

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I said in the course of my remarks that personally I would have preferred legislation similar to that passed by the Victorian Parliament last session, under which a board was set up to meet a situation like this, but the Royal Commission, acting under the terms of reference, was obliged to have regard to this company, and the money that had been expended, and the Commission recommended that the company should be allowed to continue. The company will be allowed to continue, and it is provided in the Deed of Trust that this utility shall be handed over to the growers. It is provided also that the company may borrow money and do a lot of things and by borrowing money the time might never come when the utility would be handed over to the growers. The aim of the Government is to get this utility into the hands of the growers.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you provide for the Deed of Trust here?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We provide in the Bill that the Deed of Trust must not be altered. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [8.14]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, the 5th December.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 8.14 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 4th December, 1935.

	PAGE
Motions: Standing Order suspension	2179
Wheatgrowers, Federal assistance, to inquire by select committee	2179
Resolution: State Forests, to revoke dedication	2195
Bills: Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment (No. 2), as to 3rd, recom.	2182
Adelphi Hotel, 2nd, Com. report	2184
Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1893, Amendment (No. 2), recom., further recom.	2186
Loan, £2,027,000, 2nd.	2186
Metropolitan Whole Milk Act Amendment, 2nd.	2208
Electoral, Com.	2211

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

### MOTION—STANDING ORDER SUSPENSION.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35]: I move—

That Standing Order No. 62 (limit of time for commencing new business) be suspended during the month of December.

As members know, the session is drawing to a close. Probably there is only one more Bill to come down from another place, but it is an important Bill and may give rise to a good deal of discussion. It may be possible to close the session next week, while of course it may not. At any rate we have reached a stage in the session when it is necessary to take action regarding the meetings of the House and to secure the suspension of Standing Order No. 62. Usually notice of this motion is given at a much earlier stage in the session, and certainly at this stage it is absolutely necessary.

Question put and passed.

### MOTION—WHEATGROWERS, FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.

*To Inquire by Select Committee.*

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [4.36]: I move—

That a select committee consisting of five members of the Legislative Council be appointed to inquire regarding the allocation and distribution, by the State Government, of approximately two million pounds provided by the Federal Government to assist the wheatgrowers of this State during the years 1932-33, 1933-34, 1934-35.

This motion I am submitting to the House will, I hope, appeal to a majority of members. I propose to be very brief in what I have to say, and I hope there will be no necessity to adjourn the debate. We are coming to the close of the session and if we get this motion carried to-day the proposed select committee certainly could sit from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. to-morrow and again on Friday and on the Saturday, and report next week.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It would not go on after the session closed?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No, it could not do that. There is not much to consider. The whole point is that during the past three years the Commonwealth Government have provided, as far as I can understand, approximately £2,000,000 for distribution amongst the wheatgrowers of this State. In 1932-33 the Commonwealth grant was £436,145. That, I understand, was distributed on an acreage basis. There was no payment for wheat on a bushel basis that year. In 1933-34 the Commonwealth grant was £639,493. That was for the benefit of the wheatgrowers of this State and was distributed, first upon an acreage basis of 3s. 6d. per acre. The condition imposed under that distribution was that a person having a Federal taxable income was not entitled to the 3s. 6d. per acre. It was distributed first to those entitled to it on that basis of 3s. 6d. per acre. Reference to last year's "Hansard," page 2197, discloses that some growers received 2s. per acre extra. I am certain it was never intended that any person should be singled out to get an extra 2s. per acre. It was understood that it would be on an acreage basis and that everybody would be treated alike. In 1934-35 the Commonwealth grant was given on an acreage basis. The Act set out an acreage basis of 3s. per acre and a bushel basis of 3d. per bushel on the wheat produced. In that year the amount was £724,578 for distribution on the per acre and per bushel basis, but apart from that, there was a special grant of £137,000 which brought the total to £861,578, the special grant being intended for distribution amongst necessitous farmers. During last year no condition was imposed as to taxable income such as was imposed in the previous year. Whether wheatgrowers had taxable income or not in the year 1934-35, they were entitled to the 3s. per acre and the 3d. per bushel. The £137,000 provided by the Commonwealth

Government was intended for all wheatgrowers who required assistance. They are all more or less taxpayers and the money was Commonwealth revenue, but it is said, on what I think is reliable authority, that the Agricultural Bank clients—I do not mean the big clients of the bank, because the money was distributed in a small way—received preference in the distribution of the £137,000. That is one of the reasons which prompted me to ask for the appointment of a select committee. I do not say that the statement is true. The select committee, if appointed, will ascertain whether it is true. If it is true, it is manifestly unfair that the Commonwealth money, which we all assist to provide, should be distributed amongst Agricultural Bank clients—small clients, as I said—and that wheatgrowers outside the Agricultural Bank should not get their quota. I repeat that I do not know whether the statement is true, but to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the statement is a reason why I am asking for the appointment of a select committee. The Standing Orders provide that unless the number be otherwise stipulated, a select committee shall consist of three members. I propose to ask for a select committee of five, and I desire that one member from each of the wheatgrowing provinces should be appointed. Central Province is represented by the Chief Secretary, Mr. T. Moore and Mr. Hall. We cannot ask the Chief Secretary to act, and I should like Mr. T. Moore to consent to appointment if he will be available. Failing him I should like Mr. Hall to act. South Province is on the fringe of our wheat areas and settlers there have had a bad time. That province is represented by you, Sir, Mr. Williams and Mr. Cornell. In that instance I prefer Mr. Williams to act. From South-East Province I suggest Mr. Thomson and from East Province I suggest Mr. Baxter, and I, as mover of the motion, would also be a member of the select committee. According to the rules of the House, three members would form a quorum. I have no hesitation in saying that if the select committee were appointed to-day, or even to-morrow, they could bring up a report early next week as to the distribution of the money and the report, I think, would clear the atmosphere in the interests of all concerned. I understand that the mover has the right to nominate the members of the select committee and that he automatically becomes

chairman. If any objection is raised to the adoption of that course, the members have to be appointed by ballot. I am in a quandary about Mr. T. Moore, who is not at present in his place. Without intending to cast any reflection upon Mr. Hall, I should prefer Mr. T. Moore to act because he is a supporter of the present Government. I think members know me sufficiently well to understand that there will be nothing one-sided about the report. We simply wish to ascertain the facts and report to the House. If Mr. Williams cannot act, we can overcome the difficulty by nominating someone else at a later stage. The proceedings could still be carried on, because I understand that if the motion be agreed to, another motion must be submitted containing the names of the proposed members of the select committee, with an addendum that three should form a quorum.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: It would be very awkward for me to act.

The PRESIDENT: In the event of the motion being carried, it would also be necessary to name a time for bringing up the report.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If this motion be passed, I propose to move that the select committee report on Thursday week. I believe that under the Standing Orders we could report earlier if we were ready to do so.

The PRESIDENT: I suggest that the hon. member add to his motion that the select committee report on Thursday week.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Would a separate motion be necessary empowering the select committee to call for persons, papers and records, or should that be included in this motion?

Hon. J. Cornell: It should be included in the one motion.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Then I desire to add to my motion—

that the committee have power to call for persons, papers and records, and report on Thursday next.

Mr. T. Moore is now present and for his benefit I might explain that I desire to get a representative from each of the wheat-growing provinces to act on the select committee. It is suggested that he should be one to act with Mr. Williams, Mr. Baxter and Mr. Thomson, with myself as chairman, and that we should get to work as soon as possible. Only one or two

questions are involved, these being connected principally with the distribution of the £2,000,000 odd provided by the Commonwealth during the last few years. The Committee could report on Thursday week. If we do nothing else, we can clear up a lot of misunderstandings concerning the distribution of the money.

The PRESIDENT: I presume it is the wish of the House that the hon. member should be allowed to amend his motion in the way he has indicated.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I suggest that Mr. Holmes should first of all move that a select committee consisting of certain members be appointed, three to form a quorum. He could then move that a date be fixed when the report shall be presented. If any member objects to the names put forward, a ballot can be taken.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have already suggested Mr. T. Moore, Mr. Williams, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Thomson, and the mover. I should be glad to include those names in the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The difficulty about that would be that a ballot might be called for. It seems desirable first of all to put the motion for the appointment of a select committee. Has the hon. member the leave of the House to amend his motion?

Members: Aye!

The PRESIDENT: The amendment of the motion will be permitted, by leave of the House. The motion will read:—

That a select committee consisting of five members of the Legislative Council be appointed to inquire regarding the allocation and distribution, by the State Government, of approximately two million pounds provided by the Federal Government to assist the wheat-growers of this State during the years 1932-33, 1933-34, 1934-35; the committee to have power to call for persons, papers and records, and to report on Thursday, the 11th December, 1935; three to form a quorum.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I submit that the motion is irregular. Standing Order 270 says that the members to serve on the select committee shall be nominated by the mover, and it provides for a ballot if one member objects.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member has already nominated the committee.

Hon. T. MOORE: But the names are not embodied in the motion. For my part, the notice given is too short. I have already made arrangements for the next fortnight.

If Mr. Holmes suggests that an inquiry into what has happened to £2,000,000 in the last three years is a small matter, I beg to disagree with him. I could not fit in the work at the present juncture, although I would be glad to assist in clearing up any misunderstandings that may have arisen.

The PRESIDENT: I suggest that consideration first of all be given to whether or not the select committee be appointed. A ballot can be held subsequently, if necessary.

Hon. J. Cornell: Standing Order 270 is definite.

The PRESIDENT: It has been done before along the lines I have suggested, and they seem to be reasonable lines. Members to serve on the committee shall be nominated by the mover, and if one member shall demand a ballot, they shall be selected by ballot. The House first of all has to decide that there shall be a select committee.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is the commonsense view. We have to decide first of all whether the select committee shall be appointed. When a decision has been reached upon that point, the House will either approve or disapprove of the members nominated and, if necessary, take a ballot.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I second the motion, as amended.

On motion by Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

### *As to Third Reading.*

Order of the Day read for the third reading of the Bill.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I should like to make a short personal explanation. Last evening, when the Bill passed the second reading, it was taken into Committee. I immediately left the Chamber to draft a small amendment. When I returned a little later I found the Bill had been put through Committee. I was, therefore, precluded from bringing forward the amendment. I have had this redrafted to-day. Although the Bill is to be recommitted this afternoon, I shall not have an opportunity to place my amendment before the Committee. I crave the indulgence of the Honorary Minister, and hope he will extend to me the courtesy of postponing the Bill until to-morrow. That

would give me an opportunity to give notice of the amendment, so that I may have it dealt with.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I wish to move that the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of considering the amendment I have placed on the Notice Paper. In reply to Mr. Baxter, further discussion of the Bill need not be postponed until the next sitting of the House. I do not know whether it rests with me to give the assurance Mr. Baxter desires.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is a matter for the Chairman of Committees.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Under the Standing Orders the Chairman of Committees cannot give the assurance.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the Chairman of Committees cannot, I do not see how I can.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: By agreeing to postpone the further consideration of the Bill until to-morrow, you can.

The HONORARY MINISTER: After the consideration of the amendment appearing on the Notice Paper, the report stage will be reached—to-morrow. Mr. Baxter will then have an opportunity to move for the further recommitment of the Bill.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Suppose hon. members will not agree to that course and the Bill goes to the third reading? Will the Bill go to the third reading to-day?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think the hon. member always gets a fair deal from the House. There is no reason to doubt that the House will extend to him in this connection the courtesy which is due.

### *Recommittal.*

On motion by the Honorary Minister, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 5.

### *In Committee.*

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

Clause 5—New part to be inserted in principal Act:

The CHAIRMAN: Standing Order 208 provides that no alteration shall be made in a recommitted Bill without notice, and that no amendment shall be made and no new clause shall be added to any Bill recommitted on the third reading unless notice thereof has been previously given. Strictly, or ultra-

strictly, I could direct that Mr. Baxter place his amendment on the Notice Paper, with a view to moving for a further recommitment of the Bill. However, we must exercise a little common sense and view the circumstances. Last evening the Honorary Minister was in exactly the same hitch as Mr. Baxter finds himself in now. The Honorary Minister was of the opinion that the proposed new sections, occupying 17 or 18 pages of the Bill, would be put separately, in the same way as clauses. That was also the opinion held by Mr. Baxter. However, it is not so. The whole clause, with all the proposed new sections, is put as Clause 5 of the Bill. The Standing Orders have been complied with sufficiently by the placing on the Notice Paper of the Honorary Minister's amendment; otherwise the Bill could not have been recommitted. Now that the Bill has been recommitted for the further consideration of the actual clause in which Mr. Baxter proposes to move an amendment, I shall allow Mr. Baxter to move the amendment he has in view.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: As the clause stands, in addition to what may be termed civil servants, it includes the staffs of Parliament House under the control of the President or of the Speaker, or of the President and the Speaker jointly. Parliament has always been looked upon as a law unto itself, because it is the place where laws are made. Therefore it would be a fallacy to place the Parliament House staffs under the control of any outside body.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is recognised in the Mother of Parliaments.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. Probably the matter is merely an oversight on the part of the Parliamentary Draftsman. It can easily be remedied. I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Section 140, in the definition of "Government officer," the following be inserted to stand as subparagraph (i) of the proviso to paragraph (2):—"any officer of either House of Parliament under the separate control of the President or Speaker, or under their joint control."

The HONORARY MINISTER: I would like an indication from Mr. Baxter as to the clause in the Bill that suggests the officers of Parliament are covered by its provisions.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The staff of the Legislative Assembly are controlled by the Speaker and the Council staff by the President. Surely no member would dream of

including them with the civil servants under the Bill!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Baxter has not answered my question. I asked him for information.

Hon. G. W. Miles: In Subclause 1 of the definition of "Government officer" the words "every person employed in the service of the State" may cover officers of Parliament.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection to the amendment, but I was doubtful whether the employees of Parliament were covered by the Bill. If members think those employees are not Government officers within the meaning of the Bill, it is quite all right. If they think the parliamentary employees are Government officers but should be exempt from the application of the Bill, the amendment is necessary. I do not see any harm in including them because the provisions of the Bill will not be availed of unless either party desires to adopt that course. If one of the parties desired to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by this legislation, they could do so, if Mr. Baxter's contention is correct.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If there is any doubt about it, why not include the amendment?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The only point is whether the employees of Parliament are Government officers. I have not had a previous opportunity to consider the amendment and, in fairness to myself, I think I should be given that opportunity. The consideration of the amendment should be postponed until to-morrow.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment could be dealt with and then, if necessary, the matter could be reconsidered to-morrow when the report of the Committee will be dealt with.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of the proviso to proposed new Section 156 "employers" be struck out and the word "parties" inserted in lieu.

