

BILL—REDUCTION OF RENTS.*Assembly's Message.*

Message received from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [6.20]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 29th September.

I thank members for the assistance they have given me, and the kindness and patience they have shown in the last fortnight in helping me to get through so many troublesome measures.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.21 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 13th August, 1931.

QUESTION—RAILWAY FREE PASSES.*Payment to Commonwealth Railway Department.*

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Lands: Of the £588 paid to the Commonwealth Railway Department for the year ended June, 1931, on account of Parliamentary and Ministerial passes, how much was paid for Ministers and their officers on official business, and how much for the remaining 72 State members?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Ministers, £154 16s. 8d.; other members, £433 10s. 8d.; officers, nil; total, £588 7s. 4d.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Administrator received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill (No. 3), £1,370,000.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [4.37]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable messages from the Legislative Council received at this sitting to be taken into consideration forthwith, and also to permit of the remaining stages of the Reduction of Rents Bill, the Dried Fruits Act Continuance Bill, and the Fire Brigades (Sinking Fund) Bill, and all stages of the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment Bill, to be passed at this sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House. There is an absolute majority of members present.

Question put and passed.

BILL—REDUCTION OF RENTS.

Report of Committee adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT CONTINUANCE.*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. P. D. Ferguson—Irwin-Moore) [4.39] in moving the second reading said: This Bill to continue the operation of the

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

Dried Fruits Act of 1926 is brought down in the interests of the viticultural industry, the existence of which is absolutely dependent on the extension of the Act. The industry is one of the oldest in Western Australia: in fact, it was started by a man named McFaul in the Swan Valley as far back as 1831. For many years it was not in a highly flourishing condition—not until after the war, when the Government of the day were looking for avenues in which to place our returned soldiers. It was then decided that a number of them should be established in the Swan Valley and other districts in the viticultural industry, and more particularly in the dried fruits section. For a number of years the soldiers thus established, and other settlers who had been engaged in the industry, did remarkably well, receiving high prices for their products; and the industry apparently made considerable strides. However, when the supply overtook the local demand and those engaged in the industry were forced to look overseas for markets, prices were so depressed that the producers were unable to make a living. The result was that quite a number of them went out of the business. Those who remained in it were unable to make a livelihood, with the result that in 1926 it was proposed that a control board should be set up, to be organised and managed by the producers themselves, in an endeavour to save what was left of the industry. In 1926 numerous growers were definitely opposed to control of any kind. In fact, something like 40 per cent. of the growers set their faces against this legislation. However, it was put through by the Collier Government; and I desire to say that since it has been in operation it has proved the one outstanding success of control legislation in Australia. It has been the means of saving the dried fruits industry from utter ruin. To-day I am sure 100 per cent. of our dried fruits growers, if asked whether they approve of control, would reply that they are heartily in accord with it. At a meeting of about 250 dried fruits growers which I attended in the Swan Valley recently, a resolution asking the Government to continue the operation of the Act was carried unanimously. There is not a dried fruits grower in Western Australia to-day but is prepared to admit that the operation of the measure has been the means of saving him personally from ruin and the industry from chaos.

A few derelict vineyards of Western Australia have gone out of operation, but without any appreciable increase in the acreage under vines there has been a considerable appreciation in the output of the fruit itself. In 1926, the year before the enactment of this legislation, Western Australia produced about 1,000 tons of dried fruits. In 1931, when the Act had been in operation for five years, the production rose to 2,337 tons, indicating that growers had been able to get reasonable prices for their products and that they had attended efficiently to their vineyards and carefully looked after their planting and cultural operations. The net result has been advantageous to them and to the State generally. In addition, prior to control it was found that a few of the most up-to-date growers were getting high prices for their products, while the great majority were forced to take what was left of the local trade, and had to put their fruit on the market at unremunerative prices, such as did not give them a living at all.

Mr. Sampson: That is the case as regards fresh fruit to-day.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The result of the operation of the Act has meant that every producer must export his quota of fruit, which in turn means that no fruit which is not up to standard is taken into the packing sheds. Further, every producer gets his fair share of the local sale, and has to take his fair share of the lower export parity. Reports from customers overseas indicate that the fruit from Western Australia is of the very highest quality, is indeed the best that is produced in Australia. In addition to that, the growers' control board has been working in unison with the control boards in the Eastern States, and there has been no exploiting of the consumers at all. A fair and equitable price has been placed on the fruit for local consumption, and all the producers have shared the lower prices obtained overseas. Something like £1,000,000 of capital has been invested in the vineyards of Western Australia, so it will be seen the industry is of considerable importance to the State. Quite a lot of Government funds have been invested in assisting returned soldiers and others to embark on this industry. Without this control there would be little hope for the industry, and so the Bill must

commend itself to the House. After the introduction of the parent measure in 1926 it was found there were one or two provisions that were not quite workable, and my predecessor in office, the member for Mt. Hawthorn, was good enough to introduce certain amendments at the request of the growers. Those amendments have materially assisted in the smooth working of the Act. A measure of greater control over certain growers has been vested in the board, and everybody concerned has worked together in accord with the object of benefiting the industry generally. To-day there is nothing more to be desired from the point of view of smooth working and effective control of the industry. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [4.47]: This is merely a Bill to continue the operations of the Dried Fruits Act introduced by the Labour Government and subsequently amended by that Government. The policy throughout Australia in respect of dried fruits is that of control. Even those who do not believe in control, save in exceptional circumstances, agree that it must apply to the dried fruits industry. Therefore it is quite in keeping with the policy, not only of this State, but of the Commonwealth that the Act should be continued. In each of the States where dried fruits are grown, and also under the Commonwealth Government, control exists and it is necessary that this State, being a grower, should be in line. Many difficulties have been experienced, but now the growers and those handling the products are in agreement. At one time the tendency was to break away, and certain legal proceedings were taken to bring all into line with the policy of Australia. This is now generally accepted, and there is no longer any difficulty about the operation of the Act. However, attempts should be made to find a better method of distribution of the products in this State. The difficulty now is that whereas we have this measure of control over the growers to enable them to get something like the economic value of their products, the fact remains that whereas our investigations showed that the grower is not overpaid even in this State, and that only 25 per cent. of

the product is used in Western Australia—

Mr. Thorn: Ninety per cent. is exported now.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Here we have an instance of control merely that the local price shall be regulated in accordance with the cost of production. Although the grower receives only a minimum price for his product, the selling price is by no means in conformity with the grower's price. During the inquiry we held by select committee into the cost of living, it was shown that as between the grower and the retailer the price ranged from, I think, 6d. to 10d., the producer receiving 6d. and the price charged to the consumer being 10d. Also attention should be given to decreasing the number of packing sheds or processing sheds. The growers themselves want them established in all the several districts, but it seems to me there is undue duplication, whereas we should be aiming at the cheapest methods of processing and marketing.

