

legislation we can help to establish it more firmly.

This proposed legislation will tend to stop cut-throat trading and exploitation by unscrupulous middlemen, as well as offer further protection to the consumer by ensuring a clean and wholesome supply of fresh milk. It is hoped that it will provide the necessary machinery for a system of legislative control, under which the whole industry can be organised to the best possible advantage and so give satisfaction alike to producer, distributor and consumer. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Friday 16th December, 1932.*

	PAGE
Question: Dartmoor settlers, transport facilities ...	2568
Leave of absence ...	2568
Bills: Metropolitan Whole Milk, 3R. ...	2568
Land Act Amendment, 2R., etc. ...	2568
Secession Referendum, returned ...	2599
Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment (No. 1), returned ...	2599
Electoral Act Amendment (No. 2), 1R. ...	2599
Mining Act Amendment (No. 2), 2R., etc. ...	2599
Marriage Act Amendment, 2R., etc. ...	2599

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

### QUESTION—DARTMOOR SETTLERS, TRANSPORT FACILITIES.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK asked the Premier: 1. Following his recent public statements in the Geraldton district respecting road trains, will he, in view of Mr. Taylor's return from the United Kingdom, be in a position to make a statement on the matter before Parliament adjourns? 2. If information available is unfavourable to the

project, will he introduce a Bill to authorise the construction of the Yuna-Dartmoor railway recommended by the Advisory Board?

The PREMIER replied: 1, I am awaiting Mr. Taylor's written report, but I have discussed the matter with him and I believe that the report will be favourable for the use of road trains. 2, Answered by No. 1.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Lamond (Pilbara) on the ground of urgent public business, and to Mr. Raphael (Victoria Park) on the ground of ill-health.

### BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 14th December.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [4.38]: I regret exceedingly that the Government seem determined to persist with this measure. I thought the Minister would have been satisfied at this late stage of the session to make it clear that the Government were prepared to extend the term of the pastoral leases as proposed in the Bill, and then to have left the question for the people to review at the forthcoming elections. This measure, if passed, will tie the hands of future Governments and will usurp the authority of the people. The question has never been discussed with the people in any shape or form. After the experience of the previous extension, no one expected that any Government would, within 16 years of the termination of the leases, tinker with the principle. Previous to the extension of the leases from 1928 to 1948, there was considerable public interest and controversy. A lot of people thought that the improvements would depreciate, that the leases would be neglected and that the asset would become reduced in value unless the Government declared their policy regarding the future of the leases within 10 years of their termination. Even when Parliament dealt with the matter 10 years before the

expiration of the term, there was a good deal of public opposition. There was much criticism in this House and in another place, and ultimately a conference of managers was appointed to arrive at an understanding. As one who took a keen interest in the matter at the time, I have no hesitation in saying that Parliament on that occasion was tricked. We were led to believe that the Bill would be used to prevent a continuation of the land monopoly that has proved to be disastrous to the welfare of the State for so many years. I do not say it has proved to be of any detriment to the land holders, but viewing it in a more statesmanlike way—from the viewpoint of the State—there is no question that the land in the northern part of the State is held on a distinctly unfair basis. Originally the land was not surveyed before selection. It was selected with an eye to the rivers and natural waters with the idea of getting as much of the river frontages as possible. Instead of the land being marked out by the State to ensure the selection of a maximum area proportionate to the natural waters available, the pastoralists selected on the basis of getting a monopoly of the water and enabling the least possible utilisation of the land. They took strips of land parallel to the water supplies, leaving the back country impossible of settlement. I do not wish to convey that that was done throughout the North-West, but it was the custom at the time the leases were originally selected to be influenced by the water and the monopoly of the water. I do not blame the pioneers for so doing. It was the established policy of the State at the time. Let me instance the valuable strip of land along the Midland line. The Minister for Agriculture knows this better than I do. I know sufficient to realise that that country was originally monopolised by securing control of the natural waters. In those days settlers secured 40 acres of freehold land surrounding the water supply, if it showed any degree of permanency. By that means, they secured control of the water and then took over as much land as they could utilise.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was in the days before we started farming here.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That was the custom in this State with regard to the selection of land in those days. People looked for water, secured land surrounding it, and then obtained a monopoly over the adjacent

area by means of their control over the water supply. The same conditions applied in the North-West when the early pioneers selected their holdings. I do not suggest that in the original selection, the pioneers took all the land that is monopolised to-day. Gradually but surely as the holdings became improved, the pastoralists located additional water supplies, and extended their holdings until to-day a million acres represent quite a common holding for pastoralists. It was from that standpoint that Parliament became interested in this question in 1928. From time to time we have manifested concern regarding the sparse population in the northern parts of Western Australia. I have worked in the North-West, and although I cannot claim to be an authority, I took every opportunity while there to visit the various stations along the Ashburton River. The Minderoo Station is a striking illustration of land monopoly by virtue of water control. I do not desire to go into details regarding the situation of the various stations. While I was Minister for Lands, I lost no opportunity to study this question with a desire to make conditions more attractive in the North so that white men could be profitably employed there. I knew, from my experience there, the value of the country from the standpoint of production. If we were to remodel the land conditions there, with the object of securing a maximum amount of employment instead of a minimum of control, we should do something for the benefit of the State and the Empire generally. If we consider world conditions at the moment, we have to realise that it is more dangerous than ever before, to monopolise the huge territory in the North by the settlement of so few people on the land. Surely members are interested enough to know that the failure of the Disarmament Conference in Europe was due to land monopoly. The whole difficulty between the nations has reference to the control of territory that one nation claims is not being used to the maximum extent. Take the difference that exists between France and Italy. The other day I listened with interest to a lecture regarding the position of those two countries and the reason why the nations are not making greater progress regarding world disarmament. The lecturer displayed a wonderful knowledge of the subject, and of the North of Africa. Dur-

ing his remarks he disclosed the fact that the whole trouble had arisen from the distribution of the spoils of war—he did not put it in that way; the phrase is mine—in North Africa. The trouble was that France secured control of country that was formerly held by Germany and that had been promised to Italy. As a result, Italy is now chafing under the knowledge that she has been denied control of a large area that is monopolised by France but not used to any extent by that nation. The whole problem to-day is to secure an adjustment of the territory in Northern Africa that will provide room for the expansion of the Italian people. One of the leading statesmen of Italy quite recently declared that that country had concentrated upon science and industry to such an extent that it was now realised that everything possible had already been done to maintain the Italian population. The people of that country are increasing in numbers to a greater extent than those of any other nation, and naturally they are looking for territory to provide for their natural expansion. They view with deep concern, therefore, the territory in the north of Africa from which they have been excluded. That is a phase we should not lose sight of, and we should appreciate the fact that the nations of the world are looking afield for the better utilisation of areas close to heavily populated centres in Europe. We will be confronted with trouble in Australia unless we develop the land we are monopolising to-day, to the exclusion of other nations. Just as Italy is complaining to-day about land monopoly without utilisation by France, so the same complaint may be made against Australia and Western Australia in particular. For a long time I endeavoured to get some Government to concentrate on this problem because I appreciate there is room for a very complete inquiry. An exhaustive investigation should be made regarding the many problems involved, and we should endeavour to ascertain what can be done to improve the conditions of the pastoralists, and by means of a well-thought-out policy, secure the utilisation of the land to a greater extent by the employment of white labour. If we are to interfere with the term of the leases as suggested in the Bill, we shall

make such an investigation impossible until after 1982. Surely members will realise the injustice of such a proposal. I appreciate the fact that the banking institutions to-day are beginning to use their power to scare Governments and possibly to threaten pastoralists by declaring that the termination of the leases in 16 years' time will have the effect of reducing the value of the assets from a bank point of view, to such an extent that the financial institutions cannot maintain the leases and advance further money for their development and improvement. While no doubt that has influenced the Government in the introduction of the Bill, surely the duty of Parliament is not to the banks but to the State generally. There is a great body of public opinion in the United Kingdom to-day that is favourable to the use of money available in Britain for the purpose of extending the population and production of the outer dominions. The land under review lends itself to increased production and population, but those ends cannot be gained with the land monopoly as it exists to-day. There is a possibility of readjusting the boundaries of the leases while doing justice to the pastoralists by recognising the work they have done in developing that part of the State. The whole difficulty could be overcome without the necessity for a Bill such as that under discussion. The Government have not investigated matters relating to the problem. I admit that the Minister for Lands did pay a visit to the North, but it just shows how dangerous it is to make a casual visit and to meet only a few people. No doubt the visit of the Minister led to the introduction of this legislation. I sympathise with the people in the North just as much as the Minister for Lands does. For years I have endeavoured to do something to reform the conditions that obtain in that part of the State. I remember speaking on one occasion when the then member for Pilbarra moved for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into conditions obtaining in the North. I recollect speaking in much the same strain as I am doing this afternoon. The object of the move was to induce the Government of the day to authorise a complete inquiry into the system of land tenure, the possibility of utilising the holdings to a great extent, steps to be taken to conserve

the natural fodder, and to restore natural feed where it had been eaten out owing to overstocking. In those days the whole of the natural feed had been exhausted completely, in consequence of which large areas could not be used to the extent they should have been. The number of stock depastured on particular leases, in the circumstances, was determined by the back country rather than by the more valuable country on the river frontages. We would be justified in seeking the co-operation of the Commonwealth Government by the loan of their expert scientists in carrying out the investigation, particularly from the standpoint of ascertaining what steps should be taken to restore the carrying capacity of holdings where the frontages had been eaten out through overstocking. The Minister stated that quite a number of these leases had been abandoned, but the areas abandoned are, unfortunately, not the areas we want. A great part of the territory abandoned was abandoned because of the monopoly of the water supply. If there were a readjustment of the boundaries of the leases, if there were a reduction in the areas held, if the State encouraged people with respect to improvement of pastures, improvement and extension of water supplies, fencing, and a better quality of stock, if the State were to devote its attention to all these matters, we could make that part of the State very attractive and very lucrative from the State's point of view. But the Bill does not propose to do that; it simply proposes to continue the conditions that have made reform in this part of the State impossible for years. If we extend these pastoral leases until 1982, then we shall enter into a contract which will result in tying up these huge areas for 50 years. The Government's hands will be tied. I know we cannot leave the renewal of these leases until the last few years they have to run, but we can make a start now. I urge the Government not to persevere with the Bill, but to declare definitely that they will immediately proceed with an investigation and in that investigation seek the co-operation and support of the Federal Government. The Federal Minister, Mr. Parkhill, is devoting special attention to Northern Australia. He has given a great deal of consideration to it. I do not like the way he

is going about it, because he proposes to introduce capital by giving in return a monopoly of large tracts of country. I do not believe the Federal Parliament will endorse his proposal; but the fact remains that Mr. Parkhill is aware of the conditions and realises that we must make greater use of that part of Australia. The problem with which he is confronted is far greater than the problem we have to solve. Our country is uniformly better than the Northern Territory. We have wonderful tracts of country in the North-West and the Kimberleys. If it is desirable that reform should take place in the conditions in Northern Australia, is not reform much more desirable in the more valuable country we have? I want to do something for the people. I want to help those who live in the North. I want to help the pastoralists to do better than they are doing to-day, but at the same time I do want to protect the interests of the State and the Empire. We are not doing justice to the State. We are not regarding this matter in a statesmanlike way. The Bill is pure political expediency as compared with what is necessary—a broad point of view and a statesmanlike attitude to the problem confronting us in regard to these areas. I suggest to the Minister that he should not try to force the Bill through. It is wrong, especially in the dying days of the session. We must realise that this is not only the end of the session, but the end of Parliament, and that we are proposing to deal with the heritage of future generations without the authority of the people. We practically say to the people, "We are doing this without your authority, without appealing to you, without even having mentioned it at the last general election, and 16 years before the expiration of the existing leases." We are tying the hands of future Parliaments until the year 1982. It is distinctly unfair. I am surprised at the Government introducing the Bill. I am more surprised at the Government persevering with it. I appeal to members not to support the Bill. Before we tinker with the matter any further, we, as members, should educate ourselves by obtaining expert advice and assistance. The whole problem should be investigated and a report submitted to Parliament. A casual run through the country by a Minister is not sufficient upon which to base a policy. What we want is a proper, thorough, systematic inquiry into

the whole matter by the best brains that can be obtained in Australia. Parliament can go to the country promising to make such an investigation. The fact that the investigation is to be made will steady the banking institutions and give heart to the pastoralists, because no inquiry will do an injustice. We all appreciate what the pioneers have done, but we have to realise that the methods of the pioneers are not the methods of to-day. The pioneers are not educated in modern practices. We should introduce new blood into this part of the State, not with a view to doing injustice to the pioneers, but to demonstrate that by more modern methods, evolved as the result of scientific investigation, we can make this country what it was. The member for Roebourne knows perfectly well that the country to-day is not what it was when he went there.

