

The word "capital" in a partnership has been interpreted to mean the amount put in by the members of the partnership without regard for what the total assets may be.

Mr. LAMBERT: It may be that two persons have drawn up a deed of partnership whereby the surviving partner may take over the assets of the partnership at the last valuation that was made. This may lead to the State not getting the full amount of probate duty.

The Minister for Justice: That would not affect the payment of probate duty.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the Minister says this is already provided for, I have nothing further to say.

Mr. Sampson: The hon. member is altogether away from the subject, in any case.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [6.5]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 18th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.6 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 18th September, 1934.

	PAGE
Question: Licensing Act, enforcement on goldfields	478
Ministerial statement	479
Personal explanation, Hon. G. W. Miles and main road construction funds	483
Motion: State Transport Co-ordination Act, to disallow regulation	488
Bills: Forests Act Amendment, 2R.	483
Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance, 2R.	484
Reduction of Rents Act Continuance, 2R.	485
Supreme Court Criminal Sittings Amendment, 2R.	487
Electoral Act Amendment, 2R.	488
Tenants, Purchasers, and Mortgagees' Relief Act Amendment, 2R.	489
Roman Catholic Church Property Act Amendment, 2R., Com., etc.	489
Constitution Acts Amendment, 2R.	490
Soldier Land Settlement, 2R.	490
Discharge of Order	492

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

QUESTION—LICENSING ACT.

Enforcement on Goldfields.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Has his attention been drawn to a paragraph appearing in the "West Australian" of 21st August, 1934, which reads as follows:—"Charges withdrawn—Alleged Licensing Breaches—Kalgoorlie. August 20.—Brought before the court on June 22, and twice adjourned for a month, 15 charges of breaches of the Licensing Act were finally withdrawn this morning in the Kalgoorlie Police Court, before Mr. E. McGinn, R.M. Sergeant Clements stated that he had been instructed to withdraw charges against Thomas Percy, Leslie Bennett, and James Riley, respectively proprietors of the Federal, Inland City, and Commercial Hotels, Kalgoorlie, of trading during prohibited hours, and charges against 12 men of being on these premises during prohibited hours"? 2, Will he inform the House whether the statement of the sergeant, as quoted, is correct? 3, If so, by whose authority was such instruction given? 4, What were the reasons for the withdrawal? 5, Is it the intention of the Minister in charge of Police affairs to see that the Licensing Act is enforced on the goldfields?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The Acting Commissioner of Police. 4, In arriving at the decision, the whole of the circumstances were taken

into consideration. 5, The Licensing Act has been, and is, reasonably administered on the goldfields.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon J. M. Drew—Central) [4.38]: With your permission, Mr. President, I desire to make a statement in order to give some information which was sought by hon. members during the debates on the Supply Bill and the Address-in-reply. Mr. Seddon raised a number of points when discussing the Supply Bill, and the Treasury has now furnished me with information in respect of the hon. member's questions.

The Supply granted will provide funds for the continuance of Loan works for about three months. Meantime the Loan Estimates are in course of preparation, and members later will have the opportunity of fully discussing the proposals for the year when the Loan Bill and the Appropriation Bill are before the House.

Total Loan Allocation.—For the information of members, it is estimated that the present supply of £600,000 for Loan works will be expended under the following heads:—

	£
Departmental, Administration, etc.	20,000
Railways and Tramways	125,000
Harbours and Rivers	50,000
Water Supply and Sewerage	220,000
Development of Goldfields	20,000
Development of Agriculture	100,000
Roads and Bridges, Buildings, etc.	65,000
	<hr/>
	£600,000

Departmental Services.—The provision for departmental services and administration covers the salaries and incidental charges of officers employed on Loan works.

Railways and Tramways.—Under the heading of Railways and Tramways, the expenditure will be incurred principally in deviation work, regrading, ballasting, renewing sleepers, and belated repairs. There are no new lines at present under construction. Maintenance work which was deferred during the first three years of the depression could be delayed no longer, and last year a comprehensive programme was commenced. The programme will take possibly three years to complete, and will cost approximately £500,000. It is recognised that this expenditure is really a charge to Revenue, but it

would be totally unfair to burden current working expenses with an expense that has accumulated over a number of years. Therefore the cost is being met from Loan in the first instance, but annual appropriations will be made from Revenue to recoup Loan, and £70,000 was recovered in this way in the 1933-34 year. A further appropriation will be made in the Revenue Estimates for 1934-35. Deviation and regrading works of course do not increase collections, but through savings effected in running costs they are directly reproductive. Relaying work and a deviation and bridge near Eradu were commenced in the latter part of the last financial year. This is being continued, and when completed it will save heavy expenditure in haulage, and enable greatly-increased loads to be carried. The estimated return on the capital outlay is nearly 4 per cent. Another regrading job in progress is at Meenaar, on the Eastern Goldfields line. The estimated cost is £22,000, and the return 3 per cent. A third work has been started recently on the Dumbleyung-Kukerin line at an estimated cost of £11,000. The return in this instance will be over 3½ per cent. These are all very necessary works, which will make for increased efficiency in the railway service and at the same time just about meet their cost.

Harbours and Rivers.—In the Harbours and Rivers section, the amount made available will be expended in the continuation of works which have been in hand for some time. These include the reconstruction of the North Wharf at Fremantle, the extension of Geraldton harbour facilities, the further extension of the Bunbury breakwater, and construction of a groyne to prevent the continual silting of the harbour: further work on the construction of the Esperance Jetty, and reclamation work in the Swan River at the Causeway. In addition to these works, a start has been made on the reconstruction of the portion of Beadon jetty destroyed in the disastrous cyclone of last year.