The Minister for Agriculture: Curiously, in this State the small sheds are doing it as cheaply as the big sheds.

Mr. MILLINGTON: That may be so. Here we have big plants working only periodically, a seasonal industry, and so we have to be careful that not too much capital is invested in those processing plants. I suggest that attention should be given to this. Of course, there would be difficulty in deciding which of the plants should be permitted to continue. However, that in only one phase. Another is the marketing. If the percentage exported is increasing, the growers will have to adopt the most economical processing and will have to give attention to marketing. The present marketing arrangements could be improved. If we are to popularise the production of dried fruits in this State, there must be some relationship between the price the producer gets and the price the consumer pays. It must be a determining factor if too much is charged in getting the product from the producer to the consumer. In times past the consumer could afford to pay big prices, but now that we are getting down to economic methods, those methods should be applied to this struggling industry, and so eliminate the waste which takes place between the grower and the consumer. First we have the packing sheds, then the agents, then the dealers, and eventually the retailers. The complaint

made to the select committee that inquired into the cost of living was that even a substantial order by a big retailer could not be entertained except by the agents. Since the packing sheds mainly are of recent growth, I see no reason why it should not be possible for a substantial order to be placed with them by the retailer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is not the question of packing sheds outside the scope of the Bill, which is merely to continue the operations of the Act? There is nothing in the Bill dealing with packing sheds.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Have you the Act before you?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have before me the Bill which is before the House.

Mr. MILLINGTON: What does it say? It is for an Act to continue the operation of the Dried Fruits Act.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is in it nothing about packing sheds.

Mr. MILLINGTON: It is to continue the Act. That Act in its operation controls the dried fruit industry. If you will not permit me to discuss the dried fruit industry, I shall sit down.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to give any hon. member every latitude, but if he will go outside the scope of the Bill, it becomes the Speaker's duty to call his attention to it. I think packing sheds are outside the scope of the Bill now before the House.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Since you have ruled that we cannot discuss the subject matter of the Act to be continued, there is nothing to discuss, beyond saying that some mysterious measure requires extension for three years. I will not refer to this mysterious measure, nor to the industry it affects; I will simply say that, as in the past, we should let it go along in its own humbugging way and let the people support a measure, that cannot be discussed, for the control of one of the few industries that is controlled. If we are not to discuss that, I have nothing to say, except to remark that the subject can be of no interest to the country. I will support the second reading.

Mr. Panton: What is the measure about?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Nobody knows; we are not allowed to discuss it.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [4.57]: I should like to add my blessings to the continuance of the Act. I have been connected with the industry for many years, and I had

hoped that the Government would see fit to continue the Act for a longer period than three years. When in Committee I will move an amendment to continue the Act a little further. The idea of the growers in asking the Government for a State Act was to come into line with those under the Federal Act. The Federal Act controls exports, and we required a State Act to control home sales, and more particularly to see that every grower bore his share of the export. I am a great believer in all growers in the industry having to bear their share of the 90 per cent. export. In many instances export is relatively unprofitable, and so I think it is up to every grower to be loyal to the industry and play his part in exporting. After the Act came into operation in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia, New South Wales also came into line. I should like to assure members that at no time did we take advantage of the Act to secure control of local prices. The A.D.F.A. was a voluntary association, and 90 per cent. of the growers of Australia were supporters of it. We always abide by the prices of the A.D.F.A. A few growers declined to come into line with the majority, and sold their fruit at lower prices. To prove that members of the association have not taken advantage of the Act, I wish to show that prices have been on the down grade for some time. The following is a comparison of best quality dried fruits:—

		1928.	1931.
Currants	7½d.	6¾d.
Sultanas	8¾d.	7¾d.
Lexias	6¾d.	5½d.

and this, notwithstanding that we have a protective tariff of 6d. per lb. Consequently it cannot be said that the growers have taken advantage of the Act. Quite a lot of Government money is invested in the industry, and I am pleased to be able to say that growers, including returned soldiers, are standing up to their obligations in the way of meeting their interest. The board have done their best to popularise the use of dried fruits in the State. They have undertaken publicity, and have shown pictures illustrating the industry. Books containing recipes have been issued indicating the uses to which dried fruits may be put, and the board have done all in their power to increase the demand. I agree with the ex-Minister for Agriculture that there is too much handling of dried fruits by middlemen, but we hope

at a later stage to be able to overcome that difficulty. I trust that the House will support the measure.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [5.3]: I support the continuance of the Act. During my election campaign I gave an undertaking to the settlers engaged in the industry that, if the Labour Party were returned to power, I would do my utmost to secure the continuance of the Act. I am pleased that the Government have introduced the Bill. When the original measure was introduced many people engaged in the industry were opposed to control. They were known as individualists, but to-day they are collectivists, and realise that by operating under the Act and organising markets, they are obtaining better results than they were on the individualistic basis. The Act is functioning well. The industry is not one that gives a big return to the settlers. It is only a bread-and-butter industry, because growers have to meet fierce competition in overseas markets. Still, a good many people have been established in the industry, and they are anxious that the Act be continued. I congratulate the Minister on having introduced the Bill.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.5]: I was gratified to hear the statement of the Minister. The success that has attended the control of dried fruit here is but a repetition of what has occurred elsewhere. The attitude of the Minister to the industry has been gratifying, though it is only fair. The same attitude was adopted by the ex-Minister, who, with equal readiness, adopted the principle of control. The Minister told us that the Dried Fruits Board had achieved special success in the matter of control. I do not know what other measures we have to secure control in the fruit industry, or in any other industry, except sandalwood. If it is necessary to show lack of consistency on the part of some members—

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a short Bill to continue the operations of an Act. I cannot allow the ramifications of the whole of the parent Act to be discussed. I ask members to confine themselves to the question that the Act be continued.

