

eagles which are easily discernible, but the term "Eagle-hawk," as at present in the Act, embraces a variety of predaceous birds, and it is perhaps rather misleading to new road board secretaries; hence the present Bill provides for the alteration of the term to that of wedge-tailed eagle. Mr. Yelland questioned the wisdom of perpendicular netting. In the opinion of the department the proposed fence is essential. All the enactments of the Eastern States provide for the same thing, and it is a most erroneous idea that the netting when placed horizontally offers better protection, because there will always be rabbits on both sides. If the netting is perpendicular, neither will get through; but if it is horizontal, or sloping in one direction, it offers absolutely no protection from the rabbit attempting to burrow from the opposite side to the slope. Once the burrow is under the netting, access can be gained from either side and the netting is rendered useless. The Government have over 2,000 miles of rabbit netting erected, all of which is sunk 6 inches perpendicularly in the ground; and neither the Chief Inspector of Rabbits nor any boundary rider has ever seen a rabbit burrow beneath it, although it has been erected over 25 years.

The same cannot be said of many of the private fences where the netting has been sloped or placed horizontally underground. Almost without exception in such cases, burrows going under the netting can be found, whereas on the opposite side of the road where the netting is erected perpendicularly, no burrows are through, although ample evidence exists of attempts having been made, but frustrated. A rabbit always gets close up to its object before attempting to burrow, and if it finds it has to go down perpendicularly it will continue so for about 4 inches and then give up and attempt to burrow elsewhere. Evidence of attempts to get through can be seen along any properly constructed fence where the netting has been put in the ground 6 inches perpendicularly.

The fence as outlined in the Bill is not merely to guard against dogs, as is indicated in Mr. Yelland's speech. It is also to be fox-proof, and that is why the verandah type of fence, which the hon. member says it is now a common thing to see in the country, was recommended. There is a certain legal objection, however, to the leaning type

of fence; hence the need for an upright one as specified.

The height of 5ft. 6ins. has been found insufficient to keep out wild dogs. The height of 6ft. 6ins. as recommended will not be as good as the leaning-out fence, but with the top wire fastened to the top of the posts only, as suggested, and especially if the wire is left slack so as to make it difficult for any animal to obtain a secure foothold to scramble over, the recommended fence will then approach in effectiveness the lean-out type of fence which experience has proved to be the best. The Road Boards' Conference unanimously recommended that the verandah type of fence be made law: but there was a legal objection, and it could not be done.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 9.51 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 15th October, 1930.

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

QUESTION—CHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

Tinned milk purchases.

Mr. H. W. MANN asked the Minister for Health: What is the approximate value of tinned milk purchased monthly by the Child Welfare Department and supplied to persons receiving sustenance?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: The information is not available. Families choose their own grocer and make their own selection of groceries, conditionally that necessities of living only are procured.

QUESTION—LICENSING BENCH, PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. H. W. MANN asked the Attorney General: Does he consider it the duty of the Licensing Bench, in visiting hotels, to question licensees as to the amount of their weekly takings, and matters that constitute offences, then report the matter for a prosecution, and later adjudicate on the case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: It would be improper for me to express my views of what is or is not the duty of the Licensing Bench, which is a judicial body.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH ENDOWMENT LANDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. H. W. Mann and read a first time.

BILL—STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—FEDERAL DISABILITIES.

To inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 24th September on the following motion by Mr. Piesse:—

That a Select Committee of this House be appointed to consider the disabilities this State is suffering from as a result of Federal enactments, more especially in regard to the burden of Federal tariff and taxation. That the Legislative Council be requested to elect a similar Committee to act jointly and co-operate in this matter.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.36]: The member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) went to a great deal of trouble in preparing information in support of his motion. No doubt from his point of view he made out a good case. One thing he forgot was that a short time ago a Commission sat and inquired into the whole of the circumstances affecting this State, and came to a decision. That Commission was composed entirely of gentlemen from the

Eastern States. No one from this State sat upon it, and it was not biased in any way. It made a close investigation into the difficulties under which this State laboured. The Chief Secretary presented the case for the Government, and made out an excellent one. As a result of the inquiry the Commission recommended that this State should receive £450,000 a year for 25 years. I think a minority report recommended that we should have control of our own tariff for 25 years. Following upon those recommendations the State has been receiving a grant of £300,000 a year. The conditions under which the other £150,000 was offered are known to members. They involved the taking over of part of the North-West, to which this House would be very much averse. If we continued the inquiry, it would only confirm, I am sure, what the Commission found.

Hon. P. Collier: And would not speak with the same authority.

The PREMIER: No, because that Commission was appointed by the Federal Government. The time was then ripe for our difficulties to be recognised. If we could by any chance influence the Federal Government to consider the very real disabilities under which we are still labouring, we might gain material assistance by continuing the inquiry. We know how the tariffs hit this State. We are advantaged very little by them. We have comparatively few manufacturing industries here that benefit by the protection, and there are very few people engaged in manufacturing here. There is not only the disadvantage of the tariffs as they are paid by this State, but we know that the tariffs apply to a great deal that we import from the Eastern States. We understand the extent to which we contribute directly to the Federal revenue, and we know that indirectly we pay through the imports that come from the other States. On the manufactured goods that come from the other States, about £10,000,000 worth annually, a percentage of dutiable goods is included, and on this we pay the duty. I do not know what the disadvantage there would be. Probably as a result of taxation, tariffs, and the payments that are made in an indirect way, I should think that the amount would reach somewhere about £5,000,000. On top of that there is the disadvantage imposed in respect of goods actually made for us in the Eastern States, which are increased in price but not in value, by the tariffs. Manufacturers make full use of the tariff.

Many of them compete only against producers outside Australia, and they can avail themselves of the advantages that the tariff affords. In that way we may be paying another £3,000,000 a year because of the tariff. The disadvantages under which this State labours have been made fully manifest by the inquiry that has been held. Of that there is no doubt. I gave evidence before that Commission. I know that the disadvantages under which we labour have not been covered to nearly the full extent by the contributions that have been made to us. Very rightly, I think, the Leader of the Opposition, upon receipt of the first instalment of that contribution, reduced the income tax, thus giving the people some portion of that which is paid unnecessarily on goods manufactured in the Eastern States. I would point out, however, that the Federal grant is for five years, and not for 25 years. I approached the Federal Treasurer some little time ago on this matter, but he replied that we were a little too soon in our application for an extension of the grant. A considerable time must elapse before we can secure a review of the position. If we passed this motion I would like to know from the hon. member what more could be done than has been done. Would a select committee make any more clear the disadvantages under which we suffer by reason of the tariff, and would it be in a position to influence the Federal Parliament? If that were so, we would without hesitation agree to the holding of the inquiry. It would be a good thing to have such an investigation.

Mr. Piesse: Could we stop the dumping?

The **PREMIER:** That is a serious disadvantage, but we cannot stop it. When we set up a jam factory or some other factory, we find that the class of goods we propose to manufacture, if they are also made in the Eastern States, arrives here and is sold at a price we cannot approach. We are federated, and the right is given to all people to trade within Australia without restriction, and no power can prevent that. There is no doubt that considerable difficulty is experienced in having factories established in this State, because the established manufacturers in the Eastern States are able to send their goods across and sell them here at a cheaper rate than that at which it is possible for local manufacturers to dispose of their articles. We suffer many disadvantages from that standpoint. If we

were to appoint a select committee of this House, it would mean additional expense. Certainly some officials from the Treasury would have to be engaged in the work of helping the committee, and where would the efforts of the committee lead us? Serious disadvantages are suffered by the smaller States compared with those States in which manufacturing is conducted on an extensive scale. I often wonder what will happen in that direction because, unless trade is provided for those factories, the central States must surely be worse off than we were at the moment. We all realise the cost of federation to Western Australia and the disadvantages we have suffered in consequence. I cannot see anything but disadvantages, and I believe that is the general feeling, whatever individuals may say on the point. The member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) stressed the point, which has been in my mind, too, that the people of this State have reached the point at which the burden of taxation imposed by the several taxing authorities has become impossible to carry much longer. Of those authorities, the Federal Government collect more than half. More than that, we see mighty little return for the taxation collected by the Federal authorities. I do not desire to minimise the disadvantages we, as a small State, suffer under the Federal regime. There is no need to do so; we all realise the fact. On the other hand, I doubt if we could achieve any real good as a result of the inquiry suggested by the hon. member.

Mr. Piesse: Do you think there is no possibility of getting the Disabilities Grant increased?

The **PREMIER:** As to that point, the Leader of the Opposition, when he was Premier, endeavoured to secure the full grant of £450,000. I have endeavoured to get the payment increased, too. In addition, we both asked that the grant should be paid for 25 years, as recommended by the Commission. Neither of us had any success at all. To-day we do not know whether the payment to Western Australia of £300,000 will be continued after the stated period has elapsed. Then again one of the great disadvantages we labour under arises from overlapping as between State and Federal activities. There is much overlapping and unnecessary expense. Much that we could

do for the Federal Government they elect to do for themselves. We carried on their Public Works Department for some time, and that was a help to us and represented a considerable saving in expenditure for the Minister for Works. Then the Federal Government set up their own Public Works Department. There are two Savings Bank departments, each run at some cost. Our Savings Bank was established first. That institution served the people satisfactorily, and its operations were of use to Western Australia as a State. In many other directions there is duplication or overlapping, and one can readily understand that that ought not to be. I can inform the member for Katanning that at the latest Premiers' Conference, the question of duplication and overlapping was brought up for discussion. As a result, consideration is now being given to that phase by a committee of the Federal Loan Council, in order that they may inquire regarding the possibility of reducing the expenditure involved. Members of the House should be very grateful to the member for Katanning for the trouble he has taken to prepare a case in support of his motion. Having had more experience of the workings of the Federal Government, I doubt if we would gain anything if we appointed the select committee and prepared a report on this question. I doubt if any such report would influence the Federal authorities, no matter how the committee might report on the position. I am afraid the object the hon. member has in mind would not be achieved. I sympathise entirely with him in respect to all that he said. We are suffering from grave disadvantages and it is causing us considerable anxiety and actual loss, as every hon. member knows. However, that is the position as I view it. I suggest to the member for Katanning that he will not achieve the object he has in view even if the House agreed to the appointment of a committee of inquiry.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [4.51]: While I appreciate the action taken by the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) in moving such a motion, I would point out to him that, as mentioned by the Premier, a mass of data on the questions at issue exists already. The committee that the hon. member suggests could only collate and put that data together, and present it in a compre-

hensive form. Hon. members are doubtless aware of the existence of a report that was presented to them in 1925, after a most exhaustive inquiry had been made by a special committee that was set up. I have a copy of the report and it was published under the following title: "Federation and Western Australia. Papers outlining the State's case. Prepared by the Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of Western Australia for submission to the Commonwealth Royal Commission upon Finances. Western Australia as affected by Federation. Prepared by the Hon. Norbert Keenan, K.C., Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's command." The advisory committee consisted of Hon. Norbert Keenan, K.C., Chairman, and Messrs. James Gardiner; John Curtin, editor "Westralian Worker"; M. J. Calanchini, Under Secretary for Mines; G. W. Simpson, Assistant Under Treasurer; and A. J. Reid, B.A., A.I.C.A., of the Government Statistician's Department, who acted as secretary.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Are you going to read that report?

Mr. GRIFFITHS No; the report has been presented to Parliament and has been before members. The report is a most exhaustive one and contains a lot of information. Any work done by the select committee suggested by the member for Katanning could not do more than collate and arrange the information already presented in that and other reports. Then again there was another excellent report presented by a committee of experts in 1929. That committee included such eminent men as Professor J. B. Brigden, M.A. (Professor of Economics); Prof. D. B. Copeland, M.A., D.Sc. (Professor of Commerce at the Melbourne University); Mr. E. C. Dyason, B.Sc., B.M.E., a member of the Melbourne Stock Exchange; Mr. L. C. Giblin, M.A.; Professor Ritchie (Professor of Economics at the Melbourne University); and Mr. C. H. Wickens, I.S.O., F.I.A., F.S.S. (Commonwealth Statistician).

