

New clause: Amendment of Section 2:

Mr. McDONALD: I move—

That the following new clause be inserted: "Section 2 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the definition of 'salary or wages.'"

I think the Premier will accept the amendment. The Act of last year provided machinery for a flat rate of 4½d. in the pound. Now that a graduated tax is to be imposed, the situation becomes impossible in certain respects. Section 9, paragraph (a) provides that every person paying salary or wages to any other person shall be responsible for the payment by such person of the tax on each occasion that any payment of salary or wages is made.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 15th August, 1933.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Presentation.

The PRESIDENT: I desire to report that with some members of this House I waited upon His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, and presented to him the Address that was carried in this Chamber in reply to the Speech he made at the opening of

Parliament. I have now received the following acknowledgment—

Mr. President and members of the Legislative Council, I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to his Most Gracious Majesty the King, and for your Address-in-reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament. (Sgd.) James Mitchell, Lieut.-Governor.

QUESTION—NORTH-WEST.

Commonwealth Proposals.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM asked the Chief Secretary: Will he lay on the Table of the House all papers and the Bill in connection with the proposal of the Commonwealth Government, a few years ago, to take over the Western Australian portion of the North-West, situated north of the 26th parallel?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: I would be glad to supply these papers, but at the request of the Commonwealth Government of the day they have been kept confidential.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Health Act Amendment.
- 2, Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
- 3, Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, W.A. Branch, Incorporated, Headquarters Building.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—GOVERNMENT TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th July.

HON. J. T. FRANKLIN (Metropolitan) [4.43]: I secured the adjournment of the debate on this Bill so that I might go thoroughly into the matter and ascertain if any amendments were necessary. I congratulate the Government on bringing down this measure, which will enable them to effect a decided improvement in the transport services they are giving to the people of the city of Perth. I understand that when the complete scheme is in operation, it will provide one of the best services it is possible to tender to the travelling public. When

in Committee, I shall move two amendments which already appear on the Notice Paper. If the clauses are passed as printed, the people of Perth will have to foot the bill for the maintenance of the roadway along the track. The Government have undertaken the expenditure for the maintenance of tracks throughout Greater Perth wherever the trams have been running. Unless the Bill be amended, the City Council will have to make and maintain roads without any reimbursement from the Government for work that will have to be undertaken as the result of the installation of the trolley bus system. I do not know whether members have inspected the route of the proposed trolley bus service. If they have, they will have seen how the work is disfiguring the city. I do not refer to the trolley buses themselves, because that method of conveyance will represent a distinct improvement. I refer to the erection of the unsightly poles along the route to be traversed by the trolley buses. I will be told that it is impossible to run the service without the overhead gear. I acknowledge that fact, but the Government should evince some pride in the city and should have used more ornamental poles. The City Council are endeavouring to widen some of the streets where the traffic is congested, and especially does this apply to the route along which the trolley buses will ply. We hope to widen Wellington-street by about 20 feet, but the tramway officials are erecting poles without consulting the expert officers of the local authorities as to where the poles should be placed. Another matter of importance to the city is the removal of the acute and right-angled corners at various intersections. Either by the purchase of land or by virtue of the owners giving the council sufficient of their property, the local authorities have been rounding off the corners, and this has provided greater safety for the travelling public than obtained formerly. Then again, the City Council have had to face considerable expense for the removal of poles after their erection by the Tramway Department. For instance, it cost the council over £45 to remove one pole at the corner of William-street and Bazaar-terrace, that work having to be undertaken for the safety of the public. We do not want to be forced to incur such expense in future with the trolley bus system. I shall support the Bill, but I hope my amendments will be agreed to when we reach the Committee stage.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4-48]: The Bill is really a validating measure, from blame for the introduction of which I exonerate the present Government. The Tramways Act does not provide for the use of trolley buses; if it did, the Bill would not be before us now. Despite the fact that the Tramways Act does not deal with trolley buses, the previous Government went beyond the scope of that Act and purchased two trolley buses. Now the present Government have to ask Parliament to ratify that action, and to amend the Tramways Act to cover trolley buses as well. To me trolley buses represent nothing new. I saw them in operation at Bloemfontein 12 years ago. The system was used for running between Bloemfontein and the suburb of Tempe, where the repatriation hospital was established. I think the Perth buses represent the only other instance of the system being adopted in Australia, since I saw them in South Africa. I do not see the slightest necessity for trolley buses unless the poles can be erected, the lines maintained and electricity produced at a combined cheaper cost than that at which petrol buses can be operated. One of the main differences between trolley buses and petrol buses is that one has to be operated like an ordinary tram but without the rails, whereas the petrol bus is operated without rails and no overhead gear. The petrol bus can be driven wherever its route may be stipulated, whereas the trolley bus is as circumscribed in its operations as the ordinary tram because it cannot operate away from its given track unless all the overhead gear is shifted for that purpose. In my opinion, the purchase of the trolley buses in these days of advanced motor mechanism was an absolute mistake. They were purchased without authority and quite outside the scope of the Tramways Act. That is all I desire to say regarding the measure. If the Bill were one to give the Government authority to purchase the trolley buses, I would vote against it because my slender knowledge goes to show that the up-to-date petrol bus is superior to the trolley bus. However, the trolley buses are here and, in order that they may be operated lawfully, we are asked to amend the Tramways Act. Before the trolley bus system is extended, I hope definite inquiries will be made as to whether or not, in these days of advanced transport