Mr. Corboy: This is a re-enactment.

Mr. SAMPSON: Because of what has happened with the control of sandalwood, my judgment is influenced to a certain ex-

tent. Not long ago a sandalwood measure was introduced and received the whole-hearted blessing of every member of the House. It was amazing that some members who could see no virtue in anything postulating control yet found it possible to support the sandalwood measure.

Mr. SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with the proposal to extend this Act. I rule the hon. member out of order.

Mr. SAMPSON: The sandalwood measure was on much the same lines.

Mr. Marshall: There is no similarity between them.

Mr. SAMPSON: I agree with the Minister that control is essential. We want control of other primary products. A milk control board is desirable. It has been shown that the dried fruit industry has benefited materially from the Act. Dried fruit is relatively not a perishable article as compared with fresh fruit, and I hold there is greater need for a measure of control over fresh fruit than over dried fruit. Still, I am wholeheartedly in favour of dried fruit control. The Minister said that, without control, there would be little hope for the industry. The Minister is a man who does not speak without serious thought. I hope the words of the Minister will be noted by members on the Government side when a similar proposal is submitted at a later stage in respect to other products. The Act has had the effect of keeping our own people on the land, which is a very important matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is going right outside the scope of the Bill.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am dealing with the effect of the Act, which has been to keep our own people on the land. In the fresh fruit and vegetable industries there is a tendency for our people to leave the land, and for foreigners to engage in the work. I hope the Minister will give that matter his attention. A much larger quantity of dried fruits should be used within the State. The Commissioner of Railways in Victoria, Mr. Clapp, has done a tremendous amount of work to popularise the use of dried fruits there. Here raisin bread is practically unknown, and if one did get something sold as raisin bread, it would need to be labelled in order that one might identify it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have ruled that you are discussing matters outside the scope of

the Bill. I ask you to confine your remarks to the Bill. This is not the time to discuss the parent Act and its relation to the public at large.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I desire to speak on the Bill, and I desire to review the operations of the board.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Swan has the floor, unless any member intends to object to my ruling.

Dissent from Ruling.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I propose to dissent from your ruling. If you rule that we are out of order in reviewing all the ramifications of the board, their dealings with the industry, and the question whether packing sheds, etc., have been functioning satisfactorily under the board, I am in duty bound in the interests of free discussion to move that your ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. Speaker: I accept that as a motion dissenting from my ruling. The hon. member will put his dissent in writing. He has been speaking to the second reading of a Bill to continue in operation the Dried Fruits Act until the 31st March, 1933. He has been endeavouring to show how similar measures in other States are operating. I hold it is my duty as Speaker to confine him to the subject matter contained in the Bill, that is, the duration of the Act. The member for Guildford-Midland has objected to my ruling. He maintains that the Bill is one to continue the control of the industry. I have ruled that a complete review of the progress of the industry under control and an examination of the board's work while under that control is out of order, and he has moved that my ruling be disagreed with. It is for members to decide whether I have ruled according to the Standing Orders. I am determined, unless otherwise ordered by the House, to see that debates are confined to the questions before the Chair.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have no desire to interfere with your control of the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and will assist you to the utmost of my ability, but I think we must be careful to see that our liberties are not interfered with and that we are not deprived of our rights. I claim that under this Bill we can examine the question whether control is desirable or not, satisfy ourselves that control has been in the best interests of the industry, and see whether the de-

velopment of the industry has extended or has been retarded by such control. We can inquire whether the sheds associated with that control have improved in packing methods, whether their operations have been encouraged or discouraged by the board. We can make certain that the packing sheds are functioning to the advantage of the growers. We can inquire whether marketing has improved under the board, whether they have extended the use of dried fruits during their control, whether they have advertised them, attended to the packing and export of dried fruits, whether they have studied the markets of the world, and whether samples have been sent to the different markets. We want to find out whether dried fruits are being used in the manufacture of commodities so that the sale of dried fruits may be extended. As representatives of the people, we must examine in detail all these matters if there is any doubt in our minds. I want to know whether the board are functioning economically and whether the administration is a burden on the industry or a relief to it. Is the personnel of the board truly representative of the industry? Does it represent every district where dried fruits are produced? Is the board too large or too small and ought it to be extended in any way? The fact that the control has been limited shows that Parliament doubts the wisdom of having it. It is evident we must exercise care before we extend that control any more. The only way to exercise care is to ventilate everything to do with the industry, to see whether any harm is being done to it by the operations of the board. The rights of members to free discussion must be jealously guarded. I am taking this opportunity to show that under this Bill there must be a free and full debate, so that we may ascertain whether the industry is being fostered and encouraged by the system of control.

Mr. Speaker: I have occupied the Chair for a little over a year. I do not think any member can say he has not had a fair deal on every occasion at my hands. My sole desire is to conduct the business of the House in a proper manner and to give every member the utmost possible latitude. A Speaker occupies a difficult position at times, especially when he is endeavouring to keep members within the four corners of the subject matter of the debate. It is my sole object to give members every latitude

in discussions of this importance, but I must ask them to remember that sometimes they are carried away beyond the four corners of the subject matter before the Chair, and deal with questions which are not relevant to that subject matter. I desire to be fair to members, but must carry out my duties as Speaker in accordance with the Standing Orders. I want the member for Swan and the member for Mt. Hawthorn to understand that I shall at all times give them the fullest latitude wherever that is possible. I have no wish to stop the member for Swan in the course of his remarks, provided he will confine himself to the points raised by the member for Guildford-Midland.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: With your permission, Sir, I will withdraw the motion disagreeing with your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: Very well.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

[Debate resumed.]

