say that we should not make these things more harsh than is necessary, and it is for that reason that the department and the Minister are prepared to give consideration to the question of calves. We realise what it means to a large number of small farmers, particularly to the man who may only send up one calf or two or three occasionally, and to whom a few shillings may mean quite a lot. Provided there is inspection in the way indicated there is not much to which we can take exception. On these grounds I oppose the motion.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [5.7]: When this motion was submitted by Mr. Baxter I was under the impression that it was brought in mainly to prevent the stealing of stock. But having listened to the Honorary Minister I can see that there is need for the tightening up of the position in respect of the markets. At the same time, we must not forget there are two methods the farmer has of disposing of his stock, one being through the sale of fat stock at Midland Junction and the other by disposing of carcase meat. For many years carcase meat has been sold at markets, and the procedure adopted has given satisfaction. We have not heard complaints from the health point of view, and there is no doubt that if we cancel that method of selling we shall interfere greatly with those farmers who are endeavouring to obtain a living in this way for themselves and their families. Many

head of stock such as calves and lambs are sent in from small holdings and the sales have been quite helpful to the owners. If the stock is sent down in carcass form and say the distance is 100 miles, the freight is 2s. 6d., but if it is sent down alive in a crate the cost is 12s. 6d. When brought down on the hook in a crate the offal weighs about 30 lbs., and the crate weighs about 1½ cwt., and, as I have said, the freight is then 12s. 6d. to the seller. The weight of an average calf is 70 lbs. when sold in the market, and it brings from 22s. 6d. to 30s. Members can readily see that if a farmer has to pay 12s. 6d. by way of freight, then if the calf is to be killed at the abattoirs at Fremantle or Midland Junction, there are also additional carting expenses. So a grave injustice will be inflicted on the small producers who have added to their means of livelihood in this way, and particularly the people close to the metropolitan area. I know of many consignments that have been sent from as far as Mt. Barker, and in the winter months quite a lot of carcass meat is sent in from Katanning and even closer to the city. Before road transport was prohibited, trucks were able to pick up stock early in the morning in different country centres and deliver it promptly at the market. The stock was conveyed almost invariably in the coolest part of the day, and it was available for sale on the same day. Of course that is impossible now, and in the majority of cases stock-owners have to deliver carcass meat by rail. I was struck by a letter written last week by Mr. H. J. Teasdale of Merredin, who stated that quite a large number of carcasses were frozen at Merredin and sent on to the market in that condition. It is time the Railway Department gave some consideration to supplying trucks containing freezing or chilling apparatus, as is the case in America. Some people say it might be a costly way of bringing carcasses into the market. On one occasion I called upon the secretary to the Commissioner for Railways, who informed me that the department had given this matter careful consideration, but owing to the lack of capital they could not adopt the system. The time has arrived when the Government should give careful consideration to the method of transporting carcass meat.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Where would it be inspected?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: In the centre where the beast was killed. Already the meat is inspected in most country centres by the local health inspector. That officer inspects the meat every morning before it is brought into the butchers' shops for sale. It would be just as easy to have all the meat inspected in the country in the same way as it is inspected at the abattoirs. Throughout the depression our farmers were urged to go in for mixed farming. As a rule a farmer is obliged to endeavour to make up a half truck, otherwise it would be too costly to send any of his animals to the market. If farmers find themselves unable to continue on with mixed farming, and make a little money out of carcass meat, they will have to fall back again upon the production of wheat and wool alone. This would be greatly to the detriment of the State and the producers themselves. I am sure that the carcass meat that comes in from the country must have a tendency to stabilise prices in Perth. Hotels, caterers and the like can buy any quantity of meat they want at the markets. They are not always bound to buy through butchers' shops. Mr. Baxter referred to the number of carcasses that were sold in the market on one particular day. I do not think he referred to lambs, but on the day in question I think only ten lambs were sold. I rang up Mr. Nelson at the markets, and asked him if he had many opportunities to sell lamb. He told me it was a common thing for him to have between 60 and 70 lambs for sale on the one market day. Most of that lamb was sent from the Midland Junction Abattoirs. When this matter was first mentioned I thought the regulations were intended to assist in keeping down sheep stealing, but I gather from the remarks of the Honorary Minister that they have no connection with that matter.

Hon. L. Craig: Indirectly, they must have to do with sheep stealing.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: When we were discussing the Brands Act Amendment Bill it was mentioned that sheep's carcasses were sent into the market, and that there was no method of tracing the place from which those sheep had come. I am of opinion that a record could be kept of any stock that was sent in, and that this could be referred back to the centres from which the stock had

come and checked. I will support the motion.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-West) [5.20]: I listened attentively to the remarks of Mr. Baxter and those of the Honorary Minister. I am afraid the regulations in question will inflict great hardship upon many people. If it were a matter of the public health versus the interests of a few private persons, naturally the public health would be of paramount importance, but the Honorary Minister has not shown that during the past few years the health of any individual has suffered by reason of the conditions in vogue. Mr. Baxter referred to the fact that 220 separate growers had sent meat to the metropolitan market from 62 different railway stations. If these regulations are allowed to come into force they will prevent growers from marketing their calves and lambs in the way they have been doing, because they will get little or no return from them. It appears that an attempt is being made to force everything into the abattoirs. That would put the small man in an impossible position. The small man could not send his stock by rail at a cost that would be profitable to him, because he has not enough animals to sell. The Honorary Minister referred to the condition of carcasses that have been sent to the Fremantle market. If the health officials desired to conserve the health of consumers of the metropolitan area, they could frame regulations to provide for the proper carriage of carcasses to the market. The meat should be adequately covered and protected. That would be a simple way of overcoming the difficulty. A considerable proportion of the meat supplied to Fremantle every week and sold at the depots there comes direct from the abattoirs. The Honorary Minister quoted the case of a man who had sent for slaughter pigs which were found to be diseased. Anyone who is killing animals in the vicinity of the metropolitan area has them inspected, according to the Honorary Minister. It appears to be the intention of the department to allow calves to come into the metropolitan area under certain conditions. If we approve of these regulations we shall have no say in the framing of those conditions. The regulations should be withdrawn with the idea of meeting the situation with newly-framed regulations. A large number of people in the

country districts are likely to suffer much hardship. Before the Transport Board was created animals that were killed in the country in the afternoon could be marketed in the metropolitan area the next morning. If the Railways provided trucks in which chilled meat could be transported, the meat from many centres would take too long to reach the market. The question of the carriage of carcasses to the depots is one for the Health Department. The authorities should stipulate that all the carcasses are suitably covered on their way to the markets.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And the Railways should co-operate by seeing that the carcasses are hung and properly looked after.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Health Department has been negligent in this matter. I am often surprised to see the type of vehicle used in the metropolitan area for the carriage of meat. Very often there is only an awning over it. In other parts of Australia the vehicles are properly covered and the carcasses are hung.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Instead of being carried in a heap.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It lies within the power of the Health Department to see that meat that is privately killed is properly transported. No doubt many of the statements of the Honorary Minister provide food for thought. I agree it is not desirable that meat should be sent to the market if it is at all injurious to public health. The regulations in question will do a lot of harm. I am compelled to support the motion in the hope that the Honorary Minister will see that other regulations are brought down to protect all those who have meat to send to the market, as well as safeguard the health of the community. We should be very careful when dealing with regulations that will make it more difficult for the men who are endeavouring to make a living from our primary industries. We should not pass regulations that will reduce or at least restrict their possible means of income.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.31]: I shall be very brief. While I speak on many subjects that I may not completely understand, I think the House will admit that we are now dealing with a subject of which I know something. I have run a chain of butcher's shops commencing at South Fremantle and finishing at Leonora. On one occasion when I visited abattoirs in New

South Wales I witnessed a scene that I shall never forget. The carcasses of scores of pigs were hung up and they were being scarified by inspectors with slashing knives. Kerosene had been, and was being, poured over them, and they were sent away to be burnt. They were not fit for consumption. The pig is a most dangerous animal from the standpoint of disease.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: With regard to calves, in many instances hardship will probably be inflicted if the regulation is enforced. On the other hand, we have the assurance of the Minister that the matter will be rectified. At one time when another matter was under discussion and the point involved was that of leaving matters to the discretion of the Minister, I drew the attention of the House to an amendment I proposed to the Bill, and I was told by members on all sides, "You have to trust the Minister." I am bound in this instance to follow that advice and trust the Minister!

Hon. A. Thomson: But he is not in charge of the department.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I admit the necessity for the proposed inspection and supervision, but in order that that work may be carried out properly, the inspector must see the animal slaughtered; he should not see the carcass only after the entrails had been destroyed or otherwise got rid of. During the debate, Mr. Hall made reference to the meat consumed in the country. After listening to the Minister, I presume the country people will die from all manner of diseases, because the owners of every farm or station kill their own meat, and it is consumed without the advantage of any official inspection. I employ a number of men on my property. We keep records regarding everything. Each man, woman and child, according to the records, consumed 2 lbs. of meat per day last year.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And they are still alive.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes, and not 1 lb. of that meat was inspected. Members could not find a healthier crowd of men, or a better team for work, than my employees. Nevertheless, when it comes to a consideration of conditions in the confined areas of the metropolis, where we are told 300,000,000 microbes are hanging round ready to inflict suffering upon humanity, we must have the matter regulated. We must have a set of

regulations for the city, and at the same time allow the people in the country areas to do as they like. Where meat is slaughtered for sale, I admit it should be done under proper supervision. As to there being no safeguard in the country districts, provided a man has any respect for his own health, or that of his family or his men, if any animal is killed and turns out to be diseased, in 99 cases out of a hundred the meat does not go into consumption. It is quite a different matter when they kill and pass the carcasses on for sale to the public. With the promise of the Minister, whom I must trust according to members of this Chamber, I will oppose the motion, seeing that the Minister has said he will deal with the position as it affects calves.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [5.35]: First of all, I admit that the department have a job to do, namely, to look after the health of the people who consume meat. In my opinion, however, wrong methods are used regarding the manner in which meat is brought to the city. I believe that much of our meat should be killed, particularly during the winter months, in the country centres, and the carcasses could be sent down to the city in trucks that are not refrigerated. If so despatched they would be quite all right and the public would get better and cheaper meat. Consider the position regarding cattle railed from Meekatharra. Let members imagine how those cattle are herded in trucks for two or three days, after having travelled overland for quite a long time. Finally, those beasts, after buffeting for several days during the rail journey, arrive in the metropolitan area for slaughter. I maintain that method is absolutely wrong. The beasts should be killed at Meekatharra, not at the termination of their journey in Perth.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Those conditions explain why so much of our beef is of poor quality.

Hon. T. MOORE: There is no doubt that the wrong method is adopted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We know that what you suggest ought to be done, but it cannot be done.

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not know why it could not be done. Mr. Holmes agrees that the present system is wrong and, if that is the position, we should rectify it. I do not regard it as impossible. I admit that Mr. Holmes has had much more experience than

I regarding the handling of meat in the metropolitan area, but he knows that what I say is correct. Much of the meat consumed in the metropolitan area comes from Meekatharra, and if what I suggest were adopted the people would get a better class of meat altogether. That is what we should aim at. The animals could certainly be killed at Meekatharra and sent to Perth in other than refrigerated trucks during the winter months. Of course, it could not be done during the summer unless refrigerated trucks were available. I do not think that the provision of insulated trucks should be beyond us, particularly in these days when electricity plays such a great part in our daily lives.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Attempts have been made in the past.

Hon. T. MOORE: I know, but we must alter conditions that we know to be wrong. When we find such things happening, we should ascertain the reason, and discover if we can alter the position. As to the freight question, Mr. Holmes knows how the country people are troubled from that standpoint with regard to their meat. It is one of the bugbears of life in the rural areas. The cattle railed to the metropolitan area on the hoof cost altogether too much.