Water Supply and Sewerage.—The heaviest expenditure is anticipated under the head of Water Supply and Sewerage. This section embraces water supply, sewerage, and drainage in the metropolitan area; goldfields water supply; country towns supplies; drainage, irrigation, and water supplies in country areas generally. The water supply

position in the metropolitan area has caused great concern for many years. The Canning dam, in course of construction, is the first substantial step towards relief from the annual water shortage. Good progress has been made, and it is confidently expected that a limited supply from this source will be available in the summer of 1935-36. Additional storage reservoirs have been authorised, and work at the Buckland Hill site is in hand.

In the sewerage and drainage section, the principal works now in hand are the Claremont-Cottesloe sewerage scheme and Maylands-Inglewood drainage. A comprehensive scheme for the sewerage of thickly populated areas on the south side of the river is in course, and it is hoped to make a start on this work in the very near future. Under Goldfields Water Supply the reconditioning of the 30-inch main will be continued. The work so far completed has considerably lessened the losses through leakage. Some bad sections still remain to be done, but it is now possible to advance the work in a manner that will avoid wasteful expenditure in removing men and plant over long distances. In the agricultural areas further progress will be made towards completion of drainage works in the Wagerup and Waroona areas. This forms part of the comprehensive scheme of drainage and irrigation in the South-West, which have been in hand for some years. The Collie River irrigation scheme is practically completed. Cement lining of certain sections of the channels is being carried out. The whole of the area to be served by the scheme can now be efficiently watered, but much remains to be done to the land itself before the full benefits of the water available can be obtained. The quantity of water conserved by the dam is 7½ thousand million gallons; 1½ times as much as Mundaring. The dam has been overflowing since early in July. Provision has been made to increase the conservation to 8,800,000,000 gallons whenever the requirements of the district necessitate an increased supply. The new domestic scheme to serve Collie is in progress, and will be completed by the end of the financial year. The scheme then will be handed over to the municipality.

Development of Mining.—The revival in the goldmining industry is the most pleasing development of recent years. The State would be lacking in appreciation of the bene-

fits derived from the renewed activity if reasonable encouragement were not given to its advancement. The prospecting scheme inaugurated last year is being continued. About 2,500 men have been assisted; many are on payable gold, and many others have obtained constant employment in the industry. The value of the gold produced by the assisted prospectors is greater than the amount spent by the State under the scheme. There can be no doubt that the assistance provided has been of material aid to recent development and, what is of greater national importance, it has renewed the confidence of a large body of men who were showing grave signs of a broken morale.

Development of Agriculture.—The heading of "Development of Agriculture" includes land settlement, forestry, and abattoirs.

Land Settlement.—No new land settlement schemes have been started under the present administration. It has been necessary to continue the Nornalup, Napier, and Nannup schemes, inaugurated by the previous Government, to ensure that the capital invested in them would not be lost. These schemes are now being developed along lines evolved from the experience gained through the administration of group settlement. As a consequence, there is every reason to hope for their ultimate success, both financially and by the establishment of permanent communities. Other land settlement works are the reconditioning of backward holdings in group areas, and land clearing at West Mt. Barker. There are also "legacies," the works being put in hand for the absorption of unemployed single men. Much useful work has been done, but the scope is not being extended, and a gradual reduction of the number of men employed is being made.

Forestry.—Forestry work has provided an excellent opening for the advantageous employment of a considerable number of otherwise unemployed workers. The amount spent in wages represents about 90 per cent. of the total expenditure. Regeneration of our indigenous forests, mostly jarrah, was neglected for many years, but during the last six years approximately 200,000 acres have been regenerated by natural means, and brought under fire-control measures. The area treated last year was 28,500 acres. The work is being continued, not only in

jarrah, but also in karri and mallet forests. As a result, the regeneration in our forests is now keeping pace with the timber cut. The planting of softwoods is being continued, and in eight years a total of 8,250 acres of pines has been established. Last year 1,486 acres were planted—a record.

Abattoirs.—The extension of the Midland Junction abattoirs is a work that could be no longer delayed. The capacity will be practically doubled, and it should then meet the needs of the metropolis for some years to come.

Roads and Bridges, Buildings, etc.—The principal works being carried out under the allocation for roads, are the Chidlows-York road, and feeder roads in the Yarramony area. The last-named were put in hand to provide road access in lieu of a much greater cost in the provision of a railway.

Buildings.—Building works include the completion of the new female block at the Clarendon Hospital for Insane, and schools and buildings generally throughout the State. A new central school for girls has been urged for a number of years. The present building is totally inadequate to meet the needs of the increased enrolment. It is proposed to commence building at a new site.

Conclusion.—This necessarily brief survey covers the scope of our Loan expenditure. It is not suggested that the whole of the money is being spent in works that will immediately provide interest and sinking fund on the capital outlay. Some portion of the expenditure will never earn anything at all—for instance, buildings—but the works have been selected with a due regard to the development of the State and the needs of the times. The Government would be failing in their duty if they did not take care of the well-being of the citizens of the State during these troublous times. Responsibility does not end with the provision of food to the unemployed; if it did, then some Loan expenditure might be saved, and the public debt increased by the cost of sustenance only. But the result of such a course must be the demoralisation of a large number of worthy people. Until the time when normal conditions return, expenditure on works of a national character is more than justified; it is essential to the welfare of the State. As men again become ab-

sorbed in industry, so will our expenditure on national works decrease, and our borrowings for works become confined to those of a reproductive nature.