Mr. SAMPSON: I want members to realise the great value of the dried fruits industry. When raisin bread is made here I am afraid the raisins are added with too grudging a hand. I give my full support to the Bill. Not only do I hope it will be renewed this year, but that it will always be renewed. I am sure that circumstances will justify such a course. As the advantages of control of the dried fruits industry become more widely known, so I feel certain will the enthusiasm of the Minister in charge grow with that increased knowledge. As times goes on, we shall have in the House a considerable majority in support of control. The principle is one which has not been fully realised and appreciated.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [5.30]: I welcome the Bill and the support given to the board in their efforts to help the struggling producers. Since the establishment of the board, the growers have not had an extremely enviable time, but still their experience has been better than before the establishment of board control. I am disappointed regarding one phase. As one interested in control and marketing organisation, I have watched closely the operations of the Dried Fruits Board. I agree with the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington) that there are too many middlemen be-

tween the producer and the consumer. The board was constituted with the support of many of us who had taken a keen interest in marketing matters, because we were under the impression that, as a result, much of the operations of middlemen would be eliminated. While that has resulted to a certain extent, a number of middlemen still operate, and their presence in the trade is totally unnecessary. I am disappointed that the members of the board have tolerated the continuance of those middlemen for so long. I do not object to middlemen provided they perform a useful function, and do not unnecessarily increase the cost of commodities to the consumer. In the dried fruits industry, as with other industries, the producers are impoverished because of the number of men for whom they must make provision before their produce reaches the homes of the consumers. I welcome the Bill to continue the operations of the board, but I want to say to the board members, through this Chamber, that I am keenly disappointed that they have not done more to organise the marketing of dried fruits in a more scientific manner by securing the elimination of middlemen.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair: the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Continuance of the principal Act:

Mr. THORN: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 the word "thirty-three" be struck out with a view to inserting "thirty-five" in lieu.

The clause provides that the Act shall continue till the 31st March, 1933, and the amendment will extend its operations to 1935. The Act was first introduced in 1926 and its operations have been continued by means of two Bills. The extension this time is a short one. Seeing that the Act has been successful, and practically 100 per cent. of the growers are satisfied, I hope the Committee will agree to its continuance till 1935.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I oppose the amendment. In these times when all other primary producers are suffering disabilities, it is seriously suggested that a section that has en-

joyed great privileges under the Dried Fruits Act is to be allowed to continue in that position till 1935! The Bill proposes an extension for two years but the member for Toodyay desires to secure an extension for four years. We have heard comments regarding the extension of the sugar bonus in the interests of Queensland and northern New South Wales. In my opinion, the Federal Parliament were utterly wrong in agreeing to such an extension. In that connection, I want to correct a statement made in a letter from Mr. H. Gregory, M.H.R., that appeared in the "Daily News," in which he said that the Federal Government had granted that concession. It was not the Federal Government, but the Federal Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order. There is no reference to the sugar bonus in the clause.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am out of order to that extent, but I am quite in order in comparing the position of the sugar growers with that of the dried fruit growers and other sections of the community. While all other sections of the community are called upon to make sacrifices, it is suggested that the dried fruits grower shall enjoy special privileges till 1935, whereas the wheatgrowers and the woolgrowers will have to suffer because of conditions that operate.

The Minister for Lands: You fathered the Act originally.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But reluctantly. I do not like giving sections of the people privileges and rights, or establishing monopolies enabling certain people to fix prices and eliminate opposition. The member for Toodyay should be reasonable and be content with the provision in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am surprised at the attitude adopted by the member for Mt. Magnet. He fathered the Bill. In 1929 he introduced a Bill to extend the operations of the Act till 1932—a period of three years.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am sorry the hon. member took my statement too literally. One of his colleagues in the Government introduced the measure.

Mr. Hegney: The Legislative Council proposed the extension beyond one year.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is in the best interests of the industry that we should give these people every chance. Many of them are pulling out their vines

and replacing them with a more suitable class of vine, and it will be three or four years before these become profitable.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Are you supporting the Bill or the amendment?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am supporting the amendment. If the situation as has been suggested should arise, the House will be in session from year to year and the matter can receive attention. If any one section of the community is getting anything unfairly at the expense of another section we can do what we have done this session. I am anxious that we should give every encouragement to the primary producer to enable him to send his products overseas, and so get overseas money into this country to help us develop it.

Mr. HEGNEY: If the Bill is to be continued for another 12 months that will give the opportunity to organise during that 12 months. I stand for the organisation of the primary producers who are as much workers as the industrial section, and as far as this particular industry is concerned, the workers in it have every right to be organised so that they may enjoy the fruits of their labour. I know of men engaged in the dried fruit industry who are strong Labour supporters and all desire the continuance of this legislation. I cannot see any objection to the continuance for the period mentioned by the member for Toodyay.

Hon. M. F. TROY: We are giving the industry power to fix its own prices and to exploit local people to enable them to sell abroad at a loss. If the workers were organised and could demand the price they wanted, what support would they get from the other side of the House? It is not a question of organisation; it is a question of giving one section of the community an absolute monopoly. We have provided for an extension of two years and if conditions do not improve in Australia, these people are no more entitled to have the privilege it is proposed to give them than anyone else.

Mr. Thorn: I have already pointed out that prices are on the down grade; they are lower to-day than they were two years ago.

Hon. M. F. TROY: So they ought to be lower. I am not going to assist to make the legislation permanent. It is five years now it will be ten years next time.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear! Let us pray that it will be so.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is pure syndicalism. I cannot conceive any representative of consumers agreeing to legislation that will give a monopoly to a particular set of people, that will give a set of producers the right to exploit another section. The period of two years in these times is sufficient. It may be that the dried fruit producers may have to make a sacrifice, as others have done, and if they are called upon to do so, they will be obliged to fall into line.

