

satisfied the board that by reason of his experience or training such examination should be dispensed with."

This will fit the case of a Rhodes scholar, or anyone else, who comes here from England or Ireland, and put him on exactly the same footing as the local chap, as the member for Fremantle calls him.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have no objection to the new clause, although it will not provide for the imported individual spending two years of his time in articles, as will be the case with the local boy.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move—

That a new clause be inserted, to stand as Clause 4, as follows:—"Section 14 of the principal Act is hereby amended by adding to paragraph (e) the following proviso:—"Provided that in the case of students in law at the University of Western Australia one year of such articles may be served during the period of attendance at the University.""

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2.)

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on its amendment No. 4, but insisted on its amendments No. 3 and 5, with which the Assembly had disagreed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [9.8]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday next at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned 9.9 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th December, 1933.

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

QUESTION—CATTLE CONSIGNMENTS.

Hon. W. J. MANN asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the number of cattle landed at Fremantle from other ports—(a) during the year ended the 30th June, 1933; (b) during the period between the 1st July and the 30th November, 1933; (c) the ports of shipment of such cattle; (d) the cost per head of transshipment from each port? 2, What was the number of cattle landed on the Eastern Goldfields by the trans-Australian railway from Port Augusta—(a) during the year ended the 30th June, 1933; (b) during the period between the 1st July and the 30th November, 1933; (c) the cost per head of transshipment of such cattle? 3, What was the number of cattle railled from Midland Junction and Fremantle to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie—(a) during the year ended the 30th June, 1933; (b) during the period between the 1st July and the 30th November, 1933; (c) the cost per head of railway transport? 4, What was the aggregate number of cattle received at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie from railway stations within the State—(a) during the year ended the 30th June, 1933; (b) during the period between the 1st July and the 30th November, 1933?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied 1, (a) 11,191; (b) 4,315; (c) Derby, Broome, Port Hedland, Beadon, Carnarvon; (d) from Derby to Fremantle £3 15s. per head, from Broome to Fremantle £3 15s. per head, from Port Hedland to Fremantle £3 per head, from Beadon to Fremantle £2 17s. 6d. per head. 2, (a) 2,901; (b) 1,292; (c) not known. Owners do own transshipping. 3, (a) 98; (b) 167; (c) £1 6s. 7d. 4, (a) 895; (b) 494.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

- 1, Forests Act Amendment.
- 2, Metropolitan Whole Milk Act Amendment.
- 3, Land Tax and Income Tax.

BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.*Assembly's Message.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 1, 6 and 8 of the amendments made by the Council in the Bill and had disagreed to Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the message.

No. 4. Clause 3.—Delete paragraph (f).

Assembly's reason for disagreeing to the Council's amendment:—This clause is in conformity with the principle of direct representation of the interests which finance the Board, and therefore it is essential to retain it.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on amendment No. 4. The Honorary Minister had moved that the amendment be not insisted on. Mr. R. G. Moore indicated that he proposed to move an alternative amendment.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I move an amendment—

That as an alternative to deleting paragraph (f), the paragraph be modified by adding at the end the following words—"and if the local authority, or group of local authorities, by which he was elected notifies the board in writing within thirty days of his so ceasing that it does not desire him to continue as a member of the board."

My reason for moving the alternative amendment is to leave it optional for members of local governing bodies to dispense, should they so desire, with the services of their representative on the Fire Brigades Board, should he lose his seat on a local governing body.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am in favour of the alternative amendment, but I do not know

that the Act stipulates that a member of the Fire Brigades Board must be a member of a local governing body.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is not in the Act. That is what the paragraph sets out; that has been the trouble.

Hon. G. FRASER: If there is nothing in the Act now, the alternative amendment may appear ridiculous because we are asked to stipulate that the local governing authorities may dispense with the services of their representative on the Fire Brigades Board, should he lose his seat on a council or road board.

The CHAIRMAN: The Act does not contain anything setting out that a member of the Fire Brigades Board must be a member of the local governing authority, but the Bill contains the paragraph embodying the provisions. Mr. Moore's alternative amendment will modify the paragraph.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Committee have already agreed to strike out paragraph (f). If we reverse that decision and accept the amendment moved by Mr. R. G. Moore, it will restrict the selection by a local authority of a representative on the board to one of its own members. There may come a time when some local authority wishes to elect to the board someone other than one of its members. We should not place such a restriction on the local authorities.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not see any objection to Mr. Moore's amendment, which merely gives any local authority the right to object to an ex-member of the said local authority continuing to represent it on the board. There are four members of the board representing various local authorities. But at present it would be possible to have representing the local authorities four men who were not members of any local authority. In such circumstances the board might embark on a policy involving an expenditure so large as to necessitate an increase in the rates of the local authorities, and those four members of the board might agree to that policy although they were supposed to be representing the local authorities. That would be quite possible under the Act as it stands, and I do not think that is right. A local authority should be entitled to say that its representative on the board must be one of its own members. The Committee should agree to Mr. Moore's amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I appreciate the amendment moved by Mr. Moore, but it might be wise for us to recast Clause 3. It has been the custom for local authorities to select one of their own members to represent them on the board. We could with advantage recast the clause, making it obligatory on the local authority to elect one of its own members and then add to it Mr. Moore's amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: What reason is there for trying to get carried an amendment to a paragraph we have already disagreed with? Take a man with long experience of fire brigade work. Surely a local authority would be glad to be represented on the board by such a man, even though he was not one of its members. Why tighten up the Act so that such a man could not be elected by a local authority? We have already agreed to delete paragraph (f), and we should stand by that.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: The hon. member has said that this means imposing restrictions on a local authority. But all Acts of Parliament impose restrictions on something or somebody. The amendment will do no harm at all.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: On the goldfields one man is elected to the board time after time, even though he may not be a member of the local authority; but he has to be re-elected at the end of each term. I do not see any harm in Mr. Moore's amendment.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The position is that if that gentleman mentioned by Mr. Williams, a gentleman who must have had long experience of the work of the board, were to leave Kalgoorlie and come to the metropolitan area, the local authorities here would not be able to avail themselves of his services on the board, unless indeed he first became a member of a local authority. I agree with Mr. Baxter. We should not restrict the choice of the local authorities.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The attitude of the Minister is entirely opposed to the Government's proposal in the Bill to appoint a representative of the union to the board. We have disposed of that provision, and now the Minister wishes to impose conditions on the local authorities in electing their representatives. The union, who do not provide anything towards the upkeep of the board, desired to elect whom they liked, not neces-

sarily a member of the union. When it comes to the local authorities, who provide a considerable amount of the board's funds, the Minister desires to restrict them in their choice. I support Mr. Baxter.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: When we were discussing the proposal to give the union representation on the board, the Minister said he had no objection to providing that that representative should be a member of the union. Therefore Mr. Holmes's argument falls to the ground.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: I feel inclined to support the alternative amendment. A man elected a member of a road board and a representative on the Fire Brigades Board might lose his seat on the road board, and automatically he would cease to be a member of the Fire Brigades Board. The provision would afford protection to the road board against the man's insisting upon retaining his seat on the Fire Brigades Board. If that is so, the alternative amendment seems to be a reasonable compromise.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The position is as outlined by Sir Charles Nathan. It would rest with the local authorities to determine whether the representative should continue on the board for the balance of the term.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What would happen after that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If he was not a member of the local authority, he would not be eligible to stand for the Fire Brigades Board. Mr. Holmes has repeated statements that I have repudiated more than once, but I am impelled to reply to his remarks once more.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: On a point of order, all I said was that the Bill as introduced by the Government did not impose conditions as to the election of a representative of the union. If the Minister reads the Bill he will find that that is correct.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I admit that that is correct. The proposal is that members of the board shall be members of local authorities, and on vacating their seats as members of local authorities, shall cease to be members of the Fire Brigades Board. That is a fair thing.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What is a fair thing?

The HONORARY MINISTER: What I have just stated.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You are not helping by taking that attitude. I was merely asking for information.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The information has been given so many times.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do not get nasty.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not nasty. The Bill provided that a representative of the union should be a member of the board, and I indicated more than once that I would not object to providing that that representative should be a member of the union.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Honorary Minister, who would have us believe that he is always right while I am always wrong, neglected to tell us that the Bill as received from another place, contained a schedule including a lot of local authorities who had no right to be mentioned there.

The CHAIRMAN: That has nothing to do with the amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Some members do not seem to grasp the position. If a member of a local authority ceased to hold his seat, he would automatically cease to be a member of the Fire Brigades Board.