facilities, it is advisable to go in for antiquated instead of up-to-date methods of transport.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [4.53]: Mr. Macfarlane's speech caused me some surprise. He said he would support the second reading of the Bill, but he trusted that, if the trolley bus system proved successful, the present harassing regulations affecting charabanes would be removed, and that there would be a "free go" for everyone and that charabanes should be allowed to enter into competition with the trolley buses. A "free go for everyone" would no doubt please those who like a wide choice of means of transport, but it would be a bad thing for the Government tramways, and for the taxpayers of the State, who could be called upon to pay the piper. Any Government that established trolley buses, as an adjunct to the tramway system, with such a proposal in contemplation would be lacking in all sense of responsibility to the taxpayers of the State. "If the system has been so successful elsewhere," Mr. Macfarlane asked, "why has it not been adopted by the Government before?" Surely the very fact of delay is at least *prima facie* evidence that the venture was not embarked upon without much thought and careful investigation.

Hon. J. Cornell: My argument is that the system is antiquated now.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: The figures I quoted in moving the second reading of the Bill, and the proof I gave as to the growing popularity of the system in England, should be sufficient to convince members that the trolley bus is admirably adapted to the City of Perth. One important feature is that its use makes unnecessary the relaying of worn out tracks at great cost to the State. Such was the case with the Kensington-street line. In England they are converting from tramways to trolley buses. Petrol is available in England at a fairly low price, and it should be sufficient to convince Mr. Cornell that I have furnished further particulars to show that electricity in Western Australia at any rate, and also in England, is much cheaper than petrol. That is substantially so in Western Australia. The latest conversion in England from tramways to trolley buses has been that of the Huddersfield Corporation. In support of what I say, I shall read an extract from the "Tramway and Railway World," dated the

24th June, 1933, which I think, Mr. Cornell will agree is up to date enough. The extract reads as follows—

It was decided by Huddersfield Corporation on June 21 to substitute trolley buses on three tramway routes at a cost of £91,000. Alderman T. Canby, Chairman of the Tramways Committee, mentioned that the scheme would save road widenings and track renewals estimated to cost £75,000.

Surely that ought to be enough to remove all doubts from the minds of some members and of even the most incredulous as to the utility of this comparatively new form of traffic. In reply to an interjection by Mr. Bolton, I wish to quote from departmental information which I have received, as follows—

The complete imported bus cost £2,421. Of this amount £213 is represented by freight. The two chassis, for which the bodies are being built at Midland Junction, cost £1,566 each, landed. The bodies are being built at the Midland workshops from drawings provided by Messrs. Leylands. While the two bodies are estimated to cost £1,000 each, it must be appreciated that only two are being constructed and for which patterns and jigs have to be made, but such will be available for future bus bodies, therefore while costing slightly more than the imported bus, subsequent buses are estimated to cost in the region of £2,200 each. All further bodies and overhead line material will be constructed at the Midland Junction workshops.