Hon. P. Collier: That report is worth reading.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a Federal report.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In the course of their report they spoke unfavourably regarding Western Australia's position. Those men I

have mentioned were from the Eastern States, and were certainly not biased in favour of Western Australia. In their report they said—

The unequal effects between States are probably the most embarrassing consequences of the tariff. . . . Were Australia one small, compact economic unit. . . . differences between areas would be less important. But with our diverse geographical conditions, and our Federal system of Government, such is not the case. It is to be noticed that the subsidies to Victoria and Queensland are twice as great as those to Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania. . . . So it comes about that the same two States, Victoria and Queensland, both get the greatest increase to income per head and pay least for it; New South Wales is in a middle position; and the other three States both receive least and pay most, with Western Australia in a somewhat worse position than South Australia and Tasmania.

The disabilities we suffer are well known, and do not require to be established. The trouble is that we do not seem to be able to get the authorities in the Eastern States to acknowledge those disabilities and the serious effect they have upon the State.

Mr. Piesse: Are you prepared to suffer those disabilities?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, certainly not. If there is anyone who is keen on securing an adjustment of the existing disabilities, or failing that, working for secession, I am that one. I do not think the hon. member will achieve anything by his resolution more than we have already before us in the reports by various Commissions and committees of inquiry. The only point that requires attention is how to make the people in the other States realise that Western Australia, a State of primary production, cannot continue to progress unless there is some radical change in the relationship between primary and secondary industries, as we see it in the dumping from the Eastern States, and other Federal disabilities.

Question put and negatived.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.57] in moving the second reading said: The Bill represents an attempt to amend the law that affects fruitgrowers by giving local authorities in road board and municipal districts

power under the Plant Diseases Act, 1914, to control and prevent the spread of fruit fly. The Bill provides that the exercise of the powers shall be optional, but where the necessity arises for action, the local authorities shall have power to do what is necessary. The Bill provides that every local authority may appoint inspectors, who shall have the powers of inspectors appointed under the parent Act. In fact, the definition of an inspector shows that he is an officer appointed under that Act. The difficulty of community baiting, or spraying, as it is called, is apparent because the man employed to do the baiting has not the power of an inspector under the Plant Diseases Act. With regard to fallen or other infected fruit, I have the authority of the Superintendent of Horticulture, Mr. G. H. Wickens, to say that the bait, properly applied over a period of seven days, is an effective method of controlling fruit fly, provided that the regulations dealing with picking up and destroying the infected fruit are properly observed. This statement, coming from a man with the qualifications of Mr. Wickens, is a complete answer to any question as to the efficacy of baiting when carried out in conjunction with other precautions. Picking up alone is insufficient, as also is baiting alone. The Bill gives the appointed inspectors the same power in respect of fruit fly as is given to inspectors of the Department of Agriculture, the power to bait or spray—this, actually, is the syringing of bait or fruit fly lure on to foliage. At present the difficulty is that fruit fly baiting is not carried out to the extent of 100 per cent. The local authority, subject to its own decision in the matter, is given full power to require occupiers of orchards in which any trees are baited to pay the costs of the baiting. This cost, as set out in the Bill, is limited to 4d. for each tree in the orchard. That 4d. is the maximum fee. In closely settled orchards districts, in my opinion and in the opinion of certain growers, the charge will not reach 4d., but in the more scattered districts the cost may nearly reach the 4d. permitted by the Bill. Many attempts have been made to secure the control of fruit fly, and at a later stage I hope to give some details of those attempts. The local authority is to have power to recover the costs referred to, to the extent of 4d. per tree, in any court of competent jurisdiction. Provision is made

for the exemption of portions of a district. A very important principle in the measure is that the local authority may appoint a committee to carry out this work. That committee could consist wholly or partly of persons who are not members of the local authority, and provision is made for the delegation to that committee of the exercise of all the powers under the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: Who will pay that committee?

Mr. SAMPSON: By the power given in the Bill, the collection will be made by the local authority, and the committee will find this amount sufficient to provide the baiting or spraying necessary to control the fly. It is very important that the power to delegate should be given. In many local authorities not all the members are orchardists, and not all the members understand the technical side of fruit production. In addition, members of local authorities are already carrying a very heavy burden of work. Let me point out what might happen wherever it is decided to delegate the power. In a district such as Gosnells there are the local road board and the Gosnells Fruitgrowers' Association, a very active, earnest and industrious body, who, if the power were delegated to them, would do everything that is necessary. And apart from Gosnells, there are in most fruit-growing districts organisations of growers who would, I believe, be prepared to carry out this work.

Mr. Withers: Would the fee have to be paid for every fruit-tree in each orchard where baiting is carried on?

Mr. SAMPSON: Power is taken to exempt portions of a district, but where the orchard is located in an unexempted district and the operations of the Bill are brought into force, the whole of the trees would become subject to the tax. In the opinion of many, the fruit-fly menace does not extend much beyond a 25-mile radius of Perth. Consequently, in all probability, the operations of the measure would not extend to the apple-growing districts of Mt. Barker, Bridgetown, and other southern areas.

Mr. Wansbrough: Have the growers approved of the Bill?

Mr. SAMPSON: It has been impossible to submit it to the whole of the growers, but I have discussed it with a number of them, and the Gosnells Fruitgrowers' Association are very anxious that it should be passed. The hon. member will see that all the obli-

gations and duties conveyed in the Bill are entirely optional to the various local authorities. Moreover, the local authorities, who have power to delegate to a committee the work under the Bill, have power also to remove any member of the committee, or supersede and abolish the whole of the committee at any time, should that be desired.

Mr. Patrick: Would not the local authority have to collect the fees?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, the local authority would require to collect the fees. Since the local authorities have the machinery necessary for collection, it seemed to me and others who have given consideration to the matter that it would be better that the local authorities should accept that responsibility, rather than that the industry should be loaded with the cost of establishing its own office, collectors, and all the machinery whereby collections would be made. At its discretion the local authority may expend out of its ordinary revenue such sums on the control of fruit fly as it may consider necessary for the good of the ratepayers. That is a very proper power to give to the local authorities. And it must be remembered that the power is to be exercised entirely at the discretion of the local authorities. For instance, it would not be within the power of the Minister to do more than suggest that such power be exercised. It is left entirely to the discretion of the local authority. Fruit fly is the fruitgrowers' greatest menace. It is not only their greatest menace in Western Australia, but it is regarded as their greatest menace in all those countries of the world where climatic conditions are favourable to the fly. It is said that the position in respect of the fruit-fly is no worse in Western Australia today than it was 30 years ago. But I claim that when we say it is no worse than it was 30 years ago, we are endeavouring to exaggerate the so-called control towards which so much effort has been put forward. I hope I am not unduly optimistic when I say I do not expect any Government opposition to the Bill. I have no ground for that optimism, other than my knowledge of the very grave difficulties the fly presents to all those within what might be described as the fruit fly area.

The Attorney General: Is not this going to duplicate measures at present in vogue?

Hon. P. Collier: The local inspectors will be going over the same ground as the departmental inspectors.

Mr. SAMPSON: That will not be so, because the adoption of the Bill by a local authority will relieve the local inspector and give him more time to spend in those districts where the measure is not adopted.

The Minister for Agriculture interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: I would not for a moment criticise inspectors of the department, for I know that at least some of them work very hard indeed. Fruitgrowing in this State is an exceedingly important industry, and particularly so when we realise how world conditions have affected the outlook of those engaged in certain other primary industries. The fruit requirements of the world are very great, subject of course to the right fruit being produced and properly marketed—a condition which does not always obtain. Not many weeks ago, during the peach season, I saw in a shop in Victoria Park many peaches that were infected with fruitfly. I went into the shop and examined the fruit. Seven at least of them were infected with fly. The woman in the shop was good enough, at my request, to destroy those seven peaches by burning. We know that other countries have difficulties, just as we have. We are aware of the very vigorous way in which successive Governments at different times attacked the codlin moth and eventually wiped it out, with the result that, of all the States, Western Australia—and possibly also Queensland—is free from codlin moth to-day. The department did splendid work in that regard, and here is an opportunity for carrying out good work in respect of the fruit fly. I acknowledge that more rigorous measures should be adopted, but this Bill is a step in the right direction. In British Columbia a special vote is granted every year for the control of codlin moth, an amount of 20,000 dollars being provided. That sum is small in comparison with the amount required in Florida to wrestle with the fruit fly. On that subject I quote the following:—

According to the U.S.A. Secretary of Agriculture, the campaign for the eradication of the Mediterranean fruit fly in Florida has been successful beyond expectations. The fly was first discovered in Florida in April, 1929. Subsequent investigations revealed nearly 1,000 infested properties spread through 21 counties. As the Mediterranean fruit fly is regarded as the worst of all fruit and vegetable pests, the

discovery of this wide-spread orchard infestation had a devastating effect on the credit of the State, and a vigorous quantities-and-eradication campaign was put in hand by the Agricultural Department, which spent more than 4,000,000 dollars on this work, with such success that at the end of ten months it was declared impossible to find a fruit fly in Florida. This, however, is not regarded as any guarantee of future immunity, and a continuance of the departmental work is urged.

It would be futile to suggest expenditure along those lines, but it is right to suggest that the local authorities who desire it should have the power to undertake the work of eradicating or controlling the fruit fly in their own districts. Various attempts have been made in this State to control the fruit fly, one instance being at Spearwood. There for a time it seemed that success would follow, but unfortunately the enthusiasm of the early days of that committee waned, and gradually the effort weakened because the whole of the growers did not continue their co-operation. That, unfortunately, is always the experience with voluntary efforts. In Gosnells we had an excellent example. Time was when Gosnells was regarded as the hotbed of the fruit fly. The same might be said of one or two other districts. Voluntary effort in fruit fly baiting has had the effect of improving the conditions greatly. For over 18 months not a single case of fruit sent from that district has been condemned in the Perth markets. The success that followed the establishment of community fruit fly baiting there has created a false sense of security, with the result that a number of growers are refusing to continue the fight. To protect those growers who desire to do what is necessary, this Bill should be approved. Generally speaking, the fruit fly is not bad beyond a radius of 25 miles from Perth, but that cannot be taken definitely as a fact. I have a letter from the Minister for Agriculture in which he states—

Regarding the statement that fruit fly cannot carry over in the southern districts, I wish to state that this has not yet been proved. As a matter of fact, there are citrus fruits and loquats grown, though not in large quantities, throughout the principal apple and pear growing districts in the south and south-west, and if infested fruit were sent to those districts in quantities annually, there is a possibility that the pest would carry over.

It is obvious that where the local authorities were satisfied there was no need for baiting,

the provisions of the measure would not be applied. Consequently, the growers outside what is known as the fruit fly area would take no action in the matter. I hope members will support the Bill. It aims at assisting growers to combat a most difficult pest. If the measure be passed, there will be considerable satisfaction, at least in some of the districts adjacent to Perth. If members desired, I could produce details of the baiting operations in the Goswells and Armadale districts, and show the wonderful success that followed the initiation of the scheme. However, I do not think that is necessary. I am sure the Minister will support the statements I have made of the success that followed general baiting. While 90 or 95 per cent. of the growers joined in the movement, the remaining 10 or 5 per cent., through carelessness, might breed sufficient flies to inoculate the whole district. It would be a good thing to give the local authorities this power, bearing in mind that if there was no desire to undertake the work, there would be no obligation upon them to do so. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. P. D. Ferguson—Irwin-Moore) [5.22]: One would have thought that when the member for Swan laboured as he did, he would have brought forth a more lusty offspring than the Bill before us. It gives one the impression of having almost been strangled at birth, or possibly suffered from malnutrition during the incubation period. There is not the slightest doubt that the Bill sponsored by the hon. member represents a shocking waste of time of the members and officials of this House, because little or no good can come of it. I understand that this Parliament costs the country something like £30 per hour to run.