Mr. Church: That is because there is no rain.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member knows perfectly well that the country does not respond, even with rain, as it did 25 or 30 years ago.

Mr. Church: I know a lot more about it than you do.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Undoubtedly. That is why I appealed to the hon. member. I ask him if he does not know from his own practical experience that the state of the land to-day seems to suggest that it is exhausted. The response from it is not what it was. Of course, the hon. member has done nothing to assist nature and that is where the pioneer is failing to-day. The pioneer says, "We sit back and pray for rain." But something more than that must be done. Nature must be assisted by studying the kinds of grasses that can be introduced into this country to replace the natural herbage. To-day the stocking capacity of the country is reduced enormously. I know that wool prices have had an influence; but the fact remains that, generally speaking, the same number of stock cannot be maintained throughout the North-West as was possible 25 years ago. We have to appreciate that the land is not being helped. It is being murdered by over-stocking and by carelessness in not assisting nature.

Mr. Church: That is not true.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is my experience. I will admit that it is limited, but I have devoted some attention to this

matter. Not only have I worked in the North for a time but, as Minister for Lands, I devoted a great deal of time and thought to that part of the State. I discussed it with anybody who had any knowledge at all of the country. In the limited time then at my disposal I tried to induce Parliament to make the investigation for which I am now pleading. The investigation is overdue. We want a thorough inquiry made not only from the pastoralists' point of view, but from the State's point of view. We should demonstrate to Australia and the Empire generally that this country can be utilised to a greater extent, and that it can carry a larger population than is to be found there to-day. I repeat that this part of the State is suffering from a monopoly, and, without doing injustice to anyone, we ought to review that monopoly. We should not perpetuate it. I appeal to the House not to support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE** (Hannans)

[5-12]: I cannot allow the Bill to go through the second reading stage without saying something on it. I was one of those in this Chamber who took an active part in 1917 in trying to prevent the extension of pastoral leases from 1928 to 1948, unless some conditions were imposed. The same argument exactly is being used to-day as was used in 1917 in favour of the Bill then introduced. The Minister, in introducing the Bill, made practically the same speech, although it was not quite so long, as the Minister who introduced the Bill in 1917; at all events, he conveyed exactly the same impression. He said that unless the leases were extended, the pastoralists would be unable to obtain further credit from financial institutions, and that if the House would agree to extend the leases, there would be more credit made available, with the result that vast improvements would be effected and more employment given.

Mr. Angelo: Has not that come off?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I will let the hon. member know directly whether it has come off or not.

Mr. Angelo: Nonsense!

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The hon. member says "Nonsense"; but I tell him that from the very day the extension of the leases was granted in 1917, the population in the North-West started to decrease and it has

decreased since year by year, notwithstanding that the pastoralists had seven or eight years of the most prosperous times the pastoral industry has known. As I say, notwithstanding that, year by year the population in the North has decreased, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. Angelo: Hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of improvements have been effected since then.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I admit there have been a few improvements, but I am talking about the contention that it was going to populate the North. Is there going to be any increase in population now, with wool at its present price? In ratio the population generally up there has decreased considerably more than the number of people on the rolls has decreased. In 1918 there were 3,820 names on the rolls for the four northern seats. The leases were extended for 20 years, and in 1924 the number of names had decreased to 3,789.

Mr. Angelo: That does not apply to the Gascoyne.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It applies to the four North-West seats combined.

Mr. Angelo: Perhaps in the Kimberleys.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In the Roebourne electorate there has been a far greater decrease than in Kimberley.

Mr. Angelo: But the decrease has been due to the falling-off of the mining industry in Pilbara and Ashburton.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: There are more prospectors there to-day than there were in 1924. And when we come to 1929, the peak period, the number of electors was 3,284 all told, or a decrease of 563 in the first 11 years after the extension of the leases.

Mr. Angelo: All due to mining.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is not due to mining. There has been a little decrease in mining in the Gascoyne, for once there were 53 men employed there, whereas not one is so employed to-day. At Whim Creek, when the leases were extended, the total number of employees was seven, including the manager. That was in 1914.

Mr. Angelo: What about the tin mines at Marble Bar?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The member for Guildford-Midland was quite right when he said there was more behind this than the mere extension of the leases. I am surprised at the Government, at a time when the leases

still have 16 years to run, wanting to extend them to 1982. Let me give briefly some of my experiences in the North, and refer to a man with a holding of over  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres in the Roebourne electorate, and who has spent in improvements on his holding at least 50 per cent. more than has been spent at Minderoo. I will admit I was electioneering up there in 1914. The first question that man asked me was as to my policy in regard to the extension of the leases. I told him that if I had my way the leases as at present surveyed and held would never again be granted. He said, "If only you can carry that out and properly subdivide the country, I will forfeit my  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres for one-tenth of Minderoo, and do twice as well as I am doing here." That was the remark of an experienced pastoralist, Mr. Barrett Lennard, a man to be relied upon. He was prepared to forfeit his  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres with all their costly improvements if Minderoo were properly subdivided from a water point of view, and he would take one-tenth of Minderoo and do much better on it than he could do on his own holding. From the nearest point of his lease to the coast was 66 miles, and from the coast where he touched it he had to lighter his wool 90 miles to Onslow.

Mr. Angelo: We have some pastoralists bringing their wool 240 miles.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I know that, but here is one man who had to travel by road 66 miles and then by lighter 90 miles, as against another man situated within six miles of the Onslow jetty. At that time the one management was controlling both stations, Minderoo and Globe Hill. On each of those stations I visited the homestead and the out-camps, and I can say there was not a solitary white man or white woman to be seen. Even the manager himself, whom I met in Onslow, was not on the station. But on the other station, 66 miles from the coast and with a lighterage of 90 miles to Onslow to face, I found four or five white men and two white women. What a contrast! It is Bills such as this that prevent the populating of the North. I do not care what may be done for the pastoralists in the North, we shall never get population up there until we have a resurvey of the holdings, which most certainly will not be brought about by extending the leases to 1982. The Minister, when moving the second reading, said there was nothing extraordinary about the Bill. He remarked

that no matter what Government might be in power when the existing leases expired, that Government would extend the leases. Then why rush this extension 16 years before the expiry of the existing leases, when the Minister claims that no matter what Government might be in power when the leases expired, they would extend the leases? And I believe they would, but probably with some conditions different from those obtaining to-day. If we want population in the North, we must alter the present areas. I have every respect for the men who went up and pioneered the North, and I agree that they were deserving of all the good fortune they could meet; but are we going to allow the state of affairs that existed then and the conditions that prevailed to subsist for all time? Those men did not buy the freehold; they leased their areas from the State, and the Crown is still the owner of the land. In the interests of the people of the State, this Bill should not be passed. If it does pass, I do not care what Government may be in power or what the Government may do to assist the North—unless indeed we were to discover a new goldfield up there—the population will gradually decrease during the next ten years, as it has decreased during the past ten years. Some of the pastoralists in portions of the North have spent a fair amount on improvements to their holdings, but on other holdings that were taken up in the early days one could count on the fingers of one hand the hundreds of pounds spent in improvements. I do not know what is going to become of the North, but I say if the people of other nations knew the class of country in parts of the North, and knew the manner in which it is being held and utilised, they would not permit it to continue; and, moreover, I say we would deserve it if they were to come and take it from us. In parts of the North one can travel 300 miles across a station and not see a post or a rail.

Mr. Angelo: That is in the Kimberleys.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In the North. Then members wonder why we cannot attract population to the North. One of the chief reasons is that those who went there in the early days picked the very best of the country, as would any member of the House if given the opportunity. Take Minderoo Station. How far do members think that extends along both banks of the Ashburton river, one of the most fertile valleys in Australia, even

more fertile perhaps than the famed Fitzroy Valley in Kimberley? Is there any great development going on at Minderoo? Have they done very much to assist themselves?

The Minister for Lands: I will leave it to the member for Kimberley to answer that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Ashburton is not in the Kimberley district, but in the district of the member for Roebourne.

Mr. Church: Quite right.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: What has been done in the first 60 miles from Onslow along the Ashburton?

Hon. P. Collier: They will not allow a man to have a vegetable garden anywhere along the waterfront.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: One can pass through the gate of Euro Station, 86 miles from Onslow, and immediately one is through that gate he is on Globe Hill Station, through which he can travel to Minderoo. If it be shearing time, he will find a few white men there, but at any other season of the year he will not see one. Then members say, we require to populate the North. Let us do something to help the pastoralists to populate the North. But are we ever going to populate it while the land is held under those conditions? Minderoo to-day probably would be entitled to its million acres, but it is not entitled to a million acres extending for 50 miles along both banks of the best water in the district. If this Bill is allowed to go through and the leases are extended until 1982, we shall deserve all we get. I hope the measure will be rejected. Last night the Leader of the Opposition pleaded with the Government to do something to extend the tenure of our agriculturists for a paltry three years, and yet they now come along with a proposal to extend the tenure for another section of the people for an additional 30 years. The Government should obtain a definite report upon the North, mainly for the purpose of subdividing it, not taking away anything that anyone now has. If that were done, double the number of stations would be established and all would do better than they are doing now. Further north, that number could be increased by another half. If the Government are going to take advantage of their numbers and extend for another 30 years leases which still have 16 years

to run, I shall not wonder if the people do become revolutionary. If this Bill is passed, Australia as a whole will never live to see the leases expire in 1982, because other nations will come along and take the land, and we shall deserve to lose it. It is an absolute scandal.

Mr. Sampson: Would it help to keep other nations away if the extensions were not given?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. If the Government would send someone up there to investigate and re-survey the whole of the territory.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: A re-alignment is necessary.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Are the Government so sure of being beaten next March that they are trying to rush this Bill through. I assure them if they do not get back next year we will treat the pastoralists in the North quite as fairly as any other party would do. Why extend these leases for another 30 years? If the Bill becomes law, what will happen to the representation of the North in this Chamber? It has always been our proud boast, every time there has been a redistribution of seats that we have kept our hands off the North-West.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: To give it a chance.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. We have agreed that four members shall represent the North-West. If this Bill becomes law, the population will so dwindle that instead of having four electorates that part of the State will be represented by only one member. If we look at the rolls year after year we find that after each extension the population in the North-West has further decreased, until we have got down to 556 fewer than when the last extension was made. That sort of thing will continue if the Bill is passed.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [5.35]: I support the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: Naturally.

Mr. SAMPSON: Not necessarily, but because of circumstances with which I am acquainted relative to the pastoral industry. As I said when I returned from the Old Country, I have learned something of the quality of meat that is sent there. It is clear that more consideration must be given to the North-West.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You will not give it by extending the term of the leases.

Mr. SAMPSON: When the motion for leave to introduce this Bill was before the House I noticed that members representing the North-West, who know the position of the pastoralists, were in favour of the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: Not at all. It was only a motion for leave to introduce. There was nothing known about the Bill. You cannot put it in that way.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Leader of the Opposition led me to believe he knew something about it, because he spoke about it at considerable length.

Miss Holman: The Minister told him about it while he was speaking.

Hon. P. Collier: I only knew about it while I was on my feet.

Mr. SAMPSON: There was a division, and those who voted for the motion included all the members representing the North-West.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There will be only two at most if this Bill goes through.

Hon. P. Collier: Support it on your own arguments; never mind about the North-West members.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am justified in drawing attention to what I know of the needs of the North-West in respect to the degeneracy of the meat that is shipped overseas. I went to considerable trouble to examine the meat at the Smithfield market.

Hon. P. Collier: So did I.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am sure the hon. member found exactly the same conditions that I found.

Hon. P. Collier: And will this Bill result in putting good beef on to that market?

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope it will do something towards that end. If anything is essential before any body of men invest a large sum of money in the development of station property in the North-West, it is that they should be assured of a lease for a long period. The period yet to run is not long when one considers the work that has to be done and the development that has to be brought about. It would not be a business proposition to expend a lot of money in developing a station without a long security of tenure. A lot of work has to be done in well sinking, the erection of windmills, fencing, etc. Although these stations are a long way from the city, our fortunes



are bound up to a great extent in their development. I have long been under the impression that the North-West is in the nature of a menace. We are not developing it as it should be developed. If we do not pass the Bill, we shall be doing something to prevent the development of the North. Who would find the large amount of money necessary for an undertaking of this sort unless a reasonably long security of tenure was given? I am not concerned about this matter from the party standpoint. From the political point of view of course it is important, because the future of the State is to an extent wrapped up in the North-West. I was going to refer to the manner in which cattle are brought down from the North-West.

Hon. P. Collier: Will the Bill make any difference to that?

Mr. SAMPSON: I should say it would. If the cattle-raising industry receives proper consideration and assistance, the volume of trade will be greater. Instead of cattle being sent down alive, the meat will be sent down chilled.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How are you going to bring that about by extending the present monopolies?