Hon. L. Craig: Far too much.

Hon. T. MOORE: That is another reason why we should consider the conditions under which meat is marketed. It costs so much that the men in the country, particularly when returns are low, is always doubtful whether he will get a cheque for his cattle or a bill for freight. I am somewhat in a dilemma regarding the motion. I do not desire unhealthy carcasses of meat to be unloaded on the people of the metropolitan area, but at the same time I appreciate the unsatisfactory methods that are adopted regarding meat supplies. I hope that those in charge of the buying and selling of cattle, or the agents who, to a great extent, control the marketing of stock for sale, will endeavour to devise some scheme by which, with Government assistance regarding insulated trucks, the present unsatisfactory condition of affairs may be rectified.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Twenty-five years ago I remember slaughtering in Perth with a view to sending the carcasses to Kalgoorlie in refrigerated trucks, but freight killed the proposition.

Hon. T. MOORE: We have advanced a great deal during the last 25 years.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But not in that respect.

Hon. T. MOORE: I think that with the improved conditions that obtain to-day, what was impossible 25 years ago is well within the bounds of possibility to-day. Mr. Baxter has referred to what is done in other parts of the world. He has indicated the correct way of dealing with the problem, if we are to serve the people in the country districts who grow and sell the meat and also to conserve the interests of the people in the metropolitan area who consume the meat. Better conditions are required for both sections of the community. After hearing the statement by the Minister, I shall oppose the motion, but I hope some consideration will be given to the points I have raised. Conditions should be altered so that carcasses will be brought down to the metropolitan area instead of animals being railed on the hoof as obtains to-day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.42]: Replying to Mr. Baxter's speech on this motion, the Honorary Minister quoted figures regarding stock brought to Fremantle and Perth. I would have preferred some indication of the number of stock, brought down under the conditions that have been described, that have been condemned. Although such stock are bred in the rural districts, they must be sent to depots where they are subject to inspection.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Certainly.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Members should have been told the proportion of the stock that is condemned. I agree with other members that there is a good deal in the contention that better conditions are required in the interests of the preservation of public health. I do not agree with the Honorary Minister when he suggested that if it were a question as to the public health, and as to the interests of even a large number of struggling producers in the country areas, the method outlined is the correct way by which the position may be improved. Those of us who live in the rural areas have a lively recollection, when the depression was at its height two or three years ago, that the only ready cash many estimable people could secure from month to month was that which they received as a result of sending half-a-dozen pigs and two or three calves to the metro-

politan market. That was done only in the cooler portion of the year. It is not possible in summertime, and we know that in this State the summer season is much the longer. Consequently farmers at small sidings do not take the risk of slaughtering and sending to the metropolis their stock at that time of the year. While I am with the Department of Public Health in any reasonable endeavour to improve the conditions, I feel that the department are taking a rather drastic view of the position. If this regulation be allowed to remain, how is the small farmer going to market his produce? He cannot often make up a truckload. He probably has half a dozen sows at most, and a few porkers coming along now and again, enabling him to send up, say, half a dozen carcasses per week. But he cannot send a big consignment. A few years ago I knew of a number of people who, during the winter months, regularly sent a few porkers to a well-known firm in the city. That product brought top price, 1d. or 2d. per lb. higher than the average simply because the people who sent them had a name for good quality pigs.

Hon. A. Thomson: How far away from the metropolitan area were they?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Anything up to 160 or 170 miles. The fact was known that pork bearing the name of those people had been produced under good conditions, and so buyers were prepared to pay a little more for it. While I am with the department in some regards, I feel that it has been rather too severe in this regulation. I agree with Mr. Thomson and others who have said that the department might seek improvement in the method of getting live-stock and carcase meat to market. I will support the motion.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.48]: It is not often I find myself out of step with the Minister, but it is so on this occasion. It is for the reason that four years ago we had established in our district a meat market in order to conserve the interests of the small producers. During the few years it has been operating, that market has proved a very great boon to the small producer. Since January of 1932 over 15,000 carcasses have been handled at that market, or a little over 3,000 per annum. And we find that since January of this year something like 3,600

carcasses have been handled, showing that the establishment of the market there had been long desired by the community in our district. I realise that there is great danger in the treatment of pork, more so than in the treatment of any other form of meat, and I find the figures fairly high—over 1,200 pork carcasses have been treated at those markets. Still it appears to me, as to Mr. Mann, that the regulations are a little too severe. If the motion before the House be agreed to, possibly the department will find some other way out of the difficulty. On the other hand, I believe that if the motion be defeated and the regulation remains, the people who supply to the local market will lose considerably, because if all their supplies were sent to the abattoirs there would be no profit for them. If they had to have their stock slaughtered in the prescribed manner, it would rob them of all profit. I believe that phase of it is very serious for the small man. I am very much concerned about the care of meat for public consumption, and I agree that we should be exceptionally careful to see that it is killed in the proper manner and that no infected meat is placed on the market. Still, I think the regulation too severe, and in order to give the department opportunity to bring down something which will more fairly meet the wishes of those concerned, I will vote for the motion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Cannot you trust the Minister?

Hon. G. FRASER: It is not a question of trusting the Minister. He is not supposed to be concerned in this. This is not something he will have to do with, but something for the Health Department to consider. For the reasons I have given, I will vote for the motion.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.52]: I will support the motion. It seems to me if the regulation be allowed to stand it will mean the destruction of an enormous quantity of meat, and of many side-lines upon which dairy people have been allowed to exist during the depression. If they have to convey their stock to Midland Junction, the business will be ruined, and if they are to be made subject to the rules under which the Transport Board will say that practically all will have to be carried by rail, the knocking about the stuff will get will make it pretty hopeless by the time it reaches

consumers. Altogether it will put the producers of those side-lines to endless expense, and they will find, as many do to-day, that there is nothing left for them when expenses are deducted from their cheques. I know that a great deal of first-class material has come direct from farms and dairies into this market, and I do not think sufficient provision has been made at Midland Junction. Certainly I cannot commend the Government on their foresight. A hopeless position has arisen at Midland Junction, and it applies as well to the killing arrangements as to the yarding arrangements. If the surplus animals being sent into the metropolitan markets all have to be added to the number sent to Midland Junction, it will only increase the difficulties at Midland Junction. Provision has not been made there for the stock that is going in, and unless drastic alterations are speedily effected a grave position will arise as to the quality of the commodity being turned out from Midland Junction. There is no room there for any surplus, and it is better that the dairymen and others should continue to deal with their stock in the way they have done in the past. If the motion be passed, it will leave the position as it is at present, unless new arrangements can be arrived at by the Government, and I hope that whatever is arrived at it will not be that all the killing arrangements shall be done at Midland Junction, which is the intention of this regulation. A much improved proposition would be that better arrangements should be made for those who have to send small consignments. It is very inconvenient and will mean a great deal of extra handling if we agree to this regulation. I will support the motion.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.57]: The Minister's reply to Mr. Baxter's speech was very convincing. The Minister certainly has a way with him, for he put his case very nicely, and kept quite cool throughout. He impressed me considerably, and I think he made out a very good case. When I looked round the House I thought, goodbye to Mr. Baxter's motion. But we are here to think and not to be carried away, either by the fiery eloquence of one of the members for the South Province, who is not here to-day, or by the cold, studied reasoning of the Minister this afternoon. I just have to consider what is at stake in this motion. I am quite satisfied that those whom it

mostly interests are very much concerned about it; and those people are the people depending on the methods of the past being continued. To them it is a very vital matter. We are continually being told that the man on the land can make a good living there, provided he goes in for side-lines. This regulation deals with one of the side-lines he is forced to resort to in order to remain on his farm. With all due respect to the department, this has not caused any consternation in the minds of the metropolitan consumers. If it were so, they would have addressed themselves to many members of Parliament to see to this matter years ago. It is not that two wrongs make a right, but people in the country are mostly left to take care of themselves; it does not seem to matter very much about them. We cannot afford to have an inspector in each of the country districts to ensure that meat is fit for human consumption. However, I do not wish to stress that point. What impresses me is that this is a vital matter to people who have been supplying meat to those markets. While the Minister sounded a note which must have appealed to every member, we must do all in our power to assist the producers. The people of the metropolitan area are not under any compulsion to eat meat, whether it be veal, lamb or pork. The producers, however, in order to make a living, find it necessary to send carcasses to the metropolitan market. That necessity arises from the disparity mentioned by Mr. Piesse between livestock and carcase meat. I should like to ask the Minister whether anything is being done to assist the producers in the fight they are putting up. Remembering that fight, I am compelled to disregard the cold logic of the Minister's argument and face the hard facts of the situation by supporting the motion.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [6.2]: I do not consider the question to be quite as serious as many members would lead us to believe. When we eliminate the number of calves sent to the metropolitan area, it leaves not a great number of stock forwarded as carcase meat, and when we observe that a good deal of the carcase meat comes from the Midland Junction abattoirs, the number is reduced still further. When the Brands Act Amendment Bill was before us, members said it was necessary to exercise some control over meat being

brought into the metropolitan area for sale as carcase meat in the hope of assisting to eliminate sheep-stealing. I do not think any very great hardship will be done to anybody provided the Minister agrees to the exemption of calves. I cannot see that any hardship would be inflicted on people of the country if pigs were brought under the regulation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What would your people say to that?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Quite a lot of pigs are bred in my province and many of them are sold at local sales. Centres within a few miles of each other have a monthly sale where pigs may be auctioned, or they can be sold on the hoof to buyers like Watson & Son and Foggitt, Jones, Ltd., who offer so much per lb. weight and take delivery of them at the station.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Where would they be slaughtered?

Hon. L. CRAIG: They are trucked to Perth and slaughtered at Midland Junction.

Hon. A. Thomson: The producers have to take the price offered them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: A buyer visits the various districts and the producer can see the pigs weighed at the station.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would the seller get a better price by sending to the metropolitan market?

Hon. L. CRAIG: He might, but I doubt it.

Hon. A. Thomson: I think he would.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The producer has the option to sell by auction or to sell by private treaty. It is a common practice for the agents of firms like Dalgety & Co., Elder Smith & Co., Goldsbrough Mort & Co., and Westralian Farmers Ltd., to make up a truck load for transport to Midland Junction.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not for two or three pigs.

Hon. L. CRAIG: One farmer might supply two, another four and another ten or a dozen, and so they make up a small truck load.

Hon. T. Moore: That is done every day.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The regulation is not very important as regards pigs.

Hon. A. Thomson: I am thinking of the man 20 miles out who has to pay the freight and take his pigs in to make up a truck load.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think the hon. member will find that 95 per cent. of the pig carcasses come from close around the metropolitan area. I do not know of any having been transported a great distance.

Hon. W. J. Mann: They are sent from your district.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not know that there are many, but there are many calves. I consider it necessary to exercise control over the sale of carcasses which are brought in with petrol, firewood and other goods. The regulation should tend to restrict stock-stealing, and it is desirable that action in that direction should be taken.

Hon. A. Thomson: Are not carcasses carried in railway goods vans with all sorts of other articles?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Calves are carried in that way.

Hon. A. Thomson: With milk and other goods.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am not aware of that. If we eliminate the stock killed at Midland Junction, not very much is sent in to the metropolitan area. However, I suggest that the regulation be held in abeyance pending the issue of a new one. I should not like to see this matter left in the air. The Minister for Health is not in this House and a new regulation might be issued which is not at all to our liking. If this one were held in abeyance, a new one could be issued.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: How long do you suggest it be held in abeyance?

Hon. L. CRAIG: There is plenty of time in which to bring in a new regulation. To draft it would not take more than an hour or two.