The Solicitor General advises me that the word "employers" appears incorrectly in the proviso and should be replaced by "parties," so as to cover both employers and employees.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a consequential amendment in the fifth line of the

proviso, and "employers" will be struck out and the word "parties" inserted in lieu.

Bill again reported with further amendments.

### BILL—ADELPHI HOTEL.

#### *Second Reading.*

**HON. J. NICHOLSON** (Metropolitan) [5.18] in moving the second reading said: The Bill, as its Title indicates, has reference to a building now in course of erection in St. George's-terrace, which bears the name of the Adelphi Hotel. The Licensing Act dates back to 1911 and at that period large modern hotels as we understand them now were hardly contemplated, nor was the construction of large buildings, such as those being erected in the central part of the city, foreseen in those days. For instance, we may have noticed the steps that are being taken in connection with the large Colonial Mutual Buildings, which will be 11 or 12 storeys high. Whether the erection of buildings to such a height is all that may be desired is a matter to be decided by the authorities who have such matters under their control. The erection of the Adelphi Hotel is affected by the provisions of the Licensing Act, whereas the insurance company's building is free from that legislation and the progress of the work can proceed as pleases those concerned.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** One building will serve a useful purpose; the other will help to break up the community.

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** In 1911 we did not foresee the progress and advance that was going to be made in connection with our buildings and particularly hotels for which a provisional certificate had been granted. Under Sections 61 and 62 of the Licensing Act, provision is made with reference to a provisional certificate for the hotel intended to be erected and the granting of the license. In Section 61 it is provided that the provisional certificate shall be in the form set out in the eleventh schedule of the Act and may be granted for any period not exceeding 12 months.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** I hope you are not going to occupy as much time over this Bill as they have taken to build the hotel.

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** Section 62 sets out—

On the application of the holder of a provisional certificate, or any other fit and proper person, at any quarterly sitting of the Licensing Court made within the time specified in such certificate, and on proof of the performance of such conditions, if any, as are imposed by the certificate, the applicant shall be entitled to the license.

A very brief explanation will serve to show to hon. members how this Bill has been rendered necessary. The application for the provisional certificate was duly made and granted on the 3rd December, 1934. A bond was entered into in conformity with the provisions of the certificate and the order of the court. Plans had later to be lodged, and these had to be approved by the court. As hon. members know, when a provisional certificate is applied for the final plans with working drawings and details are not prepared and lodged until a later date. These plans in this instance were ultimately lodged and finally approved by the court on the 3rd January, 1935. It then became necessary to prepare working drawings and quantities, the purpose of which, as members are aware, is to enable tenders to be called. Following on that, tenders were called and a period had to elapse after tenders were invited for consideration and acceptance of them. Eventually a tender was accepted and the contract was signed on the 19th February, 1935. The contract price of the building amounted to £57,646. The sewerage work alone will run into something between £5,000 and £6,000 and the total cost of the structure and land will be between £100,000 and £110,000. As members are aware, the hotel will be equipped with the most modern conveniences to be found in any hotel in the big cities of Australia, and probably elsewhere. The position is that because the building, having regard to the dates that I quoted, cannot possibly be completed within the 12 months, and combined with certain difficulties in getting a number of qualified workmen to carry out the important work necessary in a structure of that nature, it has been a physical impossibility to carry out the undertaking given to the Licensing Court within the specified period.

**Hon. C. B. Williams:** Is that a compliment to the Government—the shortage of workmen?

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON:** I am not casting a reflection on anyone. If the hon. member

will apply to any person interested in this contract, he will find that what I have stated is correct, namely, that there is a shortage of workmen in many of the necessary departments essential for carrying out a structure of this nature.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Why not amend the Licensing Act to meet the position?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I was just coming to that point. The hon. member may well ask why this matter is not brought forward in the form of an amendment to the Licensing Act. It has been considered that the most expeditious way of dealing with the matter is to submit a separate Bill. This is rendered necessary because of the near approach of the end of the session.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Bring down an amendment to the Licensing Act and we certainly will not finish this side of Christmas.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is so. Then again it is only a matter of following precedent, because in 1931 Parliament passed a measure where the circumstances were not so favourable as in this particular case. A Bill was rendered necessary for submission to Parliament because of certain delays which had arisen in the construction of a hotel at Mt. Hawthorn and another at Victoria Park. Parliament recognised that owing to the difficulties that had apparently assailed those associated with the two provisional certificates in question, consideration should be given to them. The proper course, I admit, would have been to amend the Licensing Act and give authority to the court to extend the time in which the buildings had to be constructed to a period considered proper. It would adequately meet the position if the court had power to deal with such matters of urgency. This is a case, I claim, where every consideration should be extended to the holder of the provisional certificate. He has shown every expedition in carrying out the work connected with the building of the hotel and has done everything required by the court. Unfortunately owing to the circumstances I have described, it will be impossible to complete the building within the time set out in the Act, and it therefore becomes necessary to submit this Bill for the consideration and I trust the acceptance of the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.30]: I have pleasure in seconding the motion, and

I hope the House will pass the Bill. It is true that the provisional license lasts only for one year, and that the board that granted that provisional license is powerless to grant an extension of time. The Act itself ought to be amended to give the board that discretionary power for, after all, they are the people best fitted to say whether an extension of time should be given. But it is too late for that now, although the amendment might well be made next session. There are two precedents for the Bill. One was the case of an hotel at Mt. Hawthorn, of which Mr. Monahan is the licensee, and the other an hotel at Victoria Park, the hotel which Mr. Donaldson subsequently built. The Licensing Act was amended to provide for the extension of those provisional certificates for nearly two years. The two hotels were not started at that time. Of course the delay was owing to the depression and the question that arose as to whether it would be wise to build them, after all. But this House and another place, in their wisdom, granted an extension of the provisional certificate. In the instance now before the House, everything possible has been done by Mr. Dunleavy in order to expedite the construction of the building. He even called for tenders, leaving the question of excavation for a separate tender in order that the hotel might be completed within the prescribed time. I understand that that cannot now be done, and that the only easement which can be given is this Bill.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [5.32]: I will support the second reading. The coming of the Bill shows appreciation of the building of the hotel, and now we are giving it a tremendous advertisement by the passing of special legislation. It seems that the whole of the members of this House are present to-day in order to see the Bill go through.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.33]: The position has been very clearly explained, and I think the House will agree to the second reading. After all, the suggestion to amend the Licensing Act is a very wise one which would not involve any great difficulty. Neither would it throw the Bill open to a lot of criticism. All that would be necessary would be to amend Sections 59 and 60 of the Act. When the Act was framed, hotels were all small and could be constructed within 12 months. However,

nobody would expect to erect a building like the Adelphi in the course of 12 months. Many weeks are required for the approval of the plans alone. Mr. Dunleavy expected to open the hotel on the 3rd December. As a matter of fact he was the only optimist amongst those concerned, because the solicitors and the architects did not think it possible. It is time Sections 59 and 60 of the Act were amended to meet the altered conditions involved in the large hotels now being erected. I will support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

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

*Recommittal.*

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, Bill re-committed for the purpose of considering six amendments on the Notice Paper.

*In Committee.*

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

Clause 2—Repeal of Sections 31 to 38, both inclusive, and insertion of new sections:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move—

That after "is" in the first line of paragraph (c) of Subsection 1 of proposed new Section 32, the words "or has been" be inserted.

The object of the amendment is to bring the wording of the paragraph into line with that in Section 31 of the Constitution. That would cover a person who had been attainted of treason.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. The paragraph in the Bill was taken from the Commonwealth Act, and the amendment would make it neither fish, fowl, nor good red herring. This matter was discussed by the select committee who decided to adopt the Commonwealth provision. The disqualification in Section 31 is against any person who has been, in any part for His Majesty's dominions, at-

tainted or convicted of treason or felony. If the hon. member would agree to insert that in the Bill, I could offer no objection.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I have no objection to restoring the original provision, but my amendment would tend to achieve the same result. I do not wish that persons who have been convicted of serious crime should be eligible to sit as members of Parliament. A person might have committed a murder and served his sentence, and under the Bill he would be eligible to become a member of Parliament.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I should like to know what amendment is before the Committee.

Hon. J. Cornhill: The amendment to make the paragraph read "is or has been attainted of treason."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member has given notice to delete certain words.

The CHAIRMAN: They will form the subject of a subsequent amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I directed attention to this matter at an earlier stage. The select committee considered that this part of the disqualification should be made as nearly alike to the Commonwealth provision as possible. There is no such thing as a felony under the Criminal Code.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Could not we strike out the reference to felony?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Paragraph (e) does not coincide with the Commonwealth provision.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The paragraph in the Bill so far has not been altered.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you think the words "or has been" should be inserted?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Any member can move to bring this clause as nearly as possible into line with the present Constitution Act by the insertion of the words "or has been." When I moved for their insertion the Committee did not agree with the suggestion. I saw the Crown Solicitor on this matter, and he agreed that if the words were added they would bring the law into line with the present Constitution. If we left in the words "is attainted of treason," once a man had either been pardoned or served his sentence and thus expiated his crime, he would be free again. I understand the Crown Solicitor would be quite agreeable to these words being inserted. I also believe that Mr. Seddon's



amendment will accomplish what is desired.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I merely wish to be satisfied that the clause will be legally drawn.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I will see about that myself.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is too important a provision to make a mess of.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have already suggested that if it is desired to alter this part of our Constitution we should scrap the whole thing, and adopt Sections 43 to 46 of the Commonwealth Constitution. Those sections have stood the test for 34 years. If we adopt them, recourse can be had to the interpretation of the Commonwealth Constitution. We must either get back to where we were or adopt the Commonwealth sections. At the rate we are going it will become more difficult for a person to be an elector for the Legislative Council than for him to be a candidate for this Chamber. There is a great discrepancy between the qualifications required for a person claiming to be an elector for this Chamber and a person wishing to stand as a candidate. I am opposed to tinkering with the Constitution at this stage. So many discrepancies exist that the qualifications for an elector appear to be more rigid than those required of a candidate. I do not think that the amendment will work, either one way or the other. The easiest course would be to revert to where we are.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We shall have to be careful in this matter. Let us be perfectly clear as to what we do. I would suggest the carrying of Mr. Seddon's amendment. Mr. Nicholson suggests taking, tomorrow, the Crown Law Department's opinion as to whether the amendment fits in, or whether other amendments are necessary. The measure will have to be carried by a statutory majority. Whatever we include in the Bill must go to another place, where I do not think objection will be raised to anything we do in this respect.

Hon. J. Cornell: I am afraid there will be objection.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Anything we do to-day can become effective only by the votes of a statutory majority in this Chamber and a statutory majority in another place.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move a further amendment—

"That in paragraph (c) the words "and is under sentence or subject to be sentenced" be struck out.

This would be in conformity with Section 31 of the Constitution Act. In view of the suggestion to refer the matter again to the Crown Law Department, the deletion of the words would save time in the event of the department's opinion being that the amendment will meet the case. Otherwise the Chief Secretary's suggestion might be adopted.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Why not insert the words "or is" immediately after "treason"? The paragraph would then read, "or is or has been convicted." The word "or" could then be inserted after "convicted."

Hon. H. Seddon: That amendment would come before mine.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I should like to move an amendment to insert after "treason" the words "is or."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: What stage have we reached? We are amending the Constitution on the spur of the moment—and on the suggestion of an hon. member who—honestly—does not know quite where he is. The matter is too serious to be played with in such a fashion. Let us go on with Mr. Seddon's amendment, which has been thought out, and then ask the Crown Law Department what they think of it. Where shall we get to if we go on like this?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not know that Mr. Holmes's comments are justified at all. The hon. member might recognise that we are trying to do the best possible.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Let us do it in the proper way.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There is no justification for such comments. If Mr. Holmes would keep exactly to the point mentioned, he would find that the amendment I have suggested, to insert "or is," comes in at this stage. I suggest to Mr. Seddon that he do not at present proceed further with any amendment to any particular clause of the Bill. The matter could be gone into by the Crown Solicitor, who could frame the amendment. I will undertake to see him to-morrow morning and submit to him the amendment I have suggested. In the meantime I shall not proceed with my suggestion.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Our Constitution Act provides that no person shall be qualified to be a member of the Council or the Assembly if he "has been in any part of His Majesty's dominions attainted or convicted of treason or felony." From the discussion one would assume that such a person, after serving his sentence of imprisonment, would be eligible; but I do not think he would be. The Commonwealth Constitution is clearer in that it refers to any person who has been convicted or is under sentence or is subject to sentence for any offence under the law. That means that such an individual is disqualified.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If such a person had served, say, 12 months in prison, would he be disqualified to become a member of Parliament when he regained his freedom?

Hon. J. CORNELL: None of us can say, exactly. The Constitution Act refers to the individual having been attainted or convicted of treason or felony in any part of the British Dominions. Does that offence stand for all time?

Hon. J. Nicholson: Yes.

Hon. J. CORNELL: But not one authority or case or ruling can be quoted in support of that contention.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Constitution Act says "has been" attainted or convicted.

Hon. J. CORNELL: During the proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Electoral Bill, two cases were cited bearing on this matter. For instance, a man had recently stood for election to Parliament, and if he had attempted to take his seat after election the Crown Law authorities held he could not have done so. That opinion, of course, has not been tested. In order to obviate such a matter, the Royal Commission secured an amendment to the Electoral Act the effect of which is that if any candidate for Parliament comes within the purview of this particular provision of the Constitution Act, his nomination will be invalid. I agree with Mr. Holmes. We are dealing with the charter under which Parliamentarians have worked for 50 years. We are endeavouring to undo what has stood the test of 50 years without the slightest inconvenience to anyone in Parliament.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Seddon's second amendment is before the Committee. The suggestion has been made that Mr. Seddon should withhold his amendment in order that the Crown Law authorities might be

consulted. I have one object in view, and that is to deal with this matter as speedily and properly as possible. It is one thing to go to the Crown Law Department and say, "This is the amendment that Parliament proposes," and quite another thing to say, "This is what Parliament has agreed to." Something that Parliament proposes may not, in fact, become part of the Bill. For that reason I suggest that Mr. Seddon's amendment be agreed to and then the Crown Law authorities can be approached and told, "This is what the Committee have agreed to. What is the effect of the amendment?"