Mr. SAMPSON: By encouraging cattle-raising in the North-West. The Leader of the Opposition has visited the Smithfield markets, and learned what I learned.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not draw the same conclusions you seem to have drawn.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not know. I have sufficient respect for the Leader of the Opposition to believe that he drew such conclusions as he wanted to draw.

Hon. P. Collier: Not such absurd ones as yours.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the hon. member does not think it absurd to do something to improve the quality of the meat so that it can compare more favourably with the Argentine product.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: In-breeding is the trouble.

Mr. SAMPSON: With the necessary encouragement, why should not our cattle-raisers do as well as those in the Argentine? If the meat were sent down in a chilled state, it would be advantageous to the North-West and to all concerned. Cattle are received in Fremantle in a shocking state in many cases. They are often moved along the race with the aid of electric goads.

Mr. Coverley: That is not quite true.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not say the hon. member is not aware of the position. The inspection of cattle that are being unloaded at Fremantle, and the reports I have read regarding the loading of cattle in the North-West, are such as to justify me in referring to the cruelty that is sometimes indulged in.

Mr. Coverley: Those reports are not correct.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the meat were sent down in a chilled state, there would be no occasion for cruelty, and it would arrive in a better condition than it does to-day. The member for Kimberley will not deny that sometimes an electric goad is used to force cattle on to a steamer.

Mr. Coverley: Occasionally.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so. I have seen it, but if you extend the leases, it will not be used!

Mr. SAMPSON: If the cattle-raising industry were extended, a better method of treatment would be followed. The cattle would be slaughtered and chilled in the North-West and the meat shipped from there. I am sorry the Leader of the Opposition is not looking at the question from that standpoint. No doubt from his point of view he put up a very convincing argument the other night. So I hope the Bill will be passed, because its passage will encourage those who are desirous of developing the cattle industry to compete with greater success in the world's markets, where our beef is at present regarded as second and third rate and is sold for army contracts and continental requirements.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It will be fourth grade if you pass this Bill.

**HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.46]:** I desire to move an amendment. The question before the Chair is "That the Bill be now read a second time." I move—

That all the words after "That" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"A Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into the advisability or otherwise of extending the term of pastoral leases, and the question of a re-alignment of the boundaries of existing leases with a view of promoting closer settlement and more favourable access to water frontages and development of the North-West pastoral areas."

I imagine that while the member for Swan was speaking the friends of the North-West who are supporting this Bill were saying to themselves, "Save us from our friends." I

have never listened to a more puerile or wretched argument in support of a case than that advanced by the member for Swan. He talked about the extension of the leases resulting in an improvement in the quality of our beef that we market. Why will that be so? In 1917 the leases were extended—they had then about 11 years or so to run—for a period of 20 years; they were extended from 1928 to 1948. Did that extension result in an improvement in the quality of our beef on the London market? Would the hon. member argue that it is because of the insecurity of tenure that the owners of the leases will not take any action to improve the quality? Surely that argument did not exist in 1917 when the leases had still 11 years to run, and when they were extended until 1948. There was the opportunity to say, "Now that we have security of tenure, now that we can see for long years ahead we will build up the quality of our herds and put on the Smithfield market, beef that will not be a discredit to us." May I ask what year it was that the hon. member was in London?

Mr. Marshall: The same year that he was in Malta.

The Minister for Lands: In 1928.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yet in 1928 the hon. member went to Smithfield and he was shocked at the quality of our meat, and at that time the leases had 20 years to run! Why was it that the extension in 1917 did not produce a beef of improved quality? The hon. member declares that the passing of this Bill will have that effect now. Why did it not have that effect then?

Mr. Sampson: It should have a good effect.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member found the beef very poor. It proves that the term of the leases has nothing to do with the quality of the meat.

Mr. Sampson: It is possible that if the leases are not extended they might be wiped out altogether.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Now the hon. member is shifting his ground from the quality of the beef to the possibility of the leases being wiped out altogether. It is absurd to talk about the quality of the beef in that way.

Mr. Sampson: It was very discouraging to note the poor quality of the beef.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We are justified in giving consideration to every means by which cattle raising will be encouraged.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: It will not be done in this way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course not. I would do anything to assist in the direction of improving the quality of our stock, but experience has shown us that the quality of the stock is not governed by the period of the lease.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you think it was North-West beef or Queensland beef that the hon. member saw at Smithfield?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know; I was not there, and not having been there I cannot say what his judgment was like on that occasion.

Mr. Sampson: I hope the Leader of the Opposition will visit Smithfield some day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I visited Smithfield a few years before the hon. member did, and there was no doubt about it the quality of the meat exported from Australia was poor. But that has nothing to do with the term of the leases.

Mr. Sampson: Will not the cattle raisers be encouraged if they have a long tenure?

Hon. P. COLLIER: In 1917 their tenure was extended. If a long tenure gives them any encouragement, there should have been evidence of it in 1928, when the hon. member was at Smithfield. According to the hon. member if we extend the leases now, history will not repeat itself; the owners will at once set to work to improve the breed of their stock. The hon. member's argument is ridiculous. The manner of the introduction of the Bill at this stage of the session is impudent. Why have the Government left it until the last day or two of the session? I hope the Minister will answer that question. I am aware that last week or the week before an explanation was made that the extension of the leases was embodied in the Land Consolidation Bill which was before the House. But it was never the intention of the Government to go on with that Bill.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: In any case the extension of the pastoral leases should never have been included in the Land Consolidation Bill.

The Minister for Lands: Where did you get that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have the authority of the Premier, who occupies a little higher position in this Chamber than does the Minister for Lands. Because the proposal was embodied in the Land Consolidation Bill, the House was supposed to know all about it. It was never seriously contemplated to go on with the Land Consolidation Bill, which is a most comprehensive measure.

The Minister for Lands: Are you not confusing it with the Transfer of Land Bill?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know what I am talking about. I know the difference between the Transfer of Land Bill and the Land Consolidation Bill.

The Minister for Lands: Both are on the Notice Paper.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am aware of that. The contents of the Land Consolidation Bill were not known to members, because the second reading had not been moved. The only explanation that could have been urged by the Government with regard to the Land Consolidation Bill was that the second reading had been moved some time ago, and therefore knowing the contents of that Bill members had no ground for complaint. But the second reading had not been moved. I do not know now, and there is not a member in the House who knows anything about one clause in the Land Consolidation Bill. How can the Minister attempt to get out of it by saying that we knew all about the Land Consolidation Bill? We knew nothing about it until the Bill was introduced. Why was it left till this late stage of the session to bring in such an important Bill? The Government will not deny its importance. The question whether all the pastoral leases of the State shall be continued for another 16 years or extended for 50 years is surely a most important question. Had not the Government made up their minds on the matter? For months we have been engaged in considering comparatively unimportant Bills. Yet this Bill of great importance is left until the last day or two of the session. Would I be unfair in suggesting that it has been deliberately left until the last few days?

The Minister for Lands: I assure you that it has not, so far as I am concerned.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It happened in the ordinary course of business?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know how members of the Government discuss the business and decide the order on the Notice Paper. During my term, Bills were given precedence according to their relative importance, and I do not think I would have approved of bringing down a Bill of such importance as this in the last few days of the session. The Government must have had their minds made up earlier. Am I not entitled to suggest that the Government have not been fair with the House or with the people? I know that the Bill may be passed without the public generally having any knowledge of it. The members of this house would be false to their responsibilities if they decided to grant the pastoral areas of this State for 50 years without proper and adequate consideration. The argument advanced by the Minister for Lands, when moving the second reading, was the old, old hoary argument about pastoral leases. He said the extension would enable the holders to arrange capital for the development of the leases.

The Minister for Lands: Not only for development but to enable them to carry on.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Let us put it that way.

The Minister for Lands: That is more important at the moment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Would the extension of the term of the leases make any difference?

Mr. Angelo: Absolutely.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I doubt it.

Mr. Angelo: I am sure of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Who is likely to foreclose?

Mr. Angelo: That is a different matter. It is not a question of foreclosing but of getting more money to keep the areas in proper condition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member is a banker. I do not profess to know anything about banking, though I have had some experience of bankers. Any banker, or any investor lending money on pastoral property, would be influenced, not by the term of the lease, but by the capacity of the property to pay interest on the money advanced. That would be governed entirely by the price of wool. If the leases were extended for 200 years and an investor were

asked for an advance to-morrow, he would not consider whether the lease was for 200 years or 2,000 years; he would consider the profit-earning capacity of the property, its ability to pay the interest on the money advanced and to return the capital.

The Minister for Lands: Within a given period.

Mr. Angelo: How do you explain the fact of a London syndicate being prepared to find £15,000,000 for the development of Northern Australia and wanting a 66 years' tenure?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Has the hon. member any inside information about the offer of the syndicate?

Mr. Angelo: I know only what I have read in the Press.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is a mythical syndicate. Fancy the hon. member supporting his case by some proposition published in a newspaper to the effect that a syndicate are willing to spend £15,000,000 on development!

Mr. Angelo: The Federal Cabinet are taking it seriously.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Surely the hon. member, as a business man and a banker, will admit that neither of us is in a position to express any opinion on the proposition. We know nothing about it.

Mr. Angelo: The syndicate are asking for a long tenure.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We know nothing about it. The tenure is associated with other conditions. Is the best argument that the hon. member, representing one of the northern constituencies, has to offer this scrappy, uncertain information about some syndicate? How can he argue for or against the proposition? What does he know about it?

Mr. Angelo: That is the chief security. The syndicate want decent tenure.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am amazed and amused at the assumption of the hon. member.

Mr. Angelo: You would be.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He says the chief thing is security of tenure. What does the hon. member know about the proposition?

Mr. Angelo: Only that the Federal Government are considering it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Will the hon. member contend that he is in a position to offer an opinion worth 2½d. on the proposition?

Mr. Angelo: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the hon. member is offering an opinion.

Mr. Angelo: The Federal Government are seriously considering the proposal.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I welcome the hon. member's interjection.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Gascoyne will have an opportunity later.

The Minister for Lands: I do not welcome it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Apparently, that is the best argument he can advance. It is a proposition about which he knows nothing. The country knows nothing about it; it is not worth a cup of cold water. People willing to lend money, more particularly in such times as the present, are concerned about the profit-earning capacity of the security. That is the question. The price of wool, the price of wheat and the price of cattle would decide the question of advances in the minds of those asked to provide money. Even if it were a gift from heaven, the tenure would not amount to anything in the minds of investors. The questions would be, "Can this property pay interest on the money required? Can it return the capital at the end of a period?" They are the only questions that would occupy the mind of a man who was considering the matter of advancing money on pastoral property. Security of tenure! I have heard it so often. It is mere claptrap stuff to bulldoze the people who do not know anything about it. The Minister says in effect that if we can only give security of tenure for 50 years, money will be thrown in. Figures have been quoted and we know from our own reading that the growing of wool is being carried on at a loss. As the Minister stated, there is no outlet for the disposal of surplus stock in the North-West. If a man were asked to advance money on property in the North-West, would he be unconcerned about the price of wool, or about the possibility of disposing of the stock, or would he say, "The term of the lease is 50 years; all right." What is the value of the lease tenure if the property cannot be carried on at a profit? We should not be acting fairly by the people if we decided this question at the moment. I would not for one moment contend that the leases ought to be allowed to run on until they expire before the question was determined. That would not be fair. But there is a difference between doing that and between

granting an extension 16 years beforehand. Sixteen years is no very short period. It is a pretty extensive period, and why should the House at this stage decide what shall happen 16 years hence? I have the greatest admiration for the men who pioneered the North-West. Their names stand out in the history of this State. They were men of great courage and great determination; men possessed of the grit which is all too rare to-day. The men who went to the North in their little sailing boats 30 or 40 years ago settled on unknown territory and opened up the North-West as part of the State. To the Duracks, who travelled overland from Queensland to the Kimberleys nearly 50 years ago, this State owes a great deal indeed. The natural thing was for the pioneers to take up the land in the best position and with the water frontages. I have no fault to find with them for that. So long as the pioneers live, I would not attempt to deprive them of the advantages that might accrue to them from water frontages because of their enterprise.