Hon. A. Thomson: And withdraw this one?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes. In the circumstances I must support the disallowance of this regulation, but I hope that the Minister will bring in another that will be acceptable to the House.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [6.8]: I shall vote against the regulation because, in the first place, it will prove a very serious disadvantage to the struggling settlers on the Peel and Bateman estates and all round that district.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: A lot of meat comes from there.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: A lot of the settlers are struggling along, and they cannot possibly take calves to Midland Junction because it would not pay them. There are other reasons why I shall support the motion. One is that in my opinion the department have started at the wrong end with their policy of reform. They have been asleep for a long time. I support the statements made about the delivery of meat in the metropolitan area. From time to time complaints have been made in the Press regarding the delivery of meat to the butchers' shops and side by side with that, there has been a remarkable improvement in the butchers' shops themselves. Most butchers have availed themselves of the latest methods of refrigeration; their shops are made fly-proof and they take a pride in their places of business. Yet I have seen a motor truck-load of meat having a canvas covering driven up to a butcher's shop in hot weather when there were any number of flies about, while a sanitary cart with a full load was standing there.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Was it your butcher?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I thought that was terrible. The motor trucks used to transport the meat to the butchers' shops would not bear inspection. They have been dirty and grimy, and I believe there is no other place in the British Empire that would tolerate the delivery of meat as it is delivered in the metropolitan area here.

Hon. L. Craig: Then you do not know the Empire.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I should have said Great Britain, because I know that hygienic conditions are not closely observed in some parts of the Empire. In the Eastern States meat is delivered in covered wagons. I hope that as a result of this debate the Health Department will wake up and realise that the people are dissatisfied with the present methods. It is a reflection on the people, on the Government and on the Parliament to have carcase meat delivered under existing conditions to the modern butchers' shops now to be found in the metropolitan area. Another reason that leads me to vote for the disallowance of the regulation is that, at a public meeting held at Fremantle a few days ago, very serious charges were made against the method of inspection at Midland Junction. I should like the Minister to refer to that in his reply.

Hon. J. Cornell: He has not the right of reply.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Very serious charges were made at the meeting. Two prominent business men spoke against the method of inspection and another man who was not interested in the meat trade, but who held a high position in the Government service, said that the Public Health Department was so short staffed that it was impossible satisfactorily to carry out the inspection of meat in the metropolitan area. If that is true, it reveals a serious state of affairs.

The Honorary Minister interjected.

The PRESIDENT: I point out that conversational discussion which no one but the hon. member can hear is quite out of order.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That official said the department were short staffed; of that I am certain. We are supposed to have modern abattoirs at Midland Junction and it seems wrong to insist upon an elaborate system of inspection and leave the door open to enable all kinds of carcase meat to enter the metropolitan area.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Before tea I was dealing with inspection of meat. At the Fremantle meeting the inspector of that municipality, a highly qualified man, stated that every precaution was taken at the Fremantle depot to safeguard the public against the distribution of diseased meat. He quoted authority to the effect that it was possible without examination of the viscera to detect diseases representing a menace to the community. That opinion has been supported by the authority Mr. Baxter quoted, and also by the statement of Mr. Franklin Higgs, that the proposed regulations would work a distinct hardship on numerous settlers at Spearwood, Rockingham and the Bateman estate, who already have great difficulty in making a livelihood. I am glad to support the Health Department in respect of all sane regulations; but in this instance, much against my inclination, I am compelled to support the motion. The amended regulations are inopportune.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [7.34]: From what has been said this afternoon I am perfectly convinced that my duty is to support the Honorary Minister. I happen to be one of those who look at the question from the standpoint of the consumer of meat. Statements made here to-day prove that something is radically wrong with the

whole business, and that the department are trying to tighten the system up. If this debate is reported fully and systematically in the Press, there will be any amount of comment from the public on the handling of food. The people will also be disturbed by what has been stated here, and thus nothing but good can result from the discussion. The whole question of the transport of meat needs to be gone into thoroughly, especially from the hygienic aspect. The suggestion of Mr. T. Moore that recourse be had to modern refrigeration and to improving the conditions under which meat is transported deserves the fullest consideration. The statements of the Honorary Minister, and of certain members who support the disallowance of the regulation—

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There were not too many of them.

Hon. H. SEDDON: —compel me to support the Government.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East—in reply) [7.36]: It is rather unfortunate for the previous speaker that he was not present throughout the debate. The hon. member has heard only to-day's discussion. When moving the motion I went fully into the present system of inspection, and showed clearly that it is all that could be desired. The Honorary Minister said that no doubt the present system left a lot to be desired. I fail to understand why the hon. gentleman should make that statement, as the present inspection leaves nothing to be desired. On a recent evening Mr. Holmes interjected asking whether many of the carcasses were condemned. Yes, large numbers of them are condemned, in the same way as happens at Midland Junction and other places where competent inspectors are employed. I fully recognise that the Honorary Minister, in discussing the subject, represented the views of the health inspectors.

The Honorary Minister: I did not stop at what you have quoted, you know.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No.

The Honorary Minister: I do not like to be misrepresented.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Is the Honorary Minister objecting to my statement that he said no doubt the present system of inspection left a great deal to be desired?

The Honorary Minister: By way of personal explanation. I added certain words to what Mr. Baxter has stated. Certainly I did use the words attributed to me by the

hon. member, but I added that the remark referred to carcass meat slaughtered outside the metropolitan area. It is only fair that Mr. Baxter should quote all the words I used in that connection.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I accept the Honorary Minister's correction. The amended regulations will not deal with slaughtering outside the metropolitan area, because under the amended regulations no meat whatever will be sent in from outside. The Commissioner of Public Health writes to the Town Clerk of Perth in this strain—

I think it is fitting at this stage to express the appreciation of the department of the work that your inspectors over a long period have performed at the Perth depot, work which so far as I know has never been the cause of any complaint.

Mr. T. Moore, who unfortunately is not in his seat at the moment, and Mr. Seddon will recognise from this quotation that the present system is satisfactory. Again, there is Dr. Reid, whose work on practical sanitation is recognised as one of the most highly authoritative. Dr. Reid stated that it is not necessary to have the viscera for the purpose of inspection. The Honorary Minister referred to the transport of meat. On that aspect I agree with him. I would like to see a great alteration take place there. The meat trade is not strange to me in any way. I know it thoroughly well, like Mr. Holmes does. The way in which meat is hawked about before delivery does not reflect credit on those connected with the delivery. The Minister spoke of carcasses being brought into the sale room. Calves are brought in with the hide on, and as regards veal there is not so much danger; but in the case of beef, mutton and pork there is considerable danger of contamination and of filth getting on the meat, as it is already dressed. Regarding delivery of meat in the metropolitan area, it has been mentioned that in these enlightened times it is strange to see huge lorries running round delivering meat, which is simply thrown on the lorries. That represents a backward state of affairs. Carted about like that, meat not only looks unsavory but does not keep so long. Moreover, the flies get to work on it properly. When the cover is removed from the meat, the dust and dirt of the street gets on it. I hope the Health Department will take the matter up. They may not have the power now but let them frame a regulation re-

quiring covered vans in which meat is hung up. That is the only healthy method of carting meat. As to horse meat having been passed by an inspector, I intend to follow the matter up. I cannot deal with it at the moment, as I must make further inquiries. However, the information I quoted came from a reliable source, a source just as reliable as the Honorary Minister's, who quoted from departmental files. Often it is not so much a question of what appears on departmental files as of what is not in the files. However, the Honorary Minister may be right. I shall take the matter up again. The hon. gentleman quoted a case of illegal slaughtering, and stated that in connection with it there had been large percentages of condemnation. The proposed regulation will not improve that situation in any way. In fact, in this respect, there is no need for another regulation. The point is that there are various interested parties. For instance, there are the Midland Junction Abattoirs, which on account of their capitalisation want all the stock possible sent to them. The Health Department naturally want control of all health matters throughout the State, whereas at present the City Council Health Officer controls the inspection of auction rooms. That inspection has been perfectly satisfactory. I have here a letter from the Commissioner of Public Health stating that everything is perfectly satisfactory in that respect. Then there are the wholesale butchers. If anyone wants an argument for rejection of the proposed regulations, he need only read an article recently published by Mr. Chandler, representing the wholesale butchers. Many small butchers, and in fact some large butchers, go to the meat sales room and purchase there against the wholesale butchers, thereby keeping prices down. Before I moved for disallowance of the regulations, I knew there were a fair number of people who delivered carcasses to the meat sales rooms, but I had not the slightest idea of the huge number doing it. Neither did I know that there were so many people dependent for their existence on those meat sales rooms. Numbers of them have approached me either personally or by letter. One man told me on Friday morning last that last year his receipts in this particular direction came to £51 and that that was the

whole of the money that he saw during the whole of the year. He did not see the colour of any money that came from his milk and other products, and he had to depend on the £51 for the purchase of the necessaries of life for himself, his wife and his children. There are dozens of others in a similar position, and if the regulation is not disallowed, it will mean that those people will have to get off their holdings. Small as is their income, the fact remains that it is quite a big thing for the man who is on a few acres of land. The regulation, if not disallowed, will take away from those people their living and throw them on the resources of others. I trust the House will agree to the motion.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 2, Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and notifying that at such conference the Assembly would be represented by three managers.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) CONTINUANCE.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and passed.

PAPERS—LAND AT ROCKY GULLY.

Debate resumed from the 21st November on the following motion by Hon. A. Thomson:—

That correspondence file No. 932/32 and classification file No. 283/31 dealing with land now thrown open for selection in the Hay district (at Rocky Gully) be laid on the Table of the House.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [7.52]: I have no objection to these papers being laid on the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

BILL—LOAN, £2,627,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 21st November.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [7.53]: The Loan Estimates, like our poor relations, are always with us, and while we cannot help feeling some alarm at the increasing per capita debt under present conditions and with our small population, it seems that no Government has any other alternative but to continue to borrow large sums of money to keep the people employed. I hope that some day, with the increasing production, we shall be able to reduce our per capita indebtedness. The Bill before us provides for a slight reduction in the total. However, with the increased revenue from the emergency tax and the gold tax, and with careful administration, the Government should be able to carry on without much difficulty. We have not increased our population, but he who suggests that we should embark on an immigration policy no doubt will bring on his head much criticism. Still, with the number of vacant farms that are on the hands of the Agricultural Bank, I am sure that people with capital would have an excellent chance of making good by taking over those properties. I believe that if a concerted policy were laid down, it is possible that people from overseas could be induced to come here to take up those vacant areas, especially when we remember that each English £1 would purchase 25s. worth of goods in Western Australia. I was greatly interested in the remarks made by Mr. Tuckey the other evening regarding the fishing industry. He certainly gave us some very interesting facts and figures. In 1922 I submitted a proposal to the then Government that we should include in our migration scheme the bringing out of fisher people from the Homeland. I regret to say, however, that I received no support. We all know the important part the fisherfolk played in defending the shores of Great Britain during the war. The trawlers became an effective portion of the navy. These people, properly organised, reaping