Mr. SAMPSON: The period mentioned in the Bill is less than one year and six months. The extension could have been granted on a previous occasion. The fact that a Labour Federal Government gave a protective tariff of 6d. a lb. on dried fruits has my admiration, and since it is a fact that almost every industry has received assistance, then so should dried fruits receive it. The prices of dried fruits have fallen since 1928. There is proof that the board are behaving properly and that the interests of the public are being watched. I hope that the extension will be approved. I do not know why the Minister made the period so short.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Committee seem to cross purposes. I agree that control is warranted. The conditions that warrant it are more or less permanent, but that is no reason why this legislation should be permanent. The board are given extremely wide powers, and we should make sure that Parliament controls the board. That is healthy for the board, and also for the growers. The board's actions should come up periodically for audit. In my opinion, it makes little difference whether the Act is extended to 1933 or to 1935; but I hope it will not be suggested that those who vote for 1935 are more enthusiastic than those who vote for 1933.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The question of time is important. I support the striking out of the figure "3" with a view to the insertion of "7," thus giving the board a term of five years in which to organise thoroughly. On the second reading I raised the question of the board's neglect to organise marketing completely. The board are hampered by the fact that they cannot enter into any extended business arrangements because of their limited period of control. They are not in a position to function in the manner Parliament expects. I emphatically believe in this form of legislation, which is necessary to give the producer on

the land an opportunity to secure the full return for his labour. Eighty per cent. of the production of dried fruits must be exported, and to arrange an export market the board's operations must extend over something more than one or two years. That is the difficulty the board have always been up against. They say they are only functioning year by year, and that therefore they are not justified in disorganising any part of the middleman's operations, since they themselves may go out of existence shortly, and this would mean that their interference would do more harm than good. With a term of five years they could attend to overseas organisation and the elimination of the middleman, feeling that they would have time to put something in the place of what they remove. The Government's proposal to extend the Act for one year is ridiculous. There is nothing in the Bill giving power to fix prices. That power has never been exercised by the board, and has never been possessed by them. There is too much competition in dried fruits to-day, and producers and consumers have to pay for it. The board can do nothing in the matter, because of their limited term. Without control of an industry, the producers can be exploited. The Labour Party say to them, "Do not allow individual bargaining. We have passed legislation to organise workers for the purpose of collective bargaining, and the same course is open to you." Individuals disunited and operating one against the other are not of advantage to the community. Before the establishment of the board of control the dried fruits industry was in a deplorable condition. We are here to protect the majority of the growers against the non-unionist minority. There must be stabilisation, and the minority must not be allowed to upset it. That is what the Labour movement stands for, on behalf of the producer as well as on behalf of the worker.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Amendment (to strike out "thirty-three") put and passed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That "thirty-seven" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

The object cannot be achieved in less than five years.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. THORN: I move an amendment—

That "thirty-five" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (5)—RETURNED.

- 1, Finance and Development Board Act Amendment.
 - 2, Federal Aid Roads Agreement.
 - 3, Fremantle (Skinner-street) Disused Cemetery Amendment.
 - 4, Pearling Act Amendment.
 - 5, Abattoirs Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it did not insist on its amendment No. 8 disagreed to by the Assembly, that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Assembly to delete paragraph (b) set out in No. 3 of the Council's amendments, but had disagreed to the amendment made by the Assembly to paragraph (c) of No. 3, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I remind members that paragraph (c) in the Council's amendment No. 3 dealt with the exemption of banks. This Committee amended paragraph (c) by inserting a proviso enabling the operations of that exemption to be wiped out by proclamation at any date after the 1st October. To that the Council refuses to agree. Consequently, I move—

That the Assembly's amendment on the Council's amendment be insisted on.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment on the Council's amendment insisted on.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Request for Conference.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That a conference be requested with the Legislative Council and that at such conference the managers consist of three members.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If one manager from either place disagrees, will the Bill be lost?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is so.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I enter my usual opposition to government by conference. It appears to me that the Council is in the habit periodically of necessitating our asking for a conference, thus interfering with the business in a manner that is not justified.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me make it clear that when a conference is held, if one manager disagrees, report can be made to the House. It does not follow that the Bill would be lost if one manager disagreed.

The Attorney General: The others could still give way.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am opposed to a conference. This involves an important matter that has been fully considered by this Chamber. It seems that vested interests are endeavouring to preserve the interests of the banks. I question whether it is right and proper for members who are directors of banks to vote on such a matter, seeing that the banks are vitally concerned.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the managers to represent this House be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Williams-Narrogin and the mover.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly forwarded to the Council.

BILL—FIRE BRIGADES (SINKING FUND).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 11th August

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford Midland) [7.51]: I have no desire to oppose the Bill; but it seems an extraordinary

way of financing undertakings of this kind. I understand that the Fire Brigades Board raised a certain loan, and that a sinking fund was created to liquidate it by a certain date. During the currency of the loan, the board decided to raise a larger loan, and it was raised on the understanding that the existing loan should be paid off. That was done. In the period between the raising of the two loans, certain sinking fund payments had accumulated, and the Bill proposes that the accumulated sinking fund should be used for the general purposes of the Fire Brigades Board on the ground that the further loan is also subject to a sinking fund which will liquidate the loan in the stipulated period. If the sinking fund on the earlier loan were placed to the credit of the new sinking fund, there would be a surplus. What I do not like is that during the period when the board were providing for the earlier sinking fund, they were obtaining it really under false pretences, inasmuch as they established a reserve or trust fund from ordinary revenue, and the general operations of the board were hampered through the raising of that money. I appreciate the fact that just as the operations of the board were hampered while the fund was being established, the board will now be assisted by the return of the money to general revenue. But that is a wrong way of financing. For this the Minister is not responsible, but the House should make it clear that Parliament does not stand for that kind of thing, and that the board should exercise greater care in the administration of their affairs. I do not know whether there were special circumstances connected with the raising of the second loan; the fact remains that it was an extraordinary procedure which should not be condoned by this House in general terms. While the Chief Secretary is considering the financial position of the board, I should like him to consider the reconstruction of the board's affairs. The general expenses of the board need attention. They are operating under an Act that must be about 25 years old.