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

Hon. P. COLLIER: At the tea adjournment I was dealing with the legitimate claims of the pioneer settlers of the North-West. I will not dispute for a moment the right of those settlers to all that may come to them because they endured very great hardships and, indeed, added a new province to Western Australia as a result of their enterprise and courage and of the risks they took. Whilst I agree it was quite natural in those days to take up the river frontages and the positions of greatest advantage, I do not admit that descendants are entitled to the privileges accorded to their fathers or ancestors, simply because they may have inherited the holdings. I consider the man who desires to take up a pastoral lease to-day should not be hampered by the exclusive rights and privileges that were acquired by the predecessors of the present holders. It is not fair that a man born in Perth and brought up in the metropolitan area, who has never experienced any of the trying times of the pioneers of 30 or 40 years ago, should be entitled to any more consideration than the man who has never been in that part of the State. I do not believe in an hereditary right to privileges of this description, and therefore I claim that the

time is overdue for a complete examination of conditions that obtain in the North-West. I remember very well the debate that took place in 1917 with regard to the proposal to extend pastoral leases. It was then pointed out by those who supported the proposition that it would probably be the last extension agreed to. Perhaps that was not exactly what they stated, but they pointed out that in the meantime a thorough investigation of the conditions in the North-West would be made, and that possibly the position would be entirely different when the question of the extension of the leases was again submitted to Parliament. That was one of the most potent arguments advanced at the time. Of course, when I refer to pastoral leases throughout my remarks, I allude to those in the North-West alone. On the occasion I refer to, it was said that if the extensions were granted for 30 years or so, the whole position could be reviewed and matters relating to the North-West could subsequently be dealt with in the light of that investigation. My amendment is most reasonable, and I ask the House seriously to consider it. The Bill proposes to extend the term of the pastoral leases to 1982. They have 16 years yet to run, but the extension contemplated is for 50 years. Bearing in mind the fact that the leases have still 16 years to run, I propose that a Royal Commission shall be appointed to inquire into the whole situation so that there may be a re-alignment of the boundaries of the pastoral leases. I think that is a very reasonable request. If my amendment be carried, the Royal Commission appointed will be a fair one, and will investigate the position, present a report to Parliament, and it will be dealt with. The question of extending the leases could be considered next year in the light of the report based on the investigations of the Royal Commission. Is there anything unreasonable in that proposal? Will the position of the leaseholders in the North-West be in any way jeopardised? Will the possibility of securing financial assistance be affected at all by the postponement of this question for another year? The only argument advanced in support of the extension has been that it will assist the leaseholders financially. Will their position be jeopardised by a postponement for one year? I know it is suggested there are financial institutions, including banks,

companies and others, with open cheque-books and pens at hand, waiting to make advances to the pastoral leaseholders if the Bill be passed, and probably that assistance will be withheld if the Bill be postponed for another year! Is that a fair and logical argument? Who are these people that are waiting with their cheque-books ready to write advances to the leaseholders tomorrow, or, at any rate, the day after Parliament assents to the Bill? Will they close their cheque-books and withhold advances, if it is said that we intend to inquire into the whole situation and to defer the extensions until next year? Surely there is no logic in that. I have no belief in the argument that it will make all the difference in the world to the leaseholders, from the standpoint of their ability to obtain financial assistance. I have heard that argument before, and I do not think there is anything in it. Assuming that there is something in the argument, would the position of the leaseholders be prejudiced if we required them to wait another year for the extension, bearing in mind that the leases have 16 years to run? If my amendment is agreed to, the leases will still have 16 years to run, but Parliament will not decide upon the further extension of the leases until next year. I have no doubt whatever that an impartial Royal Commission would be able to suggest alterations to the existing boundaries of the pastoral leases, very much to the advantage of the State. Surely the exclusive right to 80 or 100 miles of water frontage would be altered. As I have pointed out before, although that may have been justified in the early days, it cannot be justified to-day by any reasonable, thinking man if he has regard for the settlement and development of the North-West. How can that part of the State be developed and settled if all the natural advantages are monopolised by a few individual landholders? During the early part of this year, I was privileged to be in the North-West, in company with my friend the member for Roebourne (Mr. Church).

The Premier: What were you doing there?

Hon. P. COLLIER: As it turned out, I was assisting the member for Roebourne to win his seat.

The Premier: That was really good work.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It was good work and I have no cause whatever to re-

gret it. Just out from Onslow, some 10, 15 or 20 miles, is the Minderoo Station.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Twenty-two miles. I know all about it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I saw it. It is on the Murchison River. I think for a distance of 90 miles the river passes through that station. I found also that in Onslow fresh vegetables were unobtainable. The only vegetables to be had were those which were shipped at infrequent intervals to Onslow from the southern portion of the State. It was not even possible for any person to obtain a garden area on the river frontage to the Minderoo Station.

The Premier: Under the law it can be done.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but I understand the proprietors of the Minderoo Station have sufficient influence to prevent anyone from obtaining a garden area there.

The Premier: I never heard of it.

The Minister for Lands: One was granted after you were up there.

Mr. Coverley: It has not been granted by the Government.

The Minister for Lands: It has. If you call at my office I will show you.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I did not know that. Lying beyond the Minderoo Station is a great stretch of country, but no person would take up any part of it while the present owners of the Minderoo Station are entitled to all those privileges. I admit the original owner of the Minderoo Station was entitled to them, because he went there and took the risk of pioneering the area: but I do not admit his descendants have any right or title to those particular privileges. It is a very fine river.

The Premier: It is dry in the summer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It runs in the rainy season, but I suppose in the dry season there is no water in it. The water could, however, be dammed.

The Minister for Lands: It would be very expensive to dam it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that it would.

The Minister for Lands: It is a very fast-running river.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Anyhow, let me put this point: Is it contended now that there is not any water in that river? If there is not, what is the position of the pastoralists who have no river frontage at all? At least,

it is true there is water in the river at certain seasons of the year. What is the position of those pastoralists who have areas behind the Minderoo Station, but who are without a water supply except such as they may obtain by the expenditure of money in bores? Why should we hold up the development of the North. I met a man in Onslow whose name I do not wish to mention, but who, no doubt is well known to the member for Roebourne. He holds 300,000 acres in the country adjoining the Minderoo Station. That is a very small property as station properties go in the North-West. Yet he informed me that he did not owe any money either to the banks or anybody else. He was in a satisfactory position and doing well, because he had confined his efforts to a smaller area. The history of land settlement in Australia shows clearly that where very large areas of land are held by individuals, a very inadequate amount of development takes place. If a man in possession of a million acres of land can, by utilising only 500,000 acres of it, make a comfortable living, he is quite content. There is no incentive for him to develop the remainder of the land, unless he is a man who aspires to become very wealthy and, after all, there are not many men of that temperament. Most men are content to make a comfortable living and to have a small surplus. When they reach that stage they are content. If a man can do well on and be satisfied with 300,000 acres, why should we grant an extension of leases of far greater areas for another 50 years, until 1982?

The Premier: The man with the 300,000 acres will get the extension too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course. It seems we have no real appreciation of our responsibilities. This matter was not an issue at the last election. Now, without reference to the people whom we represent, without their knowledge and at this late hour, behind their backs, and without giving them an opportunity of knowing anything about it, are we to decide to hand over all the pastoral areas in the North-West to the present holders until 1982? What authority have we to do it? Have we any mandate from the people to do it? Have the people been consulted about it? We have no right to do it. It is not honest to the people whom we represent. Therefore, I cannot imagine any member of this House who has any sense of responsibility or who has any regard at

all for representative Government voting against my amendment. My amendment does not say the leases shall not be renewed. It merely says that a Royal Commission shall be appointed to inquire into the whole position with regard to the pastoral leases in the North-West. Can there be any reasonable objection to that? Only men whose minds are closed to reason, logic and argument could oppose an amendment of that kind. If the investigation I suggest is made, then Parliament can deal with the matter next year in the light of the findings of the proposed Commission. Only one year's delay! What objection can there be to that? Are the Government determined to push the Bill through this year because they fear they may not be returned next year?

The Premier: We have no fear about that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then I claim the vote of the Premier.

The Minister for Lands: We want to clean up as much legislation as we can.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Clean up! I would not use that word if I were the hon. member. The Premier says he has no doubt whatever that he will be here next year. Would anything terrible happen to these leaseholders in the intervening six months? In June or July, having had the advantage and benefit of the investigation which my amendment proposes shall be made, the Premier will be able to bring down the Bill.

The Premier: If it will be a good proposal next year, why is it not a good proposal this year?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope I have not been speaking in vain. The Premier says if it will be a good proposal next year, why should it not be a good one this year? I have been trying for the past ten minutes to explain that the difference is that next year the Government will have the benefit of an investigation by a Royal Commission. That is the all-important difference. To-day members have no information. I accept the Premier's forecast that he will be here next year. What has he to lose? Will not he and his colleagues be better equipped to deal with this question after an investigation has been made? The Premier knows he will. He will have three years within which to give effect to his desires. Does the Premier say the position is so clear that an investigation is unnecessary? When the extension of the leases was made in 1917, they

had then 11 years to run. Things had gone on all right up to within 11 years of the expiration of the leases. Now the leases have still 16 years to run. Why the urgency? Must the matter be decided in the last day or two of this Parliament? What is the extreme urgency? For nothing but extreme urgency could justify its being dealt with in this manner. If it is extremely urgent now, it was not less urgent in August and September last. Yet we did not hear from the Government in August or September, they did not bring down a Bill for the extension of the leases in those months. It has suddenly become urgent in this last week of the session, and it must go on, because numerous investors with plenty of money are ready to sign their cheques as soon as the Bill goes through. There can be no reasonable opposition to my amendment, which merely asks for an inquiry. Only members with preconceived ideas and biased and prejudiced minds, and voting according to party lines and tactics could oppose my amendment. So I rely on the common sense and fairmindedness of the majority of members to carry the amendment.

**MR. CHURCH** (Roebourne) [8.3]: I wish to contradict some of the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition and other members about the areas of country up there.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The hon. member must confine himself to the amendment for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

**Mr. CHURCH:** When these leases were reappraised in 1917-18 the Government said that double rents would have to be paid to allow us to carry on until a board was appointed to reappraise the leases in the pastoral areas. That board consisted of the Surveyor General, and Messrs. McLean and Lefroy. They went through every lease in the North-West and appraised the lot, although double rent was being charged in the meantime. Some of the appraisements were increased by 50 per cent. on top of that double rate, while others were lower, but never below 10s. per 1,000 acres. The contention is quite wrong that these leases are being withheld from the public because they were granted in the first place to people who pioneered the country, and have descended to their sons. That is wrong be-

cause very few, indeed only one, station in the North has descended to the sons of the pioneers. That is Minderoo Station. The Leader of the Opposition said that station extended for 90 miles along the river banks, precluding others from coming in to settle that country, and he urged that as a reason for the appointment of a Royal Commission. But the hon. member was wrong, because the whole of that station extends only 43 miles, not 90 miles, along the water frontage. He said also that these leases were being taken up along the water frontages and that nothing whatever was being done with the outside country, which was left to others to take up if they liked. That is not so, because the people there now have improved the country to such an extent that most of it is being used 30 miles back from the river frontages. I submit no case has been made out for the appointment of a Royal Commission, because the board has already reappraised the leases and they are to be reappraised every 15 years.

**Hon. W. D. Johnson:** That has no bearing on the reform respecting the alignment of the boundaries.

**Mr. CHURCH:** May I speak on that point, Sir?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The subject matter is the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

**Mr. CHURCH:** The hon. member gave reasons for that, and said the alignment should be altered because the sons of the pioneers had picked out all the water frontages. That is not so. They were picked out in the first place, and since then the leaseholders have made improvements on each side of the river, and for quite 30 miles away from the river there is no idle country. No case has been made out for a Royal Commission, because every 15 years these leases are to be reappraised. An amendment was agreed to the other day, when in recognition that things in the industry were so bad the authorities said, "Very well: we can see you cannot pay your rents, so we will allow you to pay on the price of wool." That is to continue until 1941. No harm has been done to the State by the granting of these leases, and I cannot see that any harm will be done in the future, because the department has the right to re-appraise the



leases every 15 years. One member's argument in favour of this proposed inquiry was that a leaseholder near Minderoo Station had  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres locked up, and no one could get into it. But that is not true. The man who was supposed to have  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres had only 424,000 acres, and he did not say he would be content to give up that 424,000 acres for one-tenth of Minderoo. I learnt that by ringing up the gentleman just now. So that is one of the wild statements made by members opposite. I cannot see that the granting of the extension of these leases will put the State into any worse position than it is in. If we had 17 Royal Commissions they would not be able to do more than is being done. Quite 90 per cent. of the sheep in the North-West are depasturing on country watered by wells, not by river pools, as suggested by members opposite. The leases are subject to reappraisal next year, so why should we have a Royal Commission to inquire into it in the meantime? I could go on farther, but probably you, Sir, would say I was out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member will not get that into his mind. I have no desire to burke discussion, so long as the hon. member confines himself to the subject matter before the Chair. The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. CHURCH: I appreciate what the Leader of the Opposition said in sympathy with the pastoral industry, but he lost sight of the fact that the matters he suggested should be inquired into by a Royal Commission have already been investigated. And we know that next year there will be a fresh appraisalment. I am not going to say whether the banks and financiers will lend us more money because of the extension of the leases. I think we have got to the end of our tether with the banks, and if our securities are curtailed by a refusal to give us the extension we think necessary, there is small chance of our getting any more money from them. But if we had no extension of tenure at all, and if there were a tremendous recovery in the prices of wool and stock, it would take us three years of fine seasons to make up the leeway of the past three years, and until the remaining 15 years of the leases expired it would be a fine thing for us if we could only keep our heads

above water. I see nothing wrong with the granting of the proposed extension, for it would do the country no harm. It cannot be suggested that the North-West has ruined Western Australia, for the pioneer pastoralists opened up the country for others. Next month, I myself will have been up there for 50 years, and I do not see any hope of recovering within the 15 years left to us the ground lost during the period of frightful prices for stock and extremely low prices for wool. So it will be understood that we do really want an assurance that we are free to go ahead with our work. Can the Leader of the Opposition point to any chance of prices rising to such an extent as to allow us to say, "Very well, let us have an inquiry and reappraisalment by a Royal Commission"? All the country up there outside the river frontages is being opened up by wells and consequently is being utilised to its full capacity. We are told that it is overstocked. I do not know that it is, except that we cannot sell the stock we have. I have killed 2,000 sheep on my stations in the last few months because I have been obliged to do so. If flocks are kept as they are and no new rams are imported and the flocks improved, the stations will cease to pay. I bought a station 30 years ago. At that time the sheep there were cutting  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of wool per head, but to-day they are cutting 9 lbs. That was brought about by the expenditure of a lot of money on stock improvements. That is the way it has to be done. We want to buy more stock now. It would be wise if members opposite passed the Bill, because it will give us a chance to carry on beyond the 15 years that are left to us. It has taken me 28 years to improve my flock from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. to 9 lbs. This was the result of careful and gradual selection. Sheep farming is not an easy job. A flock cannot be improved in five minutes. The longer the leases are made, the better it will be for the North-West and the State. We have had to kill off thousands of sheep to make room for the younger sheep. We could not sell them. I would to-morrow give any member 2,000 or 3,000 sheep if he liked to remove them.