the harvest of the sea, would bring added wealth to Western Australia and Australia as a whole, as well as providing cheap food for the people. The fishing industry in Western Australia to-day is entirely in the hands of foreigners who would not be of much value to us in times of stress. The people engaged in this industry in Great Britain have been born and bred in it, and I am sure the opportunity is open to Western Australia to combine with the Commonwealth in the direction of placing the fishing industry on a sound commercial footing, and in my opinion what is of greater importance, it would increase our population with a very useful class of people. We have a big market for fish in Western Australia, particularly smoked and cured fish. It is surprising the enormous amount that is imported into this State, and in my opinion it is time that more serious consideration was devoted to this particular industry. Mr. Aldrich, the officer in charge of the Fisheries Department, I know is a very keen gentleman who has done his best, but somehow we seem to have been lacking in the direction of being able to get the right people to assume control. I believe we could bring people out from Home, the people who know no other calling. So far, the failure of most of the fishing companies that have been formed in Western Australia and elsewhere has been brought about I think by two causes, the first being that we have endeavoured to run the business entirely on Australian conditions, which of course is impossible, and the second, the companies have not been properly or efficiently organised for the purpose of establishing their success. We know that in New South Wales the Government started the trawling industry and that it ended in failure, although a certain measure of success followed its transference to private enterprise. However, I do feel that there is in the suggestion I have advanced a practical means of increasing our population and, incidentally, in reducing our per capita indebtedness. What is more important still is that, in the event of possible trouble, these people would be valuable as against what might be termed the foreign element now engaged in the industry. There has been a certain amount of criticism because of the action of the Government in repairing and renovating our public buildings. While that criticism might be launched at the method adopted, namely,

the performing of the work departmentally, there is no gainsaying the fact that our buildings did need to be renovated, and it was essential that the State's property should be protected. The work carried out had a twofold purpose—it protected the assets of the State in the shape of our public buildings, and provided much needed employment for men who, unfortunately for themselves, were not able to find as much work as it was desirable they should have. Therefore I consider the Government are to be commended instead of being condemned. There is no doubt about the improved appearance of our buildings. They were falling into a state of disrepair and shabbiness. One institution in particular was overlooked by the Works Department, namely the Narrogin School of Agriculture. It was remarkable that when a considerable number of men were engaged in repairing schools and other public buildings along the Great Southern line, the Narrogin school was entirely overlooked. I would draw the attention of the Government to the report of the Education Department that has been laid on the Table of the House, and to the reference on page 11 to the Narrogin School of Agriculture. The extract is as follows:—

As pointed out in the last annual report, the accommodation of the school does not meet the number of students who desire to enter. During the year the students, with a few exceptions, were well up to the standard required for this school. Seventy-six per cent. of them were the sons of farmers, and more than half of the remainder definitely intended to follow rural pursuits. At the commencement of the year, 69 students were enrolled. Thirty students completed the full two years' course, 17 of whom succeeded in obtaining the school certificate. The accommodation was taxed to the uttermost, and it was necessary to place beds on the verandah and to improvise a dressing room at the end thereof. The instruction in all branches has been of a high standard. qualified experts in each department giving the necessary instruction but, as I pointed out in my last report, the farm preparations are not receiving sufficient attention. The farm foreman has so many duties to perform that he has very little time for actual farm work. Additional help has been asked for, and funds have not been available. As the State will ultimately have to depend upon those who are on the land, an additional instructor should be made available. The school residential buildings have been in existence for 30 years, during which period very little has been done in the way of renovations. The kitchen and dining room still require to be made fly-proof, and the cottages used by some of the instructors

have been in existence for about 40 years and are rapidly approaching the condition which makes them unfit for habitation. The school has done such good work that money should certainly be spent to increase the accommodation and build decent homes for the staff.

I have quoted from this report to show that one branch of our educational system has been overlooked. Between £60,000 and £70,000 has been spent in providing the school for girls at East Perth. I am not objecting to that. Although that building is necessary, it is difficult to understand why, when repairs and renovations were being carried out along the Great Southern line, so important an educational centre as the college at Narrogin should have passed unnoticed. I visited the school recently. I noticed that machinery was being repaired and reconditioned out in the open. The manager said it was difficult to do that work in wet weather, and that the work could much better be done under cover. He also said it would be helpful if cover were provided in the hot weather. The expenditure in that direction would not be very great. If cover were provided, the work could be carried out much more economically, the boys could much more readily be engaged upon it, and the investment would be a sound one. It is difficult to understand why the buildings generally have been allowed to get into such a state of disrepair, and why the accommodation is so limited. I agree with the statement of Mr. Clubb that Western Australia ultimately will have to depend upon those who are on the land, and that more money should be provided for buildings at the college so that the staff might be increased. I find that the expenditure of public money on the Agricultural College in 1929-30 was £1,100, and that since then there has been no expenditure there. On the Loan Estimates, page 24, there appears an unexpended balance of £3,223 from a loan raised for agricultural college purposes. I appeal to the Government to provide the necessary buildings at this institution. Instead of accommodation being provided for 69 students, it should be provided for at least double that number. In the principal and staff we have men who, by their commonsense and practical instruction to the boys, are playing a very important part in our primary industries, for they are sending the boys back to their homes with the hall mark of practicability upon them, and possessing a genuine knowledge of practical farming methods

which they have learned at the college. I am sure that by means of the learning that has been acquired by boys who pass through the college we shall get a good return for the money invested in the institution. The Youth and Motherhood Appeal is fast drawing to a close. I congratulate the appeal committee upon the pluck and perseverance with which they have endeavoured to raise their objective, £50,000. The organiser, Mr. Perry, is deserving of great credit for the work he has done in connection with the various efforts that have been made to attain the desired goal. I suggest that the committee should make available to the School of Agriculture a sum of at least £5,000. This institution is devoted to providing practical instruction and knowledge in agriculture, and to the training of the youths of the country districts. I have on various occasions dealt with the loan expenditure of the Railway Department. Last year the loan expenditure on improvements to existing lines was £281,465. This year £250,000 is provided. The Chief Secretary stated that last year £281,000 was spent particularly on re-grading, ballasting and deviation work. He said that these works were undoubtedly reproductive, they reduced the grades, and made possible further and cheaper services. The departmental estimates for these improvements, he said, represented a reproductive capacity expenditure of 5 per cent. That may be so in connection with the principal works carried out, but it is not apparent from the Commissioner's report. The railway earnings last year decreased by £15 per mile, and the working expenses increased by £9 per mile, while the addition to the capital cost of the railways last year was £568,311, thus increasing the average capital cost of the railways by £101 per mile. A Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into and report upon the Agricultural Bank. As a result of that report, various suggestions were made. We are all closely watching for the result of the changed methods.

Hon. H. Seddon: Are they changed methods?

Hon. A. THOMSON: There have been changes. I will reserve any criticism I have until my return to Parliament next May, if I am returned, as I hope to be. I then may be in a better position to criticise the Administration. The Commissioners are confronted with a heavy task, and have many

responsibilities placed upon them. I have my doubts about the wisdom of some of their acts, but they must be given an opportunity to prove whether their policy will bring forth the results hoped for by Parliament. I believe that if a Royal Commission or a select committee of this House were appointed to inquire into the general working of the railways, very much good could be accomplished. The capital cost of the railways is being added to each year. It seems absolutely absurd to go on in this way, and yet no attempt is made to allow for depreciation. The Chief Secretary said that £80,000 was spent last year in re-grading and in deviation work with the idea of carrying heavier loads. Notwithstanding this expenditure, the old grades and the old railway embankments are still a charge upon the capital cost.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why are not such works charged to revenue instead of capital?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Most of the money is coming out of loan. Although not one new mile of railway was constructed last year, the capital cost increased by £568,311.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Did not the Chief Secretary say that the money was paid out of loan and would be refunded later out of revenue?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not think so.

The Chief Secretary: Yes, I did, and I said that part of the money had been refunded already.

Hon. A. THOMSON: But the Commissioner of Railways, in his annual report, says that the capital cost of the system has been increased by £560,000 odd and he is expected to provide interest and working expenses on the total amount. To require any Commissioner to make the railways pay under such conditions is absurd and unreasonable. One thing I cannot understand is why one section of the railway employees submit to living under their present conditions. It cannot be said that I am pandering for votes in speaking of these men because the vast majority of them do not live in houses the value of which would entitle them to exercise the franchise for this Chamber. I refer to the permanent way men. The Railway Department have their own timber mills and they could provide standardised cottages constructed in such a manner that they could easily be dismantled and re-erected elsewhere when the necessity arose. In-

stead of doing that, the department provide the permanent-way men with old sleepers with which the employees have to erect their homes. At quite a number of country centres residents have built a fairly decent type of house for themselves, and yet right alongside, the permanent way men have these sleeper-built erections. I do not condemn the men for that; they have to make the best of a bad job. In view of the fact that all Governments claim a desire to make the living conditions of the people as comfortable as possible, it has always been a matter of surprise to me that this particular section of the railway employees have tolerated their present conditions for so long. For the most part they do not live in townships, but are located far away from the ordinary amenities of urban life. Of the £250,000 provided on the Loan Estimates, I would like a proportion, at any rate, to be made available to enable the permanent way men to enjoy at least decent housing accommodation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about the surveyors? Would you provide them with camps that they could dismantle and re-erect in various parts throughout the State?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Camping provisions are made for the surveyors and certain equipment is supplied to them. If Mr. Miles had—

Hon. G. W. Miles: I lived in tents for many years.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Of course, Mr. Miles has lived in tents, but has his wife?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Other people's wives have lived in tents.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am asking the hon. member that question.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I apologise, Mr. President. I have travelled for many hundreds of miles along our railway system and I certainly think the Railway Department should provide better accommodation for the permanent way men. They make better accommodation available for the higher paid officers, and surely the permanent way men would pay rent for better housing if it were provided. This reform is long overdue. With all respect to Mr. Miles, if he had lived under the conditions that these people do—

Hon. G. W. Miles: I have lived in worse conditions. You are always talking about economy and then you put up this sort of stuff!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have known Mr. Miles for a long time, and it is quite a number of years since he lived under conditions that he asks these permanent way men to continue to accept. I hold no brief for anyone. I merely make this statement in the interests of a section of the people entitled to more consideration. There is a matter in respect of which I have pleasure in supporting the people of Fremantle. I refer to the necessity for something definite to be decided upon regarding a new traffic bridge over the river at Fremantle. We have engineers quite capable of designing and constructing a concrete bridge, which is certainly necessary. Such an undertaking would provide work. The steel required could be manufactured in Australia, and the cement in Western Australia. There is absolutely no reason why the cost of such a bridge should be a total charge on the funds of the State. Hundreds of vehicles cross the traffic bridge every day, and I submit that a toll could be levied until such time as the bridge was paid for. A special toll could be imposed on the motor trucks that operate between Perth and Fremantle in competition with the railways and the charge could be levied on a tonnage basis on the goods carried.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But you are always advocating taking off charges!

Hon. A. THOMSON: In suggesting that the bridge could be constructed, I might be asked where the money was to come from. There are other parts of the Commonwealth where bridges have been constructed. Tenders have been called, and a company has undertaken the construction of the bridge with the right to levy a certain toll until recouped for the expenditure incurred in the operations. In view of the fact that it will certainly be detrimental if we are cut off from our principal port through lack of proper bridge facilities, serious consideration should be given to this matter. We know the inconvenience that was experienced when the railway bridge was washed away in 1926. At that time trains had to stop at North Fremantle. I hope, in advancing these views, I am making a practical suggestion indicating how this import-

ant work could be accomplished. Let us assume that an accident did happen, and that the traffic bridge was unpassable. I presume the Government would immediately provide a ferry service for vehicles and passengers, just as happens in other parts of the Commonwealth. I cannot imagine that they would provide such a service and transfer persons and vehicles from one side of the river to the other, without imposing any charge. Obviously the people would pay cheerfully. So it is that if we require a bridge built over the river, there is no reason why a toll should not be levied. I submit that that suggestion is worthy of consideration. I point out to members that £65,141 is provided on the Estimates for the erection of a bridge and the construction of a railway. In view of what I have suggested, I cannot see any reason why the Government should not give my proposal serious consideration. I want to refer briefly to a few passages in the report of the Federal Grants Commission. The figures certainly look staggering when we find that in 1900 the debt per head of the population was £67, whereas in 1934 it was £194, an increase of £127. The criticism of the commissioners, which appears on page 78, is worthy of consideration, particularly as it affects Western Australia. In paragraph 192 they state—

Western Australia affords another example of specialisation in wheat and wool with at times greater prosperity in gold production. Her main advance was made through the discovery of gold and when production declined she had to find another industry to absorb her population. An area in the South-West from Geraldton to Albany, with moderately suitable soil, proved to have a climate peculiarly suitable to the wheat plant. The settlement of this area was the main cause for Western Australia's increase of population during the last 15 years.