Mr. Seddon in the course of his speech on the Address-in-reply, referred to certain aspects of Technical School training. I submitted the hon. member's remarks to the Minister for Education, and I am sure Mr. Seddon will be pleased with the following information:—

In the first place a circular is sent to the parents of boys as soon as they have passed through the sixth class—the end of the primary school course—and in it parents are strongly advised to consult the head teacher under whose charge the boy has been, as this teacher is likely to have a good idea of the lad's capabilities. The circular then sets out the further opportunities for study that are open, and requests parents, if they do decide on a further course of training, to make every effort to enable the lad to complete it. Mr. Seddon is under the impression that Technical School students are not given opportunity to study the subjects necessary to enable them to pass the Junior public examination. The circular forwarded to the parents advises them exactly of the conditions for post-primary education. A lad who takes a Technical School course after completing the primary school standard is fitting himself for the industrial world definitely. This is quite clearly set out in the circular. If he wants an office job he should not enrol in the course, which specialises more on the technical side. However, that does not debar him from taking his Junior certificate or Leaving certificate when he goes on to the Perth Technical College. Full day courses and part-time evening courses are available there for every student who wishes to go on to the ordinary Junior. At the Eastern Goldfields Technical School at Boulder, students are provided with a full day course for the Commercial Junior certificate; so that it is possible in the whole of the metropolitan area for a boy to get his Junior, and also in the Boulder-Kalgoorlie area. It is well known that children in the correspondence classes and in all our schools have an opportunity to qualify for the Junior if their parents so desire, and if they have the necessary ability.

Mr. Hall during the course of the debate on the Address-in-reply, referred to delay on the part of the Agricultural Bank in making payments of wheat bounties. He gave me particulars of specific cases, and I submitted them to the Minister for Lands for investigation. The Minister informs me that it has been particularly difficult to administer the Wheat Growers' Relief Act in the Geraldton district, as a large proportion of the properties on which the bounty was claimed were mortgaged to outside institutions and individuals, not to the Agricultural Bank. The result was that great delay was caused through having to obtain from those institutions and persons certificates establishing the title of the applicant. Another cause of delay was the fact that a large number of the applications were incorrectly certified to by the institutions concerned, and consequently the Geraldton office was forced to withhold payment pending the receipt of the amended certificates. Furthermore, certificates had to be obtained from the Commissioner of Taxation, and Section 11 of the Act caused much trouble and delay. The Geraldton office handled applications from 518 Agricultural Bank settlers, and 1049 outside settlers, making a total of 1,567 applications covering an area of 542,731 acres. I am pleased to be able to inform Mr. Hall that the cases quoted by him have all been attended to now, and payments have been made in all except one case, which was held up pending the receipt of a certificate from the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation.

I referred Mr. Angelo's suggestion to establish an experimental farm at Carnarvon to the Minister for the North-West, who informs me that the Director of Agriculture has recently been making personal inquiries as to the best and most economical means of instituting research work in connection with the growth of bananas, pineapples, and pastures.

Mr. Miles voiced a complaint of late issue of income tax assessments. The State Commissioner for Taxation informs me that it has not been possible, since the inception of the Taxation Department in 1908, to issue the whole of the State income tax or land tax assessments within each financial year, namely, before the 30th June, for the following reasons:—

(a) The annual returns are not due until the 31st July and 31st August respectively,

and many thousands of taxpayers are granted exemptions of time beyond those dates and up to 31st December for furnishing their taxation returns.

(b) No assessment can issue until the annual Rate Acts, Federal and State, are passed by Parliament, which generally occurs during the month of December. In some cases the Rate Act has not been passed until January of the next year.

(c) It takes the present staff about 12 months to receive, file and assess the annual returns. Therefore, a considerable number of returns have remained unassessed at the close of each financial year.

Every taxpayer is required by law to pay his income tax by instalments and in advance, and not wait until he receives his notice of assessment. By so doing he is allowed the amount of his State tax paid as a deduction in his Federal income tax assessment. If he fails to comply with the provisions of the law, he has only himself to blame, not the department, for not getting the benefit of the deduction in his Federal income tax assessment.

Mr. Craig severely criticised the statement that 1s. per lb. for butter fat could be considered profitable. I submitted his remarks to the Minister for Agriculture, who has now supplied me with the following comments on this matter:—

The average yield of milk per cow was stated by Mr. Craig to be 342 gallons. This is equivalent to 136 lbs. of butter fat per lactation period, and is the average for the whole of the State and includes all cows which have been in milk for three months or more. In dealing with the dairying industry, only those farmers who derive their living from dairy farming should be considered; as where cows are milked as a side line for only a short period of the year, such farmers obviously are not true dairy farmers. Investigations over a period of three years on approximately 200 farms in the South-West, and also the grade herd recording yields for the year ended 30th April, 1934, when over 4,000 cows were tested in the South-West, show that the average yield is at least 180 lbs. of butter fat, and in some districts, such as Dardanup and Donnybrook, the yield approaches 200 lbs. per cow. In districts where yields are low, it was reported by herd recorders that such low yields were due, not so much to low quality cows, as to improper methods of feeding, and no provision for summer fod-

der. It is estimated that the cost of feeding a cow, including the growth of summer fodder, the production of hay, fertiliser, etc., is approximately £5 10s. per annum, and that where a farmer owns a herd of at least 20 cows averaging 200 lbs. butter fat, dairy farming at 1s. per lb. for butter fat is profitable and the profit increases as the average production of herds increases. Several herds in the grade herd recording scheme average over 300 lbs. of butter fat per cow. Money spent in developing grade herd recording is one means by which dairy farming can be put on a profitable basis, as indicated by the results in only eight units during the past year. For this purpose the State is only asked to subscribe approximately one-third of the total cost, the remaining two-thirds being borne by the rural credits branch of the Commonwealth Bank and the farmer himself. The whole profitableness of dairy farming depends on increasing production per cow by ample and proper feeding, and by elimination of low producing cows. Both these objects are obtained by grade herd recording.