Hon. P. Collier: Cash on delivery?

Mr. CHURCH: For nothing. I think I have made out a clear case for the passing of the Bill. The statements of the Leader of the Opposition were probably correct so

far as he knew the facts, but they were not correct in the light of the actual facts. The member for Hannans (Hon. S. W. Munsie) said something about a man who had said so-and-so to him, but those statements were absolutely wrong. I hope the Bill will be passed.

**MR. ANGELO** (Gascoyne) [8.17]: The amendment proposes to strike out certain words, and I want members to vote against it. It is a pity members do not realise that in the North-West there are two distinct provinces, namely, the Kimberleys, that is, the land north of the 20th parallel, and the area south of that parallel. The conditions of the two areas are totally dissimilar. A good deal of what members opposite have said is true as it relates to the Kimberleys, but the conditions in the Middle North are quite different. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) talked a great deal about some of the early settlers taking up tremendous areas along the river frontages, and suggested that this land was held to the detriment of other people. The value of these frontages is mythical. In my electorate many of them have been fenced off, because it is found that the watering conditions are not as satisfactory as they are when the water is supplied through the thousands of mills, windmills and tanks, and the hundreds of artesian bores that have been put down in the Gascoyne. In the early days the pastoralists had to depend on the sand wells of the rivers, and the frontages were of some value. To-day many of the pastoralists have fenced off the rivers, because the banks are a mass of double-gees which cause lameness in sheep.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If smaller holdings were arranged for, the double-gees could be coped with.

Mr. ANGELO: They cannot be kept down in 20-acre paddocks. The tropical fruitgrowers are hard put to it to cope with them on their small holdings.

Mr. Kennelly: How will an extension of 50 years help you to overcome the difficulty?

Mr. ANGELO: The Leader of the Opposition suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission. During the time I have been in Parliament many Royal Commissions have been appointed, have taken evidence and submitted their reports. Some of these have dealt with the Kimberleys and

the pastoral industry as a whole. These have all urged the necessity for giving greater security to the financial institutions which are helping the pastoralists to keep in the industry.

Hon. P. Collier: To what Commissions do you refer?

Mr. ANGELO: One Commission was appointed to inquire into the cattle industry in the North, and another appointed by the Minister dealt with the pastoral industry.

Hon. P. Collier: Which was appointed by the Minister?

The Minister for Lands: That was only a departmental inquiry.

Hon. P. Collier: Who constituted the Commission?

The Minister for Lands: The accountant of the Lands Department and Mr. Pelloe, a retired officer of one of the private banks.

Hon. P. Collier: What did they report, and what did they know about the matter?

Mr. ANGELO: I am sorry the Leader of the Opposition should say that the proposal recently made by the Federal Government for the development of the Northern Territory and the northern districts are a myth. According to the paper, certain financial people in the Old Country are prepared to develop the North by stocking it with cattle on a big scale, and to spend £15,000,000 on railways, meat works, etc. One of the conditions is that they must have a long tenure. The Leader of the Opposition has said that all a financial man wants to know is, "Can you make a profit on wool at a certain price, and are the conditions satisfactory?" Security of tenure is one of the conditions. A shopkeeper may secure certain premises, and appeal to the banks for an advance. The banker wants to know what security he has. If the land is freehold he may make the necessary advance, but if it is a leasehold he wants to know the length of tenure, and if this will last long enough to enable the shopkeeper, out of profits, to repay the amount of the loan. That is the position of the pastoral industry to-day. The Leader of the Opposition was right when he said the last time the leases were extended by 20 years they had only 11 years to run, and that now there are 16 years to run. The conditions to-day are quite different from what they were in 1916.

Hon. P. Collier: They always are.

Mr. ANGELO: Eleven years ago the financial institutions could expect their advances to be repaid in five years at the most.

Hon. P. Collier: No fear.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. To-day they do not know how long this will take; it may be 10 or 20 years.

Hon. P. Collier: And it may be never.

Mr. ANGELO: They are prepared to take the risk provided the leases are long enough to give them a sporting chance of getting their money back.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And sacrifice the State.

Mr. ANGELO: Not at all. The Leader of the Opposition stressed the necessity for giving security of tenure to the farmers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Of three years.

Hon. P. Collier: You want 50 years.

Mr. ANGELO: No interest and no rents were to be paid in those three years.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. ANGELO: The hon. member did not expect them to pay interest.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say that. I would expect them to pay if they could pay.

Mr. ANGELO: We all know they cannot pay interest.

Hon. P. Collier: I said nothing about rent or interest.

Mr. ANGELO: If they can pay rent and interest, why ask for security of tenure? They are under C.P. conditions. The pastoralists only ask for a continuance of the present conditions. They are not asking for any concession.

Hon. P. Collier: The present conditions must continue for 16 years, and you are asking that they should continue for 50 years.

Mr. ANGELO: They do not want any concessions in the way of money, or exemptions from the payment of interest or rent. Instead of the present conditions running for only 16 years, they want them continued a few more years.

Hon. P. Collier: Is the difference between 16 and 50 years only a few years?

Mr. ANGELO: Another 30 years. What is that in the building up of a station? The financial institutions are not allowed by their directors or shareholders to go any further into the industry unless they have a reasonable chance of having their advances repaid. They are saying to the pastoralists to-day, "We will allow you tucker. That is all we can afford, because we are not sure of your security beyond the 16 years."

Hon. P. Collier: That is nonsense.

Mr. ANGELO: I know of specific cases. Pastoralists have said they want to renovate their fences, and put their wells and windmills in order. The reply has been, "You will have to patch them up and go along as you are doing until we are more satisfied about the security. If you can improve our security in any way, we will give you a little extra money to enable you to effect such improvements." I wish to tell the Leader of the Opposition what all this means to the pastoral workers. The member for Hannans (Hon. S. W. Munsie) says that the population of the North is diminishing. He is quite right. The depopulation, however, has been brought about further north than the Gascoyne where mining for gold and tin was in full swing some years ago. When the leases were last extended the number of electors on my roll was between 700 and 800. At the last elections the number was increased to 1,450, showing that the population, so far as the workers are concerned, had almost doubled. I regret to say that the roll shows a decrease of 250 and nearly all are pastoral workers who unfortunately have been paid off. Many of them are down here and some are on the dole.

Hon. P. Collier: They have not been paid off because of the tenure, but because the price of wool will not permit of their being employed.

Mr. ANGELO: I agree that the price of wool and the fact that sheep cannot be sold has made it very difficult to finance so as to keep these people employed. But if a little more confidence is restored by the passing of the Bill and money is made available to carry out improvements, a good number of those men who have spent their lives in that part of the State and are deserving of every consideration, will be re-engaged. I ask members opposite to do what they can to help us to get confidence restored. It has been said that pastoralists have spent a great deal of their money down here. I am aware that some of them did buy houses in the city, but I am not exaggerating when I say that nine out of ten who bought houses in prosperous times have had to mortgage or sell those properties to keep the stations going. I know of one station property which, since the tenure was last extended, spent no less a sum than £50,000 on

water conservation, and laying pipes. That is where the profits have gone. All put their money back into our Crown lands leased to them for a number of years. I speak for my own district when I say emphatically that 90 per cent. of the profits made by the pastoralists have gone back into improving the station properties. Perhaps hon. members are not aware of what it costs to bore for water. One pastoralist spent £6,000 in sinking an artesian bore, and, failing to get any water, lost the lot. He did not ask for consideration, but stood the loss himself. There are many others who have lost a good deal of money in endeavouring to improve the Crown lands that are held by them on lease. The extension of tenure will also be very helpful in the development of the Kimberleys. We want new money there. From certain investigations in the carrying out of which I have been associated, I have learnt that the condition of the cattle industry in the Kimberleys is deplorable and that the only way to save it from ruin is by the introduction of foreign money. But before any money is invested there, the interested people want to be assured of a fairly long tenure. The Leader of the Opposition knows that. During his term of office, there came under his notice a proposal from a London syndicate which intended to spend £7,000,000 in the Kimberleys. That syndicate was headed by two ex-Australian Governors,

Hon. P. Collier: There was no proposal to spend seven millions, but to try to raise that much, which is a different matter.

Mr. ANGELO: I admit that. Anyway, the proposal was put before the Collier Government, and it was pointed out that the million-acre holding was not sufficient for the investors with big money, and that the tenure was too short. The Leader of the Opposition will remember having sent a cable to the Agent-General asking him to inform those people that "the size of the holding and the length of tenure would be no bar to negotiations." That showed he realised then, as I am sure he does now, that long tenure is most necessary.

Hon. P. Collier: But that was a wild cat proposition.

Mr. ANGELO: The Leader of the Opposition did not think that at the time.

Hon. P. Collier: The men at the head of it were not prepared to put a shilling into

it themselves; they were hawking the proposition around London. Their interest was to get a commission out of the money that might be raised.

Mr. ANGELO: The Leader of the Opposition must have believed in it when he sent the cable.

Hon. P. Collier: I was not prepared to discuss it and negotiate with them.

Mr. ANGELO: He told them by cable that the size of the holding and the length of the tenure would be no bar to the negotiations.

Hon. P. Collier: I said it would be considered.

Mr. ANGELO: I should like, in conclusion, to say a word or two about the Gascoyne vermin fence, to which reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition, who said that a large sum of money had been written-off.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say that. I asked for information. I was informed it had been written-off.

Mr. ANGELO: A certain section of the Gascoyne settlers undertook, if the Government lent them £60,000, to put up a fence, and they would repay the loan by instalments with interest. The loan has been repaid with the exception of £17,000 which is still being repaid as was arranged at the time the money was borrowed. Some years ago it was decided that as the rabbits were as numerous inside as they were outside the fence, and that as it was an expensive matter to keep the fence in repair, the Government should give permission for the abandonment of the maintenance of the fence. That was agreed to, the settlers undertaking to repay the balance of the money that had been borrowed. Repayments are still being made. The maintenance of the fence was taken on by the Government, and years later it was found that the Government had been debiting the settlers with the maintenance costs, of course illegally. The matter was put before the Crown Law authorities, and I believe it was conceded that that was an incorrect charge, and the amount was adjusted.

Hon. P. Collier: The statement was that £17,000 had been written-off.

Mr. ANGELO: No, only the maintenance costs had been written-off.

Hon. P. Collier: That does not matter.

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad to know the Leader of the Opposition is satisfied.

Hon. P. Collier: No, I am not satisfied.

Mr. ANGELO: I am very jealous of the honour of my friends in the Gascoyne, who think as much of their signatures as I am glad to know the British Government do of theirs.

Hon. P. Collier: Fancy coupling yourself up with the British Government!

**MR. KENNEALLY** (East Perth) [8.40]: I should like to know how the proposal to extend the leases for a period of 34 years at the expiration of the 16 years that they have still to run is going to improve the quality of the meat, as suggested by the member for Swan earlier. I should like also to know how the hurried proposal to make provision for the suggested extension is going to secure what the member for Gascoyne said it would do. In 1917, these leases had 11 years to run, and at that time they were extended for 20 years. To-day they have 16 years to run and, worked out in a sum of simple proportion, we find that when they had 11 years to run, the extension was granted for 20 years, and with 16 years to run, the extension asked for is 34 years.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Almost doubling each time.