Later on they condemn our land and yet I consider that the Commission themselves, in the latter part of that statement, justify, to a great extent, the expenditure and confidence we have displayed with regard to the development of our land policy. Then again in paragraph 194 they say—

The main causes of Western Australia's inferior financial condition are the serious losses arising from reckless financing of wheat settlement in an area well suited to wheat, and the attempt at dairying settlement in the high rainfall areas in the extreme South-West.

In the next paragraph they say—

The most unfortunate experiment was the attempt to settle migrants in the extreme

South-West for dairying. The only favourable factor was the heavy rainfall. Soil and settlers were unsuitable, and miscalculation and mismanagement were present.

I do not agree with the criticism or the remarks by the Federal Commission.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It applies to some parts.

Hon. A. THOMSON: But they have condemned the whole! If the prices of wheat and wool had remained at normal figures, despite a few failures, I think it could be safely claimed that our policy for the development of our vacant lands was amply justified. Some members adopt a pessimistic attitude regarding our agricultural policy and the development of our vacant areas. I think the members of the Federal Grants Commission and some of the pessimists amongst us should be invited to tour the areas that have been opened up and developed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes. Are not the members of the Federal Commission doing that now?

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Grants Commission were taken to one part only.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They were taken over the country.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I think they were taken through the Midland areas.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They have gone south.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I think they have gone back. At any rate, they should have gone over various parts of the State before they drafted the report I have quoted. Since I have been a member of this House, I have travelled for thousands of miles throughout my province and the area that has been cleared and is under cultivation is amazing. The great majority of the settlers have pulled their weight and given service for the money advanced to them. I shall not quote figures, but let members look up the contributions that wheat and wool have made to the wealth of the State. Those who condemn the soil of the South-West should visit the butter factories at Narrogin, Katanning, Albany, Denmark, Manjimup, Busselton, Harvey, Pingelly and Capel and inspect the tons of butter that are being produced. Let them then say, if they dare, that Western Australia was not justified in developing her vacant areas and making them productive. We will admit mistakes have been made. No one has criticised the administration more than I have, but let us not dwell upon the blunders of the past. Let us be united and,

with practical common-sense, profit by the mistakes we have made. I nonestly feel we are on the high road to recovery. There is a point that probably will interest my friends from the North-West. No doubt they have read this report by the commissioners, but I want to commend one portion of it to the serious consideration of the Government. Here they deal with the losses made by the State in the North-West on account of the Wyndham Meatworks and the State Shipping Service. This is what the commissioners say—

Examination of the accounts of the freezing works discloses the fact that its operations have little chance of success. The returns over a series of years have shown a small surplus.

But this is the suggestion they make—

The commission cannot advise the Commonwealth to undertake the responsibility of uneconomic enterprises. It is possible, however, that if money were spent on development such as the establishment of feeding grounds, near the works, where stock could be put into proper condition, the economic result of the freezing industry might be different.

They put forward a practicable suggestion there. I do not know whether the Government propose to act upon it.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is a question for private enterprise.

The Honorary Minister: But they did not make any specific proposal in that connection.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Are the Government going to take it into consideration?

The Honorary Minister: They have done so.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have the commissioners been up there?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not know whether they went up there any more than they went to the South-West, but it seemed to me that this proposal was something that might result in benefit to our friends of the North-West. Apparently the suggestion has been considered by the Government. The commissioners take strong exception to the fact that we have not taxed ourselves as high as they think we should do, but there is not such a great difference per head as between ourselves and the Eastern States. When we consider the position of Western Australia as compared with the more thickly populated parts of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, we see that we are developing our country at a very expensive period; and not only that, but the great

bulk of what we produce is entirely from primary industry, and consequently we have to accept the prices of the world's market. We are not in the position of the manufacturers of the Eastern States, who have only to approach the Federal Government to obtain higher customs tariffs and incidentally pass on any increased taxation that might be imposed upon them. I hope that the one or two suggestions I have made may be of some value. I have not approached the matter from a carping critical point of view. I realise the task the Government have to face with a small revenue and a large number of our people unemployed. When I say small revenue, there is no gain-saying the fact that the present Government are more fortunate than their predecessors in that they are getting an increased bounty by way of the financial emergency tax. However, whether we approve or disapprove of the loan indebtedness, which is increasing year by year, I candidly confess that at the present stage I see no alternative to increasing the use of loan funds. Means must be found, and we must hope that sooner or later our population and our productive capacity will so increase as to enable us to make up the leeway. I will support the second reading.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [8.55]:

During the course of this debate we have heard a great deal of criticism of continued Government borrowing. Such criticism may have been justified when conditions were normal, but now when money must be obtained by Governments to provide employment which, through our faulty economic system, private enterprise seems no longer to be able to afford, just what do the critics suggest should be done? It seems to me the present system of trade and commerce, depending as it does on being able to supply our customers cheaper than our competitors so that we may obtain the money necessary to enable us to live and enjoy those things which we produce ourselves, has about come to an end. If we in Australia could not produce or manufacture all that we require to enable us to obtain and enjoy most if not all the necessities of life, there might be a reasonable explanation as to why so many of our people are unable to purchase necessities. Let me mention two cases in Geraldton which came under my notice during the last week-end. I am aware that I am laying myself open

to be told that one swallow does not make a summer, but we can only speak confidently of those cases with which we are personally acquainted. It is of no use my coming here and saying that I know thousands of such cases, but I think each of us must be of the opinion that unfortunately there are hundreds and even thousands of such cases, at all events throughout the Commonwealth. The man I wish to refer to I have known for some years, and I am satisfied that if any impartial inquiry were held into his character it would result in his being adjudged a hard working, steady, sober man. For many years past he has been going up to Wyndham to take part in the seasonal operations at the meatworks there, and also he has been engaged in various sustenance works. He is a married man with five children, and after a couple of years of endeavour he has managed to become the tenant of a worker's home. He is making a very brave effort as a decent, respectable citizen should do. I happened to meet him casually on Saturday afternoon, when I asked him if he was working. He said he had earned 17s. that week, but did not know what the prospects were for the following week. This is a man with five children, a man who is not spending his money on racing, betting or beer. Another man up there, whom I have known for many years, is the father of six children, and lives over in the sandhills. The Chief Secretary knows the locality quite well. This man owns a little area of land on which there is a small cottage. His wife came to me to ask if I could assist her in getting the water laid on to the house, which would save the carting of water through very heavy sand. I am justified in saying that both those men are desirous of working. I know it is said that some men do not want work, but these two men do want work and are unable to obtain it. There are, as I have said, many men who never know what it is to have a permanent job. We are frequently reminded that it is difficult to find work of a reproductive nature. This, under our present financial system seems about correct as far as private enterprise is concerned. But Governments should not experience any such difficulty. The combined activities of the whole of the people create and produce through nature's bounteous assistance, the real wealth of Australia. So Parliaments should legislate to ensure that Governments would be able to obtain all the money necessary to pro-

vide and efficiently maintain the essential public services required by the people. Thus Parliaments should be so constituted as to ensure that Governments provide economic and efficient administration. Government work of a reproductive nature, is the re-grading of railway lines. For years the Geraldton-Mullewa section has required re-grading, but the money has not been available. Now during the severest financial depression we have experienced, thousands of pounds have been spent on that work. Still more could be spent on that section, and I have no doubt many other sections also, which would result in more economic and efficient administration. Then there is the Mullewa railway station, the lay-out of which is a nightmare to railway men, but money cannot be found to provide the necessary facilities to enable the large and increasing traffic to be expeditiously handled. The present Government like other Governments plead that money cannot be obtained to carry out all the work that requires doing. Another work of a reproductive nature would be increased housing for married men at Mullewa and other similar railway depots. There is a number of married men at Mullewa who are compelled to find their own houses. The department have built a number there, but more are required and money should be obtained for so important a purpose. Men are sent to those places and must have homes. Many of them have to work night shift and so require more decent houses in which to obtain sleep during the day, which is essential for the efficient carrying out of their work. I feel sure the Government desire to do this and many other things, but cannot, owing to the money shortage. Recently I was told by a man in a position to know that many of our locomotive engines should be scrapped owing to old age. He said that they were a constant source of trouble and expense. No Government should be so financially hard up that they could not find money for the purchase of new engines. Take the education system, very good I believe in the circumstances, but can we reasonably expect results commensurate with the cost when teachers have 50 or 60 scholars in a class? We have had free and compulsory education for some years and we are entitled to ask whether there is any marked improvement.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member intends to connect his remarks with the Loan Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes; I have the schedule of loan works before me. We are entitled to ask whether the average intelligence of the people is any higher as a result of compulsory education. Is the moral character of the young people who have had educational advantages that many of their elders were unable to obtain any better? I should say we are making it difficult to obtain the results that we might expect because sufficient money is not available. All authorities agree that money spent on education is well spent and is reproductive in the best sense of the word. I desire to express my thanks to the State Schoolteachers' Union for having printed and circulated in book form an address by the president entitled "Education versus Ignorance." This is evidence, if that were needed, of the enthusiasm that animates the majority of the teachers to obtain the very best results for the State. There is insufficient money efficiently to equip State batteries. This is most important while the price of gold is at the present level, and it is most important from the point of view of the prospector. There is no money to combat the ravages of the rabbit pest by supplying wire netting at cost to settlers. Notwithstanding the experience of the Eastern States, we have failed to realise that, successfully to check the ravages of this pest individual holdings must be netted.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What about emus?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Some years ago, at Northampton, I was one of a deputation who waited on the Minister to stress the necessity for taking action to deal with the emu pest.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the hon. member is going a long way beyond the Loan Bill. I ask him to confine his remarks to the Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not wish to transgress the rules of the House, but in the Loan Bill I saw items which I thought would permit of my speaking along those lines. The headings are—Administration, railways, tramways, etc., harbours and rivers, water supply and sewerage, development of goldfields and mineral resources, development of agriculture.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member has touched on a number of questions the expenditure for which does not come out of loan money. Does he advocate that such expenditure should come out of loan money? That is the only possible excuse for referring to those matters.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am glad of that question because I am advocating that the money should be obtained wherever the Government can get it. If I have your permission, Sir, I certainly would recommend that the Government borrow money for those essential works. Certain intermittent action has been taken to deal with the emu pest, but the problem has not been tackled seriously. Even the enthusiastic Minister for Agriculture wants to know what the settlers intend to do. That is all very well: the settlers, largely through circumstances over which they have no control, are unable to do very much. But what are the Government doing to deal with the pest on Crown lands and on abandoned farms? Mention has been made of the Narrogin school farm. All I have heard of it is to its credit. What I want to know is, why was training discontinued at the Chapman State Farm? Many years ago a certain number of students were trained there. Why that training was discontinued, I do not know. I should like to know why arrangements cannot be made now to train a certain number of students at the farm. Why should parents in the vast Victoria district have to send their sons away down to Narrogin? Why not give them a chance to receive their training in their own district in the conditions under which they will be called upon to work later? Railway rates on general goods have been greatly reduced by the Government, but have corresponding reductions been made by the Midland Railway Company? If not, do the Government intend to take any action to assist to get that done? The reduction of rates on goods carried over long distances from Perth and Fremantle is to be commended, but it is to be regretted that a corresponding reduction could not be made on goods railed from the various outports of the State. Especially does that apply to Geraldton. Failure to do so is causing increased trade to be done with the metropolis. It is generally admitted that each port is entitled to the trade of its hinterland. The railway rates should be so arranged that decentralisation will result. Regarding the Tramways Depart-

ment, serious consideration should be given to the question of extending the trolley buses, which have proved satisfactory. Recently we had a visit from a factories inspector.