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: That is clear, even to the unintelligent.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It did not seem to be clear to the hon. member.

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: It was.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We should permit local authorities to make their choice from inside or outside the ranks of their own members.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The 30 days' period mentioned in the alternative amendment might not be sufficient to enable the local authorities comprised in a group to communicate with each other and arrange a meeting. I suggest that the period be made 60 days.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And meanwhile the member would have retired through effluxion of time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Probably more than 30 days would be required to get a meeting.

Hon Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: We have been nearly an hour trying to decide whether the alternative amendment should be adopted, and members seem to be discussing the same thing over and over again. Why not take a division?

The CHAIRMAN: That was about to be done when the hon. member rose to speak.

I shall make the alternative amendment read "sixty" days.

Alternative amendment put and declared passed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I thought you were putting the question of 60 days as against 30 days.

The CHAIRMAN: No, I stated the alternative amendment and included 60 instead of 30 days.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think members understood that the question was being put in that way. I voted on an extension of the period from 30 to 60 days.

The CHAIRMAN: I put Mr. Moore's amendment, with the period altered to 60 days.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: On the Notice Paper "30 days" is stated, and Mr. Nicholson suggested 60.

The CHAIRMAN: I stated the question, and showed that Mr. Moore had moved for 60 days. I will put it again in the proper way, if desired.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Let it go.

No. 5. Clause 6.—Delete this clause.

The CHAIRMAN: A message will be sent, to the Legislative Assembly with another alternative amendment consequent upon the first alternative amendment, to retain Clause 6 with the deletion of paragraph (b). I suggest this amendment be treated as consequential, because the Committee has decided not to insist on the previous amendment.

No. 7. Title.—Delete the word "twelve" in the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: This amendment is consequential because the word "twelve" must now be restored in the Title. Clause 6 refers to Section 12 of the principal Act, and it has now been restored with the exception of paragraph (b).

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

BILL—PURCHASERS' PROTECTION.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.23] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is a definite attempt to prevent some of the abuses which

have been prevalent in connection with the sale of subdivided land. I need not go into details, because quite a lot of publicity was given to this question over an extended period. Eventually a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the activities of Land & Homes, Ltd. The Royal Commissioner was Mr. Justice Dwyer, who conducted the inquiry in 1931 and made certain recommendations. It was considered that these recommendations should, as far as possible, be embodied in a Bill. All the complaints made against this firm were not proved before the Commission, but His Honour unhesitatingly stated that there was a necessity for amending the existing Act.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I went before the Federal Land Appeal Board, and was asked if I was connected with Land and Homes, Ltd.

The HONORARY MINISTER: After the Bill was prepared and presented to another place, a select committee was appointed to deal with it. That select committee recommended several amendments, and almost in their entirety they have been accepted. With the exception of the provision contained in Clause 2, the Bill refers to contracts entered into after the commencement of the Act.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is the reference to Section 11 in Clause 2 correct?

The HONORARY MINISTER: An amendment is required in that regard. Provision is made in the Bill for each purchase of subdivisional land being subject to a condition that if the purchaser has not already inspected the land, he shall be given seven days in which to do so, that is seven days after the execution of the contract.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does "he" include "she"?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think "he" also means "she."

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I hope so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Within four days after the lapse of seven days he or she may repudiate the contract, and in such case the deposit paid shall be repaid to the purchaser. Clause 6 fixes a period of 14 days in which the purchaser may examine the title of the vendor in and to such land, and lays down that if the title is found to be wrong the vendor shall have 14 days in which to rectify, failing which the purchaser

shall, within a further period of four days after the expiration of the previous period, have the right to repudiate the contract, in which case moneys paid shall be repayable to the purchaser. Clause 7 prescribes the payment of a deposit of not less than £5, or alternatively 5 per cent., of the total purchase price of the land, whichever is the lesser sum, the object being to prevent contracts being entered into where there is no money available with which to continue the transaction. The provision is also intended as a deterrent against any person lightly entering into a contract of that kind. In view of past experience, the provision is regarded as highly desirable. If a deposit as stated in the Bill is not paid, that fact renders the contract void. Clause 8 is also a new provision, and deals with the attesting of contracts. It provides that the signature to any such contract shall be attested, immediately it has been made, by any person authorised to witness signatures under the Transfer of Land Act, 1893, and the Declarations and Attestations Act, 1913. It also provides that the attesting person shall not be in the employ of the vendor or in any way interested in the vendor's business.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What is the reason for that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The reason, I believe, is that there has been a bit of sharp practice by persons who are employed, or have been employed, by vendors. Such persons have been interested in obtaining signatures to contracts. Of this there are a number of instances which I shall be glad to quote during the Committee stage to satisfy the hon. member. Failure to observe that provision will entail a penalty of £50, and any contract in connection with which it is not observed is not enforceable against the purchaser. Clause 9 deals with married women, and entitles a married woman to repudiate any contract for the purchase of subdivisional land at any time before completion, or, whether the contract or agreement is completed or not, within a period of 12 months after the date of execution.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You are rather invalidating the privileged position to which married women have attained.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The provision will apply only if the husband has not ratified the contract. In case of repudiation, the money which has been paid shall

be repaid to the purchaser. There is a definition of "married woman" to the following effect:—

A woman residing with her husband and maintained by him, and with no substantial separate estate.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How are those facts to be proved?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think there will be much difficulty in establishing them for the purposes of this measure. Clause 10 enables a magistrate, when the aid of the court is invoked, to compel the purchaser to take such action as is necessary to restore the land to the vendor, with damages up to the extent of one-fourth of the total purchase price. Similarly, Subclause 2 of Clause 10 gives the purchaser, if threatened with proceedings, the right to invoke the protection of the court. There is also a provision for the granting of protection to any purchaser who has entered into a contract of sale before the commencement of this measure. Subclause 1 of Clause 12 provides that the dwelling-house occupied by the judgment debtor, and also the household furniture and domestic utensils of such debtor, shall be free from distraint in connection with a judgment summons or costs in connection therewith unless the magistrate, when giving judgment or making such order, specifically declares to the contrary. Subclause 2 of Clause 12 provides that the provisions of Subclause 1 shall be applicable to judgment orders obtained prior to the commencement of this measure. There is also provision against contracting outside the measure, and a prohibition against the vendor or any other person inducing a sale by offering to repurchase at an increased price. That has been the means by which numerous sales have been made from time to time, and I think there is conclusive evidence that some restriction of this nature is necessary. There is also prohibition against agents from going from house to house offering for sale subdivisinal land or shares, or canvassing with a view to inducing people to purchase. A rather heavy penalty attaches to that offence—£100.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you noticed the marginal note to that clause? It does not seem to be right. This is really a prohibition against house to house canvass.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think the point is of much importance. Subclause 2 of Clause 15 makes it definite that

the responsibility for contravention of the measure in this respect shall be upon every proprietor, vendor, promoter, or selling agent on whose behalf it is done, until it is proved that the offence was committed without his knowledge or consent; and in the case of a company every director, manager, and secretary thereof shall be deemed to be a principal and shall be liable. I think I have now covered the main points of the Bill. There exists quite a body of evidence on the points to which the measure relates. Being desirous that we should get on with the Bill as quickly as possible, I have not gone into much detail. In Committee I shall be in a position to justify all the clauses of the Bill, and I hope hon. members will agree to them in order that we may reach finality as early as possible in connection with what is now to many people a highly important matter. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—LOAN, £3,946,000.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to provide authority for the Government to borrow money for expenditure and services detailed in the First Schedule, and to reappropriate certain other Loan moneys as set out in the Second and Third Schedules. The total amount asked for is £3,946,000, and of this sum £2,646,000 is required for works, and the balance, £1,300,000, is required to meet revenue deficits. The amount raised last year was £2,176,000, and the increase this year is due, in part, to the gradual exhaustion of authorities obtained in the past, under previous Acts, as well as the inclusion of the amount advanced to meet revenue deficits. In previous years additional moneys were raised by means other than a Loan Act; as, for instance, in 1930-31, when £600,000 was raised by the issue of mortgage bonds and debentures under the authority of the Agricultural Bank Act and the Finance and Development Act, and in 1931-32, when a further £100,000 was raised by similar means. That avenue is now closed, and it is necessary to

raise money for all requirements under the sole authority of a Loan Act.