Mr. Marshall: Well, sit down quickly.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Considering that the Bill has to be printed and that other expense is incurred, I think members might give such matters more consideration before bringing them before the House.

Mr. Sampson: Do not you think you should give some consideration to the needs of the growers?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government have given a great deal of consideration to the needs of the growers, and are emphatically of opinion that no good could accrue to the growers if this measure became law.

Mr. Marshall: How do you know?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Swan with his usual generosity, provided me with a copy of the Bill, and I have had an opportunity to consider it.

Mr. Panton: After your reception of the Bill, he will not be so generous next time.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think the member for Swan is built on generous lines and will continue to act in the future as in the past.

Hon. P. Collier: Bills generally deal with the whole of the State.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This Bill seeks to amend the Plant Diseases Act of 1914 by placing upon local authorities the duty of exterminating the fruit fly. The Bill specifically says "exterminating." I wish to point out to the House that everyone interested in the fruit industry, with the possible exception of the hon. member who is sponsoring the Bill, knows it is absolutely impossible to exterminate the fruit fly once it gets into a country. While it may be and has been possible to do something in the way of controlling its ravages, I am certain it would not be possible for local governing bodies to exterminate the fruit fly completely. This has never been done in any country of the world where the Mediterranean fruit fly has established itself.

Mr. Sampson: This Bill seeks to initiate something.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It seeks to initiate an attempt to eradicate something that cannot be eradicated. Ample steps are already being taken to control the fruit fly, and no more steps would be taken if this Bill became law.

Mr. Corboy: Do you say it cannot be eradicated because it has not been eradicated?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It cannot be eradicated.

Mr. Sampson: It has been eradicated in Florida and California.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It has not. The fruit season in Western

Australia extends over a considerable period of the year, but outside of the actual fruit season, there grow numerous native bushes of one kind and another that act as hosts for the fruit fly, with the result that it can be carried over from one season to another. That is the reason why, in a country like Western Australia, the eradication of the fruit fly is not possible.

Mr. Sampson: In California those wild growths have been destroyed.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We have had the fruit fly in Western Australia for nearly 30 years. Some 15 or 20 years ago, if my memory serves me aright, the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) then Minister for Agriculture, said he was going to make a valiant attempt to have the fruit fly eradicated. I think I read in the Press at the time that he said if the fruit fly was not eradicated, the members of his staff responsible for it would be. We have not been able to eradicate it yet, although the officers of the department have been working ever since in efforts to control the ravages of the pest.

Mr. Sampson: They need a little encouragement from the Minister.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They get all the encouragement they require. Every Minister of the Department of Agriculture has given his officers all the encouragement and assistance they require in this work. However, the fruit fly is not extending; its ravages have been controlled and in some instances reduced. The member for Swan pointed out that America has spent millions of dollars, and yet has not been able to do more than we have done in Western Australia.

Mr. Sampson: I said nothing of the sort. I read a statement showing that steps were being taken to ensure that no retrogression occurred.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The entomologist of the department and the superintendent of horticulture have been busy for many years on the fruit fly trouble and have saved the fruitgrowers of this State many thousands of pounds by confining its ravages to as small an area as possible and endeavouring to prevent its spread. In fact, Mr. Newman, the entomologist, acting on the instruction and encouragement of the Minister, set himself out to bring into op-

eration the most approved methods of control. He has been successful in introducing a fruit fly bait which has proved so effective in reducing the ravages of the pest that to-day that bait is the standard bait for the whole of Australia. This fact represents a definite achievement on the part of an officer of our department. There are times when the fly gets very bad, and there are other times when it is not so bad. In seasons of heavy crops of stone fruit, which are naturally followed by a glut and a fall in prices, growers become indifferent to the ravages of the fly, and are liable to let the continuous and extensive baiting ordinarily carried on by them go by the board somewhat. In those years, therefore, the fly is bad.

Mr. Sampson: That is why we need a measure such as this.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In years when the crops of stone fruit are light and prices consequently higher, orchardists do take the trouble to bait more extensively, and the result is that the ravages of the fly are considerably decreased. Orchardists in recognised fruit districts are compelled by the departmental officers to bait at all times.

Mr. Sampson: There is a widespread belief that the administration of the Plant Diseases Act is a dead letter.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That belief exists only in the fertile imagination of the hon. member. Fruit growers throughout the State have not that idea at all, as I know from numerous communications I have received from orchardists all over Western Australia. That idea is not prevalent among them at all. It is in the mind of the hon. member, and I fear he is inclined to foster it in the minds of fruit growers. The main point of the Bill is that it proposes to transfer to local governing bodies, should they so desire, the control of fruit fly. Local governing bodies, road boards and municipalities, have many onerous duties to perform, and I do not think they are prepared to take on additional work as proposed by this measure. In the recognised fruit districts of Western Australia there are no less than 38 local governing bodies, and I am indeed doubtful whether a single one of them would be ready to take on this job. They have plenty of other work to do.

Hon. P. Collier: What is behind the Bill, then, at all?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Swan. The local governing bodies recognise that the officers of the department are doing the job now. It is a job that rightly belongs to the Agricultural Department and the officers of the fruit branch. Local governing bodies know that the work is now being done more effectively than it could be done by them. Hon. members should visualise the chaos which would result if the Bill became law and some local governing bodies undertook the work. I do not think for a moment the Darling Range Board would undertake it, but suppose that board did and a few surrounding boards refused. It would mean that there would be absolutely no uniformity about the methods of control. Now, uniformity is absolutely essential to success. It would mean that in the territory controlled by the local governing bodies willing to undertake the duty the local authorities would do the job, and that in adjoining districts, where the local authorities had refused to take the work on, departmental officers would have to continue doing it as they are doing it to-day. As it is essential that individual orchardists should carry out a uniform system of baiting and poisoning, so it is essential that all the local governing bodies taking on the work should do the same. But we would probably find that one local governing body would have one method, and another local governing body another method. Just fancy what would result if all the 38 local governing bodies did for one period undertake the work; we might easily have the spectacle of its being carried out in 38 different ways. What an absurd position that would be!

Mr. Sampson: Regulations would be made under the measure.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill provides that inspectors shall be appointed to do the baiting. That would not be nearly so practical or effective as the individual orchardist doing the job under the control and direction of the expert officers of the Agricultural Department, who know exactly how the work should be carried out. One of my greatest objections to the measure is that it provides that boards may appoint committees consisting wholly or partly of members of the board. It is absolutely contrary to the spirit and the letter of the Road Districts Act that any person should have the right to spend any of the funds of a local governing body unless he has been elected by the ratepayers.

I do not think any road board would approve of such a proposal. No one who is not elected by the ratepayers in the ordinary way, should have the right to say that one penny piece of the local body's funds should be spent in a particular direction.

Mr. Sampson: The Bill does not say anything of the sort.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course it does. I am surprised that the hon. member, who has had a long experience of the work of local governing bodies, who is to-day a member of the executive of the Road Boards Association, should put forward such a proposal. I think he will get hark from the tomb at the next meeting of the association executive.

The Minister for Railways: He will be asked to resign.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Another aspect is that farmers and others who elect representatives on the local governing bodies do so that those representatives may carry out the ordinary work of such bodies; that is to say, the construction of roads and footpaths, the provision of electric light, and so forth. Those are the proper functions of a road board or a municipality, and I cannot conceive of any such body taking sufficient interest in the work which is the subject of this Bill to do it effectively.

Mr. Sampson: That is not too complimentary to the local governing bodies.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: On the score of economy, surely it is far better for us to continue in the way we are doing. Under the Bill, each of the local governing bodies consenting to have these duties foisted on them would have inspectors of its own. The effect would not be at all desirable. Even if some local authorities consented to do the work it would still be necessary for the Agricultural Department to retain the officers in order to see that the local governing bodies carried out the function. If the local authorities definitely stated that they would not do the work, then the departmental officers could do it; but if a local governing body undertook the job, it would still be necessary for a departmental inspector to visit the district and to see that the work was properly done. This would be necessary in the interests of districts that did not undertake to do the work but were willing to leave the destinies of the orchardists in the hands of the Agri-

cultural department. There will be no increased efficiency under the Bill, but there will be considerable cost. The hon. member mentioned that the Superintendent of Horticulture had stated that community baiting was successful. The hon. member has an idea that under his Bill there will be still more community baiting. While it is true that community baiting has proved successful, that success depends absolutely on the enthusiasm displayed by the orchardists. Where community baiting has been most distinctly successful, the departmental inspector has been particularly enthusiastic about it, and thus has enthused the orchardists in his district. In that way they have been induced to take up the work of community baiting and community poisoning. But that cannot be achieved by way of legislation. It can only be achieved in a voluntary way. I venture to say that no local governing body would in this respect prove as effective as the enthusiastic officers of the department. One matter which the hon. member might have explained to the House is why he has included only the fruit fly in his Bill. It is difficult to see why he has stipulated only fruit fly when there are so many other orchard pests. Why has he not included San Jose scale, wax scale, codlin moth, and other diseases?

Mr. Sampson: Because I did not want to supplant the department altogether.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member would take out of the department's hands one pest and leave a dozen others for orchardists to contend against. Undoubtedly the departmental officers are doing all that is necessary in attempting to control fruit fly and to prevent the ravages of the pest from extending. No further good would accrue to the orchardists, or to any one else in Western Australia, if this measure were placed upon the Statute Book. The hon. member has produced no evidence at all that the departmental methods are ineffective, and he has certainly not given us one reason to believe that we would be any better off if the Bill became law. I hope, therefore, that the House will not pass the second reading.

Mr. PANTON (Leederville): I move—
That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question (second reading), put and negatived.

Bill thus defeated.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

In Committee.

Resumed from the 1st October; Mr. Richardson in the Chair; Mr. Sleeman in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment had been moved by Mr. Mann to strike out all the words after "further" in Clause 2 with the view of inserting other words.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope the Committee will not accept the hon. member's amendment. If the words are struck out it will mean that the Bill will be killed; it will be of no use proceeding any further with it. Everything mentioned in the amendment is provided for at the present time. The trustees of the bank have the discretion to refuse a loan or advance money under any circumstances they think proper. If, however, the Committee accept the amendment standing in my name on the Notice Paper, the difficulty can be overcome. There is no doubt that my original proposal has been considerably watered down by the amendment I hope to move at a later stage. I do not know whether hon. members are against me, but I do hope they will view the position with an open mind, and do what is in the best interests of the State. The amendment I propose to move later on will get us half-way along the road and will do some good to the State. Hon. members are asking all and sundry to patronise locally-made products.

The Premier: You are making a second reading speech now.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, I am merely opposing the amendment, and I hope members will not agree to it.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am very sincere with regard to the amendment, and I think it will prove effective.

Mr. Panton: It will prove effective all right.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The member for Mt. Hawthorn speaking with some years of experience, when addressing himself to the Estimates last night, enlogised the trustees

of the Agricultural Bank, and referred to their wisdom in administering the bank laws. He spoke of the great judgment they used in controlling the affairs of that institution and expressed the hope that the development of the South-West would be left in their hands.

Mr. Panton: I am sure he did not say that.

Mr. H. W. MANN: He said that rather than that the development of that part of the State should be given to the Industries Assistance Board, he hoped it would be left to the Agricultural Bank administration, in which event he knew that the money would be well expended and full value given. The member for Fremantle told us that the bank officials already had this authority. I say they have not; but if my amendment is agreed to, the bank authorities will, at their discretion, be able to say to a borrower that money will be lent to him on condition that he purchases locally-made articles. They will not be compelled to foist on to a borrower an article which in their judgment may be unsuitable.

Mr. McCallum: What is the objection to the member for Fremantle's own amendment which appears on the Notice Paper?