The Minister for Agriculture stresses the value of grade herd testing and states that the Government recognise the value of this testing, and because of that an increasing amount has been granted each year since this Government took office; for instance, the expenditure last year was £1,253, and for this year £2,000 has been provided.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. G. W. Miles and Main Road Construction Funds.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.50]: I wish to refer to an error in "Hansard" of the present session, page 359. The Chief Secretary, speaking to the Address-in-reply, said that Mr. McCallum at the Premiers' Conference of 1927 succeeded in introducing the system of distribution of money for main road construction on a basis of area and population combined. In "Hansard" at that point I am reported as interjecting that Mr. Bruce put that up, and Mr. McCallum opposed it. Actually, my interjection was that Mr. Bruce put that up and Mr. McCallum supported it.

MOTION—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulation.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 4th September on the following motion moved by Hon. A. Thomson—

That Regulation No. 48, made under the State Transport Co-ordination Act, 1933, as published in the "Government Gazette" on 16th March, 1934, and laid on the Table of the House on 7th August, 1934, be and is hereby disallowed.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.52]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned till the next sitting.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Might I ask when are we to reach finality on this question?

Motion put and passed.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th September.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.53]: May I, before referring to the Bill, express my appreciation of the very interesting information made available to the House by the Chief Secretary just now. Such information as this will be of material advantage in enlightening the House as to the programme of the Government in respect to the expenditure of loan money. The Bill before us continues the provision that certain funds reserved under the Forests Act for sandalwood reforestation are to be taken into Consolidated Revenue. In this House we have repeatedly stressed the necessity for retaining, for reforestation purposes, money raised from the forests. The very programme of the Government indicates that there is a considerable amount of work yet to be done before we shall have restored our forests to the position they should occupy as part of the economy of the State. On the other hand, we are faced with the fact that the financial emergency Acts are still in existence, and so I do not think we would be justified in interfering with the appropriation of this money as general revenue, until we can see some chance of the financial emergency legislation being either repealed or dropped. So I do not intend to oppose the Bill, but I think the House should maintain a vigilant attitude

towards future measures of this class. For it is necessary that the purposes of the Forests Act should be maintained, and research work assisted by the provision of adequate funds. This particularly applies to botanical research amongst the goldfields plants. I do not intend to go over the ground which has been repeatedly traversed in the House, except to say that this work has not been anything like seriously approached. It would offer a fruitful field for the talents of the young men at the University, and in addition would be very useful in advancing the progress of the State. This question of the utilisation of funds under the Forests Act is one of those which could well be included with other questions to be referred to a standing committee, which would go into the whole question of correct procedure in the handling of funds for various Government activities. As I say, I do not intend to oppose the Bill, but the House should impress on the Government the fact that they intend to see to it at the first opportunity that forestry revenue shall be conserved to forestry purposes. That will be when we have reasonably recovered our normal financial position.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.57]: This Bill is brought up year after year. I have opposed it each year and I will oppose this one, for I think the money should go towards reforestation. The existing system assists the Treasurer to show a deficit smaller to the extent of the funds transferred; and then the Government turn round and borrow money for reforestation purposes. It is unsound finance to take this money into revenue and then borrow money for reforestation. The whole of this money should go into the reforestation fund, and the sooner that is done the better will it be for the country. We shall not then be throwing dust in the eyes of the taxpayers. I will oppose the second reading.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th September.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [4.58]: While I am not prepared to oppose the second reading, I think the time has

arrived when some scrutiny of the operations of this Bill is due. We should hasten slowly in re-enacting some of the financial emergency legislation, because conditions have altered since we passed the original Acts, and we could justifiably ask to be supplied with some evidence as to how far the necessity exists for a continuance. I think there might well be some paring down of the provisions of some of the emergency legislation, particularly in respect of the existing conditions between mortgagors and mortgagees. In some instances serious hardship has undoubtedly been inflicted upon people brought within the four corners of the Act and it would not be right for us to allow those disabilities to continue. The real issue is how far the position to-day approximates that of three years ago or how far along the path of financial rehabilitation we have progressed. We can fairly ask how far we have returned to the conditions that existed previous to what is usually termed the depression, though perhaps it might better be defined as the economic breakdown. I suppose most members would agree that there has been some improvement, though we may disagree as to the extent of the improvement that has occurred. If we listened to some opinions expressed in the metropolis, we would be inclined to think that substantial progress had been made towards returning to normal conditions. There might be some justification for that view, but speaking generally I cannot agree that any great improvement has been made. I admit there has been some improvement and it is pleasing to be able to recognise that fact. Regarding the position from the standpoint of the rural residents, however, we find a difference. The position in the metropolitan area reacts much quicker than does that in the country. The industrialists in the metropolitan area and those associated with them are in a much more stable position than are country workers. Industrial workers are protected by arbitration awards and their present position is reasonably satisfactory. The rural community, on the other hand, are in a serious position by reason of the low prices ruling for primary products, as well as other difficulties, so that viewing the question broadly, we cannot say that from a State point of view there has been any great advance. When dealing with legislation of this kind we should endeavour to take a comprehensive view and determine how far re-

enactments are necessary and whether, if they are necessary, they should be continued in their present form or whether there should be some easement.

Hon. J. Cornell: I think it would be preferable to reduce the rate of interest all round.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There might be good reason for an easement. If the matter were carefully investigated, evidence might be adduced to support that view. I agree with Mr. Holmes that it would be advisable to take the several small Bills dealing with financial emergency legislation to the third reading stage only and allow them to remain on the Notice Paper until the Financial Emergency Bill has been considered. Then we shall know where we stand and how far any suggestions for alteration or amendment might be carried. At present I am not prepared to oppose the Bill.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piesse, debate adjourned.

BILL—REDUCTION OF RENTS ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th September.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.6]: This Bill comes within the category referred to by Mr. Mann. It is one of those measures which, since the inception of such legislation, has been introduced each year for renewal. I think it will be agreed that the circumstances responsible for the introduction of the measure in 1931 do not now exist to the same degree as they did then. Under the Act no one may charge a rent greater than that charged at the passing of the Act, less 22½ per cent.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is, under a lease.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes.