Mr. KENNEALLY: If we do not adopt the amendment, we shall not be doing the right thing by the people in the North-West. The member for Gascoyne referred to the depletion of the mining population but what he failed to add was that on some of the vast stations there was not a white man or a white woman. How will he account for the depletion of the population in those places? When the previous extension was granted, a period of 11 years had yet to run. Thus if we were to allow the proposition to remain in abeyance for the next two Parliaments, and the application for extension were then made, the holders of the leases would be no worse off.

The Minister for Lands: A different set of circumstances altogether.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Just as good a case could be put up six years hence by which time, perhaps, more normal conditions would prevail. There is a different set of circumstances as compared with 1917, and they necessitate inquiry being held. If a Royal Commission were appointed as proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, maybe an entirely new set of conditions would be agreed upon owing to the abnor-

mal times through which we are passing. If the claims of members opposite could be substantiated, an inquiry might result in far more beneficial conditions being conceded to the people of the North.

Hon. P. Collier: We might give them 100 years.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Serious consideration should be given to the question of populating the North, and if that question is not investigated by a Royal Commission inquiring into all aspects, how can we hope to do it by extending the pastoral leases without any inquiry whatever? The amendment would give the Government an opportunity to do the right thing. During the last three years the Government have not had time to give attention to the question of security desired by the farmers.

The Minister for Lands: That argument is worn out.

Mr. KENNEALLY: But they can give attention to the question of granting the pastoralists 50 years. The Government should call a halt. They should be able to give some attention to the requirements of the farmers. It is essential that consideration be given to the question of security of tenure to farmers rather than to extending pastoral leases that have 10 years to run. If the amendment be not carried, I hope the second reading will not be passed. Then the next Parliament will be able to give attention to the matter and, even if it is deferred until the end of the last session, the pastoral leases will still have 13 years to run as against 11 years when they were previously extended. If people argue that 13 years tenure is not sufficient in which to negotiate business transactions regarding pastoral leases, what about the lack of tenure to other people?

The Premier: As a matter of fact, security of tenure is the same for everyone.

The Minister for Lands: He does not know.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Then I am in good company with the Minister for Lands. He has shown his ignorance in this Chamber repeatedly. The Minister would be well advised to give attention to cleanliness of government and not talk about what other people know. He is not an intellectual giant, although he poses as such.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must discuss the Bill.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Three years security of tenure for the farmer as against 50 for the pastoralist is too big a margin. If the Government nail their colours to that mast, it is as well for us to know it. If we have an inquiry, the next Government will be in a position to form an opinion. If the amendment be defeated, the Bill should not be passed, so that during the next three years the Government might consider the question of extending the leases. Any question of lease extension will scarcely affect the meat supply either as regards quantity or quality. The argument of the member for Swan that if the quality of meat is to be improved, an extension of the leases should be granted for 50 years, will not bear investigation. I am hopeful that we shall have an inquiry to get information about the North-West. Then if the statement of the Minister for Lands is proved to be correct, that other people do not know as much as he does about the North-West—

The Minister for Lands: You might as well stick to the truth. I did not say that.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Did the Minister say he knows nothing about it?

The Minister for Lands: I did not, and neither did I say that I knew more than other people.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Then an inquiry would give everybody an opportunity to learn more about the North-West and the Minister could support the amendment on that ground. Having the information before us, we could then give attention to the question of extending the leases.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [8.52]: There is one point I should like to clear up and that is regarding security of tenure. By security of tenure we mean that the pastoralist or farmer is not to be dispossessed. That is one thing, but fixing the term of pastoral leases is quite another thing. The one has no connection with the other. A man might have freehold property which is mortgaged, and he might be given security of tenure because of his debts. The member for East Perth confuses protection under such circumstances with an extension of pastoral leases, whereas the one has nothing to do with the other. As a matter of fact the

legislation that protects the farmer, protects also the squatter and the man who has property in Perth. All of them have precisely similar protection. If the member for East Perth turned up the Act, he would see that the protection of mortgagors against mortgagees goes very far. True, the Act will operate only until the 30th December next, but the Leader of the Opposition approves of such protection, just as we do, and it will be renewed year after year so long as it be necessary to afford such protection. We will discuss that matter later, and the hon. member will be staggered to learn the length to which we have gone to protect the mortgagor, whether he be farmer, squatter or householder.

Mr. Kenneally: The Premier should have been present while his own supporters were claiming that they wanted 50 years' extension for the pastoralist for that protection.

The PREMIER: The pastoralists want the right to use their leases while they pay rent, interest and other charges. That is what they are asking, but security of tenure is a thing quite apart.

Mr. Kenneally: They have that right for the next 16 years. Why the haste to put this Bill through?

The PREMIER: Is there anything we do not know about the North-West? Do not we know the rainfall? That is an important point. We know that the North-West is not generally suitable for agriculture because the rainfall is too light. It is a pity that the rainfall is so light. It is very light over the whole of the North-West, but everybody knows that. There is nothing we do not know about it. We know the number of rivers and just what they are like. We have an officer skilled in tropical agriculture and we know what tropical agriculture can be undertaken in the North-West. We know that it cannot be undertaken except under irrigation or in other than very favoured spots. Are not we as capable of dealing with the matter here tonight as we would have been three months, six months or 12 months ago or on any night in the week?

Mr. Kenneally: Could not the Bill have been introduced three or six months ago?

The PREMIER: Of course it could have been introduced six years ago or at any other time, but would not the hon. member be as likely to understand as much about it on the 16th December as on the 16th August. We have lived in this country a

long time. We have an interest in the whole of the State. All of us know the North-West, the member for East Perth included. He knows what the people do there and of what the country is capable. The North-West is light-carrying stock country for the most part because of the light rainfall. Given a considerable rainfall like that of Queensland, it would be a very different proposition. The hon. member knows, too, that the lessees of pastoral lands are protected in their improvements absolutely, and that if they were not given a renewal of their leases, the improvements would have to be paid for.

Mr. Kenneally: There is no question of not giving them a renewal.

The PREMIER: If it came to a question of a renewal of mining leases, as it did a few years ago, there might be the same trouble. The hon. member might say that he did not know anything about the question on the 16th December but that he would know all about it on the 16th August. That will always be so, regardless of what party may be in power.

Mr. Kenneally: There is no question of not giving them a renewal.

The PREMIER: We know what the North is capable of and what the land will carry. We know that stocking is the only use to which we can put the land, unless we undertake irrigation at great expense in a few places. There are rivers in the North, but not a large number, and they are not rivers that give a permanent supply of water. They dry off into pools and are not permanently running streams. There are millions of acres of land in this State that never have been taken up and anybody can have them for the asking. I should think it was clear that in these extraordinarily difficult times, when wool and wheat prices are so low, we should do something to make it possible for the work of improving the pastoral holdings to be continued, or make it possible for the people there to hold on and not drive them off their properties because of the want of a lease that would give them the right to use the properties. There is no question of security in their right; the idea is to give them the right to use their properties. It is a fact that the quality of the stock in the North-West, particularly in the Kimberleys, has deteriorated considerably, and a good deal of money must be spent on improvements and on the purchase of better stock.

Mr. Kenneally: They have the right of which you speak for 16 years.

The PREMIER: Yes, but if we did not intend to renew the leases, we would have to give them at least ten years' notice. But who wants that land or who is likely to want it for the rearing of stock? There are millions of acres, almost hundreds of millions of acres of land in the North-West not taken up and not likely to be taken up. Life there is full of troubles, trials and hardships; it is not the sort of life that attracts people nowadays. I should think there is nothing we could learn about the North-West from inquiry by Royal Commission. Mr. Wise could tell us all about the possibilities of tropical agriculture. We know what is possible in the North with regard to stock. We know what part water supplies play in the development of that industry. The land has to be improved and fenced and the cattle protected. Vermin must be got rid of and water supplies have to be conserved. There is nothing that a Royal Commission could ascertain that we do not already know. In fact, it would be strange, after all these years, if we did not know what there is in that part of the State. We know that the country is fairly uniform, and that applies also to the rainfall. We can get the records any time we desire. I hope the House will not agree to the amendment, but will accept the Bill. I hope the House will not try to fool the farmers or anyone else into thinking that we are extending preferential treatment to the pastoralists in the North and the North-West. I hope they will not try to fool the farmers by saying that we allow them three years, whereas we are prepared to allow the pastoralists a tenure extending over 50 years, whether they pay their rent or not. That is entirely wrong. The pastoralists are treated just as we treat the farmers, and the security of tenure provided for the pastoralists is as good, but no better, than that afforded the farmers. There is no difference in our treatment of the two sections.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: You are the only one who has suggested there is.

The PREMIER: No. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat talked about three years for the farmers and 50 years for the pastoralists.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: He said nothing about the non-payment of rent.

Mr. Kenneally: Of course not, and the Premier knows I did not.

The PREMIER: Yes, he did. He talked about three years for the farmers and 50 years for the pastoralists.

Mr. Kenneally: But I said nothing about the non-payment of rent, and you know it.

The PREMIER: Some of these people cannot pay.

Mr. Kenneally: You know you are saying what is not true.

The PREMIER: I am not in the habit of saying what is not true.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: The member for East Perth did not mention the point you raised.

Mr. Kenneally: And the Premier knows it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member referred to security of tenure and it will be recognised that that means security against claims that can be made against property. I refer to claims for the non-payment of interest, rent, and so on. That is what security of tenure means in that sense.

Mr. Kenneally: The farmers will tell you what they think of security of tenure when they get the chance.

The PREMIER: No doubt the electors of East Perth will deal with the hon. member, and Northam will deal generously with me, as it always has done.

Mr. Kenneally: There is a suggestion of insincerity about that remark.

The PREMIER: And the hon. member will take the high road this time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is not included in the Bill, and we had better stick to it.

The PREMIER: I really rose to make it clear that we appreciate the possibilities of the North, and we know what security of tenure is available. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) knows just what use the land can be put to. There are places where we will be able to go in for tropical agriculture. That can be done at Campden Harbour and other selected spots. The Tropical Adviser in Agriculture, Mr. Wise, knows all the spots, and they can be taken from the pastoral leases if required. The pastoralists do not own the land, and if we want a part of it for tropical agriculture, we have the necessary power to take it. We will do so when necessary. I hope the Bill will be agreed to, and that the public will not think that we are not as capable of dealing with this matter on the 16th Decem-

ber as on the 14th August. We renewed the mining leases 20 years ago, and they did not have to be dealt with by Parliament. I venture to say that had the matter come before Parliament there would have been the same sort of discussion, although I do not know that there is any real opposition on this occasion.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: There is no opposition from that standpoint.

The PREMIER: No, but the suggestion is that at some other time it would be quite all right. It is just as right now as it can be at any other time. Surely, in view of the fact that we do know what the position is in the North and what we are asked to grant, we can pass the Bill now before the House.

**MR. COVERLEY** (Kimberley—on amendment) [9.6]: On this occasion I will go some distance in supporting the views of the Premier. I shall oppose the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, although not for the reasons that the Premier has advanced. I have on more than one occasion in this House expressed the opinion that Kimberley will be nothing but a pastoral and mining proposition for many years to come. I suffer under no illusion as to the possibility of tropical agriculture in that part of the State, from the standpoint of a commercial proposition. There are many selected spots where tropical agriculture could be undertaken successfully, but nevertheless my opinion is that the district will remain a pastoral and mining proposition for many years to come. I have not much faith in Royal Commissions, select committees, and so on. In the early part of my Parliamentary career, I supported a motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the development of the North-West. Effect has not yet been given to that motion and, if I may be permitted to prophesy, it will be many years before effect is given to it. I find that the new position has arisen in connection with the pastoral industry in the North, and perhaps in the extreme North-West. Due to the financial depression or to whatever term we may choose to adopt to describe what the financial institutions are doing in this part of the Commonwealth, most of the pastoralists are in difficulties. The majority of them are unable to spend money on improving their holdings. On account of the drop in the price of their products, the financial



institutions have to carry them on, and difficulties have arisen in that regard. My opinion is that that explains the introduction of the Bill. Most pastoral properties are involved with one or other of the financial institutions, and the lessees find they cannot meet their commitments. I do not subscribe to the statements made by the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) and others, to the effect that if the term of the leases be extended, money for developmental purposes will fall from the clouds. In my electorate, there are from 46 to 50 stations, 20 of which are owned and controlled by companies, the remainder being owned by individuals. I have been shown financial statements by some of the resident owners, and I am satisfied that unless Parliament grants the concession embodied in the Bill—the pastoralists are not asking for it but the financial institutions are forcing them to do so—many of them will have to roll up their swags and leave their properties. I agree with most of the remarks of Opposition members with reference to the principle of extended tenure. We are tying up our national assets for a further generation. I am prepared to agree to it, however, because I believe that, in the course of time, we shall have in power a Government strong enough to commandeered these properties and cut them up into smaller holdings in the interests of the development of the State, which, in turn, will be in the interests of the Empire. I imagine that, when we have a Government strong enough to do that, the Imperial Government will supply the cash necessary to enable the North to be developed along scientific lines.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Murchison — on amendment) [9.10]: I oppose the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It cannot be argued that we are unaware of the possibilities of the North-West. They are well known to us. It is a matter of water conservation to a large extent, and expensive and elaborate plant will be essential before we can engage, with any degree of success, in industries other than the depasturing of stock. I dissociate myself from the suggestion that the North-West will remain a pastoral proposition for all time. There are some beautiful portions in that part of the State, and in the course of time the areas will be cut up and tropical industries will be carried on successfully. White

people will live there, and produce commodities for which there will be a ready market.