The CHAIRMAN: I draw members' attention to the fact that that amendment is not now before the Chair.

Mr. H. W. MANN: My amendment will be very effective, and will assist in the advancement of our secondary industries.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the hon. member looks at the Agricultural Bank Act as it stands, he will find that trustees may, if they think fit, do a lot of things, amongst them being the advancing of money for machinery. At the present time if a settler puts up a request for an advance with which the trustees do not agree, they can turn it down. I want some guarantee that local implements will get some preference. But if the member for Perth is successful in his amendment, it will mean that all the words after the opening words will go out and the essence of the Bill will have disappeared. If the hon. member's amendment is defeated, it is my intention to submit one which I think will meet the requirements of the majority of the members.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I submit that the member for Perth is quite inconsistent. On

the second reading of the Bill he made a strong appeal for the purchase of locally-manufactured articles, and whilst the Bill as it stands might not meet the case, the hon. member's amendment will not assist one inch the proposal he advanced on the second reading. The trustees of the bank have full discretion at the present time, and there is no need for the amendment the hon. member suggests. The trustees may refuse advances for the purchase of machinery, but the amendment of the member for Fremantle will exactly fit the case put forward by the member for Perth. There will be no compulsion; it will merely say—if I may be permitted to call attention to it—that the intending purchaser will be perfectly protected, because it will be within the discretion of the trustees to declare that it is their opinion that no suitable machinery of local manufacture, or the kind required, can be obtained. We know that farmers have their choice with regard to brands of machinery.

The Premier: It does not mean that, surely.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course it does. The amendment of the member for Fremantle exactly meets the case advanced by the member for Perth in his second reading speech, whereas his own amendment does not. I suppose the member for Perth will oppose the amendment of the member for Fremantle which meets the case as the member for Perth advanced it on the second reading.

The Premier: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. The trustees have all the power the member for Perth is anxious to give them, and so the words he proposes to add will be superfluous. The amendment of the member for Fremantle actually brings the position to the stage the member for Perth desires. An application will be more definitely considered without there being forced on a farmer a particular brand of machine that he may not desire to have.

The Attorney General: If the member for Fremantle's amendment is carried, it will.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The amendment says that unless the trustees shall be of the opinion that no suitable machinery of Western Australian manufacture, and of the type required can be obtained. What is wrong with that?

The Attorney General: What does "suitable" mean?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Suitable for the class of work.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask hon. members not to enter into a general discussion on the second amendment, which is not before the Committee.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is difficult to discuss the position without referring to the words it is proposed to add to the clause in the event of the existing words being struck out; but perhaps I am out of order in attempting to refer to the two amendments at the same time. I merely intended to draw attention to the amendment the member for Fremantle proposes to move without discussing its merits. I do ask members, however, to read that amendment carefully and to agree with me that the member for Perth is wholly inconsistent in his attitude.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is a vast difference between the two proposals before the Committee. Both hon. members claim that they are trying to arrive at the same position. As to whether we strike out the words or not depends upon our interpretation of the meaning of the words it is proposed to insert. If we strike out the words desired by the member for Perth, we shall defeat the object of the member for Fremantle. If the Chairman rules that we cannot discuss the addition of the proposed words, it will be impossible to arrive at the real merits of the two amendments. The one proposal hinges upon the other. The member for Perth desires that preference shall be given to certain machinery under particular conditions, and the member for Fremantle desires that the trustees shall have the right to decide whether suitable machinery of the kind required is available within the State. If a farmer wants a header, he cannot of course get a suitable one locally. If, however, he wants a mouldboard plough, he can get one equal to anything made elsewhere. The trustees should then be in a position to say that it is a suitable machine and of the kind required.

Mr. Doney: Can they enforce an agreement upon the purchaser?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. They may say they will only advance money for the purchase of locally made machinery.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That is the purpose of my amendment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If that were so, I would agree to the striking out of the

words. What the hon. member wants is covered by the suggestion of the member for Fremantle. I have a mouldboard State plough, and side by side with it I have a Smith stump jump mouldboard plough.

The Minister for Railways: Why do not you use the local plough?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have been using it for years.

The Minister for Railways: You only said you had one on your farm.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not keep ploughs for fun. Those ploughs that have been made in Western Australia are comparable to the best made elsewhere.

Mr. Doney: Do you say that, where the local machinery is suitable, the trustees are to compel the settlers to buy it?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If the trustees decided that suitable machinery of the kind required is available, they will be willing to advance money for the purchase of such machinery.

Mr. Doney: So that it does amount to compulsion?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: What is the use of an amendment unless it provides for compulsion? We do not say the farmer shall not get the plough he wants, but that he cannot get State money unless he buys the local article. We hear a lot about the desirability of using local products. Here we have the opportunity to limit the patronage accorded to the Eastern States. I agree that a header, a driller and a combine machine could not be bought from within the State, but other classes of machinery made here are as good as anything of the kind produced elsewhere. I have a 6-ft. State harvester which has been in use for 10 or 12 years. It is small in draught and light in carriage, and is equal to any harvesting machine we know. In headers and other heavy harvesting machinery, the State could not compete with outside manufacturers. For my part, I have given the State preference on every occasion when it could compete with other people.

The Minister for Railways: Where did you get the Smith plough?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I bought it when taking over portion of my farm. The State implement and the Smith plough have done an equal amount of work, and in my opinion the State implement is better than the other. If the trustees were given the oppor-

tunity to investigate the matter, we should be helping to secure the maximum amount of production within the State.

The PREMIER: I hope the words will not be struck out.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You preach one thing and practice another.

The PREMIER: The trustees of the bank would ask their clients to buy anything that was made in the State that was equal in price and quality to any similar commodity. They could not have sat back for the last six years and refused to do that.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They have not been doing it.

The PREMIER: The trustees would certainly encourage their clients to buy Western Australian machinery. The farmer who borrows money, which he is obliged to repay, must determine the direction in which he shall spend it. He cannot be compelled to buy something he does not want.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, but if he wants State money, he should buy State machinery if it is suitable for his purpose.

The PREMIER: Every officer of the bank would prefer that the locally made article should be purchased, all things being equal. There is very little difference between the Act as it stands and as it would be amended in the way desired. The principle is already in force. Who is to judge as to the suitability of machinery?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. H. W. MANN: When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking earlier, he seemed to infer that I had changed my intentions regarding my amendment. That is not so because when I spoke during the second reading stage, I indicated what my amendment would be and I gave notice of it in that form. There is little difference between the two amendments, for in both instances the decision is left to the discretion of the bank trustees. It is said that any amendment will take the matter no further. The fact remains that the trustees will now have it brought directly under their notice in an Act of Parliament that it is left to their discretion whether the borrower shall have locally manufactured implements or whether he will be allowed to have an imported article. I am not so much concerned about farming implements because the

wheat farms are well stocked and odd machines only will be required. The point that weighs with me is that the dairying industry in the South-West will be developed with Agricultural Bank money.

Mr. Withers: Does the Agricultural Bank assist in the purchase of dairying implements?

Mr. H. W. MANN: The bank has not in the past, but the trustees will assist in the future. For instance, I am given to understand that the Adelaide firm of Simpson and Sons supply 80 per cent. of the cream cans and a large percentage of the milk cans used in Western Australia. We have local factories that can turn out an article quite equal to that of Simpson & Sons, yet the manufacturers find it difficult to persuade the merchants to sell them.

Hon. P. Collier: How do prices and quality compare?

Mr. H. W. MANN: The local articles are slightly cheaper and we suggest that the quality is equally good. The tins have to be submitted to a chemical test, as well as to that involved in ordinary wear and tear. If my amendment is agreed to, the trustees will have discretion in authorising loans for the purchase of the locally manufactured article.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Hon. members have suggested that we should trust the officials of the Agricultural Bank. That is what my amendment provides. If the amendment moved by the member for Perth is agreed to, the trustees will not be asked to consider the locally manufactured machines.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That is what my amendment indicates.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Some hon. members say that my amendment does not go far enough because it makes no reference to suitability regarding price. I am willing to meet them by making provision accordingly. If the amendment suggested by the member for Perth be agreed to, there is a possibility that a number of men at present in employment will be out of work.

The Premier: It will not make the slightest difference.

Mr. H. W. Mann: How do you suggest men may be thrown out of work?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The sale of agricultural machinery will not be so great in the immediate future as in the past, and if people are allowed to send their money to Canada

and other places overseas instead of purchasing suitable implements manufactured within the State, they will do a wrong to the workers of Western Australia. At present a number of returned soldiers are employed locally in the manufacture of agricultural implements. Their positions will be in jeopardy if the amendment before the Committee is agreed to. At any rate, I have done my best in the interests of the State and the workers, and if the Committee will not support me, the blame will not be mine.

Mr. DONEY: The amendment under discussion will have the effect of abolishing the element of compulsion embodied in the Bill. I object to compulsion and I thought the member for Fremantle would be satisfied with preference rather than insisting on compulsion. I will not be a party to interfering with the freedom of choice of our farmers. If the implements turned out at the State Implement Works are suitable, they will be purchased.

Mr. Withers: The State Implement Works are not mentioned.

Mr. DONEY: The member for Guildford-Midland spoke about little else. I regard the Bill as an admission of the failure of the State Implement Works, and I fancy that will serve to intensify the desire of the Government to get rid of them as soon as a suitable offer is received. Seeing that agriculture is suffering at the present moment and requires something in the nature of a salve to relieve the position, the member for Fremantle offers the industry an irritant! The hon. member is like a quack who offers a so-called remedy that serves merely to increase the trouble. He can have only a meagre understanding of the outlook ahead of the farmers; otherwise he would not introduce such a measure.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Williams-Narrogin condemns compulsion on the one hand but admires it on the other. At the present time the farmers are asking for compulsion. On one side, the farmer who has some rabbits on his property is to be compelled to destroy them while a farmer on the other side of the fence who has noxious weeds on his property should also, it is suggested, be compelled to destroy them. The reason for that is that it is for the good of the State. The Bill will be equally for the good of the State. The bogey of compulsion will not frighten the Committee, because already we compel people to do all

sorts of things. If we were to cease some of that compulsion it would not be very much good to the farmers.

Mr. WITHERS: There is very little difference between the two amendments, that of the member for Perth and that proposed by the member for Fremantle. If either be carried, it will be left to the Agricultural Bank to say whether or not they will make an advance. The member for Perth has said the Agricultural Bank trustees would regard his amendment merely as a direction from Parliament. I do not think either amendment would have a very great effect on the trustees of the Agricultural Bank. The proposed amendment of the member for Fremantle would cover the whole case. The local production of our agricultural machinery is essential to the well-being of the State. Mention has been made of a machine being manufactured in the Greenbushes district. Would it not be wise for the Agricultural Bank trustees to say to their clients -- "There is available in the Greenbushes district a locally-manufactured machine quite suitable to the South-West, and we want to give preference to that local machine, provided it costs no more than the imported article"? It has been asked why this amendment was not brought down at any time during the last six years. But when we are all dead and gone there will be amendments made to many things we think quite satisfactory to-day. Because we neglected to bring down this legislation during the past six years is no reason why the member for Fremantle should not have a brain wave to-day.

The Attorney General: But his proposed amendment is the second brain wave.

Mr. WITHERS: It is only right that we should ask people to use local products.

Mr. Doney: But we ought not to compel them to do so.

Mr. WITHERS: There is no compulsion about it. Even the amendment proposed by the member for Fremantle is merely an indication of the opinion of Parliament as to what should be done. I will support that amendment.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Attorney General by interjection says this was my second brain wave. It is not a brain wave at all. The Bill is the brain wave, but unfortunately for the State the Committee does not view the Bill favourably. So if I wish to do something for the State, I have to water

it down as I have done in my proposed amendment.