The Honorary Minister: Under a lease in existence at that time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: In Perth and in towns in the country and on the goldfields, a curious and anomalous position has been created. In 1931 the conditions were vastly different from those now prevailing. A great revival has occurred in the gold mining districts, and where property is held under a lease on the goldfields in force at the passing of the principal Act lessees

are being charged a reduced rental, whereas other property adjoining, which did not happen to be under lease in 1931, but has since been leased, is now the subject of a much higher rental. This has created an anomaly that is unfair to landlords. It throws a burden on one particular section and grants a benefit which, I think every member will agree, is not justified. The prosperous conditions that have followed gold mining activity have reacted on Perth and other centres to a considerable degree. One has only to note the activity apparent in various business premises in Perth, and it seems that the time has arrived to re-view legislation of this kind. If we intend to encourage people to go ahead with building and other operations, and if we desire the State to progress, we must not permit one section of the community to be penalised while another section benefits.

The Honorary Minister: The Act provides that the landlord may ask permission to charge a different rent.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Act contains such a provision—it is almost identical with the provision in the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act—but it places on the landlord the obligation of applying to the court for leave to charge a higher rent.

Hon. J. Cornell: How can it apply where the rent has been reduced?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I cannot grasp the effect of the hon. member's interjection.

Hon. J. Cornell: I mean, where the rent was reduced by the law.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: What the Honorary Minister referred to was a new lease in respect of premises which, at the time of the passing of the Act, were not under lease and subject to a reduction.

The Honorary Minister: No.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Section 5 of the Act reads—

(1) An application for an order hereunder may be made in the prescribed manner and, after notice given to the lessee, as provided in the regulations, and on the hearing of the application, each party shall be entitled to be represented by any solicitor or agent selected by him, and the Commissioner may either dismiss the application or (if special circumstances are proved to his satisfaction by the lessor) make an order permitting the lessor to charge rent at such higher rate (not exceeding that provided for in the lease) as the Commissioner shall declare to be just and

reasonable, having regard to the circumstances and to the economic and financial conditions prevailing in the State.

Hon. J. Cornell: Many of the goldfields leases have appreciated 100 per cent.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Where premises were leased at the passing of the Act and it is proposed to enter into a new lease, it is very difficult to get an order to charge a higher rent than that in force at the time of the passing of the Act.

The Honorary Minister: Have you any particular case to verify that statement?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I have dealt with several applications and I know the difficulties that exist. I believe Mr. Parker shares my view regarding the difficulty of obtaining orders in such circumstances. It places a great burden on landlords. The time has come to review all this emergency legislation. If circumstances were the same as they were, we would be justified in supporting this measure and allowing it to pass. The position of the small man is illustrated effectively by a letter which appeared in the "West Australian" of the 25th August last. It expresses the views of small householders, who are as much entitled to be considered as are other people. The letter reads—

I see that the Government wish to continue that quite unnecessary and useless interference with people's business, the Reduction of Rents Bill. It is a great injustice to many small property owners, forcing them to let their places, in some cases, at a lesser rate than when they were erected 30 to 40 years ago. It is only robbing one for the benefit of another. In many cases, the rent of two or three small places is all some of us have to live on, and when the income from rents is small, the compulsory reduction in some cases reduces an owner's income to the amount of the old-age pension. The unfortunate owner cannot get any pension, as his property, that used to return him £3 per week is now only returning him £2; and what benefit is 10s. or 15s. per week to the lessee of a shop who is doing any business worth the name? A mere nothing, compared with the injury to the lessor, whose sole income is two or three small rents. I think it is cruel and unjust to penalise the best class of citizen who has devoted his life to building up our city and suburbs. I do not think there are many, if any, shopkeepers who have a long lease of the premises they occupy and have agreed to pay a fixed rental for a certain time, who have got possession on anything but fair and equitable terms, and it is a bad and unjust principle for the tenant to be given power to reduce his or her rent and still retain the lease. If the property leased is large and carrying £20 to £40 per week rental, the 22½ per cent. reduc-

tion would not hurt the man who owns such property; but when the rental is only 20s. to 40s. per week, it is a very different matter. I think it would be far more humane and just if the Government must continue that regulation, if they set a maximum of, say, 30s. or £2 per week for each place, before the law for any reduction shall operate; also where the decrease does operate the owner should have the option to cancel the lease if the tenant insists on the reduction.

There is food for thought in that letter. It strengthens the view that is held that the whole position should be reconsidered. When a Bill like this was before us on a previous occasion, strong remarks were made about the character of some of these measures, because they had the effect of destroying the efforts of the thrifty. That is a class of people who should be encouraged if we are to succeed and prosper. Instead of the thrifty being assisted as they should be, their efforts are being nullified by legislation such as this. The greater the prosperity, the greater the amount of work there is in our community, and the greater is the circulation of money. Section 8 of the original Act provides that it shall not apply to the Crown. Here we have another anomaly. Where the Crown leases premises, they are free to charge any rent they choose because of this section. I believe that tenants of the City Markets have never had their rent reduced by the 22½ per cent. that was demanded and required of private landlords. It seems that a small reduction has been made in some cases, probably 5 per cent. or 10 per cent.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What reason is given for the non-reduction in rent?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I have been told that the 22½ per cent. reduction has not been given to the tenants.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Could not they have claimed it?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Not under the Act, because it does not bind the Crown.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: But the markets are controlled by a separate body.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I have referred to the anomaly on the goldfields where there are such signs of activity and prosperity, but where injustice is meted out to certain sections of the community because of the provisions of this Act. It is all very well to say that a man may apply to the court, but the difficulties surrounding such applications are very numerous and prevent people from