Prior to 1930 revenue deficits were financed out of authorised loans; but with the exhaustion of Loan funds and the closure of the Loan market, it has been necessary to obtain assistance from the Commonwealth Bank by medium of the issue of Treasury bills. These bills form part of the public debt, and, as such, require Parliamentary authorisation. The provision of £1,300,000 in this Bill is, as I have indicated, to cover the estimated deficit of £748,465 for this year, and also part of the previous revenue deficits which were not covered by earlier Loan Acts. The provision of Loan funds for entirely new works is limited to the Yuna-Dartmoor and Southern Cross southwards railways. In addition, the commencement of the Canning reservoir may be regarded as new work.

The floating debt of this State at the 30th June last amounted to £8,973,214. Of this amount, £5,875,000 was held in Australia, and £3,098,214 was London indebtedness. This floating debt is included in the net public debt of the State as at 30th June last. The sinking fund in hand at the 30th June, 1933, amounted to £1,346,550, and was distributed as follows:—

	£
National Debt Commission ..	106,204
Crown Agents	1,151,145
Endowment Policy Account, m.v. "Kangaroo"	89,198

The amount held by Crown agents is in respect of a loan for £998,353 which matures in London in January next. It will be noted that the sinking fund exceeds the loan by £152,795, and the surplus will be available when the redemption is completed.

Hon. H. Seddon: Can you tell us what will be done with that money?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot say definitely at the moment.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Can you tell us who is going to pay it back?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Our heirs and successors. The public debt has increased in the past 10 years by approximately £52 per head of the population. At the 30th June, 1933, it amounted to £193 3s. per head. This is a substantial burden for a small community to shoulder, and in comparison with some of the older States, it may appear to be unduly high, but in this connection it must be remembered that

many undertakings financed by the Government of this State out of loan moneys, are financed in other States either by private enterprise or by semi-governmental bodies, whose indebtedness is not included in the public debt of the State. Owing to the depression and the consequent unemployment that was created, it became a fundamental obligation on the Government to provide work, and, owing to the concurrent fall in revenue receipts, it was not possible for the Government to finance such works entirely out of revenue. It became necessary to borrow money for these purposes, but every care has been exercised to see that work provided is of a reproductive character and is of such a nature as to make it a legitimate charge to loan.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Is there a single work proceeding that is on a reproductive basis?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, the re-grading of railways to enable locomotives to carry heavier loads.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I thought you might have said the State Hotels.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The demands on the State for the provision of relief works will continue so long as the depression lasts, and the only hope of relief from the burdens so imposed is a speedy return to normal conditions and prosperity. I trust that members who require additional information will specify it during the debate on the second reading rather than in Committee, so that I may be able to furnish it during the Committee stage. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [5.52]: I listened with considerable interest to the remarks of the Chief Secretary, and was glad to have his assurance that every effort is being made, or will be made, to spend Loan money on reproductive work. I interjected, perhaps rather rudely, to ascertain where these reproductive works were going on at the present time, and I think the Minister replied that the only one was the re-grading of railways.

The Chief Secretary: Not the only one.

Hon. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM: I am not aware of any others. I am opposed to the expenditure of large sums of money on works that might not prove reproductive. We should be very careful before we

pass a Bill that authorises the raising of a huge sum like this. I know how dangerous it is to spend money on what I would call irresponsible works unless there be a chance of those works paying interest. However, I do not suppose there is any course left to us other than to support the Bill.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.54]: Unlike the previous speaker, I intend to oppose the Bill. My reason for doing so is that I wish to draw the attention of the people of the State to the very serious condition of affairs that now exists, which should have been driven home to them through the depression, but which, unfortunately, does not seem to have given them very much guidance. There have been so many expressions of approval of the way in which Australia has handled the depression that one would naturally expect to find something in connection with our national finance figures to justify such statements. For example, one would expect to find in the figures of our national finance something to justify those expressions of approval. When in the early days of the depression people were indulging in terms of repentance, figuratively clothed in sackcloth and ashes, there were pious expressions on the part of the Premiers of all the States in Australia with regard to what were very much needed improvements. Amongst these was firstly the most important factor of endeavouring to achieve something in the nature of a balance as far as revenue and expenditure were concerned. For some years efforts were made to bring about that balance. The deficits were very high, and one was very much disturbed to notice that at the Loan Conference held in May last the view was expressed that the States would do well if they continued to mark time, as it were, and retain the deficits at the figure to which they had been reduced. That is a disquieting feature because one realises that the expressions of approval that were heard were made because the State Governments were endeavouring to achieve a balance; but when we find that the Government were content to let things remain as they were, then I consider there is justification for a considerable amount of disapproval.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: And now this Government proposes to add another four millions to the total.

Hon. H. SEDDON: An unfortunate feature is that we find ourselves agreeing to increased local expenditure. During the first days of the depression there was a good deal of comment on the part of public men regarding the heavy burden imposed upon the community through interest and sinking fund charges. Statements were made that those charges were far too heavy, and a part of the Premiers' Plan was the carrying out of conversions whereby those charges would be reduced. The conversions were made a success first of all through an appeal to the bondholders, and this was followed by what was nothing short of compulsion with regard to those who would not agree to convert. I am inclined to think that if a private citizen adopted a similar procedure towards his creditors and forced them willy-nilly to make a reduction in their charges, we should not be inclined to commend him upon the methods he adopted in reducing his charges. In those circumstances, therefore, we do not deserve the credit that has been given to us in respect of the carrying out of the conversions. The third factor to which we should look as evidence of our having carried out the pious resolutions will be the figures regarding our imports and exports. When one looks at those figures I do not know that they furnish grounds for praise because in the amount of increased imports they do not by any means indicate a satisfactory state of affairs. The third factor is with regard to the sales of our exports whereby we contribute towards the cost of our overseas borrowing. No doubt the degree to which we have conformed to those desirable features is reflected in what are really the effects of the economic policy. We have to realise that the problem of unemployment is one of them; living standards and the condition of employment figures, and bank clearances, are all affected by the extent to which we have conformed to the principle of sound finance. When we examine the existing state of affairs we are inclined to think there is a tendency to assume that we have recovered our position to a far greater extent than the figures justify. When we come to consider the application of the Premiers' Plan, we must agree that things had to be done which were unpleasant and all of which received condemnation, but they were necessary to enable us to establish a basis on which to start. There have been great reductions in wages and salaries, interest

charges have been reduced, and moratoria in various forms have been declared. Unpleasant and unpopular as these things are I think the country can rightly say they accomplished the desired results and were worthy of approval. Our borrowing and our achievements regarding the loan policy are features that are by no means satisfactory. The really serious and dangerous phase of the whole position is that Governments have not only continued to borrow, but have come to regard it as an accepted fact that they cannot carry on without borrowing. When a Government maintain such an attitude and find they cannot carry on their activities without borrowing, we shall reach a position in our national economy that will be most seriously disturbing.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Yes, to a Government having any ideas of economy.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It would indicate that we are heading downhill and cannot stop ourselves. From that standpoint, the whole country should take notice and take alarm. Let us not make any mistake about it. The position is that unless we take steps to put an end to such a condition of affairs, we are heading straight for default. It was rather interesting to note, in the remarks of the Chief Secretary, that old familiar phrase: "The money is to be raised for reproductive works." During the years in which our financial advisers both here and abroad were criticising our progress and expenditure, we continued to indulge in heavy borrowing. If members were to search the records in "Hansard," they would find that each year when the Loan Bill was before Parliament, the same references were made regarding the type of works that were to be undertaken. The figures that are placed before us each year show the degree to which those loan works have proved reproductive. I shall quote a few figures from the records placed before members annually to show to what extent those works have been reproductive, and how they conform to the principle laid down at the Premiers' Conference in 1930, that no loan works should be undertaken unless reproductive in the sense that they must meet obligations in regard to sinking fund and interest charges. In 1930, the net loss on the works carried out from loan funds amounted to £1,077,000; in 1931, the net loss under the same head-

ing was £1,063,000. In 1932 the loss was reduced as the result of the really splendid efforts of the Government in power at the time, to £722,000. On the other hand, for the year 1933, the loss was £1,167,000. Each year we were told that the works undertaken would return interest and sinking fund charges, but the returns for the four years I have quoted show to what degree they were productive in that sense. I believe that if the figures made available in years prior to those I have quoted were examined, the results would be found somewhat similar. Is it not time to say, seeing that we have a Loan Bill before us now, which contains provisions for the expenditure of money on various works, that they should be such as will comply with the demand that they shall meet the charges for interest and sinking fund? I intend to deal with that phase in greater detail later on. The point I want to make is that, in conjunction with the other losses that have been incurred year by year, our annual interest and sinking fund bill has been steadily increasing, even during the years of depression. When we asked people to agree to the conversion loan and a reduction in the rates of interest, one would have thought that, having had driven home to us the fact that the financial burden was so heavy, we would have refrained, at any rate, from increasing that burden. On the other hand, the figures of the four years I have quoted show that, in spite of the reduction forced upon bond holders, interest and sinking fund payments have increased. In 1930, the payments under that heading totalled £3,440,000; in 1931, £3,620,000; in 1932, in which year we felt the first effects of the reduction, £3,500,000; in 1933, £3,500,000—that was largely owing to the issue of Treasury bills at a reduced rate of interest; although the debt increased the interest bill did not increase, because we got the benefit of money made available at lower rates of interest—and the estimate for 1934 is £3,600,000. That means that once again we are on the upward trend, and once more we are increasing the liability under this heading, despite the fact that during the early stages of the depression we said that the interest burden on the people was too heavy for them to bear.