It has already been demonstrated that the Midland Junction Workshops can perform high-standard work satisfactorily and economically. To give an example: Five years ago, 10 "P" class engines built by the North British Locomotive Company were imported at a cost of £10,043 each.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Was any duty included in that amount?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course, duty was included. Ten engines of similar design, subsequently built at Midland Junction, were turned out at a cost of only £9,038 each, or £1,005 less per engine than the imported article. Tenders were called in Australia for the construction of the locomotives. Only one tender was submitted and that was for £12,500 per engine, or over £3,000 per engine above the amount that work was done for at Midland Junction. Their success is not limited to England alone. Liege and Antwerp in Belgium, Medellin in the State of Columbia, South America, Chicago, Detroit, Salt Lake City and New Orleans in the United States, where petrol can be purchased at two-thirds its

cost in Australia, are all adopting the trolley bus in lieu of the tramcar and the reports from those places emphasise the fact that the trolley bus is more economical, mobile and satisfactory than the tramcar.

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: Electricity is also cheap in America.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In the Perth "Daily News" of August 3rd last, the following cable appeared:—

London, August, 2.

The "Evening News" states that trolley buses may replace London tramcars when the investigations of the newly-created Passenger Transport Board are completed. The board has been favourably impressed by the success of the trolley buses which have replaced trams on the 17-miles route in the neighbourhood of Wimbledon and Kingston, being more economical and less obstructive, which accords with the experience elsewhere. Moreover, 20 trolley-bus undertakings are all paying, while 75 per cent. of the tramways throughout the country are losing money. Nevertheless tramcars carry 100 passengers and the largest trolley buses 56, although a 74-seater has been designed. An official says that London traffic at the peak requires every available vehicle, and the abolition of the trams at present is impossible. Trams are being given a further chance and it is hoped to increase the average speed above ten miles an hour.

These are facts that cannot be disputed. Reports received from various cities and transport corporations in England are all eminently in favour of the trolley bus. It has been proved in a practical manner that in replacing tramcars by trolley buses, big savings have been effected as a result of the elimination of the heavy cost of tramway track renewals, upkeep or extension, and the lower expenditure on road upkeep. Investigation has proved that the trolley bus system is definitely cheaper and has a greater revenue earning capacity than a tramcar system. Returns obtained from a number of representative undertakings show that comparative operating costs for tramcars and trolley buses have been consolidated and are as follows:—

Years 1930-31.

Operating Costs (pence per 100 seat-miles).
(Seat-miles represent capacity multiplied by mileage.)

	Tramcar.	Trolley Bus.
Traffic expenses ..	11.70	11.42
Repairs and maintenance ..	5.73	4.08
Power	3.89	3.31
Miscellaneous charges ..	4.6	2.36
Total	25.38	21.17

The figures I have quoted show a saving in favour of trolley buses of 4.21d. per seat mile. They have replaced tramcars with conspicuous success in London, Chesterfield, Ipswich, Nottingham and Wolverhampton. In Wolverhampton tramcars have now been completely superseded. Mr. Franklin is not opposed to the Bill. He congratulated the previous Government on the introduction of the buses. The only objection he raises is to the poles which he considers are not sufficiently ornamental. Another complaint is that there has been no co-operation between the tramway authorities and the City Council. It seems to me that is regrettable because both should work harmoniously. It appears that the council has not been consulted in any way.

Hon J. T. Franklin: Not to my knowledge.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member has two amendments on the Notice Paper. I shall have to oppose both because in my opinion they are out of order. When the Committee stage is reached I shall give my reasons for opposing them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—YORK CEMETERIES.

Second Reading

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.7] in moving the second reading said:—The purpose of the Bill is to vest in the Crown, certain cemetery sites at York. These are held respectively by the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the Wesleyan religious bodies. There is also a small area of 7 acres 39 perches of adjoining land which has been purchased by the Crown to provide an adequate area for the purpose of a cemetery. The whole area, which contains 13 acres 3 roods 15 perches, will be declared a cemetery under the Cemeteries Act, 1897, and will be placed under the control of the York Municipal Council trustees. In 1914 a cemetery reserve was declared to the north of the present site but the land was not suitable for burial purposes and as a consequence was not utilised.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: On which side of the river is the cemetery, north or south?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I propose to lay a plan on the Table which will give the information the hon. member desires. I believe it is on the south side of the river. What we are dealing with now is the existing site of the cemetery which is utilised by the various religious bodies, and when the Bill goes through those bodies will relinquish their right to the particular areas. The religious bodies mentioned, who own lots 13, 15 and 16, have given their consent in writing to the surrender of their land to the Crown, in order that it may be included in the proposed public cemetery and be placed under the control of a cemetery board that is to be appointed. Although the Department is in possession of the letters of surrender it is considered advisable to deal with the matter by way of legislation. The York Municipal Council, will, as a cemetery board, have power to raise the necessary funds to fence and improve the cemetery, and will be enabled to supervise and maintain it in a satisfactory manner, in the interests of the town and of the relatives of those buried in it.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIE EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [5.7]: I desire to be quite clear about the position of this cemetery because I have some close relatives buried there. According to the schedule the grant of York town lot 13 was made to the Right Rev. Mathew Blagden Hale, then Lord Bishop of Perth. That must have been many years ago. The cemetery I have in mind, I do not think is in use at present; it is situated on the left side of the road going towards Beverley. If that be correct, I should like to know what it is proposed to do with the graves. If it is simply intended to make additions to the area, then it will not matter.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Lands vested in His Majesty:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I, too, am interested in the old cemetery in the town of