Amendment put and passed.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. G. W. MILES: I move an amendment—

That subparagraph (c) (inserted in a previous Committee) of paragraph (iv) of the proviso to Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 32 be struck out.

Subparagraph (c), inserted in a previous Committee, reads as follows:—

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

- (i) it is necessary, in order to avoid delay, expense, or other inconvenience, that the Crown shall obtain such goods or the performance of such work in such town or portion of the State;
- (ii) the goods are not sold or the work is not performed in pursuance of a written agreement which by virtue of its provisions has a continuing operation; and
- (iii) the goods or work are not required for or in connection with the construction of a public work within the meaning of the Public Works Act, 1902-1933.

The select committee to whom the Bill was sent deliberately left out any reference to a member of Parliament selling to the Crown. Mr. Nicholson, the chairman of the select committee, submitting his report to the House said it would be opening the door to trading with the Government. The select committee provided that a member of Parliament could buy from the Government, but they thought it was not advisable to allow a member of Parliament to sell to the Government. During Mr. Nichol-

son's report to the House I several times interjected, asking why could not a member of Parliament sell a pound of nails to the Government since a professional member could sell his services to the Government. Later the Chief Secretary went into the question and submitted as an amendment this subparagraph (e). I want the Committee to reconsider this provision and delete it from the Bill, because I think it would be far better not to have it in the Bill. I hope the Committee, particularly the members of the select committee, will support me in having this amendment, made at the instance of the Chief Secretary, deleted from the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is quite unusual to secure the recommitment of a Bill in order to eliminate from it an amendment agreed to by a previous Committee. What was the inspiration of this amendment agreed to by that previous Committee? Members who were opposing me complained that while there was provision in the Bill to buy from the Government, there was no provision to enable a member of Parliament to sell to the Government. On hearing that, I agreed that some such amendment was necessary. I waited on the Crown Solicitor and submitted to him what I considered was necessary. The result was the amendment which the hon. member would now have deleted. This provides only for a very limited selling, and it is surrounded by effective safeguards. For instance, there must be only one store or shop in the locality. In those circumstances there cannot possibly be any objection to the amendment carried by a previous Committee. On the one hand, if a member of Parliament stays at Caves House, he necessarily buys something from the Government. On the other hand, take a country store conducted by a member of Parliament. An officer under the Government requiring certain commodities buys them at that store, and without this provision the member of Parliament conducting or even interested in that store would lose his seat in Parliament if anybody complained. Again, a Government motor car running short of petrol is driven up to a bowser owned by a member of Parliament. That member of Parliament sells petrol to the driver of the Government motor car, and so his seat would become vacant if any-

body should take action. So, too, all along the line. The provision agreed to by a previous Committee is quite essential, and is properly safeguarded in several ways. Every member who agreed to this provision at a previous Committee must have had a full understanding of its purport, and so I trust that those who supported it previously will support it again.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Chief Secretary says that the provision was well considered. I might with equal reason say that the amendment we carried before tea on the voices and without a division was equally well considered. The Chief Secretary opposed that amendment when it was suggested by Mr. Nicholson, but on further consideration the Chief Secretary himself agreed that it might be advisable to get back to the old Constitution.

The Chief Secretary: What amendment was that?

Hon. G. W. MILES: The one we dealt with this afternoon. So the Chief Secretary put up no argument when he said the previous Committee had fully considered this provision, because the Committee to-day fully considered that other amendment. This is the most important Bill we have had before us during the session, for it is altering the Constitution. The Committee at the third reading stage decided to recommit the Bill and have already agreed to two amendments. I think the Committee, and particularly the members of the select committee, of which the Chief Secretary was one, are capable of agreeing to reconsider this provision. The Chief Secretary when he brought it down said it was necessary. I look to members to reconsider this provision on its merits. This is not any party business, but is a question affecting the Constitution of the House. As the Chief Secretary said, some members had suggested that if a member of Parliament could buy from the Government he should be able also to sell to the Government. If a member who was a professional man could sell his services to the Government, it would be right for any member to sell his wares to the Government. I want the Committee to reconsider the provision with a view to prohibiting a member from selling to the Government. It might be right to protect members who buy from the Government through trading concerns which have been forced on the community,

but I consider that this provision should be deleted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Miles stated that I supported the disqualifying clause.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You were a member of the select committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I took no action in that matter. I pointed out that the provision had been taken from the Commonwealth Act.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The amendment you got inserted was not before the select committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, but it was inspired by the hon. member and by Mr. Holmes.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Chief Secretary is always a gentleman. Not often do we find him in a merry mood, but when he moved the amendment he smiled towards me as much as to say, "That is what you want," knowing that it was nothing of the kind. The Bill proposed that a member of Parliament might buy from the Government but not sell to the Government. I pointed out the absurdity of the position, and argued that a member had no right to buy from the Government. For the Chief Secretary now to say that the amendment was put up to meet my wishes is carrying the joke just a little too far. I have been told that the proposal to allow members to sell to the Government caused no end of concern to the select committee. I believe it delayed the report of the committee for days and ultimately they decided that to introduce the principle would be too dangerous.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I would decide it in five minutes.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Some people decide things without thought. The select committee decided that to touch the matter would be too dangerous. If any member of the select committee voted to include the new paragraph, I remind him that it is never too late to rectify a wrong. If members of the select committee live up to their convictions, they must vote for the deletion of the paragraph.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There was no doubt where I stood. The Chief Secretary's effort to be kind to members has overrun itself. He has acted with the best of intentions, but the provision is fraught with great danger. In the ordinary course of business a member could buy almost anything

from the Government, but when it is a matter of selling to the Government he is restricted to the extent that he must ascertain whether there is another place in the locality where the same class of business is carried on.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Which is stupid.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If there is, the reply must be, "I cannot sell to you; go to the other place." "Philos" in the "West Australian" put the position aptly by saying that if a Minister of the Crown broke his braces and called at the wrong place, his trousers would fall down before he could get to the right place and he might be charged with exposure merely through his efforts to conform with the law. Suppose a town has two hotels.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Take Salmon Gums, where the member for the district runs the hotel.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is only one hotel at Salmon Gums. Assume that at Esperance a member of Parliament ran one of the two hotels. If a representative of the Crown went to that hotel, he would have to be sent to the other. That is absurd. I am satisfied that if the point arose, it would be decided on the simple fact whether either party had given any consideration over and above what was given in the ordinary course of business.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They do not trust members of Parliament very far.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If we are going to provide that the Crown may buy from members of Parliament, let us stipulate that purchases may be made to the extent to which members may buy from the Crown. Then there will be some consistency. I hope that the amendment previously inserted will not be endorsed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The select committee did not give days and days to the consideration of the matter, as Mr. Holmes suggested. It was discussed for perhaps half an hour and the committee realised the difficulty in framing a suitable amendment. There was no difficulty in framing an amendment of this kind designed to meet a particular case where there was only one place of business in a town owned or partly owned by a member of Parliament. When in 1894 an amendment to the Constitution Act was under consideration, numerous cases were cited of members of Parliament who were interested in sheep stations and had sold meat to the local

police constable. If the station owners had known the position, they would have refused to sell the meat. We are now asked to amend the Constitution and provide reasonable safeguards for members. We endeavoured to do this, but some members were still dissatisfied. There is provision whereby members may buy from the Government, but no provision whereby they can sell to the Government. I have endeavoured to get amendments framed that would be a kind of compromise. This is the result of our latest efforts. I feel sure it will be acceptable to members, because they will apply their common-sense to it. We want the Bill to be suitable to the conditions existing in the State.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I voted in favour of this amendment previously, and intend to support it again. Mr. Holmes says it is never too late to mend. That is an additional reason for my supporting the amendment. Our object is to amend the Constitution Act. I am astonished at the fear some members express concerning the harm they think will be done. I have not been able to discover what that harm can be. Mr. Cornell referred to the remarks of "Philos" concerning a Minister and his braces. Most Ministers are optimists, and the optimist is a man who wears neither belt nor braces. We do not want to open the door so wide that members of Parliament may abuse their position, and enter into competition with other people. The amendment merely provides that they may do legally what in other circumstances they would do without this provision. There is no reason to think that most of the difficulties referred to need ever be feared.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Chief Secretary put forward his amendment to meet the objection that whilst provision has been made for a member of Parliament to sell his services to the Government, there is no provision for him to sell certain commodities that may be needed by the Government in some remote part of the State. We desired to overcome the difficulty of a member who may find that his seat has been challenged because he has availed himself of some of the utilities of the Government. It became necessary that something should be done for the protection of members; hence the proposals advanced by the select committee. I suggest that the "power to sell" should be deferred until the Constitution Acts as a

whole are reviewed. It would be better to adhere to the decision arrived at previously. The Committee by a substantial majority voted in favour of the Chief Secretary's amendment.

Hon. L. Craig: And will do so again.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Let us waste no more time.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: At first I was disappointed to learn that the Committee have agreed to members of Parliament selling goods to the Government.

Hon. L. Craig: With restrictions.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Now that I have read the amendment, I find that it really emphasises the principle that members may not sell to the Government. It provides for the exception that may occur now and again. It is the exception that proves the rule. The rule is that members may not sell to the Government. I must vote against Mr. Miles's amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is something in the good book about the repentant. It may be too late to mend, but it is not too late to repent. It is the lop-sidedness of this business that makes it so ridiculous. The amendment will apply only to one-horse towns—pretty nearly dead-horse towns. If there is to be immunity as to buying from the Government when in competition with private traders, a member of Parliament conducting a business has an equal right to sell to the Crown in the ordinary course of his business. As the clause stands, however, he can sell to the Crown only when there is no one else from whom the Crown can buy. Mr. Angelo's view, that as the provision means nothing it can be allowed to remain, is short-sighted.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I move—

That the Committee do now divide.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result.

Ayes	..	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	..	9
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	9
					—

#### AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. C. G. Elliott
	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. E. H. Angelo
Hon. G. W. Miles	(Teller.)

Motion thus passed.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority against .. .. 11

## AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. G. W. Miles
	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. V. Plesse
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. C. H. Wittencoom
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. E. H. Gray	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Proposed new Section 34—Vacancy on happening of disqualification:

Hon. G. W. MILES: I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of the proviso the words "if any member aforesaid renders any service to the State" be struck out.

If the amendment be agreed to, I will subsequently move for the deletion of subparagraphs (i), (ii) and (iii), and the proviso will then read:—

Provided that paragraph (d) of this section shall not apply to the receipt by him of any allowance payable to him under the Parliamentary Allowances Act, 1911.

This will simply mean that no member of Parliament can offer his services or accept payment from the Crown for any services rendered. I have been opposed to the provision in the Bill all through, and I hope the Committee will reconsider the position. If the Crown require the services of a legal man to proceed to London, they could engage one who was not a member of Parliament. Members of Parliament should not be protected in the manner indicated in the proviso.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: After a long lapse of time, efforts have been made within the last few days to defeat these provisions, and now Mr. Miles comes along with

the same proposal. Although he was defeated by a large majority before, he has returned to the attack. These amendments were inserted by the select committee. It is just one month since I moved the second reading of the Bill. The clauses of this Bill, which is a small one, have been discussed from beginning to end.

Hon. G. W. Miles: This is the most important Bill that has been before the House for a very long time.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Now Mr. Miles considers the Bill requires further consideration. These provisions are very simple. They will enable a member of Parliament, without fear of consequences, to receive allowances as a member of a Royal Commission.

Hon. L. Craig: And he should be allowed to receive them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course he should. Members of Parliament receive those allowances now. Some doubt has been raised about it, and because provision has been made in the Bill to place the matter beyond doubt, Mr. Miles raises his opposition. Despite his recent defeat, he continues to oppose the Bill from beginning to end.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I voted for the second reading in order that I might have it amended.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Although the hon. member voted for the second reading, he is making every effort to defeat it in Committee. He has suggested amendments and when I endeavoured to make the provisions stronger—

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have had your victory, so why flog it?

Hon. T. Moore: You won't take your defeat.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One member of the select committee does not seem to think the Bill goes far enough to enable members of Parliament to serve in this capacity. Where are we getting to? I feel sure members will exercise their common sense and agree to the Bill as it stands.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I voted for the second reading of the Bill with the object of having it amended. I realised that in view of the existence of the State trading concerns, some amendment of the Constitution was necessary. As to the argument advanced by the Chief Secretary, I might just as well reply to him by saying that the

Committee agreed to the clauses regarding the qualification of members of Parliament, but this afternoon altered their earlier decision. Second thoughts are best on many occasions. Although it may be necessary to pay members of Royal Commissions, it is certainly preferable that no member of Parliament should receive any such remuneration from the Crown. The proposed new section goes further, and means that if the Government desire to send a representative to London to argue a case before the Privy Council, they should have the privilege of sending a member of Parliament Home. Then they are to appoint a committee of three members of the Assembly and three members of the Council to decide as to the payment. It is ridiculous to put such a provision in the Constitution Act, and I hope the Committee will reconsider the matter.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am afraid Mr. Miles cannot get beyond the Privy Council, but I do not think we are aiming as high as that tribunal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You talked that way on the second reading.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It might be necessary to send away a delegation to deal with political matters.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Secession again?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It might refer to a railway in the North-West and the Government might desire to discuss that matter with the Federal Government. They might consider that some member representing the North-West might be competent to serve on a Royal Commission appointed for that purpose.

Members: Might be!

Hon. G. W. Miles: But the member would not require payment for that service.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: While he might not require payment, he would probably desire to put in an account for his hotel expenses. We must assume that he would incur hotel expenses, and he should be paid for them. The provisions under discussion should be included in the Constitution Act. They may not be availed of. For instance, a member of Parliament need not accept a refund of his hotel expenses unless he chooses to do so.

Hon. J. Cornell: Some would drop dead if they did not.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There are many reasons why a member of Parliament, in such circumstances, should receive his ex-

penses. There are some Royal Commissions on which a member of Parliament would be a most suitable man to serve. He might have special qualifications for the task in hand. Then select committees may be appointed from time to time, and it may be necessary for them to travel beyond the confines of the city and thus incur hotel and other expenses. Provision should be included in the Constitution Act to enable repayments to be made in respect of those expenses.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But this provision goes further and deals with remuneration.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There are occasions when the payment of remuneration would be justified, and even then, the decision is not to be with the Government, but with a committee of both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Comprising six Parliamentary friends?