Hon. A. Thomson: Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die!

Hon. H. SEDDON: When one considers the extent to which money has to be found to meet losses in connection with agriculture, it should drive still further home the seriousness of the course we are pursuing.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Then there is the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Among the sums mentioned in the First Schedule of the Bill is £305,000 as additional capital for the Agricultural Bank. A Royal Commission is at present inquiring into the operations of the Agricultural Bank, and it will be interesting to know what findings will be presented regarding the additional sums voted annually for the purpose of providing capital for the Agricultural Bank. Long ago I formed the opinion that a proportion of the money so voted was simply granted to make up losses incurred by the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. It is true that during the last two years we have been frank enough to admit that a considerable proportion of our borrowings was to be devoted to financing the deficit. This afternoon the Chief Secretary pointed out that of the £1,300,000 provided for short-term advances to meet expenditure pending the receipt of revenue, a portion was necessary to meet the deficit incurred last year, and the remainder was for the purposes of the estimated deficit for the current year. The fact remains that many of the items mentioned in the schedules to the Loan Bill are open to severe criticism from the standpoint that the works referred to will not pay interest and sinking fund charges. I will mention one or two of them. The other day I asked the Chief Secretary for certain figures regarding the Government prospecting scheme. I do not desire to be misunderstood; I do not wish to give the impression that I consider that scheme has not some very promising features, but I do take exception to that scheme being paid for from loan funds. When the Chief Secretary told us the other day that £60,000 had been allotted during the present year for carrying on the prospecting scheme, and when we realise that it is costing us £1,200 a week, and note that the total cost to the 30th November last was £27,000, and that the amount refunded to date is £824, I think the scheme should demand the attention of members from the standpoint of advancing money for that purpose from loan funds.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is merely a repetition of the old prospecting board.

Hon. H. SEDDON: But we are supposed to have sobered up and reformed! We are now supposed to bring forth works "meet for repentance." Notwithstanding that, we are charging up the cost of works to loan, although obviously the expenditure should have been made from revenue. This scheme cannot be regarded in any sense as reproductive work calculated to pay interest and sinking fund charges. I know that the answer will be that the indirect results will more than meet those charges. I would remind the House that the same argument was used with regard to the railways we have constructed over a period of years, and which it is now admitted will not pay interest and sinking fund charges for many years to come. In those circumstances, I do not know that we can take any great credit to ourselves on having become reformed characters from the standpoint of our financial policy. I have already referred to the capital required for the Agricultural Bank, but there is another item relating to the development of agriculture, for which £190,000 is to be set aside. How much of that money will be spent in a direction that will be directly reproductive and therefore rightly chargeable to loan funds? Again the answer will be that the returns will be indirect. The trouble is that there is so much indirect return and so much direct loss about the procedure associated with our financial policy, that I am inclined to think those of the general public who take the trouble to give any attention to the financial problem, will regard seriously advances such as I have indicated. I do not wish to offer criticism without making some suggestions regarding how a reversal of the policy may be effected. I have indicated that we must reverse that policy, or we shall find ourselves in a very unfortunate position among the other defaulting nations who have been forced into default, not because of the pressure of war debts or of circumstances beyond their control, but because of their extravagance and unsatisfactory financing. Instead of approaching the question from the standpoint of building up an enormous burden year by year by means of borrowing, we should substitute the idea of a national saving scheme, and establish a national wealth reserve. In other words, every member of the community should bear

his share of the burden in meeting the cost of developmental works, and to that extent build up a share in the wealth of the country. We should pursue that course instead of owing the money involved to other people, either abroad or in other parts of Australia, as we do now. We could wisely try to build up our national wealth for ourselves instead of constantly increasing the burden under a system by which, while building up on one side, we diminish on the other. Under such a scheme as I suggest, we would provide for relief works, and instead of paying for them from loan funds, we would finance them by way of our national contribution.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Before tea I was dealing with the question of borrowing, and I suggested that, in view of the serious state of affairs which is bound to arrive on account of the continued borrowing, any alternative should be worthy of consideration if it would provide a method whereby we could put a stop to the continual drift. Incidentally, I should like to point out that one aspect of finance during the past few years has been that whilst in the first year of the depression sustenance and the cost of unemployment relief work were met out of revenue, the tendency has been gradually to relieve Consolidated Revenue and to place the burden more and more on loan money. In the record of Government expenditure we find that the amount disbursed on unemployment relief fell from £650,000 in 1932 to £357,000 in 1933, while the estimate for the present year is £362,000. So it will be seen that we are simply taking the burden off Consolidated Revenue and transferring it to loan expenditure. The Chief Secretary some time ago took me to task for my continued criticism of loan expenditure, and pointed out to the House that it was the only system by which unemployment relief could be met. My contention is that we should adopt a scheme from which we could obtain funds for the purpose of relief works, that we should institute a form of superannuation scheme. Some time ago I placed before the House the suggestion that, judging by the tables of costs which are provided by the various insurance companies, a sum of just under £1,200 would provide a superannuation of £1 per week for a man 65 years of age and

his wife aged 60. That sum could be obtained by every worker in the community if he were to set aside each year £10 which, carrying interest at 4 per cent., could be applied in the way of relief work. Under such a scheme, if a man through being out of work was unable to contribute, he could be employed full time on those relief works, and the difference between the actual cost of his sustenance and the value of the work he had done could be credited to him annually. As the result of calculations, it is clear that this scheme would not only provide a pension for a man and his wife of the ages I have mentioned, but it would also provide for the widows of those men who died before attaining the age of 65, and in addition would provide 10s. a week for each child up to 14 years of age left fatherless. The great advantage of the scheme would be that the liability would be wiped out with the death of the person drawing the pension. In all ordinary circumstances the scheme would steadily get into a better position, and the increasing burden would be replaced by one which remained either more or less stationary, or would increase only very slowly. In those circumstances there are many classes of work which could be legitimately undertaken by such a scheme. Under the conditions existing to-day, one of the ordinary requirements of life for the average worker, that of providing a home of his own, cannot be accomplished by many members of the community. Yet the return from a home in the way of small commitments would be well within the scheme of expenditure from the funds of the scheme, and one of the most important of our average everyday needs could be met. One great advantage would be that each year the amount available would be directly proportioned to the number of our population; and we could lay down a scheme of control of development, because we would have a definite amount to work on, whereas the extent of our loan works to-day is determined by the amount of money we can get. That state of affairs only encourages expenditure far in excess of the requirements of the country. I made this suggestion as an alternative to the present system of general borrowing. I will go farther and say that this present system is simply resolving itself into putting a heavy burden on the workers of the State and of Australia in the form of interest and

sinking fund payments. Yet, in spite of that we still persist in adding to the burden. The great advantage of a controlled system such as this would be that in times of prosperity, when work was more plentiful, the demands on the fund would not be so great, and the surplus could be applied to the national sinking fund; whereas in times of adversity the whole of the fund would be taken advantage of and, moreover, we could make use of the accumulated wealth from the surplus fund, and so we could meet the fluctuations in a far more elastic way than we can at present. We have to realise, too, that one of the heaviest burdens to-day is the burden of providing for those who have become old. The expenditure on this account is costing the Federal Government something like £11,000,000, which is an annual charge on the community. Nothing has been provided to meet it, and so it has simply become an annual charge on taxation. We should realise also that the cost of unemployment relief runs into an equally large sum of money, making a charge on the revenue, which will be replaced only by such a scheme as I have suggested. By the present method of financing the deficits, whether in the form of Treasury bonds or of long-term loans, we are creating huge debts for which no asset at all exists. Therefore I will again record my vote against this method of financing, which is having a very serious effect on Australia and which, as I say, will land us in even more serious crises unless we can take steps to avert them. Any steps would be a sound alternative to what is immediately ahead of us, namely defaulting. It is a very serious thing for a nation to default. A man who defaults on his obligations besmirches his individual record. And as it applies to individuals, so it applies to nations. One of the great grounds for the national pride we have had in the past is that most British communities have held the very highest regard for the discharge of their obligations. In support of that let me give an illustration: During an inquiry into a certain scandal in the United States of America 25 years ago, Mr. Pierpont Morgan was called as a witness before the committee of inquiry. That committee put many very pertinent questions to their witnesses and conducted searching investigations. One incident stood out: Mr. Morgan was asked what were the conditions governing the granting of credit to individuals. He said