making the headway desired. The time has arrived when a change is necessary. If the Government are not to be bound by this legislation, why should the private individual be bound? Private owners should enjoy the same respites as the Crown enjoys. In the circumstances, I feel constrained to vote against the second reading. If the Government came forward with a Bill which gradually reduced the 22½ per cent., there would be something sound and reasonable in it, but no such proposition has been brought before us. On the other hand, they say they desire to go on with the 22½ per cent. reduction. If they said they would cut this down by 10 per cent. in the first year, then 5 per cent. in the next year, and wipe it out altogether in the following year, there would be something sound in their legislation. They certainly should make provision to overcome the anomalies that exist on the goldfields. I shall reserve to myself the right to vote against the second reading.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.25]: As the Bill applies to the goldfields, it ought to be wiped off the slate. All that it does is to create extreme hardships in the case of a number of goldfields people. If any good object could be achieved, I would feel inclined to move to refer the Bill to a select committee so that an inquiry might be held into the exorbitant rents charged in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. There are very few of the existing business leases on the eastern goldfields to which the Act itself applies.

The Honorary Minister: Do you know to how many such leases the Act did apply?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I know some to which it applied. The rents were reduced by 22½ per cent. when, on the turnover of the business, there should have been an increase of 50 per cent. People who have shops to let on the eastern goldfields do not enter into a tenancy lease, and are able to charge "murderous" prices. The working man who takes his wife and children to the goldfields has to pay from 15s. to 20s. a week for perhaps only two rooms and a kitchen.

The Honorary Minister: How is that case affected by the Bill?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am speaking generally. The financial emergency legislation in respect to housing, rents and mortgages does not apply to the eastern goldfields, except that it creates hardship upon people who held leases when the Bill was passed.

Otherwise, the Act does not apply there. Rents are being charged for shops that are out of all proportion to the returns, because of the shortage of such accommodation. If I did my duty by the eastern goldfields, I would move an amendment to provide that the Act should not apply there in any way.

The Honorary Minister: Why not extend the Bill to those cases?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I should like to bring to book some of the cormorants up there. This legislation has worked hardship in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. In other gold mining towns there was very little left in the way of houses or shops to let or sell. I would point to a good illustration of the appreciation in the value of business premises in the case of the hotel at Norseman. It is a galvanised iron building and was sold for £9,000, but the purchaser is now asking £15,000 for it. Very few business premises were left at Norseman. In the case of Widgiemooltha, the late Mr. James Doyle sold out his hotel for £3,000, and the man who bought it, without effecting any improvements to it, sold it again for between £6,000 and £7,000 to a shrewd, hard-headed business man. That shows the futility of endeavouring to apply this Act to the eastern goldfields. The operation of the Act should be continued, but inquiry should be made into some of its features, so that existing anomalies may be remedied. Where the community is an appreciative one, the Act is of no use whatever; but in the case of other communities relief should be given to tenants where necessary.

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

BILL—SUPREME COURT CRIMINAL SITTINGS AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.33] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to regulate the Criminal sittings of the Supreme Court at Perth, so that such sittings shall be held monthly, except in January. The existing Act provides for monthly sittings of the Criminal Court except in January and February, and coincides with the present long vacation of the Supreme Court which runs from the 23rd De-

ember to the 25th of February. The long vacation is not fixed by statute, but by a Governor's order made under Section 10 of the Supreme Court Act, 1880. Past experience has shown that the period from the 23rd December to the 25th February is too long a period to keep prisoners waiting for trial; moreover, it has the effect of accumulating Criminal Court business and of overloading the Court in subsequent months, with a consequent increase in the expenditure of public money. Furthermore, such delay is not warranted; the administration of justice should be carried out as quickly as circumstances will permit; and, although the Supreme Court vacation extends over a period of two months, there is always a Judge in Chambers available whose services could be utilised for the purpose of holding a criminal session in February. British justice is based on the theory that a person charged with a crime must be considered innocent until he is actually proved guilty. Therefore, it is necessary that we should consider seriously the aspect of the strain caused by worry and anxiety that persons charged with serious offences may have to undergo during the period of waiting for trial—offences of which they may eventually be adjudged to be innocent—and we should do our utmost to ensure that such periods of stress are reduced to a minimum. Under present conditions, if a person is committed for trial in December, it is possible that his case would not be heard in the Supreme Court until March of the following year; and if he were unable to get someone to go bail for him, he would remain in prison for the whole of that period and possibly be found "not guilty" at his trial, or alternatively, receive only a trivial sentence. During the past vacation there was a case of a woman being committed for trial for wilful murder, and after having been kept in suspense for some months being found not guilty. Other instances of a similar nature, though not so serious, have occurred, and are likely to arise in future. Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand all conduct criminal sessions in every month except January. New South Wales holds four criminal sessions a year and circuit. The Commonwealth, of course, does not hold criminal sessions. This Bill with therefore achieve the object of bring-

ing our criminal procedure into line with that obtaining in the majority of the Eastern States. It is highly desirable that sessions should be held as frequently as possible, and His Honour the Chief Justice considers there will be no difficulty in arranging the additional sittings. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. S. W. Parker, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon.

W. H. Kitson—West) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: Under Section 8 of the Electoral Act certain persons are disqualified from being enrolled and, if by any chance they are enrolled, from recording a vote. The Bill seeks to amend that section of the Act in order that certain persons who at present are disqualified may receive the benefit of our franchise. It refers to British Indians, and also to Lebanese from the territory comprised in the mandate of the Lebanon. For many years representations have been made to successive Governments of Western Australia by the Indian Government and also by the Commonwealth Government on behalf of British Indians in particular; but up to the present no definite action has been taken here.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Was not an amendment to the effect of this Bill moved some years ago and adopted?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not so far as I am aware.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I have some recollection of it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The matter was the subject of considerable discussion some few years ago, at a time when, as hon. members will perhaps recollect, this State had a visit from a distinguished Indian. As the result, possibly, of that gentleman's visit to Western Australia and other States of the Commonwealth, certain concessions have been made by the other States, and I am advised that this is the only Australian State which does not extend to British Indians the right of the benefit of the franchise.