Hon. L. Craig: Or enemies.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am not afraid of that aspect, but I sincerely trust that members of Parliament are also honourable and that the members of that proposed committee would be honourable in their decision as to whether it was correct or otherwise. I am prepared to leave it to those members of Parliament to say when remuneration should be paid, but I think this is an essential provision.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I sat on the select committee and I voted against the second reading.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And some other members of the select committee did not attend as often as you did.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The report shows that I objected to the inclusion in the Bill of these three paragraphs that Mr. Miles wants to have struck out. It is pathetic to me to see members—some quite new members—

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: And some as young as you are.

Hon. J. CORNELL: —well intentioned but badly directed, get up and tell us what might happen to members of Parliament. For 50 years we have got on without this.

Hon. L. Craig: Till somebody found it out?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Who found it out?

Hon. L. Craig: I leave it to you.

Hon. J. CORNELL: This position has absolutely no bearing whatever on Mr. Clydesdale's case. That case only ran the

gauntlet for want of a Supreme Court judge. So far as the law is concerned, the phrase "office of profit" has not been interpreted by a judge. What was interpreted in Mr. Clydesdale's case was the legality of the indemnifying Act that we passed. The Full Court said it would not hold water, but the High Court said it would. Now we are anxious to place in the Bill some provision for which, in 50 years, no necessity has been shown.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What happened to the Workers' Homes Act Amendment Bill?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not know what happened to it, but I wish that whatever happened to that Bill would happen to this one.

Hon. C. B. Williams: If you would only sit down we might get on with this one.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member is not often here to take up the role of adviser.

Hon. C. B. Williams: When I am here I do not waste time.

Hon. J. CORNELL: You appear to-night in the role of dictator.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Well, I am tired of listening to you.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member is free to go outside. Here is another phase of the position: whom are we endeavouring to protect? Ten members of this House go to their provinces next May and may never come back, while in March or April 50 members of another place will go out and may never come back. Still, we are endeavouring to put in the Bill something for which no case has been made out. All that we are told is that a member of Parliament might be sent overseas, or the Public Works Department might want something which is not procurable except from a member of Parliament. And a committee of both Houses is to sit in solemn judgment and say "Hear, hear" to whatever a Minister may say. It ought to be left to the Governor-in-Council to decide.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Suppose these words be not struck out, will Mr. Parker tell the Committee what would happen if three members of the proposed committee were in favour of paying something to a member of Parliament for his services, while the other three were not in favour of it? I should like advice on that point.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He would not get payment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	5
Noes	..	..	..	..	22
Majority against					17

#### AYES.

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

Hon. H. Tuckey  
Hon. H. Seddon  
(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. E. H. Angelo  
Hon. C. F. Baxter  
Hon. L. B. Bolton  
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale  
Hon. L. Craig  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. C. G. Elliott  
Hon. J. T. Franklia  
Hon. G. Fraser  
Hon. E. H. Gray  
Hon. E. H. H. Hall

Hon. W. H. Kitson  
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane  
Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. R. G. Moore  
Hon. T. Moore  
Hon. J. Nicholson  
Hon. H. S. W. Parker  
Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
Hon. C. H. Wittensoom  
Hon. A. Thomson  
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. G. W. MILES: In view of the vote just taken, it would be useless to move the other amendments of which I have given notice to delete sub-paragraphs (i), (ii) and (iii).

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

#### Further Recommitment.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, Bill again recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 2.

#### In Committee.

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

Clause 2—Repeal of Sections 31 to 38 and insertion of new sections:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That in the new paragraph (e) inserted in a previous Committee, the following words be struck out:—"where there is no other person carrying on the same kind of business."

The amendment would produce consistency. If a member may buy from the Crown without restriction, a member conducting a legitimate business in opposition to another man in a town should be able to sell to the Crown.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot possibly accept the amendment. It seems like a joke as it would enable a member to



trade openly and unashamed. I do not think such a proposal could possibly receive the support of Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles. It would provide an open go for a member in competition with the rest of the community.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Yes, why not?

Hon. E. H. Angelo: It would be more than an open go.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: My vote right through has been passed to tighten up the Act. I certainly cannot have anything to do with the amendment, which would open the door still wider.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hold the same view. The amendment shocks me. To allow a member openly to compete with the public is quite against my principles. The Bill is in such a shocking state that I hope members, after sleeping on it, will consider seriously whether they will support the third reading.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am afraid there is a tendency to regard members as thieves, rogues and everything that is bad. The view seems to be that a member could not trade with the Government unless in an illegitimate manner. I would give members an open go. Why cannot a man be as honest after becoming a member of Parliament as he was before? I have tried to be as honest since I became a member. I have traded with the Government legitimately. Let me give an instance.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You are unsophisticated as yet.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Perhaps I had better not give the instance. I support the amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: My side seems to be dwindling away. The amendment endeavours to provide for a little consistency. When a member of Parliament buys from the Government, he is regarded as an unsophisticated honest citizen, but he is not to be allowed to sell to the Government. If there is to be open play on the one side, the same thing should apply on the other side. A member of Parliament in business is as reputable as any other man in business, but he is not allowed to trade with the Crown because somebody else may be conducting the same class of business. If, on the other hand, he forms himself into a company, he can trade with the Government as often

as he likes. I hope the public will rise up and give us what we deserve.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	5
Noes	..	..	..	..	22
Majority against					
	..	..	..	..	17

#### AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton  
Hon. J. Cornell  
Hon. G. Fraser

Hon. A. Thomson  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. E. H. Angelo  
Hon. C. F. Laugel  
Hon. L. Craig  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. G. G. Elliott  
Hon. J. T. Franklin  
Hon. E. H. Gray  
Hon. E. H. Hall  
Hon. J. J. Holmes  
Hon. W. H. Kilgus  
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane

Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. G. W. Miles  
Hon. R. G. Moore  
Hon. J. Nicholson  
Hon. H. S. W. Parker  
Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. H. Seddon  
Hon. H. Tuckey  
Hon. C. H. Wittenoom  
Hon. H. J. Yelland  
Hon. T. Moore  
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Bill reported without further amendment.

## RESOLUTION—STATE FORESTS.

### To Revoke Dedication.

Debate resumed from the 28th November on the following resolution received from the Assembly with a request for concurrence:—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 20, 22, 27, 29, 30, and 38, laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, on the 26th November, 1935, be carried out.

### HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [8.52]:

When moving the adjournment of the debate on the Assembly's resolution, I did so in order that I might examine the various proposals, ten in number, and all of them in the province I have the honour to represent. In the meantime I have been able to obtain a clear idea of the position, and for my part I hope the House will concur in the resolution of another place. It is satisfactory to members who a few years ago put up a hard fight for proposals of this nature to have before them such a resolution. In those times the Forests Department appeared to have an idea that the whole of the enormous area comprised in forest reserves was rich jarrah country, containing little if any land suitable for agriculture. We contested that view, and

frequently had to accompany deputations to the Forests Department for the purpose of having pieces of country excised from the reserves. It is pleasing to know that of late years the department have realised their error, and that many splendid tracts of agricultural country—

Hon. H. Tuckey: Some of the land reserved as forests has never grown any marketable timber whatever.

Hon. W. J. MANN: And never will. Moreover, many areas of the same type remain reserved. Upon the reversal of the former policy applications were made for selection, and annually the department, over a series of years, have caused the submission of a motion of this nature seeking authority for revocation. The ten areas comprised in the resolution, most of them comparatively small—the whole ten aggregate only 590 acres—will, I feel sure, all prove useful adjuncts, some to existing farms, the others to areas on which men can make homes and cultivate the soil. Accordingly, I commend the motion to the House.

Question put and passed.

## **BILL—LOAN, £2,627,000.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

**HON. H. SEDDON** (North-East) [8.56]: This Loan Bill has certain features which have not arisen in connection with previous measures of the kind. Apparently a position has been created, and the Government find themselves in that position without having contemplated it. In previous years it has been the practice to introduce into the Loan Bill an item to provide for short-term advances to cover deficits; the balance of the amount of the Bill, naturally, being for loan works. Over many years a practice has grown up of having a Loan Bill annually. This is due to the fact that originally, in times of depression, the most practical way of tiding over the difficulty and relieving distress was the putting in hand of public works. That principle, which was adopted and retained only for the purpose of meeting depressions, has in the course of time become an established practice. Parliament is found year after year providing a series of public works.

The purpose behind those works is really to provide employment. When studying the table of Loan assets, one is inclined to think that frequently that consideration was allowed to override the better judgments of Governments as to the nature of the works undertaken. In many cases one cannot but conclude that the works were premature, at any rate judging by the financial results accrued from them towards sinking fund and interest. Judged by that standard, they were a long way ahead of of their time. The productive aspect of public works has been made a secondary consideration. A reference to the table associated with Loan assets shows that only a very small proportion of the works are classed as reproductive. A number are classed as partially reproductive. A large section, comprising some £7,000,000, are classed as totally unproductive. Until the revised form of accounts was placed before Parliament, one had a hard task to determine exactly to what extent the taxpayer was being asked to contribute towards losses made in connection with Loan works. Since 1930, when the new table of accounts was introduced, it has been possible to determine definitely the amount lost year by year. In 1930 a sum of £1,077,000, in round figures, represented the loss in connection with Loan assets. In 1931 the loss was £1,063,000. In 1932, a year in the middle of the depression, the loss was £722,000. In 1933 it had risen again to £1,100,000. In 1934 it had risen further to £1,300,000, and in 1935 to £1,485,000. The item which budgets for deficits in our Loan Bill is the outcome of the Premiers' Plan, and represents an attempt to put into effect one of the resolutions adopted by the Conference of Premiers when the depression began. It is also a by-product of the provisions of the Financial Agreement. A matter which has been repeatedly mentioned here in connection with the Financial Agreement is the provision of a sinking fund to meet loan flotations devised for the purpose of financing deficits. I have said that that item has been side-stepped up to the present time. Neither the present nor any previous Ministry had made the financial provision laid down in the Financial Agreement. The provision is very definite. Paragraph (j) of Clause 3 of Part III. of the Financial Agreement

clearly lays it down in the following terms:—

In respect of any loan raised after the 30th June, 1927, by a State or by the Commonwealth for or on behalf of a State to meet a revenue deficit accruing after that date no sinking fund contribution shall be payable by the Commonwealth, but that State shall for a period sufficient to provide for the redemption of the loan pay from revenue in each year during such period a sinking fund contribution at a rate of not less than four per centum per annum of the amount of that loan.

There is another clause in the Financial Agreement under the heading of "Indemnity" that says—

Each State agrees with the Commonwealth that it will by the faithful performance of its obligations under this Agreement indemnify the Commonwealth against all liabilities whatsoever in respect of the public debt of that State taken over by the Commonwealth as aforesaid.

The words I wish to stress are "by the faithful performance of its obligations." This agreement was signed, amongst others, by P. Collier, who was then Premier of Western Australia. When, however, the Mitchell Government were in office and the question regarding the provision of the 4 per cent. sinking fund was raised, it was considered by what I would describe as a pure evasion of the provisions of the Financial Agreement, that where the deficit was being carried with Treasury bills or short-term loans, the 4 per cent. sinking fund provision should not apply. That method has been adopted year by year by successive Governments and in each Loan Act passed since that period members will find the item occurring to provide for deficits through those Acts, but there is no provision for carrying out the 4 per cent. sinking fund obligation. In my opinion the evasion was pretty apparent to everyone, but the fact remains that it was based on the interpretation that was read to this House by the then Minister in this Chamber, Mr. Baxter. There has, however, arisen in connection with last year's deficit and this year's Loan Bill a feature associated with that 4 per cent. sinking fund provision which, in my opinion, places the present Government in a very difficult position. That circumstance arises in connection with the figures read to the House by the Chief Secretary. I would refer members, in explaining those figures, to the report of the Auditor General for 1933, in which he points out that the deficit for that year was £864,081, and the accumulated deficit to the end of

June, 1933, £4,360,000. Of that accumulated deficit, £2,323,000 was covered by loan items under the heading of short-term advances, leaving a balance, which had been uncovered by loan authorisation, of £2,037,000. That money has been carried, so we are told, by Treasury bills. According to the Public Accounts, the position at the end of June, 1935, showed that the accumulated deficit amounted then to £5,316,525. Of that amount loan authorisations covered £4,373,000, leaving a balance, which was referred to by the Chief Secretary in his remarks, of £943,525. That figure was arrived at because the Government last year took £582,000 towards that unauthorised deficit from the item which was provided for charges to meet revenue shortages. When we examine the Auditor General's report, we find that the money that was received for that purpose under the Loan Act of 1935 comprised a sum of £2,852,000—the figures I am quoting are taken from page 8 of the Auditor General's report—and of that sum, apparently the only item that can be classed as a short-term debt is one of £13,000. Another item that comprises loan repayments amounts to £150,000, but the rest are all grouped under the heading of profits less discount and expenses of loans, among them being the Commonwealth loan in June, 1934, the Commonwealth loan in November, 1934, and the Commonwealth loan in June, 1935, together with counter sales of stock and inscribed stock. All these items are what we describe as funded stock, and if there is anything in that condition of the Financial Agreement at all, it is that the Financial Agreement, even on the interpretation that Governments have operated under, does provide that where money has been used for the purpose of funding deficits and that money has been obtained by loan, it shall carry the 4 per cent. sinking fund provision. So I contend the Government, by their action in dealing with money last year, did break the Financial Agreement insofar as they did not make provision for the payment of a 4 per cent. sinking fund. The position regarding this House is that if we pass the Loan Bill in its present form, members themselves will be parties to breaking the Financial Agreement, and deliberately setting aside that particular provision, because when moving the second reading of the Bill the Chief Secretary said that of the £300,000 that had been set aside to meet revenue shortages, a sum of,

roughly, £250,000 was to be devoted to the purpose of funding the deficit. Therefore, as I have pointed out, if the House pass the Loan Bill in its present form, members will be condoning the breaking of the Financial Agreement. Of course, that particular action has a distinct advantage and I am satisfied the Government considered they were acting in the best interests of the State when they took the action they did. But the fact remains that they have deliberately broken the provisions of the Financial Agreement. Obviously, the amounts that were unprovided for previously have been carried by the balance in the Loan Fund, and it was no doubt the intention of the Government to put the matter in order by devoting the sum of £500,000 last year to the purpose of funding that unauthorised balance. It is certainly an advantage and helps to clear up that amount, but it appears to me to represent a method of finance that is open to considerable abuse. All that the Government will have to do in the future will be to make some extravagant allowance to meet revenue shortages and from that extravagant allowance take care of their unauthorised deficit, which was incurred in the past. Therefore I say that it appears to me—and I shall be glad if the Chief Secretary in his reply will deal with the question—that the Government have broken that clause in the Financial Agreement which provides for a four per cent. sinking fund. The point in connection with it is that the money we are borrowing year after year for the purpose of our loan work is money which has been obtained from the thrift of the Australian people. The greater part of it comes from the insurance companies, and another very considerable part comes from trust funds. When the Financial Agreement was placed on the statute book, it was placed there with a certain provision for a very definite reason. The idea was to assure the investor in Australian stock of certain conditions providing for sound finance, which were embodied in the Financial Agreement, and that those provisions would be loyally carried out. I have shown how one of those conditions has been evaded, and I should like to point out that that condition was included by all the Premiers in their recommendation of the Bill, with the idea of penalising any Government that incurred deficits, with the idea of compelling Governments to balance their

budgets. Therefore it is only right that the investor should know that those conditions are not being complied with, and that they are subscribing to the various loans on the market and subscribing to them under the condition that Governments are not carrying out their obligations.