Hon. G. Fraser: Are there any backyard factories up your way?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Following the visit, a master printer wrote me a note.

The PRESIDENT: Does that deal with the Loan Bill or with a loan matter?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Reference has been made to-night to the appeal on behalf of youth and motherhood, and I wish to let the House and the people know that while we have been appealing for funds to provide work for youths, the Government by their action are depriving youths of employment. The letter read—

I had a visit from the factory inspector yesterday and he informed me that I was not entitled to employ a boy in the printing trade until such time that I employed a compositor or journeyman. My wife and self are the only employees of this firm and it seems outrageous that I am not enabled to employ a boy and teach him the trade. The business does not at present warrant the employment of a journeyman. The boy I had working for me is the son of a widow and will again be placed among the unemployed.

I went to see the Chief Inspector of Factories.

The PRESIDENT: It seems to me the hon. member is going very much outside the scope of the Loan Bill in discussing a lot of matters that have nothing to do with the measure. I wish the hon. member would confine his remarks to loan expenditure.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If I have erred, I regret it. Reference has been made to the fact that Government relief work is making it difficult for farmers to obtain men. I think I am right in saying that references were made to the subject on this Bill, so I take it that a few remarks by me will be in order. Is it any wonder that farmers are finding it difficult to obtain men? Many farmers are and for some years have been unable to pay any wages at all. One good thing the previous Government did was to encourage young men to accept employment on farms by granting farmers a subsidy to enable them to pay wages, but unfortunately the scheme was discontinued.

The PRESIDENT: I am afraid I cannot allow the hon. member to continue along those lines. I have told him several times that he must confine his remarks to loan ex-

penditure. I trust that the hon. member will follow the lines I have laid down.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I asked several members—perhaps I should have asked you, Sir—whether I would be in order in referring to these matters and I was assured that I would be. I have no desire to offend against the rules of the House.

The PRESIDENT: The matters with which a member may deal under a Loan Bill are numerous, but some of the minor matters to which the hon. member has referred are quite beyond the scope of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I was dealing with the employment of men on farms, and as you have allowed other members to refer to the subject, I take it I may do so as well.

The PRESIDENT: I have allowed other members incidentally to refer to matters beyond the scope of the Bill, but to go into a wealth of detail is rather exceeding the limits allowable.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have said all I wish to say on that matter. If the rest of my remarks are out of order, and if I am to be continually interrupted, I shall discontinue.

The PRESIDENT: I have no idea what the hon. member intends to refer to, but I hope he will deal with the Loan Bill and loan expenditure.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Shall I be in order in following the lead of other members by referring to the appointment of the Agricultural Bank Commissioners?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member may proceed.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have said before that there is plenty of money if only Governments would take the trouble to collect it. We have only to notice what has been done during the years of so-called financial depression. Savings Bank deposits have increased by millions throughout Australia. In this State over £3,000,000 was spent last year on alcoholic liquors and over £1,000,000 on pictures, theatres, dancing and admission to racetracks. This does not include one shilling of the huge amount spent in betting, either on or off racetracks. Then a sum of £172,000 was subscribed to the lotteries, and I am unable to estimate the huge amount that is spent annually in what might be described as pleasure motoring. In view of such figures, how can it be seriously contended that we cannot afford to make an

attempt to provide our children—the people's children—with a training that will enable them to meet the new conditions being forced on our present-day civilisation?

Hon. E. H. Gray: Are you advocating higher taxes?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Had the appointment of the chairman of the Agricultural Bank Commissioners not been referred to by a couple of members, evidently a wrong impression would have remained in the public mind. Now that the explanation has been made, it seems to me that the appointment was another of those political favours which most Governments have been guilty of awarding. I have previously objected to Governments appointing members of Parliament to paid positions, and I reiterate that objection in connection with this appointment. In view of the reference contained in the report of the Federal Taxation Commissioner to the other Commissioner of the Agricultural Bank, I consider the Government should request his resignation. One of the first and most important appointments made by the new Commissioners was that of Chief Inspector. The appointee was a strong supporter of the Government, and it is generally considered that that fact was responsible for his appointment to the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank. Then, having assisted to condemn the administration as a Royal Commissioner and recommended the appointment of a Chief Inspector, he applies for, and obtains, a position he assisted to create, over the heads of many officers who have proved their efficiency by years of conscientious service to the State. It is this policy of spoils to the victors, followed more or less by all Governments—I am not singling out the present Government—that is causing party politics to fall into such disrepute. I desire to urge the expenditure of sufficient money to provide the tomato-growers at Wonthella and Bluff Point with water. The Government are in possession of figures which would indicate that any money spent in this direction will be reproductive. We are not able to export much to the Eastern States, but we do send them tomatoes; ninety-odd thousand cases I am informed have been despatched East this season. I realise that the Minister for Agriculture recognises the value to the State of this industry; and I feel sure that two other Ministers, Mr. Drew and Mr. Willcock, will do their best in the matter, know-

ing as they do what the industry is worth not only to Geraldton but to Western Australia as a whole. In conclusion I would urge that the Government bring down, as it appears from the Press they intend, a Bill to provide for bulk handling. I feel sure they will do their utmost to enact a measure which will enable our farmers to receive Federal money. Lastly, I urge the introduction of a Bill for the removal of the stain which is upon the State in regard to the care of our aborigines. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [9.5] in moving the second reading said: This is the usual Bill introduced each session to deal with adjustments and alterations to reserves. There are several matters to be dealt with, and, in order that members may fully acquaint themselves with the proposals involved, I have caused lithographs of the areas concerned to be placed on the Table of the House. The first proposal relates to Reserve A20838—an "A" Class recreation reserve vested in the Nedlands Road Board. To provide additional educational facilities, the Education Department have decided to erect a public school at Hollywood and have secured the consent of the road board to the transfer of a portion of the land for a building site. It is now necessary that Parliamentary approval should be obtained for the transfer. The second proposal refers to sub-lots C, C1, and C5 at Busselton. Sub-lots C5 and C1 comprise the unused portion of the old Busselton church cemeteries, and are held, respectively, by the Methodist and Roman Catholic churches. The Busselton Council desire to establish a camping ground on these unused lands, which are ideally situated for the purpose; and the churches have assented to a surrender to the Crown. As Lot C1 is the subject of a very old title, anteceding the Transfer of Land Act, it is found necessary to revest this lot in His Majesty per medium of an Act of Parliament. Sub-lot C is a narrow strip of land outside the boundary of the cemetery fence and lying along the eastern side of Stanley-street. Additional side width is required

to the jetty railway which passes along this street, and the Church of England has agreed to its surrender for this purpose. The third proposal deals with Youanmi Lot 101. In 1911, Lot 101 was granted to the trustees of the Youanmi Miners' Union of Workers (A.W.U.) to provide a hall site. That body was subsequently absorbed in the Westralian Branch of the Australian Workers' Union, and it is now proposed to grant the site to the latter. It is necessary to re-vest the existing lease in the Crown in order to give effect to this purpose. The fourth proposal relates to Reserve A12076—a Class "A" reserve set apart for educational endowment at Katanning. The Crown grant of these lots has been issued to the Education Endowment Trustees, and they are now desirous of selling four of these lots to the Katanning Road Board, who wish to utilise them as saleyards. As the land forms part of a Class "A" reserve, the sale cannot be effected except by Parliamentary authority. The purpose of this clause is, therefore, to enable the Education Endowment Trustees to sell the land free and discharged of any trust. The fifth proposal refers to Carnarvon Lot 507, one of a number held in trust by the Carnarvon Municipal Council for the purposes of municipal endowment. The Commissioners of the Presbyterian Church propose to establish a Men's Club for the Australian Inland Mission at Carnarvon, and wish to secure Lot 507 for their purposes. To this end they have obtained the consent of the council to its surrender, and it is now proposed that the lot shall be re-vested in the Crown and granted to the Presbyterian Church for the purpose indicated. The final proposal, relating to Reserve S330, involves a slight amendment to Section 2 of the Reserves Act, 1934. This has been necessitated by the inadvertent quotation of a wrong location number in the 1934 Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [9.11]: I support the second reading, and give notice of an amendment in connection with the Bill; that is, to authorise the Fremantle City Council to lease a block of land to the St. John Ambulance Society for the purposes of an ambulance building. The amendment is necessary because the Fremantle City Council were of opinion that they could receive permission to grant the lease from the Governor-in-Council, but on

applying for such permission were informed that the land in question was saddled with a trust. That trust is now obsolete. The proposed lease is to be for a term of 21 years, with right of renewal.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—ST. GEORGE'S COURT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [9.12] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to enable a private right-of-way previously known as St. George's Court, to be declared a street. This right-of-way runs between St. George's Terrace and The Esplanade, and the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Co., Ltd., are at present erecting extensive premises on land owned by them and adjoining this right-of-way. This company has offered to surrender to the Crown sufficient of its land to enable this right-of-way to be turned into a street 40 ft. wide. The right-of-way has been in public use for about 60 years, and the estate of the present legal owners is practically negligible, because the general public have acquired by prescription a right-of-way over such land, which it is not now possible for any owner of that land to destroy. All the holders of the land in the present right-of-way, with the exception of a portion known as the Armstrong Estate, have agreed to surrender their rights to the Crown. It is very difficult, or impossible, to locate the executors of the Armstrong Estate, and the title is not under the Transfer of Land Act. In any case, their title to the land is only a limited one, as right-of-carriage-way over it is held by the adjoining holders, and this right is being surrendered by them. Provision is made in the Bill, however, to indemnify both the Crown and the City Council against all claims and costs in the matter. This indemnification has been embodied in the agreement referred to in Clause 3 of the Bill. The Bill is necessary owing to the fact that the Municipal Corporations Act provides that no street shall be set out of a lesser width than 66 ft., and, secondly, to the difficulty of obtaining the surrender of the portion belonging to the Armstrong Estate. The Town Plan-

ning Board, the City Council, and the Surveyor General, have all signified their approval of the proposal in regard to the width of the street.

The Bill provides that the Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation, so as to enable the agreement to be signed by all parties concerned before the Act is proclaimed. This provision was for the purpose of preventing unnecessary delay in the introduction of the Bill.

Clause 2 enumerates the various portions of land which are to be revested in the Crown, as set out in the respective schedules and indicated on the plan in the Fourth Schedule. Clause 3 provides that when the Governor is satisfied that a satisfactory agreement has been entered into and signed by the City of Perth and the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Company, under which the company will undertake the construction of the roadway and pathways, he may, by notice in the "Government Gazette," declare the lands revested to be a street and public highway. Clause 4 provides that the street shall be known as "St. George's Court" or such other name as may be approved. Clause 5 contains machinery to enable the necessary amendments to be made in documents and records, and also for the issue, on application of the owner, and without payment of any fee, of a balance certificate showing the land remaining in their title after the excision of the land revested under this Bill. The agreement referred to has already been drafted, and approved of by the parties concerned. It provides for the roadway and the pathways to be constructed by the company within 12 months of the passing of the Act, and it also indemnifies the Crown, the Minister for Lands, and the City of Perth against all claims and costs. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1899, AMENDMENT (No. 2).

In Committee.