Hon. J. Cornell: What about Cingalese? Does this affect them?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not unless they are classed as British Indians.

Hon. J. Cornell: They are not British Indians. They stand by themselves.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Bill definitely sets out that British Indians and Lebanese shall be exempt from the existing prohibition in the Electoral Act. It is interesting to note that so far back as 1921 the Imperial Conference held that the differences then obtaining between the various States of the Commonwealth in regard to the franchise for British Indians, should be rectified. The latest figures available show that there are in Western Australia 163 British Indians. The number of Lebanese here is known to be very small, but the exact figure is not available. In view especially of Commonwealth immigration restrictions, of which hon. members are aware, it is considered highly improbable that the number of British Indians in Western Australia will increase. We all know that Asiatics are entitled to be enrolled and to vote for the Legislative Council, provided they possess certain property qualifications.

Hon. J. Cornell: They will not be when this Bill is finished with, if I have my way.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If this Bill is enacted, they will have the right to be enrolled and to vote for the Legislative Assembly. The Bill seems to me one of those measures to which we may very well agree, especially as legislation of similar effect exists in four other Australian States and in the Commonwealth itself. The Commonwealth franchise has been extended to British Indians, natives of Asia, Africa, etc., to whom a certificate of naturalisation has been issued under the law of the Commonwealth or a State, if such certificate is still in force. In Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia the franchise has been given to anyone who is a natural-born or naturalised British subject, irrespective of the original nationality. Queensland has extended the franchise to (a) British Indians and (b) natives of Syria who are naturalised under the law of the Commonwealth; otherwise natives of Asia, Africa, and so forth are still disqualified from voting, even though naturalised British subjects. I may mention that if this Bill is agreed to, it will necessitate a small amendment of the Constitution Act in order to give full effect to what is proposed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned for one week.

BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS, AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.44] in moving the second reading said: This is one of those small measures which Parliament has been re-enacting year after year in association with financial emergency legislation. The principal Act in this case would expire on the 31st December of the current year, but it has certain protective provisions which would continue until the end of March, 1935, if this Bill were not passed. We are providing in this Bill that it shall be extended for a further period of 12 months, that is, until December, 1935, and that the protective provisions I have already referred to shall be carried on until March, 1936. It is still considered necessary that this measure should be retained on the statute-book, even though the applications received during the last two or three years have gradually diminished. I should like to quote the number of applications that have been received and the manner in which they have been dealt with. The Act has been in existence since 1930. In 1931 there were 912 applications; in 1932 the number was 211; in 1933 it had fallen to 121; and for the expired eight months of the present year the total is 37. Eighteen of the last named applications have resulted in orders being made under the Act; nine cases were struck out, and three were withdrawn. Although it is considered necessary that we should continue the Act for another year, the figures prove conclusively that the time is not far distant when there will be no further need for this legislation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.48] in moving the second reading said: This is a formal measure which sets out to amend

the principal Act of 1912. To give members an idea of what the Bill really purports to do, it may be as well for me to read the section it is proposed to amend.

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth may, from time to time, by an instrument in writing under his hand and seal, appoint the Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Perth, and a priest of the said diocese, or either of them, his attorneys or attorney to exercise all or any of the powers conferred upon the said Bishop by Section 4 of the principal Act, during the absence of the said Bishop from the State of Western Australia; and it shall be lawful for such attorneys or attorney so appointed, subject to the provisions of Sections 6 and 7 of the principal Act, in the name and on behalf of the said Bishop, to exercise such powers accordingly, and to execute and sign all documents and writings required to give effect thereto.

That means, in effect, that when the bishop is out of the State, he can appoint an attorney. As the section stands now, the bishop may be travelling within the State and he has not the power of nominating an attorney. The Bill provides that when the bishop is within the State he will have the power to appoint an attorney in the same way that he now has the power to make such an appointment before leaving the State. The original Act was passed in 1911 and it was amended a year later in the form in which it now stands. At that time the diocese was very small in comparison with what it is to-day. The present Archbishop finds it necessary occasionally to leave Perth, and in many instances he is further away from the capital than if he were in Adelaide or Melbourne; at any rate, he might visit places more inconveniently situated than either of those two cities. There is another phase. The present holder of the office may become ill, and, as the Act stands at the present time, he has not the power to delegate his authority to an attorney. The Bill will remedy that. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon.

W. H. Kitson—West) [5.54] in moving the second reading said: This is the amendment to the Constitution I indicated would be necessary a little while ago if the House agreed to the amendment of the Electoral Act. In order to give full effect to the proposal contained in that amending Bill, it will be necessary for this particular section of the Constitution to be amended, because it provides that no aboriginal native of Asia shall be registered as an elector except in respect of freehold qualification. The Bill proposes to exempt those persons from the territory comprised in the mandate of the Lebanon as well as British India from the provisions of Section 15 of the Constitution Act, 1899. The reasons were fully explained when I introduced the other Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—SOLDIER LAND SETTLEMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon J. M. Drew—Central) [5.56] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to ratify an agreement to amend the original agreement relating to the settlement of soldiers. The amending agreement has already been signed by the Prime Minister and all the State Premiers, subject, of course, to Parliamentary ratification. The agreement contains really only three main provisions. They are—

1. The acknowledgment by the States that the amounts owing to the Commonwealth form part of the Public Debt, covered by Commonwealth Inscribed Stock and Consolidated Treasury Bonds, and carry interest at 4 per cent.

2. The acceptance by the States of the amounts of the reductions in indebtedness to the Commonwealth, as recommended by Mr. Justice Pike. Those reductions represent Justice Pike's assessment of the share of the losses on soldier settlement advances to be undertaken by the Commonwealth.