The Honorary Minister: What is it you suggest?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I suggest that the financial institutions do not understand the action of the Western Australian Government in doing what they have done in regard to the funding of this amount without providing the four per cent. sinking fund, and I say the financial institutions have been letting the Government evade the clause in the Financial Agreement up to the present by the short-term loans. That explanation will not suffice in the present instance, where the Government are using money raised from funded loans without providing the four per cent. sinking fund. There is arising, too, a state of affairs in our Australian finances which will compel the Government to revise their policy. During the depression funds were available for Governments from banks, of which they took full advantage by means of the issue of Australian bills. It was only possible for Governments to finance in that way because money was accumulating in the banks and other financial institutions, which in the ordinary course of events would have been utilised in circulation and in trade. And the banks in endeavouring to assist the Government to carry on finance at a very difficult time made available those moneys on condition that they were available only on short-term currency. The Government made use of the money considerably because those short-term advances carried a very low rate of discount, and the Government were able to carry out their borrowings at a very much cheaper rate than by taking other loans in the ordinary way. It was a dangerous and unsatisfactory method of financing, because the money was liable to be called up by the depositors at any time. And should there be a revival of trade, and opportunities be offered to investors to get better returns than they could get from the banks, it is obvious that those moneys would be called up and the banks would find themselves in a very awkward position.

It was this danger that influenced the bank to stress the position to the Government. I should like to emphasise that point because it is a point which I think will materially affect Government finance in the future. Reference has been made again and again in our public Press to the features of public finance. For instance, I have here a cutting dated September last which stresses the point, as follows:—

When depression struck, it was public finance that showed up worst in Australia. It is no excuse to point out that some other overseas countries were in a similar plight. The line of least resistance has almost invariably been followed in Budget management, except where the Commonwealth Bank has put its foot down . . . .

Public finance is at all times a recondite matter to men in the street—few such men, for example, ever have the opportunity of running their business on Parliamentary Budget lines—and the last meeting of the Loan Council had a somewhat startling effect. It was shown that our debt had been piling up at the rate of £30,000,000 or so a year, and State Treasurers demonstrated every willingness to keep on borrowing. Two of them were furious when their demands (one specified £5,500,000 and the other £2,000,000) were refused.

This time Governments had to come on to the open market for their requirements. For three or four years Budget deficits were unobtrusively financed on Treasury bills, discounted by the banks. The taxpayer and the investor now had food for thought. The latter, starved of profitable outlets for his money for some years, had rushed the first two or three loans after things had become more or less stable at rates of interest flattering to Treasurers. But loan threatened to follow loan, the inroads of Government control and profit-levies in private business showed no signs of letting-up—and the investor became dubious.

Conditions to-day have materially altered. There are opportunities presented to the investor to secure better returns for his money than he has been getting through Government loans. And, as the Chief Secretary pointed out, the last loan which was floated was seriously under-subscribed and the warning of the banks that the Government would have to restrict their demands was emphasised by the fact that in the present loan we have the re-introduction of a method of subscription which was adopted during the worst period of the war when the investors subscribing to Government loans were given the opportunity to subscribe by instalments. That method has been re-introduced in connection with the present loan. As I say, the Government

could not have got the money that they did get during the early part of the depression except by Treasury bills. The position to-day is entirely different. In the trade and finance column of the newspaper the other day we found that no less than 12 Australian companies are now making fresh issues of capital, and the Broken Hill Proprietary were in the market for £2½ millions. Australasian Papers were in the market for one-third of a million pounds, and various others were in the market for various amounts involving £3,400,000. I should like to draw attention to the fact that those are going on the market at the very time the present loan is being floated. Attention has been drawn to one striking feature in connection with the banking business which should be borne in mind by Governments when considering their loan policy. In the statement of Australian Banking Statistics contained in the "West Australian" of the 30th October, attention was drawn to the fact that whilst deposits had seriously declined, advances had increased. The total variation was in the region of £20,000,000, and of this sum a considerable amount represented a decrease in deposits, and a larger amount represented an increase in advances. Referring to this development, the "Australian Insurance and Banking Record" pointed out that a very considerable amount of money had left Australia during the last 12 months. When the depression overtook this country and the exchange premium rose to 25 per cent., considerable sums of money which belonged to overseas companies were lent to Australia in the belief that the depression would be temporary and that the 25 per cent. exchange would be in vogue for only a comparatively short period. It is now recognised that the 25 per cent. exchange has definitely come to stay, and those overseas companies, realising that fact, have withdrawn the money, which they temporarily left here, and cut the loss. The obvious result has been seriously to affect the banking position. To ensure sound banking, it is necessary that the banks should maintain a certain margin between their deposits and their advances, and if, as a result of the variation to which I have referred, that ratio is disturbed, obviously the banking policy will have to be revised. There is a rather interesting feature that might be

commended to the attention of people who are inclined to support the Douglas Credit proposals. Such people make a great feature of their arguments that advances actually create deposits. Here we have a situation in which there is an increase of advances and a decrease of deposits representing a difference of some £20,000,000, and it would be interesting if the people holding those new-fangled ideas would explain how this fits in with their ideas of banking, because, to me, it seems to be a strong argument against their proposals. One cannot fail to be amused at the development and demonstration of public opinion on finance during a time of crisis. A meeting was held in Perth recently, headed by various prominent citizens, to discuss the question of providing against poverty. Some very interesting speeches were delivered. One speaker emphasised that the campaign which the meeting inaugurated was to demand that the physical fact of poverty should be ended. Everyone, I think, will agree with that.

Hon. H. Tuckey: It is easier said than done.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Another speaker went on to say that candidates for Parliament should take steps to ensure that every man, woman and child received sufficient money to enable him or her to purchase goods and services up to the full capacity of the productive system of the country. That is very sound, too, but a peculiar feature of all the speeches was that nobody offered a remedy or alternative method. Some of the speakers plainly stated that they did not know how it should be done, but that they would insist upon members of Parliament doing it. I wish to drive home this aspect of their arguments. Fifty members of the Legislative Assembly will shortly be facing their electors, and this public meeting, representing a considerable proportion of the people of Perth, stated that candidates would have to undertake to do those things. One speaker went to the extent of saying that if they did not know how to do it, somebody would be obtained who did know. Another speaker, a professor, said there was a marked contrast between the incomes of the rich and the poor which made democracy impossible. Another speaker, the director of the campaign, said that in a democracy government was of two parts, one part the elector and the other part the elected person. It was the function of the electors, he

argued, to say what should be done, and it was the function of the elected to do the will of the electors. It was not the business of the electors to say how poverty should be obviated, but it was their province to determine that, in the midst of plenty, poverty should not continue. The duty devolved upon the elected representatives to employ whatever experts were necessary to give the results demanded.

Hon. T. Moore: We have had a lot of experts already.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. During the whole of that meeting, not a sound suggestion was offered whereby the difficulty might be overcome. The report of that meeting reminds me of a speech we heard in this House a few days ago along very similar lines, where again there was an absence of any concrete suggestion whereby this deplorable state of affairs could be remedied. It is all very fine for people to get up at public meetings and become enthusiastic over propositions of this kind, but we do expect that a person who has studied a problem will have arrived at some conclusion which at least will point in the right direction and will advocate something which is concrete towards remedying a state of affairs that everyone agrees is deplorable. I should like to deal more fully with one statement made at that meeting—a statement referring to the disparity between the incomes of the rich and the incomes of the poor. On referring to the report of the Commissioner of Taxation for 1935 we find some very enlightening figures dealing with incomes. Out of the whole population of Western Australia comprising some 440,000 persons, there are 35 or 37 who are receiving above £5,000 a year. Although we in Western Australia regard £5,000 a year as a large income, it is not so considered in many other countries.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And heavy taxation has to be paid.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the income previous to taxation being charged. The analysis shows that 93 per cent. of the taxpayers were receiving less than £700 per annum, and 97 per cent. were receiving less than £1,000 of income per annum. Thus only 3 per cent. of the taxpayers are over the £1,000 mark. Payers of income tax represented 7.5 per cent. of the population. Therefore I should like to point out that in Western Australia the disparity in

comes is not so marked as to give rise to a statement that was evidently intended to engender a feeling of bitterness and class consciousness, and which could not conduce to the satisfactory co-operation needed to solve the very serious problem of poverty. One can only describe the methods of that meeting as being entirely unscientific. The approach to the question of poverty amid plenty in Western Australia has only been along the lines of expediency, and never along the lines of scientific investigation, such as the problem demands. Whilst loan expenditure has played such a large part in our attempt to meet the depression, and that evil associated with depression, unemployment, we have to recognise that this is only an expedient. We must attempt to approach the problem along different lines. The line which offers the most promising prospect of development is the line of planned production. The question of production has not been approached from the standpoint of the consumer. We have not had statistics as to the number of persons who would be employed in satisfying the demands of the community along any given line. Two or three truths may be stressed, truths which underlie this problem. There is the question of developing the purchasing power of the consuming community. That line is capable of enormous expansion. Then there is the question of the provision of an insurance fund against unemployment, a means of providing a cushion between the time when a man loses his job and the time when he can be re-employed in industry. And then there is the encouragement of a balanced system of wealth production which is based on the consumption requirements of the community. If we measure up the question of loan money and borrowing, we must admit that that is only an expedient, and falls far short of an ideal system of providing for meeting this problem in a satisfactory and organised manner. The line that appeals to me most, as offering a line of advance, is through our Arbitration Court. If the Arbitration Court revised the basis on which it determines the basic wage, and fixed a standard more in accordance with the standard of comfort that is possible under modern scientific production, it would be taking a very strong and effective step towards meeting the problem of unemployment. If it could determine that the worker's home may be the subject of investigation, and deter-

mined that the worker's home should be of a standard which provided not only for an adequate number of rooms, but adequate equipment in accordance with the discoveries of science in the last few years, and could lay that down as a basis under which the basic wage could be determined, the result would be a considerable development of employment through the provision of machinery that is used in modern homes for the benefit of the housewife and the comfort of the occupants. It will be contended that this is something we cannot afford, that if we introduced so high a standard it would have a serious effect upon many of our industries. One of the features of the depression has been a definite change-over in our economic system, and whether we wish it or not we are being forced in the direction of having to meet our requirements from our own efforts, rather than depend, as we have done in the past, upon the support and assistance we have received from overseas. When I speak of the standard of living as comprising the basis on which our basic wage might be fixed, and fixed at a high standard, I hold that this standard should be applied to every section of the community. The result would be a change-over so far as the avenues of employment that are available to our people are concerned, and a further result would be that we would become more independent, and as a community would be living on a much higher standard than we live to-day. There is a great difference between the production of wealth and the measurement of that wealth in money. That, unfortunately, is something which has caused a considerable amount of confusion in the thoughts of the people who are close to this question to-day. I wish to refer to Government finance. There is an indication that the revenues of the Government will increase materially during the present financial year. One of the greatest problems Governments had to face when the depression struck the country was the question of revenue from taxation. Although they tried to adjust their estimates to meet as they thought the losses due to the depression, the estimates fell far short of the money actually received. Almost in every case the estimated returns from the various forms of taxation were a long way higher than the money actually re-

ceived. As a fact there has been a considerable improvement in income, and that is reflected in the revenue from taxation. I am inclined to think that the Government's Estimates will be found to be just as much out on the other side as they were under-estimated previously. That is being borne out by the returns received to-day under the financial emergency taxation. If the figures are examined it will be found that whilst the Government estimate was £650,000 from that tax, the probability is that by the end of the financial year they will have received a sum not very far short of £900,000 from that one source alone. Should the Government end the year with a surplus—I contend that the returns received indicate they will have a surplus if they keep strictly to the estimates of expenditure—I hope they will adopt a sound principle of sound finance, and will use the surplus to meet the deficits which have accumulated, and wipe them out from revenue instead of being obliged to fund them. In other words, I hope the Government intend to carry out the obligations imposed by the Financial Agreement. There is one factor in the national welfare that is often lost sight of in a community like this. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the most valuable man in any community is he who can find profitable employment for his fellows. My contention is—and it has been advocated by many students of economics—that the man who can find profitable employment for five of his fellowmen is a valuable asset to the community. The man who can find profitable employment for fifty is a much greater asset to the community, and the man who can find profitable employment for 500 men is so valuable an asset that the community should take every care to see that he is given all possible assistance and encouragement. The words "profitable employment," are a very important description of the nature of the employment.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Profitable to the employer, to the men, or to the State?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Profitable to the State. The very rarest of our human faculties is the faculty of providing new sources of profitable employment. That type of brain is sufficiently rare to be valued and encouraged, and employed in the best interests of the State.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It also works for destruction.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I do not know that. Progress has been the result more of individual effort and individual discovery than of any other cause. These pioneers have blazed the trail, and the people have rushed in after them. The items of the Bill are in themselves significant. There is a distinct change in the direction of loan expenditure. There has been a decrease in the amount of money appropriated to agricultural development. That, of course, was to be expected. The water supply and sewerage this year take roughly £900,000 of loan money as against £1,100,000 last year.

Hon. T. Moore: Is that expenditure reproductive?

Hon. H. SEDDON: It has been considered by various Governments to be reproductive.

Hon. T. Moore: On what basis?