The Chief Secretary: Oh no.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Anyhow, the Act is obsolete. The Minister would be serving the interests of the metropolitan area if he considered introducing legislation to bring the Fire Brigades Act up to date. I support the Bill. I do not wish to see the money left in the Commonwealth Bank.

It ought to be used. At the same time the method by which the board obtained the money was quite wrong.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [7.56]: I have not been a member of the board for very long, but I take exception to the statement made by the member for Guildford-Midland that unwisdom was shown when the sinking fund was created. Any business man working on proper lines does try to create some kind of trust or reserve fund when money is available, and that was done in this instance. The money would have been left in the trust or reserve fund to meet any serious expenditure had not the Chief Secretary, after discussion with the Premier, informed the board that there must be a 20 per cent. cut in the board's expenditure, in common with the cut in every other department. The board held several meetings and carefully considered their estimates for the coming year. They found that, after making cuts in every possible item of expenditure, they could not get within the margin required by something like £2,500. While it is possible to cut salaries, wages and certain other expenditure by 20 per cent., there are items such as insurance, interest and fuel that cannot be cut. It was a question of the officials having to suffer by means of retrenchment, or of permission being obtained to use the reserve for the current year's operations. By being permitted to use the reserve fund, the board can balance their budget for this year. The question arises, what will the board do next year? We do not know, but we hope something will turn up to prevent the dismissal of competent firemen and so bring down the efficiency of the brigade. The board are very sorry to use this money, but there is nothing else for it if they are to carry out the dictates of the Minister to reduce their expenditure by 20 per cent. The member for Guildford-Midland suggests that the board are not working efficiently. Last year the difference between the actual expenditure and the estimated expenditure was only £59, and seeing that the total expenditure was £56,000 the result was very good. I have been a member of the board for six or eight months, and have watched every move to see where retrenchments and economies could be effected. I consider that the board are carrying out their work in a most econ-

omical and efficient manner. The member for Guildford-Midland must remember that this money will not only go towards the Government allocation of one-fourth, but will also prevent the necessity for increasing the allocations from the other contributing bodies. All contributors to the fund will benefit by the use of the money. I support the second reading of the Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. N. N. Keenan—Nedlands—in reply) [8.0]: I should like to clear up a doubt that appears to exist in the mind of the member for Carnarvon (Mr. Angelo). The Government do not dictate to the board what they are to do. What happened was that the Treasurer told them the Government would not be in a position this year to make a grant of a higher amount than was given last year, less 20 per cent. The Treasurer is under an obligation to contribute one-fourth of the expenditure. The position of the Treasury to-day is that it cannot undertake to allow the expenditure to swell to proportions which cannot be met. That is all. The board can spend their money as they choose, but will not get anything more than the equivalent of what was given last year, less a reduction of 20 per cent. This loan was raised 18 years ago, before 1913. The loan that was redeemed was also raised in 1913, 18 years ago. I have been trying to find out who was the Chief Secretary in that day, because I rather thought it might have been the member for Guildford-Midland. I think the Scaddan Government were in office then. It is no use digging up old mistakes and trying to discover who was responsible for them. We are rectifying this mistake now. The money is lying in the Commonwealth Bank, and can be put to better use if the Fire Brigades Board have the handling of it.

Mr. Marshall: It would not have gone to the Commonwealth Bank if the member for Maylands had been Treasurer.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FREMANTLE TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

First Reading.

Introduced by Mr. Sleeman and read first time.

Second Reading.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [8.8]: I am moving the second reading said: Although this is a small Bill, it is unique. People very seldom want to pay back money they have borrowed, but that is so in this case. Last year the Fremantle Tramway Board borrowed £35,000 from the Colonial Mutual Insurance Company for certain work. Portion of the money was expended on the undertaking for which it was borrowed, but the board now find they have a balance of £21,000. The money was intended for the erection and equipment of a sub-station. The board are not now anxious to go on with the work. If they were desirous of doing so they would find themselves in the position that the greater part of the money would be absorbed in exchange rates. They do not want to be allowed to pay back £21,000 to the insurance company, the money being in the bank. The board were prepared to pay it back and the company were prepared to accept it, but, according to legal advice obtained, the money could not be returned unless a Bill was passed to allow the board to do so.

The Minister for Lands: What is the total amount the board are going to pay on the debentures?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The total is £21,000. I understand the board are paying 7 per cent for the money and that which is now in the bank is returning only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. For every week the board delay in repaying the money, they lose about £8. It is not pleasant for me to be introducing this Bill. I would much rather see the money expended on the work provided for people around the country. Unfortunately the board say they are unable to go on with the work. Unless leave is given to them to pay the money back it will lie in the bank and will be costing the board £8 every week.

Mr. Angelo: How does exchange come into the matter?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The money would have been spent on the importation of machine

from overseas. The major portion of it would be spent in that direction, and not very much would have been required for labour. To a layman it is peculiar that there should be any necessity for the introduction of this Bill. One would have thought that a company or firm would have encountered no difficulty if it had desired to pay back a sum of money to the people from whom it had been borrowed. Apparently in this case a Bill is required to enable this to be done.

The Minister for Railways. Could not the plant be obtained in Australia?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I think not.

The Minister for Railways: I doubt if the matter has been investigated. I know that turbo-generators have been made in Australia.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would be pleased if it could be made in Australia. I would prefer to see anything that we want made in Australia.

Mr. Angelo: Could it not be made at the Implement Works?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No doubt many things could be made there if the opportunity were given. If there was any chance of spending the money in Australia I would be the first to advocate that it should be done. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 14 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2.—Delete all words after "any," in line 9, down to and inclusive of the word "typewriter," in line 19, and insert in lieu thereof the words "chattel personal."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the Bill was before the Committee in this Chamber, a general desire was expressed that the Bill should apply to a much wider extent than was originally intended. In order to meet the wishes of this Chamber, as well as of members of another place, the amendment was moved so as to make the Bill operate over as wide an area as possible. Now it will embrace any moveable chattel. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. McCallum: What is meant by "chattel personal"?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That includes anything that is moveable on a property and anything that can be sold.