the first condition in granting credit to any person was that person's integrity. "I have," he said, "frequently made advances to men, in some instances of a million dollars, on the man's own word, and I consider that is the very highest security a banker can have." The effect of that reply was felt throughout the length and breadth of the country, because it was realised that the value of a man's word and integrity was the surest foundation on which to work. The material security ranked second to the moral security. I wish to apply the same argument. Our nation has a great deal to lose by placing itself in such a position that its integrity is imperilled and the serious danger of defaulting increased. By continually consenting to Loan Bills brought down year after year, particularly without exercising a very critical attitude toward the items upon which the money is proposed to be expended, we are not carrying out our duty to the country, but are endangering our integrity which has been not only our national pride, but the foundation on which we have been able to conduct our financial operations in the past. I must therefore oppose the second reading.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—Short title:

Hon. A. THOMSON: I move an amendment—

That "the 1st day of July, 1934," be struck out and the words "a day to be fixed by proclamation" inserted in lieu.

I have given notice of this and other amendments only out of a sincere desire to assist the Government in having presented to Parliament next session further information than is at present available. The Minister, in replying to the second reading debate last night, dealt with only one phase of the question, namely the effect of motor competition on the railways. In some of the statements made, he was somewhat ungenerous to me.

He very skilfully evaded some of the questions on which I had asked for information, and when he endeavoured by old political—I will not say trickery—

Hon. J. Nicholson: Forcefulness?

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, he tried to convey the impression that I was opposed to the railways granting concessions to school children.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is a sufficiently old Parliamentarian to know that in Committee he cannot reply to the remarks of the Minister on the second reading.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I propose to link my remarks with the amendment. A board might be able to suggest that many of the charges that have to be met by the Commissioner of Railways should be apportioned to the departments that legitimately should bear them. I have no desire to flout the Government or place them in an invidious position, but the time at our disposal will not enable us to give the Bill the consideration it deserves. The public must be considered. The operation of the measure would impose undue burdens on country residents. I was pleased to read the following lines in an excellent leading article in this morning's "West Australian"—

The passing of important laws affecting most intimately the lives and livelihood of many thousands, in a hurried turmoil of haste, is unfitting and detrimental to the efficiency and dignity of Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that Clause 1 be postponed and that a general discussion take place on Clause 2. The amendments of which notice has been given speak for themselves.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the further consideration of Clause 1 be postponed.

Motion put and passed.

Clause 2—Parts and division:

The CHAIRMAN: I will allow a general discussion on this clause, with the understanding that if it be struck out, I shall be fairly strict in curbing the discussion subsequently.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I suggest that Clauses 2, 3 and 4 be postponed and that the general discussion take place on Clause 5.

The CHAIRMAN: If members outlined their reasons for not proceeding further than is contemplated by Mr. Thomson's amendments and if the clause were struck out, the Minister would know that the rest of Mr. Thomson's amendments would be accepted.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I think your suggestion, Mr. Chairman, is a wise one, because, on that clause, we can show our attitude to the Bill. In view of other legislation awaiting our addition, it is unjust to ask us, in the time at our disposal, to deal with the numerous contentious clauses in this Bill. Mr. Thomson's suggestion appears to some of us to offer a method by which we can meet the Government and enable the board to carry out some of its most important functions. It would enable the board to engage in the necessary exploratory work before being given any extended powers. I hope the Chief Secretary will not regard this as an attempt to dictate the policy to the Government, because nothing is further from our minds. It is an honest attempt to assist them as far as members feel they can go. If it is intended to push on with the Bill, it is only fair we should consider other amendments that will have to be put upon the Notice Paper. Were it not for the fact that one-third of the members of this Chamber have to face the electors next year, we would be able to give more time to the consideration of this measure. In fairness to members generally we feel they should have time in which to consider this important question. We would even be prepared to re-assemble at an early date after the elections, and give the utmost time and attention to any legislation the Government brought down. The delay that would occur by adopting Mr. Thomson's suggestion would be of only a brief nature, and time could be usefully employed meanwhile by the board in making investigations preparatory to putting their machinery into operation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I desire to get on with this Bill as quickly as possible, but I am awaiting the decision of the Committee on this particular amendment. If the Committee are in favour of Mr. Thomson's proposals, after the consideration of Clause 5, if not before, I should be able to say that the Bill will not be acceptable to the Government. I am not saying this as a threat, but I must state what is in my

mind. The Government could not consider accepting this Bill containing the amendments contemplated by Mr. Thomson.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I appreciate the candour of the Chief Secretary, and I am sure it is our desire to be equally candid with him. The important nature of the legislation that is mingled with this particular Bill adds a weight to the mind of every member. Most of us have an earnest desire to help the Government to overcome the difficulties with which they are confronted, and we have viewed with considerable anxiety the losses which have accrued to the railways through the growth of other means of transport. We all are conscious of the responsibility and the load which the Government have to carry, and of the worries and cares of the Commissioner. This Bill has been brought down without any of that evidence which is due to us before we can give serious consideration to such important provisions as these.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is that not a reflection upon another place?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Have members there not as much brains as we have here?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am casting no reflection upon another place. This Bill is so important that, before we can actually pass it into law, in justice to ourselves and the country we should be furnished with the fullest possible information, such as can be obtained only by appointing a select committee or a Royal Commission. If the Government have had evidence of this nature, we have not been informed of it. We are working in the dark. I feel I am entitled to more information than I am possessed of before I can give full consideration to the various clauses of the Bill. If we passed it as it is, it would not come into operation until the 1st July next. Surely it cannot be argued that any serious impediment would be created if between now and Parliament re-assembling the whole question were sifted by a Royal Commission.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You would hold it up just the same.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member is not correct in that statement.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Experience teaches that I am right.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. members is a little too impetuous.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No great amount of time would be lost. Whatever Bill might be passed then would be such that it could come into operation at once, and the board could immediately set about the discharge of its duties. We know what transport means to the development of this country. Having that knowledge before them, and the recognition of their responsibility, the Government will realise that there is no disposition on the part of this Chamber to prevent them from forging ahead with the most desirable form of legislation. I speak in all sincerity, and with no desire whatever to delay the Bill.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I hope the Chamber will get on with the Bill, because if the measure is not passed the Premier intends to call an early session after the New Year. This House will then be over-weighted, because of the biennial election. No member seeking re-election can really afford to attend sittings here during such a period; and the intelligence of the House would be impaired by the absence, probably, of ten members. Let us obtain a Bill which will remove the waste entailed by duplication of transport. If the views of Mr. Thomson, Mr. Seddon and Mr. Nicholson are to prevail, this country cannot have up-to-date transport. Let us make a start by placing on the statute-book the best Act we can fashion.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: For the position hon. members find themselves in, the Government alone are responsible. For my part, I have given the Bill the closest attention I possibly could; but I fail to see the ultimate application of some clauses and also of some amendments of which notice has been given. In the last eight or ten days of the session this Chamber is asked to consider a huge volume of important legislation. We must not make a makeshift job of it. The Bill deals with one of the State's greatest problems. I suggest to hon. members that it would not be amiss to pass Clauses 2 and 3. The Minister must realise that this is a non-party measure, and that every member desires to assist in putting it into the best possible shape. However, we are afraid that some amendments may be fraught with as much danger to the country as are the clauses themselves. The Minister might agree to report progress after Clauses 2 and 3 have been carried, so that members may consult as to the extent to which they can meet the wishes of the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The sooner we have a decision, the better. I have come to the conclusion that some members, no doubt from conscientious motives, are opposed to the Bill and are determined to use every legitimate effort to bring about its destruction. Other members, I believe, are swayed by influences which lead them to conclude that it is necessary to appoint such a board as indicated by amendments on the Notice Paper—a board to investigate and report to Parliament. Such a board would not be acceptable to the Government. Mr. Thomson says the Bill seriously affects the interests of the people. That has been the burden of my speech. The Bill is intended to safeguard those interests. What further evidence or information is needed? Country members, especially, know the position; it stares them in the face wherever they go. Action is necessary, and that action must be taken either one way or the other. If the Government cannot succeed in one way, they will without delay adopt the alternative course. In any case, the Bill will not come into operation until the 1st July; but the board proposed under it must be appointed straight away to make the necessary preparations. If a board is appointed as suggested by Mr. Thomson, and reports to Parliament, it would take some considerable time to make the necessary preparations, legislative and otherwise. The opponents of the measure will be gratified by the delay. Vested interests, we are told, arise in connection with the measure. Those vested interests would in the meantime become intensified. The question of compensation has been raised. I believe there is no prospect of any Government sanctioning compensation in the circumstances; but suppose there is to be compensation, will the amount of compensation be greater if the road transport interests are permitted to continue in present circumstances? Will those who are engaged in motor transport within a 15-mile radius of the metropolitan area contribute to the fund? Suppose we have a special session of Parliament; then we would simply start from where we are now. Sir Charles Nathan says he is unable to grasp the contents of the Bill. It is almost entirely a machinery measure. The Government are quite prepared to accept any reasonable amendments. They do not assert that the Bill is perfect. It is based on legislation in various Australian States, modified