3. An amendment of the Financial Agreement to enable the Prime Minister or a State Premier to be appointed representative of the Commonwealth or a State on the Loan Council.

In regard to these three provisions, it is necessary to point out that the amounts originally advanced by the Commonwealth were repayable by December, 1950, and were subject to rates of interest varying from £5 5s. per cent to £7 5s. per cent., according to the loan out of which the Commonwealth Government found the money. On the adoption of the Financial Agreement, these advances formed part of the net public debt of the State on which the Commonwealth contributed part of the sinking fund for their redemption.

When the internal loan indebtedness of the Commonwealth and States was converted in 1931, the original Commonwealth loans, out of which the soldier settlement advances had been made, lost their identity, and the Commonwealth reduced the interest rate on the full amount of the unpaid advances to a flat rate of 4 per cent. As this was the rate fixed for the converted loans, and as the advances are now part of the public debt of the State, subject to the Financial Agreement, the Commonwealth asked the States to agree to transfer the indebtedness as advances, which, under the old Soldier Settlement Agreement were repayable in 1950, to indebtedness as Australian consolidated inscribed stock and Australian consolidated treasury bonds. The amounts so transferred will be divided, as far as possible, equally among the several dates of maturity specified in the Commonwealth Debt Conversion Act, 1931.

I consider that this is a very reasonable proposal and, subject to interest rates maintaining their present low level for some time, will prove an ultimate benefit to the States. It is possible that loans at present carrying interest at 4 per cent. will be converted on maturity to a lower rate. In any event the change is immaterial from the State's viewpoint, since the debt is covered by the sinking fund under the control of the National Debt Commission.

In 1928, the Commonwealth Government appointed Mr. Justice Pike as a Commissioner, to make an investigation into the losses sustained by the States as a result of soldier settlement. Mr. Justice Pike visited all the States, and in regard to our own, he found that the losses sustained up to the date of his inquiry, plus an estimate of future losses, totalled £2,059,368. The amount claimed by this State was £2,742,802,

but some of the items claimed, notably concessions granted to settlers by way of reduction in the value of Crown lands were disallowed. The basis of the Commissioner's recommendations was that the losses as assessed by him should be shouldered equally by the Commonwealth and the State, after giving credit to the Commonwealth Government for the concessions already made to the States. In our case, these concessions made by us amounted to £1,477,688, and as half of the losses as assessed by the Commissioner amounted to £1,029,684 we were not, in his opinion, entitled to any further relief. It is, of course, unfortunate, that the inquiry was made at a time of high prices for agricultural products, and of general prosperity, but that is a circumstance which affected all States alike. The investigation was quite impartial, and we have no cause to complain that we received differential treatment. There is no doubt, however, that if the investigation had been made since 1930, the State estimate of future losses would have been much higher than it was in 1928. The ratification of this agreement, which has been signed by the Premiers of all the States, will not, however, preclude pressure being made on the Commonwealth for further assistance, should the necessity arise.

Section 3 of Part 1 of the Financial Agreement provides that the Prime Minister and the State Premiers shall each appoint a Minister to represent the Commonwealth and each State on the Loan Council. A doubt has been expressed as to whether this provision permits of the appointment of the Prime Minister and the State Premiers themselves, or whether the representatives must be Ministers other than the Prime Minister and the Premiers. Though, so far as I know, the appointments have not been questioned, the opportunity is now being availed of to remove any possible doubt. While the appointments have not been questioned so far, legal authorities consider that there is a doubt about the position. Should the matter ever be raised, difficulty might be experienced. The proposed amendment, embodied in the schedule attached to the Bill, provides that the representatives on the Loan Council shall be the Prime Minister and the State Premiers, or, in their absence,

Ministers appointed by them, which is the procedure hitherto adopted. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, Order of the Day for the second reading of the Industries Assistance Act Continuance Bill was discharged from the Notice Paper.

House adjourned at 6.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 15th September, 1934.

	PAGE
Questions: Unemployment, land settlement ...	492
South Perth ferries repairs and boat-hire ...	492
Bill: Administration Act (Estate and Succession Duties) Amendment, report ...	492
Agricultural Bank Royal Commission, Standing Orders suspension, consideration of report ...	492

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

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYMENT, LAND SETTLEMENT.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Employment: 1, With a view to assisting to solve the unemployment question, will the Government consider placing married men with families on suitable abandoned blocks, as is being done in Victoria and New South Wales? 2, Will the Minister have prepared a list of married men, at present on sustenance and/or relief work, who are desirous of settling on the land? 3, Will the Government consider placing these men on suitable blocks to clean up, repair fences, dig out rabbits, etc., in anticipation of the Federal grant to settle such men? 4, In view of what is being paid to caretakers at present,

could not those caretakers be given an incentive to work by the acquisition of such blocks by an arrangement as outlined in Question 3?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: 1, The Government have no knowledge of what is being done in the States mentioned other than has already been tried in this State. 2, Not considered necessary at present. 3,749 men are at present employed on reconditioning, and additional men will be so placed when considered necessary. If and when a Federal grant is made available, the Government will give attention to using it to the best possible advantage. 4, Answered by No. 3.

QUESTION—STATE FERRIES.

Repairs and Boat Hire.

Mr. CROSS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the cost of repairs to boats employed in the South Perth ferry service for the year ended 30th June, 1934? 2, What was the cost of hiring boats to take the place of ferry boats under repair for the same period?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, £1,200. 2, £180.

BILL—ADMINISTRATION ACT (ESTATE AND SUCCESSION DUTIES) AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

AGRICULTURAL BANK ROYAL COMMISSION.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mount Magnet) [4.35]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to enable a motion dealing with the consideration of the report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the operations of the Agricultural Bank, to be taken into consideration at this sitting.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House, and there is an absolute majority present.

Question passed.