Hon. H. SEDDON: On the basis of the Government always being able to collect interest and sinking fund. From that standpoint the expenditure is regarded as reproductive. Presumably anything tending towards a higher standard of comfort and health may be considered reproductive. The amount of money devoted in the Bill to goldfields and mineral development is approximately £40,000, as against £70,000 last year. When one considers the valuable contribution made by goldmining during the years of the depression, one cannot but wonder whether the Government might not have reviewed those items with a view to affording the mining industry certain facilities which would result in increased revenue. One feature of loan expenditure does not find a place in this Bill—provision of workers' homes on the goldfields. In my opinion that is rather a strange omission, having regard to the strength of the Labour Party's platform in that respect, as set out clearly and distinctly by that Labour Premier who placed the original Workers' Homes Act on the statute-book. It is interesting to recall the remarks of the Labour Premier and to bear in mind that included in his Cabinet were nearly all the Ministers from goldfields constituencies who are in the present Cabinet, and to consider their present attitude towards the provision of homes for goldfields workers, as compared with actual results. The original Workers' Homes Act was introduced in the year 1912, when our goldfields



were in anything but a promising position financially.

Hon. J. Cornell: The original Act was passed in 1911 by the Scaddan Government.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the period to which I am referring. The outlook on the fields then was not bright, but the remarks of the Premier of that day were made with the idea of assisting every worker in the community. Moving the second reading of the measure he said—

The Bill enabling workers to provide homes for themselves will do more in the direction of assisting workers throughout the country than any other Bill we have passed . . . . We are going to the extent of providing the land as well as erecting the dwelling . . . . The object of the Bill is to enable people of limited means and dependent on their own personal exertions for the support of themselves and their families to provide permanent homes . . . We are making provision for people to provide homes for themselves in almost every circumstance. The whole of the Bill is under the control of the Minister. It is true a board is appointed for the purpose of administering the Act, but it is under the control of the Minister. We provide he shall pay a deposit of £10, which afterwards becomes part of his purchase money. Our aim is that anyone earning his living in any sphere of work may acquire a permanent home.

Contrasting those words with the attitude of the present Government towards workers' homes on the goldfields, we are apt to read them with reservations. Those strong appeals for support of the Bill are to-day subject to the reservation, "We intend to make this provision for workers to have homes everywhere in the State except on the goldfields. We intend to assist people throughout the country, except on the goldfields, to provide homes for themselves. We are making provision for people to obtain homes for themselves in almost any circumstances, except goldfields circumstances."

Hon. T. Moore: Are you reading that, or does that come from you?

Hon. H. SEDDON: It comes from me. I have read the remarks of the Premier of the day, Mr. Scaddan, and am interpreting them in the light of the attitude of the present Government. Their attitude is that whilst they endorse the fine principles previously expressed, they make a definite exception with regard to goldfields workers. I may refer to a recent happening. Mr. Cornell introduced a Bill dealing with the goldfields aspect, and the measure was ruled out of order in the Assembly. A goldfields representative in another place moved a

motion affirming that it should be made possible for goldfields local authorities to do something towards remedying the existing evil of a housing shortage. The interpretation of that motion, to my mind, is that in order to provide goldfields workers with homes, goldfields people who have homes of their own will be asked by the present Government to furnish the necessary means. Those who have homes on the goldfields are to be asked to bear the financial burden of providing homes for newcomers on the goldfields, a burden which the Government themselves are unwilling to bear. That, in my opinion, is an attitude which will bring goldfields representatives considerable criticism from their electors.

The PRESIDENT: I must remind the hon. member that it is contrary to the Standing Orders to allude to debates in the Legislative Assembly. Therefore I hope the hon. member will not proceed on those lines.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I have made the point that I wish to emphasise. The Loan Bill contains no item to provide goldfields workers with homes. That is an item which might well have been included, which perhaps might have replaced some of the items included. It is utterly unfair to expect goldfields ratepayers to take over the burden of financing workers' homes on the goldfields.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Municipal Corporations Act would have to be amended in order to allow that to be done.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes, and the Government have repeatedly stated they have no intention of bringing down a Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act unless it includes provision for the abolition of plural voting. Therefore I fear it will be quite a long time before an amending measure is introduced.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Government cannot do everything.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What about private enterprise?

Hon. H. SEDDON: In my opinion private enterprise has acted very well in this respect.

Hon. J. Cornell: Private enterprise could do well in helping to provide the workers with homes.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes, and private enterprise has risen to the extent of providing £150,000 in order to assist people on the goldfields to secure their own homes.

But this applies to the class of people the Workers' Homes Board were intended to cater for, and they are the people who ordinarily cannot have their homes built by private builders. Those are the people I consider it is the duty of the Government to make provision for through the Workers' Homes Board. That is why I am stressing this item so strongly in connection with the present Loan Bill. It appears to me as the only line the Government can adopt if they are to be consistent and carry out the ideals emphasised in the remarks of Mr. Scaddan in 1912. They must take some steps to arrange to meet this pressing need of the goldfields citizens. I think I have covered the whole of the ground associated with the question of loan finance, and I hope that the Chief Secretary, when he replies to the debate, will thoroughly explain the position the Government have placed themselves in with regard to carrying out the provisions of the Financial Agreement and that even at this late stage, we may hope that some steps will be taken by the Government to deal with the problem of workers' homes on the goldfields, which has been repeatedly brought before their notice.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [9.52]: My remarks on the Bill will be brief as the hour is late. I was struck by the speech delivered by Mr. Seddon. So far as I can gather, he has left us very much in the same position as did that Town Hall meeting.

Hon. H. Seddon: I do not think so.

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Seddon did offer some criticism regarding Government finance and commented upon their actions, but he did not suggest some other method. He did not present any alternative.

Hon. H. Seddon: Yes, I did. I referred to the Arbitration Act.

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Seddon did mention "planned production." Surely those are empty words. The hon. member did not indicate how that planned production was to be effected. The man who spoke at that celebrated Town Hall meeting no doubt used nice-sounding words like those. Such phrases are very catchy, but when it comes to a matter of actual planned production, it is a different thing altogether. We have plenty of production. Our production is wonderful, so much so that, as the people pointed out at that Town Hall meeting, we have amongst us starvation in the midst of plenty. It is not on the side of production

that we must plan; it is on the other side. Mr. Seddon need not worry about the production side.

Hon. H. Seddon: I think I need.

Hon. T. MOORE: Then I disagree with Mr. Seddon. Practically half the people in the State are living in Perth and yet there is plenty for everyone. They can buy all they need, if they have the money with which to make the purchases. Money is the only thing that people may be a bit short of.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And perhaps a little credit.

Hon. T. MOORE: Planned production is not enough.

Hon. G. Fraser: Planned distribution is required.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, it is the method of distribution that is all wrong. We have been hearing these high-sounding phrases for years past and for just so long have we known the need for a better plan of distribution. That is what is lacking, and so I say Mr. Seddon worked along wrong lines. That is how I regard his remarks, except from the standpoint that we should have planned production so that we can sell overseas at a profit. That is rather a tall order too. That is a matter about which we may worry. We have plenty of production, but unfortunately many of the commodities are produced at a loss to the grower.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is due to private ownership Mr. Seddon so often eulogises.

Hon. T. MOORE: This question is quite beyond the capacity of a lot of people to handle. It is so very easy to criticise the other person and say that he ought to have done this or ought not to have done that. To indicate to that other person just what he ought to have done is a different matter. So it is when we come to Governments. Mr. Seddon suggested that the Government should not have done this or that, but it was only towards the finish of his speech that he did give some indication as to what he considered the Government should do. He then offered the suggestion that workers' homes should be built. I agree that every worker should have his home. Mr. Seddon also made the point that all loan work should be reproductive. Despite his remarks, the hon. member knows in the bottom of his heart that it is very doubtful whether the work he

suggested will be productive from that point of view.

Hon. H. Seddon: I do not think you are justified in saying that.

Hon. T. MOORE: After all, there is a doubt, but I hope the hon. member is right.

Hon. H. Seddon: By way of a personal explanation, Mr. President, Mr. T. Moore said that down in my heart I did not think my proposal was sound business. My reply to that is that the greater part of my savings have been invested on the goldfields in helping workers to make this very provision I have urged that the Government ought to make. My money has been invested in helping these people to get their own homes.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am pleased to hear Mr. Seddon make that explanation. At the same time, it is interesting to note that one of our greatest mining magnates, the man who is referred to to-day as having done so much to help the goldfields and improve the condition of the State—I refer to Mr. Claude de Bernales—is not rushing to the goldfields with all his cash to invest it there.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Yes.

Hon. T. MOORE: He is not turning to the goldfields, but is investing his money in the city where all the capitalists are, where it is considered the return on money invested will be greater and where the investments are safer.

Hon. J. Cornell: He recently put thousands of pounds into a goldfields foundry.

Hon. T. MOORE: From a business point of view, Mr. de Bernales has invested in the city.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did not he put a lot of money into the Phoenix mine, or was that put in by the mugs?

Hon. T. MOORE: I am not sure about that, but when we look at Mr. de Bernales's position, it will be agreed that he has done very well out of the mining industry.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Would a man invest in the city if he had no faith in the country?

Hon. T. MOORE: From that standpoint, I think that Mr. R. G. Moore will say that the Workers' Homes Board have acted in that way. I realise that the country districts have had a share in the work of the Workers' Homes Board, and I believe it is possible for the board to operate more extensively on the goldfields, but I do not think that elaborate houses are required there.

Hon. R. G. Moore: They were never required.

Hon. T. MOORE: The buildings that were erected on the goldfields 30 years ago were quite comfortable and many fine families were reared in those homes. I agree with Mr. R. G. Moore that we should not ask the Workers' Homes Board to build expensive homes on the goldfields.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Would you describe a £450 home as expensive?

Hon. T. MOORE: It would be expensive for a goldfields home.

Hon. R. G. Moore: And that amount is the limit.

Hon. T. MOORE: That amount would be altogether too expensive in most instances. Workers' homes are wanted at Wiluna, Cue and Magnet and homes erected there should be much less expensive. To spend £450 on a house on the goldfields would be too much, except in isolated instances. From the point of view of the people who have to carry the load and get out of it in a reasonably short time, the cost is too great.

Hon. J. Cornell: Some people on £4 a week are paying £800 for homes.

Hon. T. MOORE: We have to consider the married man who is raising a family. He needs a home for his family, and I may say that the man on the basic wage to-day has not too much money to spare with which to build a home. If the hon. member thinks I am wrong in that, I invite him to come up to the goldfields, see the conditions and decide whether he would advise the building of expensive homes. I have no desire to criticise the Government, for during the past few years all Governments have had a particularly trying time, and we should not be too ready to criticise them. But I have seen a remarkable change for the better, if we compare the programmes of to-day with those of a few years ago. Some members will get up and wail about two men being out of work in a certain part of the country. But a few years ago there were soup kitchens provided for numbers of men, but no other provision made for them, so I say we have moved along and I want to give credit where credit is due. In that regard I think we have moved along on right lines, for married men to-day can go to the Government and have positions found for them. When I know that this is being done in a capitalistic State where we have some people preaching what Governments should do, and when we know that private enterprise has fallen down on its job and the Government have had to come in and look after the workmen,

I say we have moved along considerably. But there is a growing tendency to have everybody running to the Government for almost everything. I am not now thinking of workers' homes, but I say we have that tendency and that we are likely to have a set-back. This is a capitalistic State in which many people are asking for a socialistic programme to be carried out. They want the Government to keep on increasing the help they give and to extend their assistance day after day; but I say we shall have a set-back. The Government must find employment for all those men who need it, which is pretty nearly socialism. It is coming to this, that we shall have all the men in the country under the wing of the Government. It is going far on socialistic lines, and inevitably there will be a set-back as it cannot be done under the capitalistic system. I agree with Mr. Seddon that there is room for investors in industry. That is the hope I have, that if the investors will set up an industry which will create employment the Government will have so much less to do and the community also will have so much less to do. Taxation is too high altogether; indeed, it is shockingly high, but if investors are prepared to put their money into industry and so provide employment for men, we shall be moving along on better lines.

Hon. R. G. Moore: They would do that now if they could find a profitable industry.

Hon. T. MOORE: That is the point. Mr. Seddon said that a good deal of capital was going to be used in that way. I hope that what he said in that regard is correct, for then we shall have employment by private capital instead of everybody going to the Government for everything they want. We are not getting ahead when we leave everything to borrowed money. I am not criticising the Government, for I think they are doing very well, but I do say the tendency is to run to the Government for everything that is required, and that that must lead to a reaction. Regarding public works on which loan money has been expended, I might instance the Wyndham Meat Works. When that establishment was started there was a hue and cry and a lot of public money was put into it. The result is that an immense interest bill has had to be met for many years. Now compare private enterprise with that instance of Government enterprise. Just a little further on, not an

enormous way from Wyndham, Vestey's invested a lot of money at Darwin to carry on the same class of business as is being carried on at the Wyndham Meat Works; but Vestey's cut their loss. They did not give the cattle owner in that part of the country any chance to carry on. Again, private enterprise started the Carnarvon works. Mr. Angelo will know something about that.

Hon. L. Craig: Unfortunately, so do I.

Hon. T. MOORE: The Government put a certain amount of money into that venture. We sometimes hear it spoken of as a total loss, but I for one do not think it is an entire loss. I do not think that because we are in a really bad way to-day the State will always be so. Regarding the Wyndham Meat Works we have this to say, that but for those works how would the cattlemen in the North be getting on? In the past that part of the State helped to build up other parts of the State and so it was entitled to the expenditure on the meat works. If we were to go in for more big works, instead of tiddlywinking works, it would be much better for the State. In that regard the Wyndham Meat Works have been good to the cattle-raisers of the North and it has also been good to the South-West, because if the people there sent their cattle down here instead of exporting them to European markets there would be very much less money to be distributed in the South among the stock raisers. If loan money is to be used on tiddlywinking works, we shall get nowhere. Another work where loan money could be used—but I should like to see private enterprise supplying it—is in the Geraldton district, where we have a splendid field for freezing works, and the best fattening country in the State. But no effort is being made by private investors to get into those works. The outlook for the Geraldton district, in my opinion, would be rendered much brighter if a move were made by men of capital in that direction. In that district we have a certain number of men possessed of capital.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: You are one of them.

Hon. T. MOORE: A very small one, but I would be prepared to contribute my mite if men with capital were prepared to subscribe their quota also. Quite a number of pastoralists in the Murchison would assist, realising that if a lot of the stock raised in the Geraldton zone were not disposed of in that way, the problem of dis-

posing of the sheep from the Murchison will probably become acute. It would be to the advantage of the Murchison pastoralists to assist in that work. The establishment of freezers at Geraldton would give the district quite a good future and would ensure relief for the markets here in the years to come and provide employment.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Would the harbour have sufficient water for freezing works?