to meet our circumstances. I hope there will be no attempt to push through the amendments on the Notice Paper. Whatever may be said as to good intentions—and I believe they are good—such a course is equivalent to dictating to the Government. There is a board to be appointed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The object is not to dictate to the Government but to help them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Primary Producers' Association, it is suggested, is to participate in the nominating of a member of the board. That is a purely political association.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Why not the A.W.U.?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why allow the Primary Producers' Association to participate, and leave the W.A. Railway Employees' Union, which represents a much larger section of the community, out in the wilderness? Then there are the Fruit-growers' Association, and the Pastoralists' Association.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Pastoralists' Association is always fair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have no objection to the Pastoralists' Association being included except that the principle is bad. The Government are to have no say in the appointment of the board, nor is the machinery available for the election. How will the board be elected?

Hon. J. Nicholson: It will be appointed by the Government on the nomination of those bodies.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On whose authority? I presume it will be the executive of the Primary Producers' Association in Perth, or perhaps the Mussolini of that executive. Why is the Motor Transport Association to have a representative?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Why not?

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about the Motor Transport Carriers' Association?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then there is the Westralian Motor Passengers Transport Association, the members of which are confined in their activities within the 15-mile radius. Let me show how carelessly these amendments have been prepared. Clause 5 reads—

The board shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be a Government official, one representing rural industries, and one city interests, but none of whom shall be financially interested in any form of transport service or contract.

Yet the amendments suggested show that bodies that are actually financially interested in motor transport are to have a say in the matter. Subclause 2 reads—

The members of the board shall be persons who, in the Governor's opinion, are capable of assessing the financial and economic effect on the State as a whole of any transport policy.

Although the bodies I have mentioned are to have a say in the nomination of the board, the Commissioner of Railways, who represents the greatest transport asset of the State, is not mentioned.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He could be the Government representative.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I recognise why his name does not appear in the amendments because the difficulty of giving the Commissioner representation was appreciated.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is quite unfair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It would be necessary to provide a definition so as to include the various parts of the State served by railway communication. Although he is not financially interested in motor transport, the Commissioner of Railways is omitted. I have said enough to show that the Government will not accept the Bill with the amendments that have been suggested.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I listened with great interest to the impassioned speech of the Chief Secretary and found his utterance most informative. As the eldest member of the House, it appears to me extraordinary that 30 clever men cannot reach a compromise on this question. The discussion would seem to suggest that we are likely to reach the same position as we did on the Fire Brigades Bill, and we will not be able to agree. I think the better course would be to appoint a select committee, or some board, to carry out investigations and place a report before us. In view of the tenor of the discussion, I do not think we will reach finality if we proceed as we have so far. The problem confronting us is not confined to Western Australia but is world wide. It is a question of road traffic versus the railways. I am absolutely impartial and my only desire is to see the issue settled.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Fifty members of Parliament elected by a majority of the people have sent the Bill to us from another place. They sent it up with their blessing.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: If you say it was sent to us by a majority with their blessing, you will be right.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: We are supposed to have as much brains, if not more, than members of another place. I have examined the division lists in "Hansard" and the minority mainly consisted of members of the Labour Party. In conversation with a few members, including some who were Ministers in the Mitchell Government, I was told that the Assembly had made a pretty good Bill of this measure and that it would suit the farmers well. I now understand why some men lost their jobs in another place and were sent to this House. Representatives of the Country Party in this Chamber have flooded the Notice Paper with amendments to the Bill, whereas Country Party representatives in the Assembly are satisfied with it and were not denied the right by the Minister to amend the Bill when it was before them.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: They knew it was hopeless to move amendments there.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Williams is perilously close to infringing Standing Order 392 which prohibits reference to discussions that take place during the current session.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I thought you were going to put something over me that you have not attempted to put over anyone else and I was going to bite.

The CHAIRMAN: I have given the hon. member a fair run.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: No fairer than other members have been granted.

The CHAIRMAN: I am merely drawing the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 392.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have not referred to a debate during the current session but to conversations I had with members. The hope was expressed that members of this Chamber would be as kind to the Bill as members were in the Legislative Assembly. I have heard some talk about flooding the Chamber with legislation at this late hour. I have been a member for six years and after the first two years I did not want to hear any talk of that description. Four goldfields members have to travel 375 miles each week in order to be present at sittings, yet day after day the House has adjourned at 6 p.m. and at times has adjourned for a week. Yet we hear talk of flooding the House with legislation now!

I do not want to hear that sort of talk from metropolitan members, because it is most unfair. I have heard, day after day, not only now but when Mr. Baxter was Leader of the House, members move the adjournment of the debate and the Minister was forced to adjourn the House. This Bill was blessed by the Assembly on the 29th November. It is now the 14th December, yet some members here have not the time, the ability or the knowledge to apply themselves to the measure, which has been here 15 days for our consideration.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It was held up in your absence.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Members here would not allow my absence to delay anything.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is now being held up by your presence.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have my remarks to make about the Bill, and I propose to make them. After all, the members who are holding up the Bill are the farmers' representatives, who should be only too ready to support the present Government. However, they are the most ultra conservative persons I have ever known. The Government are being obstructed in their efforts to do the right thing by the railways, without which four-fifths of the farmers could not exist. They use the railways for the haulage of their wheat and fertilisers, but use motor transport for all commodities which have to pay higher freights on whatever form of transport they might be carried. The railways work for the primary producer at a dead loss.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The House is sitting in Committee. This is not a second reading debate.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: You let other members go, as for instance Mr. Nicholson; but for that I would not have spoken. Why not be sincere? Let us have a vote here and now as to whether we want this measure. The opposition to the Bill appears to be actuated by ulterior motives. Are we out for the State instrumentalities, or are we out to safeguard someone who has taken advantage of the circumstances to come in as a competitor against the State railways? The Government will not put into the Bill anything that will provide compensation for anyone who might suffer by this competition.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: This is certainly a very important measure to be considering

at this stage of the session. I am sorry for the Chief Secretary, who in the closing days of the session has to pilot through this Bill in addition to many other important measures. I do not blame the Chief Secretary at all for the delay, for I have occupied the same position and so I know the difficult task the Minister has in influencing the Cabinet to push forward the measures and get them here in good time. While I was Leader of the House I induced the Cabinet to have seven Bills introduced in this House, which eased the position considerably.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But we did not finish the session any earlier.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: This measure could soon be settled.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Well, let us settle it, but on proper grounds. So important is the Bill that it should receive every consideration, no matter what time will have to be spent in the shaping of it. On the second reading I said the Bill, unfortunately, was ten years late in being brought forward. No one can dispute that. If this were experimental legislation, I would say that to appoint a board would be the right course to adopt. The experimental stage, however, has been passed. Extensive inquiries have been made in Victoria over a long period, and a measure has been enacted there. That measure is almost identical with the Bill before us.