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Disqualification:

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (c) be struck out.

This paragraph renders a clergyman or minister of religion incapable of being chosen or sitting as a member of either the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly. I understand there is no bar in the Federal Act, and I do not see why we should prohibit a minister of religion from standing for Parliament. There is no very good reason for doing so. The Chief Secretary when replying to the second reading, did not raise any objection to the suggestion I made in this direction.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We should have a strong argument advanced in favour of the striking out of the paragraph.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I support the amendment. This has been in our Constitution for many years and I see no reason why it should remain. A person employed by the Crown gets a kind of glorified leave, and during that period he does not draw any salary, though he is still employed by the Crown. The Bill provides that any person employed by the Crown may stand for Parliament, but if elected, he must resign 14 days after the declaration of the poll. The position regarding a minister of religion should be exactly the same.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We have not heard any argument beyond the statement that we do not know why this provision is in the Constitution and that therefore we should strike it out. I want to hear a valid reason for striking out the paragraph.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I am convinced that a minister of religion cannot do his job as a minister of religion and be a member of Parliament as well. When I was elected to Parliament I gave up my other position in order to attend to my duties as a member of this House. The calling of a minister of religion is different from most others. Once a person is appointed a minister of religion he should remain such because it is for him a full-time job and he can have no time for anything else. I intend to oppose the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A few nights ago in a very weak moment I confessed my ignorance as to the reason for the origin of this provision, but since then I

have been besieged by people who are willing to act as my instructor. Only this morning I received the following letter dated the 23rd November:—

Dear Sir, You will find the true reason why ministers of God are debarred from sitting in Parliament in the gospel of St. Luke, chapter 22, verses 24 to 26. If you want any further information I should be only too happy to supply same.

The verses are as follow:—

And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, the Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve.

I do not know what all this means, but that is the information I have from the greatest possible authority.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I oppose the amendment. I see nothing to prevent a clergyman from resigning from the church if he desires to contest a seat in Parliament. Clergymen, however, have a different kind of call, and do not desire to come into contact with mundane matters. If they do so desire they have a remedy at hand.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: As a signatory of the report furnished by the select committee on this Bill, I feel it is probably due to the Committee of this House that I should give some explanation why this particular exemption was included. The Committee did not desire at this stage to depart too much from the principles laid down in the Constitution Act. There had to be some reconstruction of Sections 31 to 38, but for the most part the committee followed as closely as possible the existing law. It was felt to be impracticable at this stage to revise the whole of our Constitution Acts. Could we have dealt with them all probably some amendments might have been introduced. No reason for the inclusion of clergymen has been furnished or found. It may be wise to leave the exemption as it is, and reconsider it when the Constitution Acts come up for review. Possibly in the old days clergymen received part of their stipend from the Government, and therefore were regarded as holding an office of profit under the Crown. I shall oppose the amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We are certainly indebted to Mr. Nicholson for the work he

did on the select committee. I agree with the sentiments he has expressed. There is always a danger of mixing politics with religion, and it is a matter for great regret when such a thing occurs. If a minister of religion were to stand for election a great deal of friction and turmoil might be created. It is very much wiser to leave this provision as it is.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The origin of this provision arose probably when the people were a little more religious than some are now. In a small community, we usually endeavour to raise our ministers of religion above ordinary everyday events, and the framers of the Constitution probably did not like to contemplate ministers of the gospel standing on soap boxes and having all the yahoos making rude remarks about them merely because of a disagreement in politics.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does that not happen every time?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: And would it not be a horrible sight if ministers of religion were the butt?

Hon. J. Cornell: No.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am afraid I must disagree with the hon. member. I would not like to see ministers of religion stumping the country on soap boxes and being cock-shies for yahoos. Members know that men of that type are at every election meeting. Mr. Nicholson probably hit the nail on the head when he said that this would apply to the Legislative Assembly as well. He indicated that he desired to keep ministers of religion away from the influences of the Legislative Assembly. In that direction, he desires to render good service, and I shall help him by voting against the amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I oppose the amendment. I would vote the whole Bill out if I could get a sufficient following, and I would use the argument of the sponsor of the Bill when he said that the Committee might think it well to leave this part of the Constitution as it stands. For my part, I think it would be as well to leave the whole Constitution as it is, until such time as we can deal with it in a comprehensive manner. We are tinkering with it because of altered conditions. The fact remains that the Constitution is as good to-day as it ever was. We are likely to get into further difficulties if Governments continue to tinker with

matters that are rightly the concern of private enterprise.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do you suggest that private enterprise would have provided the service that is run by the State steamers?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I wonder!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No one knows better than the hon. member that his Government took office with the intention of abolishing the State trading concerns. If they did not establish any new ones, they certainly did not abolish any existing ones. The Constitution was framed by men of the Empire, to whom we should take off our hats. Now we are tinkering with it in such a manner that I do not know where we will get to, or if there will be any Constitution when we finish.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I had no idea when I mentioned this matter first that it would have led to such a debate and give the Chief Secretary such an excellent opportunity to indulge in his journalistic flair. I adopted his suggestion to move an amendment in Committee and that has led to another interesting discussion, including the Chief Secretary's biblical allusions. In view of the expressions of opinion by members, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (c), after "is," the words "or has been" be inserted.

During the second reading debate I drew attention to the paragraph and suggested the addition of the words I have indicated.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I understood the Bill was introduced as a result of the work of a select committee, in connection with which Mr. Nicholson took a very prominent part. We are amending the Constitution and now, on the spur of the moment, amendments are being shot in by the hon. member. I hope the Committee realise where we may get to if we are not careful.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I appreciate the hon. member's remarks. Obviously, he forgets that this matter was discussed during the second reading debate. It was pointed out that variations had been introduced into the paragraph and, in order to bring it as nearly as possible into line with the Constitution, the amendment I have suggested was necessary. The words "is attainted of treason" appear in the Federal Constitu-

tion whereas the words in the State Constitution are "has been attainted." The amendment will bring the paragraph into line with both Constitutions. My amendment was moved in conformity with the suggestion made by Mr. Holmes himself during the debate; he said that the clauses should be brought as nearly as possible into conformity with the existing law. If a person is attainted of treason—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If he has been, he is; so why put the additional words in?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But a man may have been attainted of treason and may have that offence removed by a free pardon. At present, if a man has been attainted of treason, that represents a lifelong disqualification from being a member of Parliament.

The Honorary Minister: But suppose it was an unjust decision?

Hon. J. J. NICHOLSON: It is for the Committee to decide; I have merely done what was suggested by Mr. Holmes during the second reading debate.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It must be one thing or the other, and we should not try to make a shandy-gaff of it. This State has had its Act since 1899, and the Commonwealth has had its Act since 1901. Personally I prefer the Commonwealth provision. Which are we going to have? When a man is convicted of an offence, he must serve his time.

The Honorary Minister: A free pardon stands pre-eminent.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is so.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I cannot see the necessity for the proposed alteration.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The clause is not worded in accordance with the Criminal Code.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I still fail to see the necessity for the amendment. Let me read the Constitution.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No, that relates to electors, not to members.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I take it these words make an alteration to the first portion of the paragraph, and that any person who has been convicted of a crime, provided he serves his term, can still stand as a member of Parliament. Is that so?

Hon. J. Cornell: We do not know. It has never been decided. Men have been elected to our Parliament who have previously served time.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I think the meaning ought to be made more explicit.

The Honorary Minister: If a man has served his sentence, he has expiated his crime.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: Yes, but according to my interpretation of that paragraph, if a convicted man serves his sentence, he is eligible to be elected to Parliament.

Hon. L. Craig: Having served his sentence, he is again a free man, and the stigma is removed from him.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: Under this clause there is nothing about the stigma.

Hon. L. Craig: Having served his sentence, any stigma that had attached to him has been removed.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: But the clause says nothing about that.

Hon. L. Craig: There is no longer any stigma upon him.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: That is not dealt with in this clause. Suppose he served a sentence of 15 years for murder; would the stigma then be removed? Of course not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: A man having served a sentence of, say, one year, would be free, but is the stigma that was upon him removed? We have worked for many years under our Constitution, and so have the Commonwealth under their Constitution, yet there has not been a single case come before the courts; so I think we can leave that argument alone. I have heard it contended that once out, always out. But even that has never been decided.

Amendment put and negatived.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That there be inserted after the said subparagraph (d) a further subparagraph, to stand as (e), as follows:—

(e) to any sale of goods or to any performance of work by any person to or for the Crown in the usual and ordinary course of a commercial business as already established and being carried on by such person in a town or portion of the State where there is no other person carrying on the same kind of business and—

(i) it is necessary, in order to avoid delay, expense, or other inconvenience, that the Crown shall obtain such goods or the performance of such work in such town or portion of the State;

(ii) the goods are not sold or the work is not performed in pursuance of a written agreement which by virtue

of its provisions has a continuing operation; and

(iii) the goods or work are not required for or in connection with the construction of a public work within the meaning of the Public Works Act, 1902-1933.

I have brought down this in answer to some critics of the House last week, when a complaint was made that the Bill was one-sided in that it enabled members of Parliament to buy from the Government but not to sell to the Government. To an extent I sympathise with that view, and so I have had this amendment drawn. It provides that a storekeeper who is a member of Parliament, and the only storekeeper in the district, may without prejudice sell a small quantity of goods to, say, a representative of the Main Roads Board who is passing through the district. Also it provides that a policeman in a remote pastoral district may purchase supplies from a pastoralist, who may be a member of Parliament, and the pastoralist will not consequently forfeit his seat in Parliament. No amendment that could possibly be framed would escape the censure of some person, but here we have something to work upon and I think that to an extent it will meet the position.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I was quoting such instances the other day in support of my contention that members of Parliament would not be allowed to sell a pound of nails to the Government. It does not follow that I claim they should be entitled so to sell a pound of nails, but I did say the Bill was one-sided in that it would allow a member of Parliament to buy from the Government but not to sell to the Government. Under the amendment brought down by the Chief Secretary a person might come into a town and want a pound of butter. There is a shop selling butter, but there are also a dozen people in the town prepared to sell a pound of butter, if only the stranger knew where to find them. I could hold up the whole of this amendment to ridicule, but my attitude is "Do as you like, so long as it complies with the Constitution."

Hon. J. CORNELL: From the outset I had misgivings about the Bill. If the amendment be adopted, I think we shall have one of the most intricate pieces of work possible.

The Chief Secretary: What is wrong with the amendment?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I want to know what is right with it.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are complaining; tell us what is wrong.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is nothing right with it.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Explain what you are grizzling about.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am not grizzling, but am endeavouring to save the Committee from themselves. The Constitution should be framed with a minimum number of words to give expression to it.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do not you think that ought to apply to members of Parliament?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It should apply to the hon. member. We should have condensed what is already in the Constitution instead of enlarging it. We are trying at the one time to amend the Constitution, to evolve a new one and to interpret it. That will not work and consequently I oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I remind Mr. Cornell that the Chief Secretary was met with the argument that the Bill was one-sided in that it provided for purchases being made by members from Government concerns, but did not make provision to enable a member to sell a pound of nails to the Government. I sought to combat the statement by pointing out that the select committee considered it would be injudicious, seeing that only certain sections were being amended, to make provision to enable members to make sales to the Government unless those members formed themselves into a company as provided in the Act at present.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I think you are right.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Chief Secretary is to be congratulated on having evolved the amendment which merely seeks to comply with the wishes of members expressed during the debate. We are amending only Sections 31 to 38 and are importing something vital into the amendments. Because of that, we would be wise not to depart from the principles of the Act that if a man enters Parliament he is not the same free agent that he was before. There is great risk of corruption creeping in despite our best efforts to hedge the matter around with all sorts of provisions. Until we revise the Constitution as a whole, we would be wise to leave out the proposed amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It gets on my nerves to hear members talking of cor-

ruption when almost all the matters referred to in the Bill have been practised by members of Parliament since the passing of the Constitution.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Hear, hear! Sheer hypocrisy!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A man in the backblocks might be selling petrol, the only man there, and a member of Parliament might be interested in the business. A Government car could not buy, say, 15 gallons of petrol from him. Is not that ridiculous?