The Attorney General: You would still like the Bill in its original form?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would, indeed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am in favour of the amendment by the member for Perth, and judging by the speeches of members opposite they too are in favour of it. If the Bill were carried in the form favoured by the member for Fremantle, the Agricultural Bank would not advance money for any machinery not manufactured in Western Australia. The member for Guildford voted for the second reading, but to-night he has told us that not all the agricultural machinery manufactured in the State is satisfactory to him.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I say that definitely.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member also said that no drills or discs are made locally. That is not correct. Yet if the proposed amendment of the member for Fremantle were carried, any farmer on the Agricultural Bank would be unable to use imported machinery. I agree that, all things being equal, farmers should buy machinery made in Western Australia, but I would not give even the Agricultural Bank trustees the right to say which is the best machine for a man to use on his own farm. I am not prepared to admit that the Agricultural Bank trustees are practical farmers, or that they are competent to tell a farmer what machine he should use. Mr. Cook and Mr. Moran have had some experience as practical farmers, but I do not think that even they should be allowed to say what machinery a farmer should use on his own holding. Unless we accept the amendment of the member for Perth, a client of the Agricultural Bank will have to do without drills, discs and harrows; that is, if the member for Guildford's statement is correct.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is not quite correct.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I agree with that. If the member for Guildford believes that certain agricultural machines are not manufactured in Western Australia, he should not have supported the second reading.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It appears to me the chief objection to the Bill is on the score that it is mandatory. If the Bill be amended as desired by the member for

Perth, then the amendment of the member for Fremantle cannot be moved at all. Actually we are discussing the Bill as it will be when one or the other of those amendments is agreed to. It has been said that agricultural machinery manufactured in Western Australia is dearer than imported machinery. Actually, the local machinery has been sold at the same price as the imported article. All that remains is the question of type. Some people like one type of machine, and some another. Personally I favour some of the State machines, but not others. I disagree with the statement that under the proposed amendment of the member for Fremantle the Agricultural Bank trustees will be compelled to insist upon the use of agricultural machinery produced in Western Australia. It has been said there is in the Bill a particular preference for local machinery. But surely there is nothing wrong about that. I have heard members of the Government supporting a campaign for the consumption of Western Australian goods. It is their policy. Yet the first time an attempt is made in this House to put that policy into effect, they are up against it. It is most extraordinary. The Premier has been boosting Western Australian goods and urging people to give preference to the products and manufactures of their own State, and yet the first time the question is raised here, he is against it.

The Minister for Works: You say you do not agree with the clause.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If it were absolutely mandatory that farmers should buy nothing but State implements, it might be objectionable, but we know the provision is not intended to be mandatory. If a suitable implement cannot be produced in the State, there will be no obligation on the trustees to refuse the money. I see very little objection to the proposal. I have perfect faith in the bank trustees, whom I would rather trust to give an opinion than the farmers. It is a pity they have not been able to exercise more discretion in the past. The member for Nelson spoke of depots in the group areas containing State-made machinery, and suggested that the fact of its being stored there proved it was worthless. If members went through the wheat areas, they would see thousands of depots containing machinery. In fact there is a depot on almost every farm. That is because the

trustees did not have any discretion. If farmers had been compelled to consult the bank before purchasing machinery, many of them would not be so hopelessly in debt. Under the Bill the trustees would have discretion and many farmers would be saved from themselves. I oppose the amendment of the member for Perth.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister for Works has tried to persuade members not to vote for the excision of the words, because their retention would render the Bill unworkable. I have put an amendment on the Notice Paper, and if the words are retained, I shall attempt to get my amendment inserted.

Amendment (to strike out words) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	16
Majority for ..					3

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Barnard	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Davy	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Doney	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. North
Mr. H. W. Mann	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Raphael
Mr. McCallum	(Teller.)
Mr. Munzie	

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Wells	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Teesdale	Miss Holman
Mr. J. M. Smith	Mr. Millington
Mr. Sampson	Mr. Corboy
Mr. Parker	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Collier

Amendment thus passed.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I move an amendment—

That the following be inserted in lieu of the words struck out:—"that the trustees shall have discretion to refuse an advance to any

settler for the purchase of any agricultural or dairying implements or machinery which have not been manufactured in Western Australia.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I shall not oppose the amendment. Next session we shall be able to compare the sales of locally-made implements and ascertain whether the amendment has been of any benefit. If it be found that local sales have not been improved, it might be recognised that the words I suggested should be inserted.

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

Title agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—EGG MARKETING.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st October.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [8.13]: I suppose I may be forgiven if I express the opinion that the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), although usually regarded as consistent both in his attitude to public questions, as well as in his speeches and votes in this House, has on this occasion fallen somewhat from grace, for he is the sponsor of a measure which proposes to introduce what I consider is a very dangerous monopoly. That, of course, is quite foreign to the hon. member's beliefs in connection with the control of public affairs.

Mr. McCallum: A monopoly is all right, so long as all are in it.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Does the hon. member suggest that the member for Guildford-Midland is in it?

Mr. McCallum: He may be producing eggs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have advocated monopoly all my life, in some respects, to protect the public and the producer.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is explaining that his object is to protect the public.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And the producer.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Unfortunately the proposal in the Bill will not in any way help the public; it is intended to help only a few producers. I hope to be able to show that it is extremely

doubtful whether it will even assist the few. I have to admit that the production of eggs, like every other industry, is suffering from unfortunate marketing conditions. But that is not peculiar to egg production. I suppose the hon. member recognises that it applies also to the production of wheat, and moreover to the production of what in countries that have compulsory wheat pools. So that unless under the Bill there is something different from the ordinary operation of a pool, there is no certainty that the egg producers of Western Australia will be in any way benefited by the proposals of the measure. According to my reading of the Bill, it proposes to establish a pool by the creation of a board or boards. I am not quite able to gather whether the hon. member has in mind the establishment of a pool to cover the whole State under one board, or pools in different districts with a board established in each district. I fail to see how the pooling of a product of this nature can be operated with fairness to all the producers unless the pool is operated by one board.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have no objection to that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am trying to deal with the measure.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The measure says both things.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; but we cannot have both.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We can.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: As a matter of fact the Bill proposes that in the first instance the pooling of eggs under the control of a board shall be established only on a petition by producers in a district defined in the petition. That is dangerous, because a majority of egg producers in one place would be able to comply with the conditions of the measure, while the district would embrace people not producers from the point of view of the pool, and those people, without wishing to enter the pool, without being interested in it, would nevertheless be compelled to enter it. Even if that occurred, no advantage would result to the egg producers in the district unless people producing the same commodity outside the district were also compelled to come into the pool. The hon. member knows that one of the difficulties which the man producing eggs for a livelihood is up against to-day is

that country eggs come on the market, eggs produced under entirely different conditions, eggs produced as a side line. The hon. member knows that in the early days on the gold-fields eggs were imported from South Australia. They were largely collected by Afghan hawkers from the South Australian farming community. The hon. member knows perfectly well that to-day Western Australian farmers are sending eggs to market in competition with the man who produces them for a livelihood. How does the hon. member suggest that a board representing those who produce eggs for a livelihood will be able to afford them any protection in the market against the man who produces eggs as a side line? That being the case, I take it the hon. member, if he succeeded in getting the Bill passed, would discover these difficulties, if he does not know them already, after the formation of a board in one particular district. Then, after a very short period, he would turn his attention to getting an amendment passed compelling every egg producer in the State to come into the pool, until a monopoly in the marketing of eggs had been created. As a matter of fact, however, the hon. member tries to impress upon us that the sole purpose of the measure is to provide for a better organisation of the export of eggs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is the main object of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That being the main object, I infer there must be another object.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have not discovered that other object from the hon. member's speech in introducing the Bill. Still, I know what would happen, whether it was the object or not. If the producers of eggs succeeded at all in increasing the price of eggs, the general public would have to pay a bigger price for its breakfast. As a matter of fact, everybody knows that the successful business man is he who buys in the cheapest market and sells in the dearest, never concerns himself when buying whether the seller is able to get a decent livelihood at the price, nor when selling whether the producer is in a position to pay the price. I am concerned for the interests of both the producer and the consumer of the commodity. The hon. member knows perfectly well that this

measure has been prompted by those who to-day are interested in a voluntary pool.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No. That is wrong. The Poultry Farmers' Organisation prompted this long before there was a pool.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I shall say something about the Poultry Farmers' Organisation presently. I have here some resolutions carried by the organisation. The pool have been in operation as a voluntary pool, and have been handling eggs for export for about four years. I do not know that the pool have at any time made anything like a reasonable profit. I believe that on more than one occasion they have shown a loss on their operations, that loss being borne by the egg producers. But is it not also a fact that the voluntary pool have religiously refused to do business outside Western Australia except through one firm, and this notwithstanding the fact that on one occasion during this very year, when we have had so many complaints about the price of eggs, a firm well known on the London market, already handling pooled eggs from the other side of Australia, established a letter of credit for £20,000 in a Perth bank against eggs which might be available for export? The firm were prepared to finance up to about 11d. per dozen against cool store warrant.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We got a better offer.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member got nothing of the kind. The firm in question offered a further 3d. per dozen when the eggs were on board, making a price of 1s. 2d. at a time when it was claimed that the best price obtainable by our egg producers was 8d. per dozen. That letter of credit remained in the bank for a fortnight, and the pool did not reply one way or the other. I have all the correspondence here.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You have not the facts, and you have only half the correspondence. You know very well that a lot of correspondence—

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am stating from the correspondence what I am entitled to assume are the facts. Eventually the pool stated they were not prepared to operate under that letter of credit. They operated through a firm with whom they had previously been doing business.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It took a fortnight or more to get anything like the terms offered by the firm who were turned down.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: All that is untrue.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: What I say is not untrue.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I say it is.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Let us assume for the moment that it is untrue, although I assert the contrary. I wanted to explain that, after all, the market is available to a voluntary pool exactly as it is to a compulsory pool. If this Bill came into force to-morrow, it would not be intended to do more than embrace the egg producers in a defined district. The pool would still only operate as a voluntary pool. It would only become a compulsory pool if the whole State were involved. The whole State is not asking for a pool. In the circumstances, the voluntary pool, as operating to-day, if it likes to do what the hon. member has so frequently suggested should be done, look around and establish a better market than the one through which the pool has been operating, might easily be able to find such better market. But unfortunately the pool operates through only one firm. I ask the hon. member why the pool should not operate through others who have been in the business and have been returning to the producer profits equal to, or better than, the profits returned by the voluntary pool. Why should the pool ask the other firm to go out of business and throw the egg producers on the mercy of one firm both here and in London?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I would be the last to suggest that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Bill provides for it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It does not.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It provides definitely that once a board is established under the provisions of the Bill, every person selling and producing eggs for profit—say a man having 20 fowls and selling half a dozen fresh eggs to his neighbour at a profit—will be compelled to supply the whole of the eggs produced by him to the board. The board are then to be empowered to sell the eggs through one firm or more, as they choose. The board would be there to operate through one firm, and one only.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They would appoint agents; it might be one, or two, or half a dozen.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know that; but I say the Bill empowers the board to operate through one firm only if they choose, and no one can say them nay.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You must provide that, surely!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Of course it has to be provided.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You would not put in the Bill that the board must have three agents.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am trying to point out that the voluntary pool operating to-day have operated through one firm, and one firm only.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The others would not operate with us.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is not correct. I have evidence that they offered to do so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not correct.