The Chief Secretary: It means the reverse of real.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 2.—Delete the definition of "Motor vehicle."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The amendment is necessary because the term "chattel personal" would embrace motor vehicles.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 3.—Insert after "purchaser," at end of Subclause 1, the words "and the word 'writing' in this section shall be deemed to include such printing only as is in type not smaller than eight point face."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The clause provides that a copy of the agreement shall be handed to the purchaser, so that he will know exactly what he has signed. If we are to insist on notices being printed in certain type, it seems to me it will be ridiculous.

Mr. SAMPSON: I regard the amendment as reasonable.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What is meant by eight point face? I have heard of two-faced!

Mr. SAMPSON: Under the new system of American standardised type, instead of the old terms pearl, minion, agate, brevier, small pica and so on, the type is denominated by means of points, thus an eight point face means type measuring about one-ninth of an inch. The type used in printing the "West Australian" is seven point face, I believe. It seems to me that the Council's amendment is reasonable, because it will mean that agreements will have to be printed in type that is readable and not in microscopic type that the farmers would find difficult to read by lamplight.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 4.—Insert "or" after "representations" in line 21, and delete "or terms" in the same line.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

It is possible that, in a legal sense, the words "or terms" may have a certain meaning, but if we were to ask the representative of a machinery firm what their terms were, he would say that they required payment in certain amounts. I think the words were included for a very definite purpose.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 5, Subclause 1.—Insert after "vendor," in line 24, the words "(except by the request or at the instance of the purchaser)."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Representatives of the motor firms pointed out that if the clause were passed as originally drafted, it would mean that when a motor became obsolete, the purchaser could ask for it to be taken back and he would have to receive a certain amount for his equity. They pointed out that they sold motors under hire-purchase agreements, and took promissory notes as securities. Instead of holding the promissory notes, they had them discounted. Without the amend-

ment proposed by the Council, the firm might be financially embarrassed, and would not be able to continue business along the usual lines. It will be recognised that the Bill was introduced in the interests of those whose machines were repossessed because they could not continue making the necessary payments.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: This does not seem to be quite fair. The amendment says "except by the request or at the instance of the purchaser."

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Who else would request? In ordinary circumstances the firm would just take possession.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: If a purchaser requests the vendor to take possession, he cannot demand an account. Where the firm possesses, the purchaser can demand an account.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: How does that work out when people are unable to go on with their payments?

The Minister for Lands: The vendors repossess. If the purchaser says, "take it back," then he has no case.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: If the purchaser is unable to pay, the vendor will step in and he has to give the purchaser any equity there may be in the machine.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A man sometimes hands back a machine when he wants to buy a new one. If he hands back, the vendor has to find the money with which to pay any equity there may be in the machine. It has been pointed out that the vendor sometimes may not be able to finance the matter.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: We should not worry about people who buy motor cars, trucks on the hire-purchase system.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not an unscrupulous man against whom we want to protect the public. Why should not a man sell his machine properly instead of waiting to hand it back to the firm when it is obsolete? Where a vendor steps in and takes possession the Act should apply. It gives protection to both sides.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 5, Subclause (1)—Delete "twenty" and insert "twenty-one," in line 26, and delete "fourteen" and insert "twenty-one" in line 27.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have no objection to this amendment. I move—
That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 7. Clause 5.—Insert a subclause, to stand as Subclause (2), as follows:—

(2.) If a vendor shall take possession of the chattel for some temporary purpose by the request, or at the instance of the purchaser, and shall afterwards refuse to re-deliver the chattel to the purchaser he shall be deemed, as at the date of such refusal, to have taken possession of the chattel otherwise than at the request or at the instance of the purchaser.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot follow the reasoning of this amendment. If a man runs his motor truck into the garage of the vendor for the purpose of getting some repairs done, and afterwards does not pay for those repairs, the vendor can refuse to let him have it back.

Mr. Marshall: No, that is not what it means.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The object of the amendment is to limit what is provided for in the previous section, namely, that a vendor who has taken back an article the subject of a hire-purchase agreement at the request of the purchaser is not thereby deemed to have taken it under this Act. The intention is to limit the rights of the vendor. If the vendor takes possession temporarily and afterwards refuses to re-deliver the article, he shall be deemed to have taken forcible possession, if I may use that word.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is quite possible that the purchaser, at the desire of the vendor, may take possession of the article temporarily, and when the equity is adjusted the purchaser may be dissatisfied. The vendor may then say, "I will refuse to return it." The amendment will make it obligatory on the part of the purchaser to return it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I still believe that if the purchaser took his machine to the vendor to have repairs effected, the vendor could say, "You are not going to get his machine back until you have paid for the repairs."

Mr. Marshall: That is not so.

Hon. A. McCallum: That would be forcible possession.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Any way, I have no objection to the amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Progress reported until a later stage of the sitting.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendment made by the Assembly to No. 3 of the Council's amendments and disagreed to by the Council, and had appointed Sir Charles Nathan, Hon. H. Seddon and Hon. C. F. Baxter as managers, the President's room as the place of meeting, and the time forthwith.

Sitting suspended from 8.45 p.m. to 12.20 a.m.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

Conference Managers' Report.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have to report that the managers representing this House and the other place have met and come to an agreement as follows:—

The managers agree to recommend the acceptance by the Legislative Council of the amendment made by the Legislative Assembly to the Legislative Council's amendment No. 3.