Hon. T. MOORE: Quite a lot of money has been expended on the harbour at Geraldton.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Would the depth of water be sufficient?

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not intend to follow the hon. member along those lines. He made a mess of his own speech, and will not give me a chance to make mine. Unless we are prepared to look ahead, we shall not get anywhere. Because conditions are depressed at present is no reason why we should not look forward to the time when our industries will recover and will be humming as they were in years gone by. The installation of freezers has recently been commenced at Albany with the idea of exporting fat lambs. Anyone who knows the two districts is aware that there is no comparison between them. If Albany from the point of view of the installation of freezers is a possibility, then Geraldton is a probability, and in saying that I have no desire to speak disparagingly of the Albany district.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What happened to the works at Carnarvon?

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Angelo will tell the hon. member.

Hon. C. H. Wittenoom: We have a deep-water harbour at Albany.

Hon. J. Cornell: But the harbour will not grow lambs.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am aware that Albany has some natural advantages, but we have a very good artificial harbour at Geraldton. Let me suggest another sound work which could be undertaken with loan money. Our settlers must have, as soon as possible, quite a large quantity of wire netting. The rabbit menace is increasing all over the country, and a hitch has occurred between the Commonwealth Government and the State Government regarding the supply of wire-netting. I believe that, as

in the past, the Commonwealth Government are inclined to give the State a rather bad deal. Unless we are prepared to spend loan money on wire-netting for fencing against the rabbit menace, we shall experience a setback over a large area of the State. The sooner we provide the wire-netting, the easier it will be to cope with the problem. If we continue for a few years as we have been going, the position of the man on the land, bad as it is to-day, will be very much worse. To supply wire-netting would be a good work and a big work. It would create a lot of employment and good employment for many men who would be required to erect it. It would be reproductive work. Money spent on netting will certainly prove a most reproductive work on any farm where the rabbits are bad, and they are bad practically from one end of the State to the other. Members make a mistake when they point to Victoria as having got rid of the rabbits without the use of netting, despite the fact that there were millions of rabbits in that State. I agree that Victoria was successful. I speak as one who has been through the mill in that State. I could show members miles of country in Victoria, once overrun with rabbits, where not an ounce of wire-netting has been used and where it would be exceedingly difficult to find a rabbit to shoot. Victoria got rid of the rabbits by poisoning, but it must be remembered that Victoria over the greater part was settled with farms of 320 acres, and it was an easy matter to cope with the rabbits on those small holdings as against the problem in this State, where we have miles of country at present of little value for farming, forming a breeding ground all round. The conditions are quite different from those in Victoria. In the district I came from there was a settler every half mile, and it was quite an easy matter to cope with the rabbits on small areas. The difficulty in this State is that we have so much Government land of little value at the present time. I suggest that money could be well expended on freezing works at Geraldton and on providing settlers with wire-netting. If freezers are not provided at Geraldton we shall, in the days ahead, be swamping the metropolitan market with fat lambs and beef. The work of netting holdings against the rabbits would be a

large reproductive work and would provide much employment which is so sadly needed to-day. I support the second reading.

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

## **BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. W. J. MANN** (South-West) [10.17]: There are some comments I should like to offer on the Bill. When the original measure was passed, it was admittedly a piece of experimental legislation, and it caused a good deal of controversy in this Parliament. Quite a number of people alleged that it would never be possible to control the whole milk industry, but a few stalwarts contended that, given a fair opportunity, it would be possible materially to improve the appalling state into which the industry had fallen at that time. I consider that the people of this State have every reason to be glad that Parliament brought the Whole Milk Board into existence. It was very evident at the time that unless some control were given, a large number of worthy people who were endeavouring to make homes for themselves in the south-western part of the State, including of course Peel Estate and areas closer to the metropolis, would be definitely forced out of the industry. The original legislation was experimental, and the amending Bill now before us shows that it was not altogether perfect. Time has brought to light a number of anomalies. In this Bill it is proposed as far as possible to remove those anomalies. If ever there has been a board in this State that has been subject to unfair tactics it is this board. Some people who were on the fringe of the industry at the outset prophesied failure for the board. So far as I have been able to see, those people have done almost everything they could in the meantime to bring that about. Mr. Craig instanced some of the tactics that had been employed. It is the bounden duty of the House to declare in no uncertain way that that kind of thing must cease. Under this amending Bill it will be possible for the board to take such action as will very largely prevent a repetition of these unfortunate

happenings. We all agree upon the necessity for an adequate supply of clean, wholesome milk. Members have dealt with other aspects of the milk trade that might be exploited. I think it was Mr. Gray who dealt extensively with the opportunities that might be afforded in providing daily supplies of milk for school children. I believe that is one way in which the consumption of pure milk could wisely be taken up. I do not propose to cover that ground again. It is a question concerning which there is no room for reasonable doubt. What I wish to impress upon the House is the necessity for giving the board every possible assistance to carry out their duties. To this end I have one or two amendments to suggest. Clause 16 of the Bill provides for the continuance of the Act for another year. This should be deleted. The time has passed when we need have any fear about this legislation. It should be made permanent. In Committee I intend to move in that direction. The work of the board has fully justified such a request. The continuance of the Act from year to year is not in the best interests of the industry. Knowing that they have no sense of security beyond 12 months, the board must be somewhat hampered in their actions. It would be impossible for them to plan any great distance ahead with any degree of certainty. The House would be well advised to make this a permanent measure. I hope the Minister in his reply will be able to assure us that the Government will agree to the suggestion, so that the board may have a sense of security and may be able to plan ahead. It ought to be possible for the board to embark upon some propaganda or publicity to increase the consumption of milk. It has been said that the Act provides for such a thing, but after perusing it I have some doubt on that score. I know that many people interested in the industry have continually urged a movement in this direction. We frequently see propaganda in the direction of eating more fruit and other articles of diet. Why not give the board authority, if they have not already got it, to undertake similar propaganda? The Title of the parent Act provides that it is an Act for the regulation, organisation, production, purchase, treatment, sale and distribution of whole milk. It may be contended that the requisite power is embodied in the Title. I should like the Minister to give us an assurance that the Act is wide enough in its application to cover publicity

in this regard. If he can do that it will silence some of the critics to whom I referred recently, who never lose an opportunity to put up objections to whatever the board are doing. Some of these people have been most assiduous in this regard. In their opinion the board can do nothing right, but in the opinion of the majority of the people the board have done good work. Another provision that should be included in the Bill is a clause giving the board power to insist that retailers should put up a bond to the value of a month's supply of milk to ensure that payments are made regularly to the milk purchasers. That is rendered necessary by the fact that shrewd people who go around purchasing milk have by various and divers means managed to escape their liabilities. I am not in a position to state the total amount of money denied to the producers, or owing to them; but I know of numerous cases running up to as high as £80. The producers concerned are all struggling to make good. All of them are expected to pay interest. Many of them are clients of the Agricultural Bank, to whom at different periods inspectors have gone forth to demand payment of interest. It is impossible for such men to pay interest unless they are paid for their products. From inquiries I have made I understand that the board have tried to deal with these defaulting purchasers by way of regulations. I believe there is a regulation which provides that people who go around purchasing milk shall make payment within four days of the termination of the first 14 days of the month, and again four days after the end of the month. That is essential. However, it must be borne in mind that some of the producers are under fairly heavy expenditure—more so than the producers further out who have much better developed properties. The man who has to purchase a good deal of his fodder in the metropolitan area, simply cannot get along unless he is paid promptly. In practice, this is what sometimes happens. Prosecutions are launched, the defaulters are brought to court, fined a couple of pounds, and that has ended the matter; the victim has received nothing, and the unscrupulous purchaser has gone scot free. I know of one case—it occurred just before the operation of the board—of an excellent farmer who lost no less than £176 to these purchasers. I ask, and my colleagues ask, that the House agree to the inclusion of a clause

authorising the board to demand a bond, up to a reasonable amount, that the purchaser shall pay.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Or else cash.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Purchasers can put up cash if they like; but there must be security for payment to people who are working seven days a week and 365 days a year, and doing wonderfully good work.

Hon. R. G. Moore: What you have stated applies to all businesses.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes; but the hon. member probably knows that the primary producers, particularly those engaged in the dairying industry, have for quite a while been subjected to intense competition.

Hon. R. G. Moore: I am not objecting.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am glad of that. They can hardly be compared to producers engaged in secondary industries. There is nothing of the sheltered industry about primary production, and the production of milk especially. Before the creation of the board the case of milk producers was appalling. They were being forced to sell their product at a price which in many cases did not provide them with ordinary necessities of life. I desire to see the board allowed to continue and allowed to expand. Although I am voicing some of my own eulogistic opinions with regard to the board, I could not name all the members for any amount of money. I do not know the gentlemen. Therefore I am not speaking of personal friends, but of a body of men who have done a good job. I hope the House will pass the Bill without amendment, excepting the amendments which I shall put up.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And the amendment which I shall propose.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I was anticipating that interjection. When I spoke of my proposed amendments, I had in mind Mr. Nicholson's amendment.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I hope you will support me.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I do not know that I shall. I do not know that the hon. member's amendment will make for better working of the board; I am afraid it will not. From a general view of this kind of work, I hardly think it is woman's sphere. Again, I see no need for Mr. Nicholson's amendment. I have not discovered in the clause dealing with membership, any reference to sex; so I presume the positions are open to

both sexes. I commend the measure to the sympathies of hon. members, because I am sure the work of the members of the board is worthy of those sympathies. I also hope the House will show its appreciation of that work by deleting Clause 15 and also by making the amendment which I have indicated.

**HON. L. B. BOLTON** (Metropolitan) [10.37]: Having given notice that in Committee I would move to amend Clause 3 of the Bill, and then having withdrawn that notice, I feel that some little explanation is due from me to the House. Before making that explanation, I have a few general observations to offer on the Bill. It was only to be expected that a measure of this kind, having for its object the control of so universally used a commodity as milk, would meet with much criticism and strong opposition in many quarters. Like Mr. Mann, if I believed half the things that I have been told and that are written to me regarding the board's operations, I would conclude that the members of that body were unable to do anything right. My personal opinion is that the board is an excellent one, though there is room for improvement. However, I do believe that the board we have operating the measure have done excellent work. Like Mr. Mann again, I think I could name hardly one member of the board. The only member I could name is a personal friend of mine. Therefore, in making these remarks I am not speaking particularly on behalf of the members of the board. They have had a difficult task to perform, and in my judgment have performed it well. A measure similar to our Act is operating in England at the present time. During a recent visit to the Old Country I heard much criticism levelled at the controllers of milk there. Thus it is not only in our State that such difficulties have to be overcome. The Bill is worthy of members' support. It has for its object the control of milk supplies and probably does restrict trade. It has that effect quite as much as any other measure on the statute-book. I might suggest to members that they are not always consistent because recently, when an endeavour was made to restrict trade in another direction, the Bill met with opposition. I believe that had that Bill been passed, members would later have regarded it as quite as effective as the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You do not suggest that this is a handiwork?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: No, not in the sense that the other Bill implied. Ice-cream is not included under the control specified in the Bill, nor is it included under control either in respect of the raw material or the finished product in any Whole Milk Act passed in other States. Legislation of this description was passed by the House of Assembly in Adelaide but was thrown out by the Legislative Council. No such legislation exists in Queensland. It will be seen, therefore, that ice-cream is appreciated in other States as meriting exclusion with butter, cheese, and so forth. As ice-cream has been included under the Act in this State for the past two years and as it was felt that the board were satisfied with the ice-cream position, as outlined to the board by a deputation representative of the principal ice-cream interests some two years ago, it has been considered that ice-cream, as in the other Eastern States, could be excluded from the operations of the Act in common with butter and cheese. That course was regarded as desirable, because it might be that at some future date the restrictions imposed by the Act and regulations made under it might, if ice-cream were included, mean that the prices of raw materials would be directly or indirectly increased. That would immediately have the effect of forcing some of the principal manufacturing plants to use other raw materials, which could even now be used to advantage from the standpoint of price, with the net result that the present trade in milk and cream would be lost to Western Australia. I felt, therefore, that the amendment I proposed to move would, in these circumstances, be acceptable to the Minister and the board. I now understand that the amendment would seriously embarrass and prejudice the board in the discharge of their duties, principally with regard to the policing of the milk trade itself. Therefore, in fairness to the Minister and the board, although with some reluctance, the amendment has been withdrawn, but I hope the Minister's assurance will be forthcoming that neither the Minister nor the board will take any steps in respect to supplies of milk or cream that will, directly or indirectly, increase the price of ice-cream to the manufacturer, the retailer or the consumer and thus be responsible for the loss of this milk and cream trade, in part or in whole, to the State. I do not think it is the Minister's



intention nor that of the board to embarrass or harass the ice-cream industry in such a manner, but I would be glad of the Minister's assurance in that regard. Following such an assurance, which would be placed on record, the amendment could be safely withdrawn. I feel sure the Bill will reach the Committee stage. A continuance of the Act is necessary. I agree with Mr. Mann that a policy aimed at securing a greater use of milk should be promulgated by the board and I hope consideration will be given to that phase by the Minister. I support the second reading of the Bill.

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

### BILL—ELECTORAL.

#### *In Committee.*

Resumed from the 20th November. Hon. J. Nicholson in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Proposed new Clause 87—Qualification of postal vote officer (partly considered):

Hon. J. CORNELL: When the Committee last met, consideration was given to the proposed new clause I had moved. Since then I have gone further into the question and have placed on the Notice Paper another clause that is much wider in effect. I shall ask leave of the Committee to withdraw the proposed new clause now before members with the object of substituting the one that appears on the Notice Paper. It has been drafted along the lines of the Commonwealth Act and the Acts of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. At the end of the proposed new clause I have added the following proviso:—

Provided that all persons or classes of persons employed in the Public Service of the Commonwealth or of the State may be declared by proclamation to be postal vote officers within the meaning of the Act.

The Chief Secretary will agree that that widens the proposed new clause very considerably. In the meantime I ask leave to withdraw the proposed new Clause 87 now before the Committee.

Proposed new Clause 87, by leave, withdrawn.