Mr. SPEAKER: This conversation between two members must cease.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If it would not delay the House too much, I would read the correspondence.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Guildford-Midland will have the right later to challenge the Minister's statements.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The board, if constituted on petition by the producers in any defined district set out in the petition, would consist of five members, three of whom would be elected by the producers and two appointed by the Government. The board would obtain the complete property of all the producers in the form of eggs. Notwithstanding anything that may be said to the contrary by the hon. member, once the eggs are in the possession of the board, the board will have complete property in them, and the producer will have no right to object. He may voice his objection through the public Press or by other means, but in fact he has no remedy. He loses control of his eggs completely at the moment they pass over to the board.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not correct.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is correct. That being the case, it means that even for the local market the board to be created under the measure will be able to control the sale of eggs, either withholding them or making them available. On the

face of it, that would appear to be something for the benefit of local egg producers; but does the hon. member not know that the Commonwealth Constitution provides that there shall be perfect freedom of trade between the States?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is why that provision is in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: And what is happening to-day will continue. We shall probably get back to conditions that prevailed in the early days of the gold-fields, when the hawkers of South Australia dumped eggs on to our market. That is what will happen.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We could reciprocate.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No, because I am trying to explain that the eggs produced here would have to be sold in South Australia at a lower price, just as a hit back at the producer there. Our community would suffer a loss by that action and they would also have to pay an additional price locally just as is being done in the case of sugar from Queensland.

Mr. McCallum: That is being done with butter.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; we are not exporting butter.

Mr. McCallum: We are sending our butter elsewhere and selling it at a lower rate than we have to pay for it here.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If I produce butter and choose to send it to New South Wales, no one can say me nay, but the Bill proposes that if I produce eggs I am not to sell them where I choose; I shall have to sell them where the board chooses to permit me to sell. Last year, to the 30th June, according to the "Statistical Abstract," more eggs were imported into Western Australia than were exported.

Mr. Richardson: They were dumped here.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Not at all. That has been going on for years and it will continue to go on under the Bill because we cannot restrict the importation of eggs into Western Australia. If we were to create under the provisions of the Bill a higher price for eggs, what would happen? The other States would profit by that and increase the number of eggs they send to this State. That is not the way by which we can assist the producer of eggs. What the hon. member desires to bring about will not be achieved by him. We shall bring about a position similar to that in

respect to butter production. Our great difficulty when large quantities were being imported into the State was that there was a good deal of dumping.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Is that not being done to-day?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Only to a limited extent.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why is it limited to-day?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Because the people of the State have been taught to consume their own products and we are producing a better class of butter. The hon. member knows that for a long time, although we were just about overtaking the local demand for a period, during the balance of the year we had to import butter, and the people in the Eastern States said to us that if we wanted butter for that period we would have to take it for the remainder of the year as well. The hon. member knows that we had to put thousands of cases in our cool stores to meet the competition of the Eastern States. I am speaking, of course, of some years ago. As a matter of fact, the Government advanced money against the butter that was stored locally because at that time the local producers could not market it. We waited until such time as the imported article went off and then released our own product. Under the Bill there will be nothing to prevent anyone buying fresh eggs at 8d. a dozen and sending them to the London market which is better than our own. That can be done without the assistance of a compulsory pool. Therefore the only effect of the pool will be to have the eggs marketed locally for export and to raise the price against the local consumer. Then the moment that happens the Eastern States will increase their export to us. What will be the value of doing that? If poultry farmers believe that by putting their eggs into a pool they will get a better market overseas they should be encouraged to do that, but I do object to using Parliament, the law of the land, to compel people who do not want to use those methods, to hand over their products to a board over which they have little or no control, roping in all the consumers to the point of compelling them to pay a higher price for eggs, or otherwise encouraging additional importations from the Eastern States. It is not necessary to have legislation to organise the poultry industry. That can be done without

the assistance of legislation. Last year 174,840 dozen eggs were exported overseas. We imported eggs in shell to the number of 42,788 dozen and in pulp 236,789 lbs. The value of the exports was £10,995 and the value of the imports came to £14,397. Let us get to the point where compulsory pooling is likely to prevent eggs coming from the other side of Australia. If we are going to increase the price locally, we will give more encouragement to the Eastern States to send their eggs to Western Australia, and that will eventually do harm to our producers. Without efficient organisation it does not matter whether you have a compulsory or a voluntary pool. If the object is artificially to raise the price locally, the consumers will have to pay more and in my opinion without any lasting benefit to the people it is designed to help. Therefore it is undesirable to give the power it is proposed to extend under the Bill. The poultry farmers of this State are not anxious for this method of assisting them out of their difficulties. There are real difficulties, I admit, but they are no more real than the difficulties that have to be faced by other producers, the producers of wool and wheat for instance. With the fall in the price of wheat and offal, the position of the egg producer should be somewhat better at the present time. It is not right to assert that because he has to face the conditions existing to-day it will be possible, by compelling everyone to be roped into paying a higher price for his requirements, there will be lasting benefit to the producer. There have been a number of meetings held since the Bill was first promulgated.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I know of one.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know of two. A meeting of poultry farmers was held at Welshpool recently.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: At a public hall? It was held somewhere; it might have been a little meeting at a private house.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It might have been a large meeting; they were egg producers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You ought to say where it was held.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It was a meeting held at Welshpool and this was the resolution that was carried—

This meeting fails to see how the Egg Marketing Bill now before Parliament is going to solve the problem of over-production. We ob-

ject to any form of control, and think it will be better for all to let the market find its own level. Should the Bill reach the Legislative Council, we trust that members will insist on a 75 per cent. poll of producers to form a board.

Hon. P. Collier: Who presided at that meeting?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A gentleman, I think.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You do not know how many were present.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, as many again as half. Another meeting of the Poultry Farmers' Branch of the R.S.L. was held on the 26th inst. I do not know where that was held.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It would be pretty hard to find out.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: At that meeting the provisions of the Bill for the marketing of eggs were reviewed, and this was the resolution that was carried—

That although organised control may in some instances be desirable, my branch views with great misgivings the possibility of control over the poultry industry in our State being diverted to channels likely to create a monopoly in management as well as in distribution. If control were confined to export, cold storage and pulping under a board first nominated by yourself, my branch feels that your support in that direction would be of great benefit to the industry as a whole.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Who signed that?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: "J. Mason, President."

Hon. P. Collier: I think you had better allow them to get all the eggs out of the State before the next elections.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If this Bill is passed, there will be no over-ripe eggs by the time the next election takes place. Some of the provisions of the Bill are most astonishing. True, there is provision for exemption, but exemption is not mandatory. You cannot demand exemption because the conditions being as they are, it may not be desirable to come under the pool. It is purely in the discretion of the board. The Bill does not mean anything; it takes a lot in. It says—

The Board may, in such cases and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section, (a) such small producers as the board think fit;

(b) sales direct to local consumers or to retail vendors; (c) such eggs as the producer may require for his own use.

I have never in my life heard anything so ridiculous. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) recently waxed eloquent against a proposal in the Traffic Bill to prevent a person owning a motor car travelling on our roads and paying additional taxation, when he wanted to carry his own products to his farm. Now a member of his own party proposes in the Bill before us to do something which will prevent a farmer having breakfast on his own eggs. It will not be possible for him to cook his own eggs without first getting exemption from the board.

Mr. McCallum: Will he take the hen with him when he goes to the board for exemption?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I think the Minister for Works would prohibit such a proposal. Then the next exemption reads—

Such other sales, purchases, or transactions as may be prescribed. . . . and may at any time revoke such exemption.

He might eat half an egg and then get it revoked. I have heard of revoking at bridge, but I did not know that it was possible for a board to compel anyone to revoke after he had started to eat an egg. Apparently under the Bill that will be possible. If those who are anxious to do so care to organise and control their own production and their marketing they can do so as effectively as any other class of producer. I am sure the member for Guildford-Midland and other members opposite would be astounded if the Government, or any private member, brought down a Bill to provide for the pooling of the butter produced by our different factories, and roped in farmers who also produced butter, on the ground that they were not producing at a profit and for the reason that the consumer must be forced to pay a higher price for that commodity.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We may have to do that yet.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: When we are up against a trouble we usually look upon the most difficult side, and suggest a remedy which may involve everyone, until the remedy becomes worse than the disease.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is a world-wide trouble to-day.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is exactly the position. I am almost nervous about suggesting that which is so frequently referred to, namely "another sheltered industry." So much has been said by economists concerning sheltered industries that I am almost afraid to refer to them.

Mr. Hegney: This is only a shell industry, not a sheltered one.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Producers may organise for their own advantage, but they should not have the right to compel people who have no say in the matter to be brought under conditions that may be imposed upon them by a board. I do not know that it is wise to allow the producer of a certain commodity to force every other producer of a like commodity to come into a pool of this sort. Let me take the position of coal. One of the objections there is that there is a combine controlling coal. That is bad, but it is bad only from the point of view of those who pay for the coal. As the member for Fremantle would say, it is not bad for those who are in it. We can go on until there is no end to the formation of boards and pools to control production and the output of everything.

The Attorney General: They are schemes for making things dearer.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They can only make local things dearer. The board cannot control the overseas markets.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The board can control local prices.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, unless the producers of eggs in the Eastern States see fit to consign large quantities here when it suits them to do so. Such shipments would cause the board to disgorge eggs locally at a price that fitted in with the requirements of the consumers. There can be no other purpose in a movement of this sort. The export markets of the world are available to a voluntary pool just as much as they are to a compulsory pool. If there is a market available elsewhere for more eggs than the local producers can sell, and they desire to send them to that other market, they can still do so. They can obtain

the overseas price for their eggs, but they cannot control that price, no matter what organisation stands behind them. There can be only one result from a pool of this kind, namely the raising of the price locally to the consumer without any lasting benefit to those it may be desired to assist.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do you think it is in the interests of the State that eggs should be sold for 4d. or 5d. a dozen?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Exactly the same thing applies to other commodities. Does the hon. member think it right that wheat should be down to the present price? Does he suggest that because we can only get 2s. 4d. a bushel on the world's market we should compel everyone in this State to pay 10s. in order to make up the difference?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is ridiculous.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No one would suggest such a thing merely because the producer is getting an unsatisfactory price for his wheat.

Mr. McCallum: Is that not happening in the case of butter?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. Why should the Bill be restricted to eggs? Why should it not apply to everything, and why should not the local consumer be made to pay a high price for everything and allow the world to get the rest at the cheapest possible price? The very opposite is what we should aim at. We should make everything as cheap as possible within the State, subject to a fair price to the consumer and producer, and should make the price as high as possible for every commodity that we can export. The higher the price we can get for our exportable surplus, the better will it be for our producers. The idea of securing a high local price and a low export price is against the interests of all our products. I would ask the hon. member seriously to reconsider this matter and ask those who prompted him to bring down this Bill to do the same. They will then find that by getting together they can render to themselves material help. I wish them every success in the way of securing every farthing they can by the export of their eggs. If necessary the Government would be ready to help in finding an export market for them. If the producer chooses to send his eggs to the local market and ac-

cepts the price the consumer can afford to pay, comparable with the price of other commodities, we should not by Act of Parliament force him to do something against his own interests, this being also against the interests of the consumer. Therefore I suggest that it would be unwise to pass this Bill.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.50]: During the recent elections I came into contact with many who were engaged in the poultry raising industry. I said I would support a measure to provide for organising and stabilising that industry. In New South Wales and Queensland there are two Acts in existence, which provide for the establishment of boards under which the production and sale of eggs are regulated. In Victoria and South Australia the producers are asking their Governments to bring down Bills to provide for the same thing. The Victorian measure is not yet before Parliament. Recently, however, a deputation from the egg producers in South Australia asked the Minister for Agriculture to bring down a Bill on similar lines to the measure operating in New South Wales. The Minister said he would do this at the first opportunity that presented itself. In conjunction with three other members I waited on the Minister for Agriculture. We presented to him the disabilities of the producers, and asked him to use his influence with Cabinet so that the Government might bring down a measure dealing with the industry. Unfortunately Cabinet did not agree to this, with the result that another Bill is now before the House. The principles underlying this measure will help to do for this industry what the Dried Fruits Control Act is helping to do for those engaged in the dried fruits industry. The growers are not getting fabulous prices, but the Act has prevented the abandonment of many holdings in the vine-growing areas. If it were not for the help that has been given to them, many of these settlers would have given up their occupations. The same thing is likely to apply to the egg industry. At present prices the producer cannot carry on much longer. A new-laid egg is now selling at from 7½d. to 8½d. a doz. These prices cannot pay. The producers are workers, and are in much the same position as the workers in industrial establishments. The old doctrine has gone by the board. We now have unem-

ployed men looking for work. The fact that we have trade union organisations which have been able to maintain conditions in our industries, and see that the interests of those employed in them are safeguarded, despite the fact that thousands of others are out of work, must show the necessity for such organisation. If it is necessary for workers to organise, it is much more necessary that producers should organise. This Bill will have the effect of stabilising the industry and of putting it upon a decent basis. There are many difficulties associated with the marketing of eggs. It is a somewhat intricate business. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) said it was bristling with difficulties. Not long ago I read of an action involving the ownership of certain eggs. It appears that a man had a peacock which flew over the fence, and subsequently a number of eggs were laid next door. The question arose as to the ownership of the eggs. When the case came before the proper tribunal the judge had to decide as to the ownership. Eventually it was held that as the peacock could not lay eggs it was impossible to arrive at a decision. As I have said, the position is bristling with difficulties. There is a good market abroad for eggs. The industry is worth £12,000,000 to Australia, but last year only a quarter of a million pounds worth of eggs were exported. We should not allow the industry to decline if we can help it. There is control in New South Wales. According to the "West Australian" to-day the price of new-laid eggs in Sydney is 1s. 2d. a dozen and country eggs are 10d. In this State the price is between 7½d. and 8½d. for new-laid, and 6d. for country eggs. In Adelaide country eggs are 6d. and in Melbourne between 10d. and 11d.