York. There is some doubt as to whether that is the particular cemetery with which we are dealing or whether there is another cemetery. I should like the Minister to clear up the point.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot add anything to what I have said. I am advised that the cemetery at present being used by the three different religious bodies is to be added to by the purchase of a further area. The religious bodies in question have relinquished control over the areas, and if the Bill becomes law there will be a public cemetery in which members of all denominations can be buried. I imagine that there is an old cemetery in the town of York. If that be so the Bill will not affect it. If members desire to look further into the matter I shall be only too willing to report progress to permit of additional inquiries being made.

Progress reported.

**BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT
AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.16] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to make several necessary amendments before the Road Districts Act, 1919-1932, is reprinted pursuant to the Amendments Incorporation Act, 1923. The amendments proposed are really consequential upon amendments made during last session. For instance, provision was then made in regard to the election of a vice-chairman. To give effect to this provision a consequential addition to the inclusive meaning of "Chairman" is necessary in order to endow a vice-chairman with all the functions of the chairman, and to enable him to sign cheques, documents etc. in the event of the chairman's absence. From time to time, as hon. members probably know, slight alterations are made in the boundaries of districts, for a variety of reasons: and therefore it is necessary to be able to define accurately from time to time the boundaries of given districts. The necessary steps are now taken to effect that; but as the existing Act does not specifically give a legal right to do so, it is considered advisable to take this opportunity of regularising that position. Again, in the event

of redivision of a road district into wards, in some cases only a portion of the district may be affected: but Section 13 of the Act compels all members of the road board then to go out of office and seek re-election. I think members will agree that that is hardly right, fair, or necessary.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does not the Bill empower the Minister to decide which members of a road board are to remain, and which of them are to seek re-election?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is the object of the amendment. The principal Act was amended last year, but apparently power was not given to limit the re-election of road board members to those affected by alterations in boundaries. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that three wards were not affected by alteration of boundaries; the representatives of those wards would, under the existing law, be called upon to seek re-election, as the Act provides that all the members shall retire and seek re-election.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But Clause 4 provides that only such members as the Minister may think fit and determine shall seek re-election.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Clause 5 seeks to amend an ambiguous proviso in Section 16 of the principal Act. The Road Districts Act Amendment Act, 1932, altered the date of the annual election of members from the second Saturday in April of every year to the third Saturday; and the proposed amendments in Clauses 6, 7, and 8 are necessary to give full effect to the alteration intended. Clause 9 corrects a misprint, as obviously the 26th parallel of South latitude is intended, as provided in Section 69 of the original Act, and not the 28th parallel. Clause 10 is a consequential amendment following Section 17 of the 1932 Act, wherein it was provided that each member, including the chairman, should have one vote only, and that in the case of an equality of votes the question should pass in the negative. To be consistent it is necessary that in meetings of the committee, the chairman shall not have a second or casting vote. It is not considered desirable that the chairman of a committee should have greater power than the chairman of the board. Provision was made in the Act passed last session by which a board may, with the approval of the Minister, subsidise an agricultural society "within its district." There

are instances where an agricultural society, although composed of members of the road board, may not have its showgrounds, or its offices, in the road district, but in an adjoining municipality; such instances occur at Wagin, Northam, York, etc. Although the show operations would be for the benefit of the road district, the discretion of the Minister would limit the granting of a subsidy to an agricultural society related only to the road district affected. The remaining clauses of the Bill correct misprints only. If the second reading is agreed to, I do not propose to take the Committee stage until the next sitting of the House, so that hon. members may have an opportunity of examining the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

House adjourned at 5.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 15th August, 1933.

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

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. A. A. M. Coverley (Kimberley) took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.