#### New Clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 87, be inserted as follows:—

87. No person other than any of the persons hereinafter mentioned shall be

appointed postal vote officers, namely, the Chief Electoral Officers; Returning Officers; Assistant Returning Officers; Deputy Returning Officers; Presiding Officers; registrars and officers and magistrates (as defined by this Act); officers permanently employed in the Commonwealth or State Electoral Departments; postmasters or postmistresses or postal officials in charge of post offices (the term "postal officials" includes a "free mail bag holder"); justices of the peace; commissioners for taking declarations or affidavits; adult teachers employed in the Department of Education; officers of the Department of Trade and Customs; members of the police force; members of a municipal council or roads board; town clerks and roads district secretaries; engineers of a municipal council or roads board; mining registrars; clerks of court; railway station masters and night officers in charge who are permanently employed in the railway service of the Commonwealth or State; permanent way inspectors and road masters permanently employed in the railway service of the Commonwealth; officers in charge of quarantine stations; lighthouse keepers and assistant lighthouse keepers; pilots in the service of the Commonwealth or State; telegraph line repairers permanently employed by the Commonwealth who are in charge of working parties; engineers engaged on railway or road construction; mail contractors; superintendents of mercantile marine and their deputies while permanently employed in the Public Service of the Commonwealth or State; naval commissioned officers in the service of the Commonwealth while employed on a ship of war; licensed surveyors; Government surveyors; district branch managers and accountants and field inspectors of the Agricultural Bank; State battery managers; mining inspectors; station owners; station managers; station overseers; legally qualified medical practitioners; matrons in charge of public or private hospitals; registered midwives and nurses.

Provided that all persons or classes of persons employed in the Public Service of the Commonwealth or of the State may be declared by proclamation to be postal vote officers within the meaning of this Act.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have cut out the honorary electoral agents.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes. The hon. member has a close grip on the Commonwealth legislation and he knows that after one has applied for a postal vote under the Commonwealth he must record his vote before one of those various witnesses.

Hon. G. Fraser: No, they witness your signature.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The voter has to record his vote before one of them. The proviso to the clause greatly widens the scope of the clause.

Hon. G. FRASER: I certainly do not like the present system of postal vote officers and I was hopeful the Committee would accept the recommendations of the Royal Commis-

sion and so make a great improvement in the system. Since that has not been done, I have only the option of the present system or the system proposed in the amendment, and I certainly prefer the system in practice to-day. While there are enumerated in the proposed new clause many persons who may be appointed postal vote officers, it will be difficult for an elector in the metropolitan area to record a postal vote.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: It will be more difficult for the man out-back.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know about that.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Because you do not represent the people out-back.

Hon. G. FRASER: Many of those people enumerated would not accept the job of postal vote officer.

Hon. H. Tuckey: You would not want them in the metropolitan area.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Everybody in the metropolitan area is trying to get rich quick, and has no time for voting at elections.

Hon. G. FRASER: There are few medical practitioners who would take the job, few town clerks or road board secretaries, and so on, right through the list. Very few of those enumerated who reside in the metropolitan area would accept such a position. Mr. Cornell has said that there is no difference between this proposed system and the Commonwealth system. But there is a vast difference. Time is the essence of the contract for the postal vote officer, and it takes much longer to record a vote under the State system, and will even under this proposed new system, than it does under the Federal system. A voter writes in for his ballot paper, the whole of the papers are returned to him, and one of the persons enumerated in the Commonwealth list attends, and in his presence the vote is recorded.

Hon. J. Cornell: It takes no longer under the Commonwealth system.

Hon. G. FRASER: No. Under the State system it takes about 20 minutes for the postal vote officer to carry out the task.

Hon. J. Cornell: You must have had dead men or blind men.

Hon. G. FRASER: Under the Commonwealth system a couple of minutes are all that are required. Whereas it is easy to get a Commonwealth postal vote completed, it will be difficult to get people to act for the State as postal vote officers because of

the time required to take the vote. The new clause would restrict facilities for people in the metropolitan area to record postal votes. In the past it has been difficult to get postal vote officers when required, and I fear that the difficulty in the future would be greater.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I oppose the new clause. In the country we must have farmers appointed as postal vote officers because it would be impossible in many parts to secure the services of many of the classes of people mentioned in the new clause. I was pleased to hear Mr. Fraser speak as he did of the difficulties in the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I represent more isolated farms than does Mr. Piesse. My province includes the whole of the 3,500 farms. Mr. Fraser has not quoted the returning officers, assistant returning officers or presiding officers in the metropolitan area, and he has not quoted the officers of the Commonwealth Electoral Department. My endeavour is to give effect to my disagreement with the recommendation of the Royal Commission. I ask Mr. Fraser, how is the sick vote taken for a Federal election? Has not the postal vote officer to go to the house to take it?

Hon. G. Fraser: The point is the difference in time required to take the vote.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Any postal vote officer who knows his job could take the vote in three minutes.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Certainly it is not five minutes' work.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is another important point. I am pleased that the Electoral Department are endeavouring to get in the postal vote books. There are hundreds of books that ought to be recalled and scores of them will never be collected. If the new clause were agreed to, it would necessitate the appointment of new officers and the recall of the books, which is very desirable.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I oppose the new clause because it will make conditions no easier. I would not allow a policeman to take a vote of any kind. A policeman is the last person who should be taken to anybody's house, particularly if one of the inmates is sick. It is quite possible for Agricultural Bank inspectors to intimidate voters. Under the Commonwealth system the ballot paper is sent to the elector a day ahead, which gives the elector a chance of

selecting his candidate from amongst the names written on the ballot paper. Why should not farmers have a farmer postal vote officer instead of, say, a permanent way inspector or a road master? It is idle to suggest that the officials mentioned in the proposed new clause are non-partisan. That cannot be said of even the returning officers themselves. I know of one officer who deliberately threw out 16 votes that belonged to me. Fortunately that did not affect the result. If we are not going to have the system recommended by the Royal Commission, let us stay where we are.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	..	10
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	1
					—

The CHAIRMAN: Before the telling, I announce that I give my vote with the ayes.

#### Ayes.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. C. G. Elliott
Hon. R. G. Moore	(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
	(Teller.)

New clause thus passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 88, be inserted as follows:—"No candidate, and no person holding any official position in connection with any political organisation or election committee, shall be appointed a postal vote officer."

That is taken word for word from the old Act.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 89, be inserted as follows:—"No postal vote shall be taken under the preceding sections of this Act after six o'clock in the afternoon of the day next preceding the polling day."

This is a new provision. It is in conformity with Commonwealth legislation, and the legislation of the States I have previously enumerated. In my experience of postal

voting under the old system, the greatest abuses have occurred on polling day. Some enterprising supporter of a candidate call on a lady who will not go to the polling place because she cannot be bothered. The enterprising supporter replies, "That does not matter; we will get a postal vote officer to come and take your vote." I know of cases where respectable numbers of votes have been taken on polling day by this means. The new clause will work no hardship on sick people.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Unless the new clause is extended much further, to provide that no vote shall be received by the returning officer after 6 p.m. on the day preceding election day, the amendment will get us nowhere at all. Another suggestion is that all postal vote officers should lodge their books with the returning officer, or put them in the post addressed to him, before 6 p.m. on the day preceding polling day.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: That is impracticable.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Of course it is. Who is to say when postal votes have been taken? The Federal system bears no analogy to ours. In Federal elections the ballot paper must be obtained the night before.

Hon. G. FRASER: In this respect there is a great difference between Commonwealth and States. Under Commonwealth law one can record a postal vote on election day. One's application must be in the hands of the returning officer before 6 p.m. on the day preceding the election.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 90, be inserted as follows:—

#### General application to vote by post.

90. (1.) Any person who is enrolled as an elector for any Province or district, and who satisfies the registrar of the Province or district that his place of living is so distant from the nearest usual polling place therein at which he might vote as such elector, or that the means of transport from his place of living to such polling place are so irregular or so inadequate as to render it difficult or inconvenient for such person to attend at the polling place for the purpose of voting as an elector in person, may vote by post under this Division, and may at any time lodge with the registrar of the Province or district for which he is entitled to vote a general application, in the prescribed form and manner or by letter, provided the

letter is signed by the applicant and witnessed by another elector or person qualified to be an elector, and sufficiently sets out the grounds on which the elector makes the application, for the issue to him of postal ballot papers in the prescribed form for use under this section pursuant to the preceding sections of this Division on the occasion of every election for the Province or district.

(2.) Whenever nominations for any election have been declared, postal ballot papers shall (if the application is still in force) be issued and sent forthwith by the registrar to the elector.

(3.) Any application lodged under this section may at any time other than between the hour of nomination and the closing of the poll at such election be annulled by the Chief Electoral Officer or any other officer, as prescribed: Provided that—

- (a) notice of annulment shall forthwith be sent to the elector;
- (b) notwithstanding such general application is in force an elector who presents himself for voting in person, and who declares that he has not received the ballot paper prescribed by this section shall be entitled to vote in person.

The substance of the amendment has been taken from the recommendation of the Royal Commission with regard to persons appointed to act as postal vote officers, and the amendment has been put in order by Mr. Sayer. In the South Province there are electors who because of their isolation and the inconvenience entailed in reaching the polling booth have hardly ever voted at an election. This will be of advantage to isolated electors who will be able to communicate with the registrar, and on receiving ballot papers after nominations have closed, will be able to post their ballot papers back to the registrar.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I support the new clause, particularly in view of the fact that we have just agreed to new Clause 87.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Anyhow, this is just wasting time. These amendments will not be agreed to in another place.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 91, be inserted as follows:—

*Postal Vote Officer to vote in absence.*

91. (1.) If any person appointed as postal vote officer is himself an elector having the right under this subdivision to vote by post, and there is not a magistrate or postal vote officer before whom he can conveniently attend to vote by post, he may, for the purpose only of

enabling his own vote to be taken, delegate by writing under his hand to any other elector his power and duty as a postal vote officer.

(2.) For the purpose of taking such vote, the delegate shall be deemed a postal vote officer appointed by the Minister, and when signing his name on the counterfoil, indorsement, or otherwise, and in taking the elector's declaration shall describe himself as "deputy postal vote officer appointed under section eighty-eight."

(3.) Every postal vote officer delegating his authority pursuant to this section shall forthwith report the matter in writing to the Chief Electoral Officer.

This amendment appears on the Notice Paper in the name of Mr. Angelo, and I shall move it on his behalf. The reference in Subclause 2 to Section 88 will have to be altered, but that can be done by the Clerk. Personally, although this provision was agreed to in the Legislative Assembly some years ago, I do not see there is much necessity for it now, in view of the amendment we have just agreed to.

New clause put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: On the Notice Paper there appears a note by Mr. Sayer indicating that the headline preceding Clause 77 should be altered by deleting the words "voting in absence" and substituting "postal votes." That is a consequential matter, and the Clerk can attend to that.

Postponed Clause 82:

Hon. J. CORNELL: Clauses 82 and 83 are really consequential, and I suggest to the Minister that they be further postponed.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Why not get ahead a bit? This is only wasting time.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There are many features in the Bill that are highly desirable and should be preserved. Apart from the franchise for the Council and the postal voting, very little material alteration has been made in the Bill.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, postponed Clauses 82 and 83 were further postponed.

Postponed Clause 98—Voting at adjourned polling:

Hon. J. CORNELL: This clause gives to the presiding officer undue power. In a couple of places we have had adjourned polling, but I do not think the presiding officer should have the power to determine whether an elector who failed to vote be-

fore the adjournment could have voted. It is making judge and jury both of the presiding officer. I move an amendment—

That beginning in line 4, the words "and who in the opinion of the presiding officer in ordinary circumstances would have voted at that polling place but for the adjournment" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, postponed Clauses 124 and 126 were further postponed.

Postponed Clause 127—The officers count the votes in the respective boxes which they open:

On motions by the Chief Secretary, paragraph (c) of Sub-clause 8 amended by inserting after "distribution" in line 1 the words "shall again ascertain" and by striking out of lines 2 and 3 "shall again be ascertained"; and paragraph (d) amended by inserting after "votes" in line 2 the words "shall repeat"; by substituting "distribute" for "distributing" in lines 3 and 4; by striking out of line 6 the words "shall be repeated"; by inserting after "and" in line 6 the word "recount"; by striking out of line 7 the word "recounted"; by striking out of line 9 the words "such candidate," and by striking out of line 10 the words "be declared" and substituting the words "declare such candidate."

On motion by the Chief Secretary, further consideration of the clause, as amended, postponed.

Postponed Clause 130—Informal ballot paper:

On motion by the Chief Secretary, further consideration of the clause postponed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: We have practically completed the Bill now, the only exception being the postponed clauses, which, but for one small amendment, will require only numerical alteration. We have now been right through the Bill. It is almost impossible to bring the numbers into proper sequence until the Bill has been recommitted. When that has been done, we can bring the clauses into their proper sequence. I will confer with the President on the subject to-morrow.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 12.4 a.m. (Thursday).

## Legislative Council,

Thursday, 5th December, 1935.

	Question: Land taxation, leasehold residential areas	PAGE
Motions: Standing Orders suspension	...	2215
Additional sitting day	...	2216
Wheatgrowers, Federal assistance, to inquire by select committee	...	2216
Bills: Adelphi Hotel, 3A., passed	...	2216
Reserves, reoom.	...	2216
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment, (No. 2) remaining stages	...	2217
Public Service Act Amendment, 3A., passed	...	2217
Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment, 3A., passed	...	2217
Railways Classification Board Act Amendment, 1A.	...	2217
Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, Amendment (No. 2), report, 3A.	...	2217
Loan, 2A.	...	2218
Metropolitan Whole Milk Act Amendment, 2A., etc.	...	2226
Electoral, Com.	...	2242
Adjournment, special	...	2246

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

### QUESTION—LAND TAXATION.

#### Leasehold Residential Areas.

Hon. H. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, In what year did the Land and Income Tax Act first apply to leasehold residential areas leased by the Crown to tenants for a fee of 10s. per annum in the Kalgoolie and Boulder districts? 2, Has the holder of such an area been required to furnish a land tax return each year since the Land and Income Tax Act first applied to the holder thereof? 3, If not, why not? 4, Is the Minister aware that some holders of these areas who have been in possession less than nine years have been assessed at 2s. 6d. per annum for four or five years only, and have been asked to submit a land tax return for the full period they have held their areas, whilst other holders who have held these areas for a much longer period have been assessed for lesser periods, and in some cases have not been assessed at all? 5, Does the Minister approve of invalid and old-age pensioners, holding the areas in question, being taxed therefor? 6, If not, will the Government take steps to cause the Taxation Department to refrain from asking these pensioners to furnish land tax returns, and to cease to impose an extra charge of 2s. 6d. per annum on their residential leasehold areas?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, The year 1907. 2, Yes, vide Section 33 (4)