Report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting, on amendment No. 7; Mr. Richardson in the Chair, the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 8. Clause 5.—Delete "shall" and insert "may," in line 32.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The substitution of "may" for "shall" seems to me

against the usual draftsmanship. However, I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 9. Clause 5, Subclause 4.—Insert after "account," in line 14, the words "and has failed to arrive at an amicable agreement thereon with the vendor."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I see no objection to this, and I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 10. Clause 5.—Delete "twenty" and insert "twenty-one," in line 15.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is consequential. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 11. Clause 5, Subclause 4.—Insert a proviso, as follows:—"Provided that the date fixed for appearance before the magistrate shall be not less than one month after the date on which the chattel was taken possession of by the vendor."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This amendment is desirable, and I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 12. Clause 5, Subclause (5).—Add a proviso, as follows:—

Provided that if after the vendor has taken possession of the chattel it shall have been sold by public auction—

- (a) at a place agreed on by the vendor and purchaser, or in default of agreement at the place where the hire-purchase agreement was entered into by the purchaser; and
- (b) subject to reasonable conditions of sale which permitted both vendor and purchaser to bid; and
- (c) at a reasonable time and after adequate advertisement and due notice to the purchaser,

then the price for which the chattel was so sold, after deducting the expenses occasioned by the sale, shall, for the purposes of this section, be conclusively deemed to be the value of the chattel at the time when and the place where such sale was effected.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the bill be agreed to, it will do away with all the powers provided in Subclause 5. It proposes that the value of a machine shall be determined by being offered at auction. Since it looks as if it would do away with the approach to the court, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 13. Clause 9.—Insert at the end of the following words:—"and shall extend to any hire-purchase agreement made and in operation at or before the commencement of this Act."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is to make the clause retrospective. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 14. Insert a new clause, to stand after Clause 7, as follows:—"Any hire-purchase agreement exempt from registration under the provisions of Section 54 of the Bills of Sale Act, 1899, shall, notwithstanding the fact that it is unregistered, be deemed subject to the provisions of Section 29 of this Act."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Provision is made in the Bills of Sale Act to protect the vendor of any goods sold under hire-purchase agreement on certain conditions. It is proposed to extend the same protection here. I see no objection to it. Certainly it will enable people to get furniture more easily under hire-purchase agreement than they can to-day. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a committee consisting of the members for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) and the Minister for Lands appointed to draw up reasons for not agreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read, notifying that it had adopted the report of the conference managers.

Sitting suspended from 12.55 a.m. to 2.55 a.m.

BILL—HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it did not insist on its amendment No. 4 disagreed to by the Assembly, but did insist on its amendments No. 3 and No. 8, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the message.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: For the second time I move—

That the Council's amendments No. 3 and No. 8 be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments Nos. 3 and 8 not agreed to.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Request for Conference.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That a conference with the Council be requested and that Hon. W. D. Johnson, Mr. Griffiths and the mover be appointed managers for the Assembly.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly forwarded to the Council.

Sitting suspended from 3.3 a.m. to 3.30 a.m.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on amendments Nos. 3 and 8 disagreed to by the Assembly, and had appointed Hon. E. H. Gray, Hon. H. Seddon and Hon. C. F. Baxter as managers; the President's room as the place of meeting, and the time forthwith.

Sitting suspended from 3.32 a.m. to 5.15 a.m.

BILL—HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.

Conference Managers' Report.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have to report that the managers have met and agreed to accept amendment No. 3, refer-

ring to size of type, and to reject amendment No. 8, referring to sale by auction.

Report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read, notifying that it had adopted the report of the conference managers.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Fire Brigades (Sinking Fund).
 - 2, Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

Sitting suspended from 5.23 to 6.5 a.m.

BILL—REDUCTION OF RENTS.

Council's Amendments.

Message from the Council notifying that it had agreed to the Bill subject to a schedule of four amendments now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. In the definition of "lease" strike out "lessor" and substitute "lessee."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is a sensible amendment because the crux of the situation is whether the lessee can terminate the lease, not whether the lessor can. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. In line 2 of Clause 3 strike out "therein" and insert "herein" in lieu.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is a very proper amendment, correcting what is an undoubted error. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 4—Delete the proviso to Subclause 1 and insert in lieu thereof a proviso as follows:—

Provided that—

(a) As regards a lease existing on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine

hundred and thirty, and still existing at the commencement of this Act, the present rent payable under the lease shall be deemed to be increased by the amount of any reduction of rent allowed by the lessor since the said thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and thirty, but such amount shall be included as part of the reduction made by this section.

(b) As regards a lease granted since the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and thirty, and existing at the commencement of this Act, wherein the rent reserved is less than the rent reserved by a previous lease of the same premises and existing on the said thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and thirty, the present rent payable under the current lease shall be deemed to be increased by the amount of the said difference in rent, but such amount shall be included as part of the reduction made by this section.

(c) In the case of premises which were not leased on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and thirty, this Act shall not apply unless the lease thereof was entered into earlier than three months before the coming into operation of this Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is an extension of the principle that we recognised when we inserted Subclause 2 of Clause 5 providing that a special circumstance to be considered by the commissioner should be the amount by which the rent of the premises may have been reduced since the 30th June, 1930. These amendments by the Council constitute an attempt to make it possible, where the rent has been reduced since that date, to avoid having to go to the commissioner. It is a laudable attempt to keep down costs. Paragraph (a) deals with leases that existed on the 30th June, 1930, and paragraph (b) deals with leases entered into since that date, wherein the rent is less than that of the previous lease. These two paragraphs cover the position of leases that were in existence on the 30th June, 1930, and are still in existence, and also those leases made since that date but which are still in existence. Finally some member of the Council evidently wondered what about

new premises that had not existed on the 30th June, 1930, the rent of which is quite as low as this Bill desires. Paragraph (c) proposes that the Act shall not apply to such premises. The idea is that in respect of any premises that have been leased for the first time within the last three months the rent is already as low as is desired in the Bill. I think those amendments are in accordance with the wishes of the Chamber. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council amendment agreed to.

No. 4. Insert a new subclause to stand as Subclause 8 as follows:—"This Act shall not bind the Crown."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was pointed out that the Bill, as passed by the Chamber, would affect pastoral, grazing, conditional purchase leases, etc., the rents of which were fixed long before the depression occurred. The policy of the Crown is to pass on all advantages possible in regard to interest, and so far as is financially possible rents, etc., will be reduced to relieve Crown lessees. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council amendment agreed to.

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

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (H. C. G. Latham—York) [6.17]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn Tuesday, 22nd September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.18 a.m. (Friday)

The Second Period of the First Session of the Fourteenth Parliament was thus closed.