**HON. J. C. WILLECOCK**: We already have power to resume land for that purpose.

**MR. MARSHALL**: That is why I oppose the amendment. I do not want the Minister for Lands to be under any misapprehension; we have all the power we need to enable us to resume any portion of the North-West that we require for the purposes I have indicated. For my part, I do not desire any expensive inquiry concerning the North. We have had an expert in the North-West for many years, and he has proved a most valuable officer. Possibly many members of Parliament are not aware that he is there. If his services are retained to the State, gradually but surely we shall find areas such as that at Carnarvon, where closer settlement will be promoted and tropical fruits will be grown.

**MR. Angelo**: He has been a most useful officer.

**MR. MARSHALL**: Yes, and in years to come we shall more fully appreciate his valuable work. It may not be in my time, but I am sure that in due course the North-West will be as thriving and prosperous as the South-West, although, of course, in a different direction. There is no necessity for the appointment of a Royal Commission. We know the possibilities of the North-West: it is all a matter of money and water conservation. Until we do, that portion of our State can be used for no other purpose than raising beef and producing wool and mutton. I oppose the amendment, but when the Bill is before us I want to express my views on it.

**HON. J. C. WILLECOCK** (Geraldton) [9.16]: I do not desire to delay the House, but I think we have got away from the subject matter of the amendment, which raises the question of whether or not there should be a readjustment of the boundaries of the stations with a view to increasing the productive capacity of the leases. That was a point made by the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Roebourne spoke about the revaluation or reappraisal of the leases, but that is not the point at all. There are some 400 or 500 stations in the State, all of which appear to have been taken up promiscuously. People have come along and pegged out leases without the land having been surveyed. That method of selecting

land is not in the best interests of the development of the country. Some stations have an area of a million acres, others 500,000 acres, while some have an area of only 30,000 to 40,000 acres. As explained by the members for Hannans and Guildford-Midland, we should have some evidence that the pooling of the leases will tend to their better development, so that existing watercourses and roads can be used to better advantage. We have not had any evidence that the land has been taken up or worked in the most economical manner. The Premier spoke about the rainfall and about what the land is capable of producing; but in some instances people are holding too much land. If people are holding too much land and are not developing it, but merely holding it for the benefit of their grandchildren, then it will not be in the interests of the State to grant them an extension of their leases for a further term of 50 years. I remember that on the last occasion when Parliament extended the leases, in 1917, it was stated, "We will agree at this stage to the extension of the leases for 20 years; but before any further extension is granted, it should be the duty of Parliament to see that the land has been selected in the best interests of the development of the north-west portion of the State, and with a view to the production of wealth." That was another point raised by the Leader of the Opposition. The observations made by the member for Guildford-Midland on this matter are classical because of their appropriateness to the subject of the development of the North-West. He has evidently made an intense study of the matter. He had opportunities of doing so during the time he was residing in the North-West and when he was Minister for Lands. He made it very clear that we could not intelligently discuss this matter until a thorough investigation had been made by experts. Why should we grant an extension of these leases 16 years prior to the date when they will expire? No doubt seven or eight years before the leases expire we should arrive at some definite policy for the development of the pastoral areas. We should make it easier for the people of the North to produce wealth in the pastoral industry. Some pastoralists with comparatively small areas have been forced to take up land two or three hundred miles inland, while other pastoralists are holding a million acres, por-

tion of which is within 14 or 15 miles of a port. If all the areas were pooled, so to speak, arrangements might be made whereby reasonable access to ports could be given to all pastoralists. That is what has been done in the agricultural areas. I see no reason, unless, of course, there is some political reason, why these leases should be extended now. I know of a number of people in the North-West who are not satisfied with the way in which the land has been selected there. The member for Hannans gave a striking instance, which nobody contradicted.

Mr. Church: I did.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I listened to the hon. member and did not hear him contradict the member for Hannans.

Mr. Church: I have spoken to the man referred to by the member for Hannans and he said it was absolutely wrong.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Do you mean Mr. Barrett-Lennard?

Mr. Church: Yes, he told me.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Did he say that what the member for Hannans said was wrong?

Mr. Church: Yes, I rang him up and asked him. That is your answer.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: But the hon. member did not say that during the course of his speech.

Mr. Church: I did say so.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That is a matter between Mr. Barrett-Lennard and the member for Hannans. I cannot deal with it at this stage. What is a reasonable time to extend the leases? We might decide that 50 years is not long enough and say they should be extended for 70 years. We might be able to obtain information from a financial institution as to what is a reasonable period to extend the leases. The last Government made a guess and said 20 years was long enough.

The Minister for Lands: Wool was then 1s. 5d. a lb.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I am talking about what is a reasonable time to extend the leases. We have had no information about that. The present Government say 50 years is a reasonable time, but we want to know from somebody in authority, who has had experience, what a reasonable period is.

The Minister for Lands: You could not arbitrarily fix a period which would satisfy everybody.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: No, but what is a reasonable period? It would not be right to grant an extension for 50 years if 30 years would serve the purpose. Goodness knows what is going to happen to this country 40 or 50 years hence. What does the member for Roebourne suggest is a reasonable time?

Mr. Church: Just what is in the Bill.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The member for Roebourne, in common with his colleagues in the North-West, was entirely and definitely satisfied when, 10 years ago, he got an extension for 30 years. What has altered his opinion since then? Now he says he wants an extension for 50 years.

Mr. Church: I did not. According to the Bill, it is 33 years.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Thirty-three years on top of the present term, which makes 49 years altogether. I am sorry the Government will not agree to the amendment. The Bill will be passed and not a single individual in the North-West affected by it will know anything about it.

The Minister for Lands: I guarantee their members know a good deal about it, particularly the members for Kimberley and Gascoyne.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I object to a close arrangement being made by two or three men.

The Minister for Lands: We did not say, as you know, that the Bill was not being introduced.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Bill will be passed by Parliament before the people in the North-West know anything about it.

The Minister for Lands: If they knew, they would ask for 100 years, so it is just as well not to let them know.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: There are probably some people in the North-West who would not be in favour of the Bill. There was a considerable amount of opposition to the previous extension of the leases. The Bill is being rushed through so quickly that it will be impossible for the opposition to it to make itself articulate. I guarantee that not one of the constituents of the member for Roebourne knows anything about the Bill, unless the hon. member sent a wire telling them the Government were introducing it. Did he have some understanding behind the back of Parliament with the Minister for Lands?

The Minister for Lands: I mentioned it on the Estimates.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: There may be 1,000 of the 3,000 or 4,000 people in the North-West who might desire to express their opposition to the Bill. They may think the Bill is not in the best interests of the North-West. We certainly silence their opposition by not telling them anything at all about the Bill. I do not think it is right or honourable for Parliament to pass legislation in this way. Why should not the Government agree to delay the measure so that the people of the North-West may have an opportunity of expressing their views upon it? If we do something behind their backs, they will not forgive us. Not one of them has had an opportunity of acquainting himself with the provisions of the Bill. Yet here we are legislating for millions of acres of land. We are not justified in doing that without letting the people interested know about it. Reasonable delay would not mean any injustice to the pastoralists. Why then should we have all this hurry? I will support the amendment.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. C. G. Latham—York—on amendment) [9.31]: I appreciate the way in which the Opposition have stated their case, but I cannot help feeling impressed with some of the statements made. One has only to look at the map on the wall to see the tremendous area of Crown lands still left in the North-West. If any man selects a piece of that land, he has only 16 years of a lease left. How could he possibly obtain money to enable him to develop and improve that land within 16 years? The shyest thing I know is money. If a person has money to invest he requires substantial security. The area of Crown lands left up North alone justifies the extension of the leases. If we extend the leases, when there are any land rents in arrears we shall have a longer period over which to spread those arrears and so make the payments easier. Again, the capitalisation of the stations is very much greater than it was in 1917 for, as I have already said, properties have changed hands at a figure exceeding £55,000, and with the fall in the prices of wool and stock, it is impossible for the leaseholders to make their annual payments. So the extension of the leases will ease the position.

As to the proposed Royal Commission, in 1926 the House carried a motion for a Royal Commission, a motion moved by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Lamond). The present Leader of the Opposition was then Premier, and he told members it would require millions of money to do anything up there. So it would. I could not make out a better case against the appointment of a Royal Commission than if I were to use the words then used by the present Leader of the Opposition, for the view he holds to-day is the same as it was in 1926. No Royal Commission was appointed, because the hon. member then told the House that the task before the Government in developing the South-West was quite enough, without seriously attempting the development of the North.

Hon. P. Collier: That has no bearing upon this.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Except that it shows how difficult it is for us to-day.

Hon. P. Collier: That is admitted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are not giving away this land, but only leasing it for 50 years. And, after all, the leaseholders have no security of tenure, for anyone can enter upon those leases and select land for agricultural purposes.

Hon. P. Collier: But it is not agricultural land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is admitted, but Mr. Wise, the tropical adviser, has told us there are along the coast places where tropical fruits and pastures could be grown. However, it is a question, not of growing those products, but of marketing them. The only way to use the North to any real advantage is to wait until our population is sufficiently dense.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We have no room for a dense population.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member cannot be earnest in that. All countries have been developed the same as we are developing Western Australia: first the aborigines, then the pastoral industry, then the agricultural industry followed by industrialism and commercialism. Had the member for Guildford-Midland accompanied us on our trip through Kimberley I am sure that any assistance he could give to leaseholders there to enable them to get more money for development purposes, he would have been only too glad to give. My one regret is that

the member for Pilbara, who was with us on that trip, is unable to be here to-night, for he would certainly echo the remarks of the members representing the North. There is no political significance whatever in the Bill. We want to relieve the feelings of the pastoralists in the North, who are performing a very important function. I am afraid we do not appreciate how much we owe to them. What is required is to let them have some security of tenure to offer their financiers, so that they may get money to enable them to hang on until things improve. The Leader of the Opposition said the Bill was late in being introduced. I admit that. Probably it was my own fault. I assure the House that in my office the print of the Bill to amend and consolidate the Land Act embodied this Bill, which was lifted out of the consolidation Bill in an attempt to expedite the work and allow the session to close before Christmas. I am sure the hon. member would not believe that I would put up anything which was not true. Had it been possible to get that Land Act consolidation drafted earlier, it would have been introduced earlier. Probably it was due to my lack of knowledge as to what was entailed in the preparation of a consolidating measure. It is an enormous job. However, that task is now completed, and I hope that whoever may be Minister for Lands in the next Parliament will be able to introduce that Bill in the first session. I am sorry members as a whole cannot agree to support the Bill as we have introduced it, but I can assure them there is no ulterior motive behind the Bill. There is a misunderstanding in respect of the security of tenure. If the pastoralists do not pay their rent, their leases are subject to forfeiture just the same as any other land held under lease from the Crown. There is no security for them against their creditors, any more than there is for the wheatgrower; so we are not giving them a security which we do not give to other sections of the community. The Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act gives exactly the same security to pastoralists as to agriculturists. I want to clear up that point, because the farmers to-day are having a very desperate time, and I am sure no member would desire incorrectly to inform any farmer and let him think we are giving to others what we are not giving to him. By this Bill the pastoralists will not get any more security of tenure than the wheatgrowers have. Any

man doing a fair thing has no reason to fear a forfeiture of his land because he is unable for a time to pay his rent. I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Murchison) [9.45]: While I agree to an extension of the leases, I am not prepared to go as far as the Government propose. A period of 50 years is far too long. I shall support the second reading of the Bill in the hope of getting the period reduced in Committee. Quite a lot of excuses have been made by the Minister to justify the proposal to extend the leases for 50 years. He said that extension was necessary to enable the pastoralists to secure finance to develop their holdings. I am not under any misapprehension about that. I do not think the extension of the leases will assist the pastoralists to the extent of enabling them to get one extra penny of new money for developmental work. If the pastoralists succeed in getting any additional funds from the financial institutions, the money will be advanced only to enable them to carry on. I am not so foolish as to believe that they will get a flood of money for new work. The position now as compared with 1917 is quite different. The association of pastoralists who in 1917 prompted the then Government, 11 years before the expiration of the leases, to grant an extension, did so conditionally. They made a fifty-fifty proposal, and the result was that the Government proposed that the leases be extended from 1928 to 1948, provided the rents were increased 100 per cent. That was agreed to. The squatters considered it was fair and reasonable, in return for the extension, to pay double the previous rents.