Hon. J. Cornell: Will an endeavour be made to put all those things in the Constitution?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That ought to be in the Constitution.

Hon. J. Cornell: And if a man wanted a safety pin because his braces had broken, that should be in too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Solicitor General has informed me that an oral contract to sell goods to the Crown would be a violation of the Act. The situation undoubtedly exists and a remedy is needed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I appreciate the Chief Secretary's argument, which is sound from the standpoint he has adopted, but the select committee did not desire to open the door to anyone who in future might try to take advantage of the position. The amendment might permit of a member supplying very much more than the requirements mentioned by the Chief Secretary, and if the personnel of Parliament were greatly altered, extreme danger might arise under the amendment because it would open the door to abuse.

The Honorary Minister: Give an instance of how that could occur.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If a member were allowed to sell petrol to the Government, he could sell anything.

Hon. L. Craig: That would not necessarily be corrupt.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Once we gave power to members to do business in the direction indicated by the amendment, it could be extended to any limit.

The Honorary Minister: It is very limited indeed.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is not limited in words, anyhow.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: A grave danger will be created if we open the door as indicated.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I thought of referring to the statements of ethics to which we have listened, but I do not know whether the term is quite fitting. Mr. Nicholson said it would not be wise at this stage to introduce the amendment. Mr. Baxter said the select committee did not want to leave the door open for political corruption that might occur. What were the select committee doing that they did not recommend something on the lines of the amendment?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We did not believe in it.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Well, I think that is sheer hypocrisy.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I ask that the hon. member withdraw that statement.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I withdraw it. Does anyone believe that a man in the position mentioned by the Chief Secretary would not be incited to break the law and supply the petrol? The Chief Secretary is to be congratulated on making an attempt to overcome the difficulty. I support the hon. gentleman.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I also support the Chief Secretary. While not professing to be an encyclopaedia on the Constitution, I consider it possible to bring common sense to bear on the Constitution Acts. Undoubtedly the old Constitution Act compelled members of Parliament to incur risks. In certain circumstances it is necessary for members of Parliament to sell something to the Crown. The amendment lays down the conditions under which they may do so. The most remarkable feature of the situation is that members who complained because the Bill contained no provision such as this, now complain just as much because the provision has been inserted. Even if the provision were omitted, there would be nothing much wrong, as the old practice would continue. However, members of Parliament have to be protected from men without a sense of decency.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The Chief Secretary is to be congratulated on his amendment, which certainly will have my support.

Hon. G. W. MILES: As the first to mention this matter, by way of interjection, I may say that my objection was that if one member could not sell a pound of nails to the Government another member should not be able to sell them professional ser-

vices. In the back country, if a departmental officer is stuck for nails my managers, under instructions from me, have no transactions whatever with him. The departmental officer can buy the pound of nails for himself, and pay for it out of his own pocket, but there must be none of those departmental blue forms. Generally speaking, I do not believe in tinkering with the Constitution.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I protest strongly against some hon. members pointing out the danger we might run if the Bill is not passed and if the amendment did not go into the Bill. Our Constitution has existed for over 40 years, and in only two cases have the courts adjudicated with regard to it. In one case Parliament rushed in with an indemnifying measure which the Full Court said would not hold water, and then Parliament rushed in with another indemnifying Bill. In point of fact we members of Parliament run very few risks indeed, but we are now trying to build up a wall against risks by a super-wall of words.

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

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

AYES.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. R. G. Moore |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. T. Moore |
| Hon. C. G. Elliott | Hon. H. V. Piesse |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. H. Seddon |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. C. H. Wittenoom |
| Hon. E. H. H. Hall | Hon. H. J. Yelland |
| Hon. W. H. Kitchin | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. W. J. Mann | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. J. Cornell | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. G. W. Miles | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. J. Nicholson | Hon. C. F. Baxter |
| | (Teller.) |

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I direct the Committee's attention to the proviso to proposed new Section 34. Paragraphs (i) and (ii) may be all right but I object to paragraph (iii). Who is going to ascertain the expenses? It is set out that provided that if any member renders any service to the State, paragraph (d) shall not only apply to the receipt by him of any payment as remuneration for the service after such payment and the amount has been approved by a joint committee consisting of three

members of the Council and three members of the Assembly to be appointed and maintained by the Council and the Assembly for the purpose of determining whether or not payments shall be approved. There is no machinery for appointing the three members of the Council and three members of the Assembly.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, the Standing Orders.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No; there is no machinery whatever to show whether or not the decision shall be unanimous or whether a majority decision shall prevail. To bring three from each House to sit in judgment on an appointment which must be made by the Governor-in-Council is absurd. If this is to remain in the Bill, the Governor-in-Council should do the whole job. This apparently is the idea of a lawyer and he forgot to finish it. I hope the Committee will agree that the only responsible body to do the job is the Governor-in-Council. I move an amendment—

That in lines 3 to 11 the following words be struck out:—"a joint committee consisting of three members of the Legislative Council and three members of the Legislative Assembly to be appointed and maintained by the said Council and the said Assembly for the special purpose of determining in every case whether or not the payments of the nature mentioned in this paragraph shall be approved and authorised," for the purpose of inserting "the Governor-in-Council."

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If a man is to be sent to England as a representative of Western Australia on some mission, and he happens to be a member of Parliament, I assume he will not be lifted on to the boat and sent bodily away, but that he will be asked whether he will go. Then I assume that arrangements will be made as to what expenses or remuneration will be necessary to induce him to accept the offer. When that is all fixed, then I take it the Governor-in-Council—if it is necessary for the Governor-in-Council to make the appointment—will make the appointment. The paragraph provides that whatever the Governor-in-Council may offer him as expenses or fee, the member is not exempt from the restrictions imposed by the Constitution Act unless a joint committee of members approves of his being paid that fee. I assume again that that committee can decide that they will not

approve of the particular individual accepting remuneration: the Committee, I understand, will be in a position to say, "We do not approve of Mr. So-and-so accepting this job for remuneration; we will not approve of any remuneration or expenses being paid."

Hon. J. CORNELL: Who would suggest it? The Governor-in-Council, and no other body could.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Very often appointments are made by Ministers of which the Governor-in-Council knows nothing whatever. In this case no remuneration can be paid until the committee decides. There are many minor matters on which the Government might require the services of members, but everything will be done in the light of day and the committee's work will be known through the Press.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The idea underlying the provision is quite good. It was to permit of securing the services of some person for the benefit of the State that could not be secured because of his being a member of Parliament. The first idea was that the matter should be decided by both Houses, but if the services of a member were required while Parliament was not in session, nothing could be done. Consequently the select committee resolved that the decision could well be left to a committee of three members from each House.

Hon. H. Seddon: A standing committee appointed at the beginning of the session?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes. The Standing Orders would make provision to meet the case.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They do not.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We could provide whatever was necessary under the Standing Orders.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is no standing committee to interpret the Constitution.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The committee would act in accordance with Standing Orders provided. In that way the scheme would be workable. The proposal was submitted to overcome a knotty problem and make available the services of members for the benefit of the State. We wanted to keep the matter out of the hands of Ministers. The provision is reasonable and wise.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Parker and Mr. Nicholson have clearly explained the position and indicated the motives that inspired the select committee in preparing this part of the Bill. It might not be necessary to make use of the provisions once in ten years, but the power would be there. A Minister who desired a temporary appointment for a special purpose might decide on a certain fee, and that fee would be submitted for the approval of the committee.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You would have to alter the Standing Orders?

Hon. J. Cornell: They do not apply.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then we shall introduce legislation or make them apply. Surely with three members from each House sitting in judgment, there could be no possibility of corruption arising.

Hon. J. Cornell: No one suggested corruption.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But underlying the hon. member's remarks—

Hon. J. Cornell: No, I said the provision was absurd.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think it is one of the soundest provisions in the Bill. Everything will be done in the light of day and full publicity will be given.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And it would all be for the benefit of the State.

Hon. J. Cornell: It looks like a benefit for members of Parliament.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It might be highly desirable in the interests of the State that a particular member should be appointed to do a special job. I do not think the provision will be utilised much, but a time might come when it could be availed of.

Hon. J. CORNELL: This is a clear indication of signs of doddery in the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Speak for yourself.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am, and am including others.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There is no necessity.

Hon. J. CORNELL: After 46 years' experience of our Constitution we discover that experts exist amongst members whose services cannot be obtained under the Constitution. In the past we have got along without them.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No, we have not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: We did until the hon. member came along.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No, I am speaking of the secession delegate.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Do you call him an expert?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Yes.

Hon. J. CORNELL: On Red Poll bulls or on secession? Now we are told that some eminent Parliamentary might be required to help the Crown.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Quite likely.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Parker said that a Minister might require a member to advise him.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It is done daily in the Crown Law Department.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Suppose a Minister required Mr. Parker's services because he was an expert on one branch of the law.

Mr. Parker: Thank you for the compliment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: He might say, "Mr. Parker, I require your services because of your knowledge in this direction. Before I can secure them I must take you before a committee of both Houses and talk it over. I have to convince them that you are the man for the job, and that what I am going to offer you is adequate remuneration." I do not think any self-respecting Minister would do that, but would endeavour to find some other gentleman to do the work. I think there are more eminent men outside Parliament than there are in it. There is no machinery in this Bill, but we are told that Standing Orders can be framed to provide the machinery. I say that Standing Orders cannot be framed for that purpose. Can the Chief Secretary point to one instance of a standing committee being entrusted with power to interpret the Constitution? Parliament alone can interpret the Constitution. If thought necessary, the Governor-in-Council could be made the proper person to say who shall be the man to be employed by the Government and what he should receive for the work.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Cornell says there is no power to make the necessary Standing Orders. Parliament will take that power in order that its will may be carried out.

Hon. J. Cornell: The House alone can make its own Standing Orders.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In this case we will give Parliament special power to make the Standing Orders.

Hon. J. Nicholson: This may come under Standing Order 311.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If there is no machinery at present, we can bring it into being.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I should like to see the whole proviso struck out. It is not right that members of Parliament should be engaged to do work for the Government.

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

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Ayes | 4 |
| Noes | 16 |
| <hr/> | |
| Majority against | 12 |
| <hr/> | |

AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell
Hon. G. W. Miles

Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. C. G. Elliott
(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. Craig
Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. E. H. H. Hall
Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. T. Moore

Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. G. Fraser
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I desire to move that paragraph (iii) be struck out.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Committee have resolved that certain words of that paragraph remain, and the hon. member cannot now move that they be struck out. The hon. member can move that amendment on recommitment to-morrow.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. The hon. member is too late.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to proposed new Section 34:—“Provided also that paragraph (d) of this section shall not apply to any payment for work performed by any member in respect whereof exemption from disqualification is granted to such member by the provisions of subparagraph (c) of paragraph (iv) of the proviso to Subsection 1 of Section 32 of this Act.”

It is necessary to insert this proviso in order to get over the provision in paragraph (d).

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is no use beating the air, but I do intend to express myself on the third reading of the Bill.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 11.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 26th November, 1935.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

- 1, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.
- 2, Financial Emergency Tax.
- 3, Wiluna Water Board Further Loan Guarantee.
- 4, Financial Emergency Act Amendment.
- 5, Workers' Homes Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 6, Pearling Act Amendment.