The Minister for Railways: Is the 1s. 2d. for home consumption?

MR. HEGNEY: These are the prices quoted in to-day's paper.

The Minister for Railways: The price is nearly 200 per cent. higher in Sydney where there is a board, than in South Australia where there is none.

MR. HEGNEY: The time may come when our producers may have to abandon their farms should the prices remain as they are. The Minister contended that the voluntary system in South Australia was one we

should emulate. He quoted the following extract:—

The Red Comb Egg Association is a glorious testimonial of what can be accomplished by correct marketing methods. Pence per dozen over and above ordinary country egg prices have been returned to members for many years with the result that in 11 years from a small beginning of five members pooling about 200 dozen a week, the association is now more than 400 strong, pooling 40,000 dozen eggs a week in the springtime and supplying 60 per cent. of South Australian exports to the United Kingdom.

The Minister for Agriculture: That indicates the progress of the voluntary pool.

Mr. HEGNEY: The deputation asked the Minister to bring down a Bill to deal with the marketing of eggs. In South Australia where they have been so successful with the voluntary pool, people are also asking the Government to bring down a Bill to assist the farmers. While the voluntary pool has been reasonably successful, it has grown as indicated in that statement. In spite of that, those concerned were compelled to go to the Government to ask for legislation to control the industry.

The Attorney General: Every section of the community is looking for a monopoly, if it can get it. Unfortunately that is human nature.

Mr. HEGNEY: Some monopolies have proved effective, when prices charged have been reasonable.

The Attorney General: They always led to increases.

Mr. HEGNEY: No, not always.

The Attorney General: I would like to know of one instance where a monopoly has not had that effect.

Mr. HEGNEY: As a matter of fact, monopolies can often do a lot of good. More up-to-date plant can be installed; organisation of an industry can be placed on a better basis than is possible with a number of small competing concerns; production can be on a cheaper basis.

The Minister for Railways: But you cannot control the market overseas.

Mr. HEGNEY: That is so, but the purpose of the Bill is to endeavour to organise the industry so that when the market is glutted and the industry is unprofitable to those who have embarked their capital in it, it will be possible, with proper organisation, to dispose of the eggs under the best possible conditions. I understand that in Sep-

tember, October and November, the London market is profitable for our eggs. At other times, the market is not so profitable to our growers, because the producers in the Old Land place their eggs on the market to the detriment of our product. The main fear about the Bill is, apparently, that the consumer may have to pay a bit more for his eggs for the breakfast table. In my opinion, ample safeguards are provided in the Bill. Even so, we have the experience of other countries where, when the staple article of diet is non-existent owing to famine, pestilence, or some other cause, the people have to find some other form of food as a substitute. When Irish Blight destroyed potato crops, the people who depended on that product had to find something else to take its place, and the same thing will apply to eggs. If the board in control of the industry places too high a price upon the eggs, the consumers will not eat them. Consequently the price will have to be adjusted to suit the consumer's pocket.

The Attorney General: There is not much protection there for the public.

The Minister for Railways: And in any case, what value would it be to the producer if the public stopped eating eggs?

Mr. HEGNEY: The effect of control would be to stabilise the industry. The producers would see that the board did not exploit the consumers by charging an exorbitant price for the eggs. It would be in their interests to increase the consumption of eggs, rather than to place a prohibitive price on their output. If every member of the community ate one more egg per month, that would mean one dozen more per individual per year. That would represent a considerable increase in the consumption of eggs in 12 months, and would help to solve some of the problems confronting the egg producers. I do not profess to be a poultry expert, but I support the general principles of the Bill. I believe it will prevent the abandonment of poultry farms that are scattered throughout the State. It will give some security to those who have invested their money in the industry. Organisation is the main-spring of our social system. To-day we are compelled to organise, irrespective of what activities we may be engaged in.

The Attorney General: I think the world to-day is suffering through being blinded by

the science of organisation. There is too much of it.

Mr. HEGNEY: Organisation has largely solved the problem of production, and in almost every industry there is ample production. It is distribution of the proceeds of industry that causes difficulty. Some people suggest that hours of work should be extended. Owing to the invention of labour-saving machinery, industry to-day can produce goods in large quantities. This should enable hours of labour to be reduced, and life made a little more bearable for a large section of the community. It is admitted to-day that in 12 months we can produce sufficient to enable us to carry on for two years.

The Attorney General: Because, instead of allowing commodities to be distributed naturally, we introduce these brilliant schemes for control and distribution.

Mr. HEGNEY: A Nationalist Government have been in power in New South Wales for some considerable time, and they have not repealed a similar Act that operates there. In Queensland and South Australia similar legislation is in operation, while in Victoria the producers are clamouring for the introduction of a Government measure along lines similar to that operating in New South Wales. This movement is not confined to Australia; and I will quote a newspaper cutting that relates to the organisation of industry and a British agricultural scheme. The "West Australian" published the following British official wireless message from London under date 13th July—

Lord de la Warr, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, when speaking at Mold yesterday, said that the Minister for Agriculture (Dr. Addison) intended to place the development of agricultural education and research in the forefront of his policy. The Government, he added, were considering the possibilities of giving to the majority of farmers engaged in producing a given commodity the right to form an organisation to control the marketing of that commodity, with power to bring in recalcitrant minorities. This would entail the formulating of a scheme for submission to Parliament through the Minister for Agriculture, and satisfying him that the scheme represented the views of the bulk of producers, and that the rights of minorities and of the consumers had been considered. Although they did not envisage taking the power to enforce a scheme of organisation upon industry, they did envisage giving to industry the power to organise itself.

That is what the Bill does. It gives power to the industry to organise itself. Therefore, I hope the second reading of the Bill will be supported by a majority of the House.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [9.9]: I support the general principles of the Bill. During my association with the dried fruits industry, I had a good deal to do with the question of organisation. I believe in the proper control of the export of perishable lines. We may be asked about the position of wool and wheat. I would reply that they are not perishable lines, and I maintain they do not require the same control as perishable goods. There was a period of six years when both wheat and wool were controlled.

The Minister for Agriculture: But under abnormal conditions.

Mr. THORN: I am of opinion that the wheat and wool producers would be very pleased if the same control existed to-day.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not one per cent. of them.

Mr. THORN: I believe they would be better off under that system.

The Minister for Railways: You must remember that that control was in the interests of the Empire as a whole.

Mr. THORN: When an industry reaches a stage of over-production so that it becomes unprofitable, it should be properly controlled. We are endeavouring, by means of the measure, to place long lines of our product on the London market. That will enable our products to be disposed of, and our producers to reap some return for their work. The egg producers of the State have been going through very trying times, and it behoves Parliament to render what assistance is possible. The egg industry is an asset and if we can work up a satisfactory export trade, it will play a big part in bringing new capital into the State. I also believe that when a primary industry reaches the stage of over-production, the producers of that commodity should be made to take a fair share in the export trade. There is always one man who will hang back for the local market. I regard him as the "disorganiser." He will not take his share in working up the export market. Under the Dried Fruits Act, every grower must take his share of the export trade, as well as of the local trade. There is a lot of talk about compulsion, and it is true that

the Bill may contemplate compulsion to a certain extent. I believe that the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) would be quite safe in providing in the Bill for a four-fifths majority of the organised poultry producers to be in favour of the marketing board. Those people are making a living from the industry. The farmer is the man who produces, to my mind, the true election egg. Even under the conditions sought to be obtained, I claim that he would be better off as well.

The Minister for Works: He would have more elections.

Mr. THORN: Under a proper method of control, his products would be marketed and he would benefit accordingly. I believe that the farmers cannot give their eggs away to-day; the storekeepers refuse to take them because there is no market for eggs. When the industry reaches such a serious position, it is up to Parliament to do what is possible in the interests of the producers.

Mr. Hegney: Under those conditions, eggs should be cheap enough for the breakfast table.

Mr. THORN: When the Minister was speaking, I said that the people should pay more. I maintain that eggs should never be sold at less than 1s. per dozen. That is a fair price. To-day we find that people can get a jolly good breakfast for a penny or a penny-halfpenny, and I reckon it is up to them to pay a bit more.

Mr. Withers: That would be all right if you made the minimum the maximum, when you mention 1s. a dozen.

Mr. THORN: I do not think the Minister for Railways mentioned a large and representative meeting that was held in Perth some time ago. At that meeting 300 egg producers were in attendance, and there were three dissentients only.

The Minister for Agriculture: They have changed their minds since.

Mr. THORN: They have not.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If they have, it must have been because of the Minister's speech.

Mr. THORN: We have had reference to other meetings. I think one at Welshpool was mentioned. It is said that there were seven egg producers at that meeting. I think more likely they were seven clucky hens! That is the sort of meeting that is organised as soon as we try to do anything for the producer, and we always find that

the middle man plays a big part in organising those little meetings and sees to it that they get plenty of publicity. The other meeting that was held under the title of Returned Soldiers' Egg Producers does not count for very much. I guarantee there were not very many at that meeting. The organiser of that meeting is one of those disgruntles that a few months ago were in favour of the Bill. Because he could not get his own way with the organisation he was in, he turned round and organised the Returned Soldiers' Egg Producers' Association, just to give him something to work on. I have heard it said in this House that if an industry could not stand on its own legs it should be allowed to go out. But if we stick to that policy practically all our primary industries will go out.

The Attorney General: At whose expense are we supposed to prop them up?

Mr. THORN: This is an egg-marketing Bill to deal with export.

The Minister for Railways: No. It is not.

Mr. THORN: I am not going to dodge the fact that to an extent it will stabilise the price of eggs in Western Australia. But there is no chance of the public being fleeced, because the moment we try any funny business here in raising the price of eggs above a fair thing, in will come the South Australian eggs the Minister spoke of.

The Minister for Railways: You cannot try any funny business anywhere else.

Mr. THORN: The very fact that South Australian eggs are so handy will govern the price of eggs in Western Australia.

The Minister for Railways: Then what do you hope to get out of the scheme?

Hon. M. F. Troy: Are not eggs controlled in South Australia?