Hon. W. J. Mann: But we have not had any experience.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Then let us take New Zealand, where similar legislation has operated very successfully. The same applies to South Africa, though I should not like to see the Act of that country adopted here. We cannot afford to delay the passing of legislation of this kind. A sum of £25,000,000 is tied up in the railways, and we are still permitting opposition to the railways. There is no reason why hardship should be inflicted on competitors, though they take only 12 per cent. of the traffic—the 12 per cent. upon which the railways depend for profit in order to give relief to primary producers. I do not say the Bill is perfect; some amendments are necessary, but we should not destroy the Bill by deleting this clause. If we do, we shall be turning back the clock considerably. We are everlastingly hearing of the deficit and of the need for placing the State in a sound financial position. If we delay the passing

of the measure, how can we rectify the present trouble? The Bill has been described as drastic, but much more drastic measures have been passed by this Parliament. Let us make an attempt to mould the Bill into a workable measure and start right away to rectify the position.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I support Mr. Baxter's remarks. We should proceed with the consideration of the Bill. For a long time I have realised that the transport problem is one of the most serious that confront us. Much has been said about our having had no experience, but we can never acquire experience unless we make a start, and the sooner we make a start, the sooner shall we get our experience. The only possible chance of reducing railway freights is by giving the department a fair deal, which they are not getting at present. Every member must realise that much time is necessary to frame a Bill of this description. The very fact that the measure will not be put into operation until the 1st July, 1934, is a safeguard. The board appointed would consist of the best men obtainable, and they would have six months in which to consider the best means to deal with the situation. If we waited for six years, some people would not be satisfied. Every measure of reform must hurt someone, but we cannot stop progress on that account. Let us press on with the measure and give the Government a chance to put it into operation and stop the drift and economic waste that have been occurring during the last 10 or 15 years.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Mr. Williams said that Country Party members in another place had given the Bill their blessing. Mr. Baxter's speech indicated that we are dealing with the measure on non-party lines. While I am in accord with the general principles espoused by the Country Party, I am not bound to support any particular measure. The amendments are the result of the deliberations of—

Hon. G. Fraser: Caucus?

Hon. A. THOMSON: —of members who felt anxious as to what would happen if the Bill were passed in its present form. We are being held up to ridicule because we suggested various bodies to appoint representatives of the board. On the second reading I stated that, on a board of five, one of the members should be the Commissioner of Railways. I am aware that one's actions and aims are liable to be miscon-

strued, but any action of mine has not been taken with a desire to do anything detrimental to the Railway Department. I do not believe that any one of the members who conferred desired to kill the Bill. Rather have we shown anxiety to assist the Government. Mr. Baxter has mentioned what has been done in Victoria. I have a copy of the second report of the Transport Regulation Board of Victoria brought into being last year, and I doubt whether the Act passed there has yet received assent. We are asked to accept for Western Australia conditions that are deemed suitable to a State like Victoria, which could go into the south-west corner of this State.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The board which was appointed there preceded the introduction of legislation.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That is so, and we in our turn are asking that an investigation should be made into this question prior to legislation being drawn up to deal with it. The Government already have power under the Traffic Act to prevent any increase in motor transport in the country districts, and also have power to refuse red-plate licenses. We do not want to kill the Bill, or to place any difficulties in the way of the Government regulating traffic, but we do think the example of Victoria should be followed in this matter. In view of the serious position in which the railways find themselves no further licenses should be issued in cases that involve competition with the railway system, until such time as the board has had an opportunity to make a full report upon the situation to Parliament and the Government. I am very concerned lest this Bill, as we now have it, should increase the cost of living, and place an additional burden upon the people in the country districts. This measure will not add any burdens to the owners of motor trucks in the metropolitan area, but will add greatly to those that already fall upon people resident in the country.

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

Hon. A. THOMSON: The hon. member represents a province that will be exempt under the Bill.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We have had no railways built up there.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not object to the exemption, but I am surprised at the interjection. In my opinion this Bill will impose additional hardships upon those

who are producing the wealth of the country, and an additional burden upon every worker and business man outside the metropolitan area. I admit the railways are carrying at a reduced freight many commodities associated with our primary industries.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And what do they get in return, when the farmers send their wool to Fremantle by motor truck?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Perhaps they are not as well off as the hon. member. The farmer is said to have no business ability when he endeavours to sell his commodities at the highest possible price, and to buy his necessities at the cheapest price, but he is told that he is disloyal to the State because he uses some means of transport other than the railways. The Railway Department has fallen into its present position through no lack of efficiency on the part of its officers, but because of the conditions that are imposed. We have authorised the construction of many lines that we knew would not pay their way when built. The Commissioner should be given a credit note, as it were, for the loss on those lines. It is said now that the railways have lost their suburban passenger traffic, and cannot recover it, and that they have lost their goods traffic in the metropolitan area and cannot recover it; and so it is now desired to place this additional burden upon the primary producing section of the people. Many of us are of opinion that the wheat freight does pay the Railway Department. I am not opposed to the co-ordination of traffic, and I am well aware that the railway officials have for a long time been battling against many adverse conditions. The subject needs thorough investigation. If the Government consider the deliberations of the suggested board will be of value, they can give effect to their recommendations. The Bill itself represents a blank cheque. The Chief Secretary was unable to state what fees and charges would be imposed by the board as proposed in the Bill. The Government naturally consider they have sufficient information to draft a suitable measure. However, since Parliament has been in session there have been deputations asking the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to secure information. I trust my amendment will be carried. If it is good enough for the Government to adopt the proposed Victorian legislation, surely it is good enough for them to adopt the Victorian

principle of appointing a board to investigate.

The CHAIRMAN: There must be some limit to the range of discussion in Committee. The issue is simple. It is said that the time at the disposal of the Chamber is insufficient to allow of a complete investigation and that therefore a board should be appointed to investigate. The Chair would therefore be right in keeping hon. members to the question of time, instead of allowing second reading speeches to be made on that aspect.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The Chief Secretary has intimated that he wants a test division to show whether there is a majority in favour of Mr. Thomson's amendment. I am among those who conferred outside sitting hours with a view to assisting the Government. After deliberation it was decided that the Bill should be supported up to the point of giving the Government the board, and that certain interests should be named from which the Government were to select the members of the board, the Government themselves choosing members to represent the departments. I am prepared to support Clause 2 on the understanding that after it has been passed progress will be reported. If the Chief Secretary will not accept the amendments on the Notice Paper, we must be allowed time to draw up other amendments. In my opinion, the board should not be given administrative powers until the position has been examined from every facet. I am opposed to hasty legislation; I would rather see the Bill laid aside.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Thomson and Mr. Macfarlane referred to the manner in which the amendments appearing on the Notice Paper were framed. It may be that from my previous remarks it was inferred that I criticised the gentlemen who prepared those amendments. Nothing was further from my intentions. I realised that the placing of those amendments on the Notice Paper was an act of courtesy on the part of the members concerned. I have not reflected in any way on any hon. member. I shall be prepared to report progress after Clause 2 has been disposed of, because in any case it would be too late to proceed further at this sitting. Mr. Thomson said the Traffic Act gave control of transport, but he did not explain how it did so in the direction proposed by this Bill. A license could not be refused for any vehicle if the appli-

eration was in accordance with the Traffic Act; in such a case an applicant could force the Government to grant him the license. It is said that the Bill will increase burdens in country districts, while favouring the metropolitan area. The concession given to the metropolitan area is a concession made to the trading public. There is no desire to place any obstacle in their way. The same concession is granted to country districts. Clause 33, for example, grants a general radius of 15 miles from the place of business; and the place of business might be in, for instance, Katanning.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: It is usual to allow a double radius in country districts as compared with the metropolitan area.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know what they do in the country districts, but the same concession is granted to the country trader as to the city trader.

Hon. H. V. Piessé: That is no good.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill does not affect my province, and I am only concerned, as a member of the House, to see that justice is done to all sections. In the North, we have never had sufficient political pull to have railways built that could prove a menace to the State. If other parts of the State had been in the same position, the railways would not be situated as they are to-day, carrying a capitalisation that no reasonable organisation could be expected to bear.

Hon. V. Hamersley: What about the Port Hedland-Marble Bar railway?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Miles can deal with that matter. The amendment hinges round the personnel of the board to be appointed. I have had one experience regarding the Lotteries Commission of attempting to dictate to the Government. Members let me down on that occasion, and they cannot expect me to stand by them now.

Hon. G. FRASER: I cannot understand the attitude of some members who profess to be sincere in their protests that they have had insufficient time to consider the Bill. There are still five or six sitting days, and we have lost to-day without making any advance.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Some advance has been made.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes; like a crab—backwards. The Bill contains 60 clauses, and the suggestion that members have not had time to consider it is absolutely ridicu-

lous. Of course, the caucus meeting was held and members have decided what they are to do.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That phase has already been dealt with.

Hon. G. FRASER: There was a meeting to deal with the Bill. Although it is a non-party measure, Labour members were not invited to be present. I did not know anything about the meeting until Mr. Thomson mentioned it this evening.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister has already explained that whatever members may have had in mind regarding that meeting, they were good enough to send a member to tell him all about it.