**Mr. Church:** For how long did they agree to pay the double rents? Only until they were re-appraised.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** Yes, but no squatter knew what would happen under the re-appraisal. They certainly admitted that they were paying too low a rent, and they were prepared to pay double until the reappraisal was made. To-day the position is different. Although an extension of the leases is proposed, the rents have been reduced materially. They were reduced last year.

**Mr. Church:** According to the price of wool.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** Yes. The rents were reduced in a haphazard way. Any member with experience of the Murchison or the North-West will admit that a large area of land is being and has been held for a considerable number of years without being improved. If the land is held by the same lessees for another 50 years, it will not be improved. My argument of last year applies to-day. Rather than concede a reduction of rent haphazardly, each case should have been taken on its merits. Each pastoralist should have been questioned to this effect, "What area of land are you holding? How long have you held it? How much of it have you improved?" Thus we could have ascertained that many lessees required, not so much a reduction of rent as a reduction of area, which would have saved them money in the payment of rent. That course was not adopted. Now it is proposed to extend the leases, but we are not to consider whether the properties held will be made fully productive. We are asked to say, in effect, "We are not concerned about the area you hold, or your development of it; you can have it for the next 50 years." The Bill also proposes a further reduction in rent. I agree that the pastoralists are having a hard time, but the farmers are also suffering acutely. The cause in each instance, in my opinion, is the same. In the wheatbelt are farmers holding 2,000 or 3,000 acres of land. Men become land-hungry; they hold areas far in excess of what they can develop, and they have to pay rates and taxes on land that is producing nothing. That condition of affairs is as glaring in the pastoral areas as in the agricultural areas. To grant a reduction in rent when pastoralists are playing the part of the dog-in-the-manger is not right. They are to be given extension of their leases, not to enable them to produce, but to prevent other people from producing. If they want to hold land out of use, they should pay a reasonable price for it, especially as they are depriving other people of the opportunity of taking it up and developing it. That is one of the reasons why I dislike granting an extension without first having a thorough review of the position. One station has been held by the present lessee for the

past 25 years. He has gradually absorbed the country around his original selection and, with a partner, is holding about 2½ million acres of land, which is traversed by a railway. I suggest that not half a million acres of it is thoroughly improved. Yet that land will be held out of production for the next 50 years. If the pastoralists want a concession, the State should grant it only on the condition that they do the job required of them by law. If they will not use the land, they should not be allowed to hold it. The pastoralists are financially bogged, but I am not too sure that the financial institutions do not encourage the holding of large areas. It seems necessary to hold a large area, even though the major portion of it be producing nothing, in order to get assistance from the financial institutions. We should have many more people producing wheat, wool and mutton. What has retarded settlement has been the holding of large areas and the using of only a fraction of them. It is true that the fixing of the alignments of the pastoral leases has been a matter of guesswork. Though certain lines have been struck and divisions made in the Murchison and North-West, I do not suppose 50 of the pastoral leases have been surveyed or had the boundaries technically defined.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Some of the lines on the Murchison were run out by laymen.

Mr. MARSHALL: Several stations have surveyors who survey the holdings, and on one station a boundary was found to be 18 miles out. The fixing of boundaries has been approximate. A man would mount a horse and start from a datum peg. He would estimate that the horse trotted six miles an hour, and after travelling for four hours, would arrive at the conclusion that he had gone 24 miles. That is the way pastoral leases have been surveyed.

The Minister for Agriculture: I would not put my money on that horse.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister, being Scottish, would not put it on any horse. I agree with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, and the member for Geraldton about endeavouring to secure a better alignment of the leases, but there will be trouble when the task is undertaken and a good deal of expense is likely to be involved, especially if leases occupying good positions are interfered with. The time will come when it must be done. I doubt if we shall be able to finance it for many years. It will be a

costly job. Compensation will be paid to the one and possibly taken from the other. Ultimately the Treasury will be called upon to foot a fairly large bill to get anywhere near correcting the present awful alignments of our pastoral leases generally. It is wrong to extend the leases for 50 years when they still have 16 years to run. It will be time enough to think about an extension three or six years hence. I congratulate the Government upon their consistency: whenever they do tackle the question of leases they carry out the job efficiently. They have got up to as high as 99-year leases. They have a penchant for extending certain leases for a long period. In Committee I shall move to reduce the term. The pastoralists could not expect to get security of tenure for 50 years when they have 16 years already to go. I admit that portion of the State cannot be used for any other purpose for a long time. I have no desire to be a dog in the manger, and prevent people from doing what I cannot do myself. I compliment our wool growers and beef raisers. They have been very generous to the State and have built up a wonderful industry which has not cost the Government anything to speak of. Our wool industry has been developed by private enterprise and often at great sacrifice in the early days. Pastoralists do deserve some consideration, and in so far as they do I shall be prepared to let them have an extension. I disagree with that portion of the Bill that permits one manager to manage more than one station. It is a bad look-out for us if our million-acre propositions cannot run one white man.

The Minister for Lands: What about dealing with that in Committee?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. I support the second reading, conditional on there being a reduction of the term of leases provided therein.

MR. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [10.5]: I support the second reading, but in Committee will endeavour to secure certain amendments. The three principles involved in the measure are—the extension of the leases, the reappraisal of the leases, and the limitation of areas. Will the Minister explain how the reappraisal will affect the parent Act?

The Minister for Lands: I will do so in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Angelo in the Chair: the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Extension of term for which leases may be granted under principal Act as amended by No. 19 of 1917 and this Act:

Mr. MARSHALL: I move an amendment—

That in line 15 the words "eighty-two" be struck out and "sixty-two" be inserted in lieu.

This would ensure a total tenure of 30 years, and should satisfy the squatters. When the time comes for a review of the position the right thing, I am sure, will be done by these people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot accept the amendment. We have submitted sufficient evidence to justify an extension for the full 50 years. The people will not be deprived of any rights. On much of this land it is necessary to put down artesian bores before it can be used for stock. These bores are very expensive, and have to be relaid from time to time. If people are given only a short lease they would not be likely to incur the necessary expense in development.

Mr. MARSHALL: Does the Minister argue that it will be more expensive to put down bores in the future than it has been in the past?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Mr. MARSHALL: Pastoralists have spent huge sums of money in the past, without a lease extending over 50 years. As a matter of fact, no money will be spent on bores, fencing or sheds for many years to come unless the price of wool improves. I agree that the leases should be extended, but I think the suggestion that a term of 50 years is necessary to enable money to be raised for boring is ridiculous.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: At Wiluna £1,250,000 has been spent on an 18-year lease.

The Minister for Lands: That is a wasting asset.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then the risk is all the greater.

The Minister for Lands: There will be very little left behind at the end of 18 years.

Mr. MARSHALL: Eighteen years is nothing in the life of a mine.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. COVERLEY: Will the Minister explain how the annual rental is to be applied when the reappraisal is effected next year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The rental will be assessed by the board. I believe the rental basis, as between East and West Kimberley, is wrong. The board have been instructed that they are to take no notice of the differential basis as between the two Kimberleys, but to fix a rental for the whole of the Kimberleys.

Mr. Coverley: Then the next appraisalment will be 15 years after the one fixed next year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, it will be fixed without consideration for the amending Act last year. After visiting that part of the State, I believe a mistake was made when we passed that measure.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 30 of No. 19 of 1917:

Mr. COVERLEY: Paragraph (a) does not appeal to me with regard to the limitation of areas. We are doing our utmost to encourage pastoralists to employ labour and we want to increase the population in the outer areas. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (a) be struck out.

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

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 107 of principal Act:

Mr. COVERLEY: The clause provides that the natives may enter any enclosed or unenclosed but otherwise unimproved parts of a lease, to seek their sustenance in their accustomed manner. At present the natives can visit water holes and get roots and whatever they require. I cannot see any reason for the clause. I hope it will be deleted.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 7, 8—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILLS (2)—RETURNED.**

1, Secession Referendum,

With amendments.

2, Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment (No. 1),

Without amendment.

**BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT  
(No. 2.)**

Received from the Council and read a first time.

**BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT  
(No. 2.)**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [10.25] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill which has reached us from another place. It was introduced in consequence of a resolution passed by that Chamber drawing attention to the fact that on the goldfields of the State there were quite a number of tailings dumps in respect of which, although apparently it was not possible to find an owner for them, it was not lawful to issue a license to enable them to be re-treated. Members will of course know that quite a quantity of tailings which could not be re-treated profitably when the standard value of gold was £4 4s. 11½d. per ounce, can be profitably re-treated to-day. As it was not possible to give a legal title to those tailings, they have remained untreated. The Bill will amend the existing Mining Act to permit of their being re-treated. The Bill applies to tailings dumps on tailings areas, mining leases and water rights. Where they exist on mining leases that have been abandoned since 1904, licenses can be and have been granted for their re-treatment. Those dumps that existed on leases abandoned prior to 1904 (and there is quite a number of them) are not in the same category. They cannot be re-treated. Small leases were taken up

of about 12 acres each and, in order to avoid putting the tailings dumps on the lease itself, the lessee made application to the Crown for and obtained the right to put his tailings on what are known as tailings areas or machinery areas. While the mining lease itself was abandoned, there was no abandonment of the ownership of the tailings on the tailings areas or machinery areas. It is not possible to establish who are the owners of such tailings dumps, but notwithstanding that, the Crown have not been able to grant licences to re-treat them. The Bill, if passed, will permit of that being done. The granting of the licenses will provide additional work and will also mean the production of more gold at a time when gold is being sold at a high price. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

*Third Reading.*

Read a third time and passed.

**BILL—MARRIAGE ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**MR. PARKER** (North-East Fremantle) [10.31] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill to rectify an anomaly in the existing law.

Hon. P. Collier: It comes from the Council?

Mr. PARKER: Yes. At present a man may marry his deceased wife's sister, but he cannot marry his deceased wife's sister's daughter. The same applies in the opposite degree in respect of a woman marrying the son of her deceased husband's brother. The Bill is purely to rectify an anomaly of the law, and that is all there is in it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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



*Third Reading.*

Read a third time and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

*House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.*

**Legislative Council,**

*Tuesday, 20th December, 1932.*

	PAGE
Assent to Bills	2600
Bills: Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment (No. 2), Com., etc.	2600
Bills of Sale Act Amendment, 3r.	2600
Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment, 2r., etc.	2602
Metropolitan Whole Milk, 2r., etc.	2608
Mining Act Amendment (No. 2), returned	2627
Marriage Act Amendment, returned	2627
Land Act Amendment, all stages	2627
Motion: State Forests revocation	2631

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

**ASSENT TO BILLS.**

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

1, Tenants, Purchasers and Mortgagors' Relief Act Amendment.

2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.

**BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX  
ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT  
(No. 2).**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 16th December. Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, Hon. J. J. Holmes in charge of the Bill.

Title:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: At the last sitting of the Committee, Mr. Kitson raised the point that a similar Bill to this amended the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act,

1907-1931. This particular Bill amends the Acts of 1907-1924. I find that this measure is in no way complicated with the other one, and is quite in order.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Read a third time, and passed.

**BILLS—BILLS OF SALE ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

*Third Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [4.40]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

**HON. J. M. DREW** (Central) [4.41]: I oppose the third reading. I was absent for a brief period when the Minister made his second reading speech, but I have examined the Bill since and come to the conclusion that it is not as innocent as its size would indicate. Its object is to validate certain bills of sale which have not been registered in accordance with the Act. It does not say so in as many words, but that is its objective. Under the Bills of Sale Act, notices of intention to register must be given except in a few specified cases. It would seem that such notice was not given when it should have been given, and bills of sale have been registered contrary to the law. The law is to be altered and made retrospective so as to protect the interests and serve the future purposes of the gentlemen vitally concerned, whoever they may be. I do not know who they are, and have not had time in which to make inquiries. Notice of intention to register is not necessary in certain circumstances when the security is wool or stock on a station. A station is interpreted to mean "any land used wholly or partly for the purposes of depasturing stock, whether the same shall consist of freehold land or land held under lease or license, or partly of freehold land or partly of land so held." Section 18 of the Bills of Sale Act Amendment Act, 1906, is amended by Section 15 of the Bills of Sale Act Amendment Act, 1914. Clause 2 of the Bill amends the Act by deleting the words "on a station," and deleting the paragraph which defines a station. The law exempts from notice of