Mr. THORN: No, but South Australia is asking for control, and presently it will come. There is no doubt about that. All the other States will get in and we shall come in at the finish, as we usually do. We ought to show a lead now and do what we can. The control of the dried fruit industry has been most successful, and it will be a very sad day for the dried fruit producers when that control is taken from them. There was a little opposition to that measure when it was brought forward, but to-day practically there is 100 per cent. of

support for it. There we have worked along very happily ever since we received that control and I believe the egg producers, given similar control, would work along as happily. I hope members will give the Bill serious consideration and will not take it too cheaply. There has been a good deal of laughter and joking during the debate because, when all is said and done, there is nothing worse than a bad egg, and when we speak of eggs we often think of bad eggs. It seems astounding that politicians should not be unanimously in favour of the proper control of eggs. I believe that if we were to refer it to the Hon. William Morris Hughes he would say, "Certainly, control eggs." He has sad memories of stopping eggs on the Queensland border. We might also include tomatoes in this Bill, because politicians probably would be more comfortable if we had full control of both those lines. But, all joking apart, I hope members will give the Bill their warm support, for its object is solely the helping of the egg producers.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.20]: Agitation for marketing control is not new either in Western Australia or in Australia. Legislation to that effect has been introduced in this House previously. It operates to-day in the dried fruit industry throughout Australia, and having in mind the competition of cheaply grown dried fruits in other countries of the world, that legislation has been of considerable benefit to our growers. Marketing control is also in effect in a voluntary manner by the operation of the Paterson butter scheme which, of course, is the invention of the friends of our friends opposite. In my opinion it is not acting in the best interests of Australia generally. May I be permitted to say in what direction the Paterson butter scheme has resulted. It has resulted in the people of Australia being compelled to pay £2,000,000 more per annum for butter than they are entitled to pay, and it has resulted in increasing the land values in the Eastern States far beyond the real effective values. If the Paterson butter scheme were increased by 1d. a lb., land values would immediately rise by another £1. If we compare the industries which are controlled with those that are not controlled, we have a striking example in the dairying industry in New Zealand and in Australia. In the north island

of New Zealand the dairying industry is carried on in conditions very similar to those in the north of New South Wales, while the dairying industry in the South Island of New Zealand is carried on in conditions similar to those in Western Australia and Victoria. Yet, with land at £70 and £80 per acre, and with wages no higher than they are in the dairying industry in Australia, New Zealand can carry on more successfully than can Australia, and in consequence the Commonwealth Government impose a duty of 6d. per lb. on New Zealand butter. In New Zealand the dairy farmer is efficient and up to date, makes most wonderful provision for his stock, and carries on the most effective organisation in the Southern Hemisphere, whereas in Australia the dairy farmer is the most inefficient and ineffective in Australasia. I had this comparison in my mind when I came back from New Zealand. I had a considerable knowledge of the dairying industry and I had also a knowledge of that part of New South Wales where the North Coast butter is produced. Indeed, my people live there. There the whole cry is for stabilisation. What has happened? One farm there now keeps two families. It seems good economy, but actually one family does not work at all, but merely lives on the other family, who works the farm. When land there is being sold, the claim is made that because butter brings a certain price the land is of a certain value. The higher the Paterson butter scheme operates, the higher do land values go, and of course the industry is not benefited at all.

The Minister for Railways: Instead of the value of the dairy herd being raised by better breeding.

Hon. M. F. TROY: A man entering the industry must purchase land at a high value, and having insufficient money he goes to a financial institution which advances him £3,000 or £4,000. The financial institution is concerned about land values because of the security provided. All the State taxation and the local taxation is based on land values which do not exist at all. So the people of Australia are penalised in order to retain land values which are not real and which are of no use either to the community or to the industry. In New Zealand marvellous provision is made for feed for the stock, whereas in the northern districts of New South Wales one does not see a haystack in 50 miles. That is the danger of legislation

of this character. If you allow the people in an industry to get an unduly easy living, and if you make the industry profitable by artificial aid, you penalise the community and in the end the industry itself. That is what we have to be careful of in legislation of this character. In 1925 I introduced legislation providing for the organising of the people engaged in the farming industry. But that legislation was not like this. I want to show the distinction, because I had in mind then the evil possibilities, as well as the good possibilities, of legislation of this character. The primary producers Bill introduced by me provided that the growers were to be registered, and that on presentation of a petition by two-thirds of the producers in any industry, the Governor might declare the product of that industry to be a controlled product. Then within a month a ballot was to be held, but if one-fourth of the producers in the industry objected to the product being controlled, it could not be controlled; and within two years a ballot of all the registered growers had to be taken at which a majority of 66 per cent. had to be secured in order that the product should become controlled by law. But a very important provision in that Bill, which is lacking in this, was the Ministerial veto. The Minister had power to veto any act of a board which he deemed prejudicial to the interests of the community. That is a power which should be included in this Bill. It ought not to be within the province of any body of people to get legislative sanction to control an industry and to create a monopoly. If the dried fruit producers, or any other body of producers, acted prejudicially to the people's interests, had that legislation been passed I, as Minister for the time being, would have had no hesitation in wiping out that authority. I believe in the organisation of industry, but I do not believe in giving any body of producers the right to control a product and to establish a monopoly with a view to exploiting the community to their heart's desire. I do not want to assume that the producers in any industry desire to exploit the people at the beginning, but invariably that results later on. Take the wheat pool: it is a purely voluntary pool. This year the producers were paid 3s. 4d. for their wheat, but all the time the wheat pool were holding that wheat the local consumer was paying 6s. a bushel for it. A few days ago I came

down from the goldfields. The people there are still paying 9s. 6d. per bushel for their wheat. I saw their docketts, and advised them to get together and buy a truck-load of wheat.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is no control of wheat. You know that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There is no control of wheat, but the wheat in the State is held largely by the pool and by merchants in their warehouses. If the farmers knew where wheat could be sold, it would not bring that price, but the sellers of the wheat are not in touch with such markets.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I wish you would give me a hand to sell some at that price. Your figures are wrong.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I suggested a remedy—that those people should buy a truck-load of wheat.

The Minister for Lands: That must have been the price per bag!

Hon. M. F. TROY: That price has operated for a long time on the goldfields.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Out at Wiluna?

Hon. M. F. TROY: It would be easy to break down such a high price by the people in the district ordering a truck-load or two. I do not say that is due to the pool, but it has resulted largely from the fact that we pool our wheat—I have pooled mine—and the fact also that wheat is held largely by merchants in their warehouses on behalf of the farmers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It was worse than that before the pool started.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There are one or two features of the Bill to which I wish to refer, because they are my chief objections to the proposals. Before this Bill gets my sanction, there must be provision for a Ministerial veto. At any rate, there must be provision for a veto by someone to protect the consumer. The consumer is just as important as the producer. He has his place in the community and ought to receive equal consideration with any other man. We are told from time to time that the farmers are the backbone of the country. As one engaged in the industry, I do not agree with that. I believe the farmer is essential to the community, but he is no more important than the man who renders service to the community in other ways.

The Minister for Railways: Anyhow, the backbone is not much good without the body.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Someone must protect the consumer. Unless he is protected, he will be exploited. A provision of that kind was included in the Primary Products Marketing Bill. That measure would never have been introduced by me had it not contained such a provision. There is a peculiarity about this Bill that I hope will be explained. It provides that the Governor may, whenever requested by a petition signed by not less than 50 producers within an area to be defined in the petition, issue a proclamation fixing the day for the taking of a poll of the producers carrying on business within the area on the question whether a marketing board shall be constituted for the area. I assume it is contemplated that the producers in the metropolitan area will present a petition, and that the Governor will proclaim a marketing board for the metropolitan area, and that eggs will then be a controlled product in the metropolitan area. If that is so, what is to become of the producers outside the metropolitan area? Are all the farmers who produce a few eggs to be shut out of the metropolitan area or allowed to come in?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Under the Bill, they will come in.

Hon. M. F. TROY: To shut them out would be unfair. If they are to come into the controlled area, the control will collapse, because the competition of the outside producers will undermine the market in the controlled area.

The Minister for Railways: While, under this Bill, you could prevent the farmers from sending their eggs into the metropolitan area, you could not shut out eggs from the Eastern States.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Under the Bill, you could not shut out the farmer.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, you could.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Oh, no.

The Minister for Railways: If you created a board in the metropolitan area, you could shut out the farmers, unless they came under the measure.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

The Minister for Railways: But you could not shut out eggs from the Eastern States.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You do not understand the Bill. Take it home and read it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If it is intended that all the farmers shall be included in the specified district, then the number required to sign the petition is too small. No fifty men in a community numbering thousands should have the right to initiate a pool of this character. Yet, under the Bill, 50 out of all the thousands of producers may petition the Governor, and the Governor may issue a proclamation. The number is too small.

The Attorney General: I cannot understand why the poor old consumer should not have a say. He is very interested in the matter.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The consumer, as well as the producer, has representatives in Parliament, and we ought to discuss the Bill having regard to the interests of all concerned. I am endeavouring to do that. I have an unhappy suspicion that a district might mean the metropolitan area. If this Bill were passed in its present form, any 50 producers in the metropolitan area could present a petition to the Governor, and on the petition the Governor must act.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Not "must" but "may."

Hon. M. F. TROY: We have argued that point before. "May" means "shall."

Hon. P. Collier: You never apply "must" where the Governor is concerned. It is always "may."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You must have some authority to decide whether the petition is correct.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Suppose the measure were passed and 50 growers in the metropolitan area presented a petition to the Governor, and the metropolitan area were created a district, the possibility is that the producers in the country would be shut out of the market, though the market is just as much theirs as anyone else's. I sympathise with the hon. member's desire to help the producers to organise. There is no doubt that organisation by the producers gives them experience, if nothing else. It gives them a knowledge of their markets. It has given the directors of the wheat pool a greater knowledge of marketing conditions and other world affairs than they could have acquired in any other way. To that extent the pool has been exceedingly valuable to

the community it serves. If we are going to get an efficient body of producers, I quite agree that they should organise and would be glad to help them, but they must not operate at the expense of the community amongst whom they reside. That sort of thing has happened too often in Australia, and it has proved most pernicious. I have mentioned the Paterson butter scheme.

The Attorney General: And that is a voluntary scheme.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but it is effective. Under it the factory managers come together, and there is no possibility of a producer remaining outside of it.

The Attorney General: No, because the control is in the hands of people few in number.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, and they can stifle competition. I quite agree with the Minister for Railways that some of the provisions of the Bill are ridiculous. I do not wish to hurt the feelings of the member for Guildford-Midland, but I cannot help thinking that the provision in Clause 11, Sub-clause 3, that the board may exempt such eggs as the producer may require for his own use is ridiculous.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How could you control the commodity without having some such provision? Show me how it can be done and I will accept your suggestion.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If control cannot be effected without such a piffling provision governing the egg used by the wife to make a pudding or consumed by the child at breakfast, this proposed legislation is utterly hopeless.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If we omitted that provision, the effect would not be piffling.

Hon. M. F. TROY: How would the board know what eggs were used in my own household.

The Minister for Railways: What right have the board to know?

Hon. M. F. TROY: They would not have the slightest knowledge. If the board have to inquire into those trivial things, what sort of expenditure will be incurred and what sort of inspectorial staff will be necessary? They could not possibly do it. I am prepared to support any reasonable legislation for the organisation of the industry, but proper protection must be provided for the community, and the people of the country must have an equal opportunity with other

producers in the market of the city. If that is done, I shall have no great objection to the measure. The first step in legislation of this kind should be to give producers power to organise for export, and I do not mind if it is made compulsory. Give them power to organise for export and leave the local market alone.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is impossible. Control is necessary to secure the maximum exports.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It would be much easier to frame acceptable provisions governing export than to secure approval for some of the provisions of the Bill. If opportunity be given to the producers to organise their product for export, much will have been accomplished in their behalf. If the hon. member amends his Bill in that direction, he will secure my support.

On motion by the Attorney General, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.43 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 16th October, 1930.

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

QUESTION—COLLIE COAL AGREEMENT.

Hon. G. W. MILES asked the Minister for Country Water Supplies: Does the agreement between the Railway Department and the Collie Mining Companies contain a three months' cancellation clause?

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES replied: No.