Hon. G. FRASER: That may be all right from the Chief Secretary's point of view, but I was not aware of it until Mr. Thomson spoke about it this evening. If members have not had sufficient time to consider the Bill, it is strange that such a string of amendments appear on the Notice Paper. It appears to me that this is merely another way by which the Bill may be killed. If that was the intention of the meeting—

Hon. A. Thomson: You know that was not the intention, so why continue talking like that?

Hon. G. FRASER: That is my impression.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why continue like that? Your impression is wrong.

The CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that the sentence of death is to be commuted.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think the intention is to kill the Bill, and if that is the decision of members, the sooner it is done the better. Members have been stonewalling the Bill during the Committee stage, at the same time professing to be sincere in their desire for the Bill to proceed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: If you say much more, you will kill the Bill. You had better be careful.

Hon. G. FRASER: I warn members that if it is intended to proceed along the lines suggested, they will certainly, in view of the attitude of the Government on another measure, kill the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I put the question, I want to repeat that the vote taken on the clause will be a clear indication as to whether or not the further amendments proposed will be moved, particularly those that refer to the deletion of clauses.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	6
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	9
				—

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. A. Thomson
	(Teller.)

PAIR:

AYE.	NO.
Hon. T. Moore	Hon. E. H. H. Hall

Clause thus passed.

Progress reported.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. E. H. Gray in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 4:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That all words from and including “and,” in line 4 down to “thereof,” in line 11, be struck out.

The reason why I am objecting to the clause is that it is simply a proviso which states that the inspector, where he considers any place for registration as a place of business is unsuitable, can report it to the court. In Clause 8 one of the objections that can be taken is that of unsuitable premises. Virtually they are one and the same, and we do not want it in two places. But why I object to the inspector reporting to the court is that the court can state the objection without giving notice to the applicant, whereas if it be made one of the grounds of objection carried into Section 9 of the Act, the applicant gets notice. On the second reading, the Honorary Minister said he would be agreeable to this amendment.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I did say that where objection was taken by the inspector, it is only fair that notice should be given. Also I think the contention of the hon. member that Clause 8 will cover the position is correct. I will not oppose the amendment.

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

Clauses 5 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Amendment of Section 9:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I draw the Minister's attention to the words “or that the reasonable requirements of the district do not warrant the granting of the license.” In the Licensing Act such an objection would be quite reasonable, but in the case of a license for an employment broker, the law of supply and demand would come in. If there were not sufficient demand for the services of an employment broker, the thing would regulate itself. I suggest to the Honorary Minister that he agree to delete those words “or that the reasonable requirements of the district do not warrant the granting of the license.”

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think those words are necessary. After all, they merely constitute a ground on which objection may be taken, and the court will decide whether the objection is reasonable. There might be a number of applicants for licenses in one district, and it might not be in the best interests of the community that there should be an unlimited number of employment brokers in the district.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I cannot understand why the Government should worry these employment brokers, for they do a lot of good and are very useful. I do not see why their position should be made more difficult for them than it is; on the contrary, we should do all we can to assist them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Amendment of Section 14:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If we strike out the words as proposed in the clause, we shall be debarring an employment broker from receiving from an employee any payment for services rendered. I hope the clause will be deleted.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Clause 12 is to a great extent contingent on the succeeding clause, and therefore I move—

That the further consideration of Clause 12 be postponed.

Motion put and passed.

Clause 13—Repeal of Section 15 and insertion of new section in lieu thereof:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That the proposed new Subsection 1 be struck out.

This provision would preclude an employment broker from receiving from the employee payment for services rendered. The practice has been to charge half the fee to the employer and half to the employee.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Where is the harm in that?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If we pass the proposed new subsection the whole responsibility for paying the broker's fees will rest on the employer. My amendment would permit of the existing practice being continued.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Would you like to do anything without remuneration?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not suggest that anyone should.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: When employment brokers have to register their establishments, provide office accommodation, and give their time to finding engagements for employees, it is extraordinary to suggest that the work should be done free of charge to the employees.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: They do not pay; the employers pay the lot.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Employees with whom I have spoken have preferred to pay, rather than be under an obligation to anyone. The broker gives service and there is no reason why he should not be paid for it.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: On the second reading I emphasised the right of the broker to charge the employee as well as the employer. If the employee is not prepared to pay half the fee, he may go to the State Labour Bureau, and obtain free service. If he avails himself of the aid of a private broker, he should pay for the service received. I trust that the present conditions will be retained.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: In 1918 the Act was amended to provide that no payment

or remuneration for, or in respect of, any hire should be charged by the employment broker to a servant which was not equally charged to the employer. That is the position to-day and it should remain so. An employer gets more satisfactory results from other sources of labour than the Government bureau. More personal attention can be given by the private broker than it is possible to get from the Labour Bureau. If an employee pays no fee or railway fare, there is nothing to prevent him from taking a trip into the country free of charge, and paying no further attention to the position he is supposed to be taking up. I agree that proposed Subsection 1 should be struck out.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I support the clause as it stands. No one should be asked to pay for the right to work. The best employment agency in the State is the Pastoral Labour Bureau, which never collects a penny from the employee. A fixed rate of £1 is charged to the employer, and the office is open to anyone at that rate. Instead of fixing the fees by regulation, which might be used for the fixing of a rate which would put the employment brokers out of existence, I have a proposal that the whole question should be left open as between private broker and the employer. Those two parties could determine what should be paid for the particular services rendered. This would place them in competition with each other, and ensure that the best service was given on both sides. The Labour Bureau often sends to the Pastoral Bureau in the hope that it will be possible to place some good man for whom no position has been found at the Government office.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: How will it be possible for a private employment broker to carry on his business under a clause like this? He is to get no fee from the employee.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He must get it from the employer.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: The clause does not say so. I do not see where he is entitled to receive anything.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Under proposed Subsection 2.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: That makes a difference.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I shall move for the deletion of proposed Subsections 2 and 3. Proposed Subsection 2 refers to a scale of charges. We propose to dispense with

the scale, leaving the matter to the employee and the broker. Progress might be reported after proposed Subsection 1 has been disposed of.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I doubt whether members regard proposed Subsection 1 as vital. The law for years has been that the employment broker shall receive one-half of the fee from the employer and the other half from the employee. The clause creates something new. Hon. members should have an opportunity of thinking over the whole position in the light of the amendments Mr. Holmes has in view. Progress should be reported now.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection to progress being reported. The law as stated by Mr. Nicholson shows that the present position is unfortunate. In many cases employment brokers do not attempt to collect half the fee from the employer. As to that point, I gave considerable information when moving the second reading. In the great majority of cases the employee is the only one who pays.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: My experience leads me to think you are wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: My authority is the Chief Inspector of Factories. I have evidence on the point here. Quite recently a Perth employment broker informed the Chief Inspector that when she presented her bill to a large cafe proprietor for the payment of her fee, the proprietor said, "I never pay," and tore up the bill. The same broker further said that another Perth employer had offered her the work of engaging employees for him provided she made no charge, as, he added, was the case with other brokers. There being no provision that a charge shall be collected from the employer, the result is too frequently that the employee is the only one who pays anything at all.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Under this provision the broker will get the fee from the employer or not at all.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If hon. members will consider Mr. Holmes's amendments as a whole, in conjunction with the clause, they may possibly take a different view.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 15th December, 1933.

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

QUESTION—DAM CONSTRUCTION, REDUCING COSTS.

Hon J. M. MACFARLANE asked the Chief Secretary: In view of the statements made by Mr. W. H. Shiels, B.Sc., C.E., London and Australia, supported by plans lodged with the Public Works Department, that he can effect a saving of 66 per cent. in the construction of dams for water conservation,—(a) has the matter been brought to the notice of the Minister concerned by the departmental officers? (b) has the Department availed itself of these plans and proposals: if so, to what extent?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: (a) Yes. (b) The proposals have been duly considered, but not adopted.

BILL—FARMERS' DEBTS ADJUSTMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: The main purpose of the Bill is to ensure the continuance of the parent Act, subject to certain slight amendments which experience has proved are necessary. The provisions of the Act first became operative for the season March 1931 to March 1932, and, during that year, 415 settlers were carried on, the sum of £167,000, including cash advances and goods in kind, being made available by creditors, to permit of 230,000 acres being cropped and 100,000 acres being fallowed. The price received for wheat for that season averaged 2s. 9d. per bushel and advances were repaid practically in full. In addition, £65,000 was distributed between mortgagees, machinery