

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER 1919

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER, 1919.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. W. Hamilton) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock p.m.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

CENTRAL SUGAR MILLS.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the accounts of the Central Sugar Mills under Government control and self-controlled mills indebted to the Treasurer.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

SETTLEMENT OF RETURNED SOLDIERS IN COOK-TOWN DISTRICT.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN asked the Secretary for Mines—

“In view of its promised efforts to settle returned soldiers on the land, will the Government consider the advisability of appointing a committee to report on the question of making available for settlement for soldiers the great area of good land in the Cooktown district; such committee to consist of representatives from the Departments of Lands and Agriculture, Mr. Jones (the cotton expert), and the Protector of Aborigines, the inquiries to be made on the following lines:—

1. The suitability of such lands for cotton-growing and the area thereof?
2. The possibility of irrigation in connection therewith?
3. The advantages of making the land available for soldier settlement with good prospects of success?
4. The opportunity that will be afforded of offering easy and congenial occupation to the aborigines in preference to hiring them out to Japanese and other employers in the pearl-shelling and other industries, and thus endeavour to arrest the extinction of the native race?
5. The providing of an alternate tropical product to sugar and one giving large returns?”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones) replied—

“For the hon. gentleman's information I would say that the Land Settlement Committee, which was appointed by the present Government for the purpose of promoting the settlement of returned soldiers on the land, has full power, and is fully competent to collect all data, and to make any investigations which are deemed necessary, in regard to any suggested scheme for the settlement of returned soldiers in the Cooktown district. Should the hon. member have in his possession information which he thinks would be of value, I would suggest that he make it available to the members of the Land Settlement Committee.”

[Hon. W. Hamilton.

REMUNERATION OF HON. R. BEDFORD.

HON. H. TURNER: I would like to ask the Minister, without notice, when he expects to be able to lay on the table of the Council the return ordered to be tabled, on my motion, with reference to the Hon. R. Bedford?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The return will be tabled when the information is made available to me.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I suppose it will be tabled the week after next, after we have adjourned. (Laughter.)

STOCK FOODS BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Assembly by message in the usual form.

POPULAR INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM BILL.

COMMITTEE.

(Hon. W. F. Taylor in the chair.)

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 4—“Prayer of petition”—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved the addition to the clause of the following words:—

“The term ‘proposed law’ includes the recall of any elected member of the Legislative Assembly, and the vacating of office by any Minister of the Crown.”

That amendment was inserted by the Council the last time the Bill was before them, and was now moved in pursuance of the suggestion made that the recall should be included as one of the subjects for the exercise of the initiative and referendum. He looked upon the giving of the right of recall to the electors as one of the most democratic features that could be inserted in the Bill.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFF: Why not make it apply to the individual members of this Council?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He was surprised that there should be any objection to the recall being included in the Bill on the part of a Government and their supporters who professed to regard the measure as a democratic one.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFF: You know the amendment will kill the Bill, and that is why you are proposing it.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He said unhesitatingly that no more democratic feature could be introduced into the Bill. It would enable electors to get rid of a member who was not giving satisfaction. He might have been in Parliament only a year, but during that time he might have gone back entirely on his election pledges, or he might have proved himself in other ways to be quite unfitted to represent them. Why should they not have the power, before the three years for which he had been elected were up, to dismiss him and elect another member who would better represent their

opinions. He was surprised that the Government would not accept the amendment on the previous occasion, but he hoped that in the present instance the Minister would show his broadmindedness, his respect for the people, and his preparedness to trust the people that he was always bragging about, and that he would accept the amendment without any discussion.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Before dealing with the amendment he wished to say that, in his opinion, it was entirely out of order. When the Bill was last before them a similar amendment was moved, and the Hon. Mr. Sumner raised a point of order, and the Chairman ruled that the amendment was in order. He (Mr. Jones) was still of opinion that the amendment was entirely outside the scope of the Bill. The Bill was—

“A Bill to amend the Constitution of Queensland by providing for legislation and repeal or rejection of laws or proposed laws by means of the popular initiative and referendum, and for purposes consequent thereon or incidental thereto.”

The amendment was neither “consequent thereon” nor “incidental thereto.” He would, therefore, ask for the ruling of the Chairman again on the question, in the hope that he might have given further consideration to it, because it was quite possible that a Chairman, in the light of new facts and new arguments, would see that the ruling he had previously given was not quite a correct one. He would content himself now with asking for the Chairman’s ruling on the matter.

Hon. T. L. JONES supported the contention of the Minister that the proposed amendment was out of order.

Hon. T. M. HALL: Because it affects the carcasses of members of Parliament, I suppose.

Hon. T. L. JONES: For the reasons he proposed to give, and which the hon. gentleman would have an opportunity of replying to, if he could; and he challenged him to do so. The Bill had nothing to do with the recall of members, but it distinctly provided for the amendment of the Constitution “by providing for legislation and repeal or rejection of laws or proposed laws by means of the popular initiative and referendum.” Not by any stretch of imagination could they include in the Bill a proposal to affect the status of a member of the Assembly.

Hon. T. M. HALL: What is the good of the Bill, then?

Hon. T. L. JONES: The good of the Bill was to provide for what it set out to provide—the initiative and referendum. The proper place for the recall was in the Elections Act, which dealt with the position of members of the Assembly. He challenged the right of the Council to insert the recall in this Bill, which conferred powers upon the people, but not on the Assembly, and had nothing whatever to do with the status of members of the Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling has been asked as to whether this amendment is within the scope of the Bill. The same question was raised last year when a similar Bill was before the Committee, and I ruled that the amendment was in order. I am still of that

opinion, because this Bill is drafted somewhat on the lines of existing measures in other countries of which the principle of the recall of members forms a part. I see no reason, therefore, why, because this particular provision is omitted, it should not be included by means of an amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He very much regretted that the Chairman had ruled against him. He was still of opinion that the amendment was entirely out of order, but they could not further discuss that matter. The Chairman had ruled that the amendment was in order, and all they could do was to discuss the amendment. Although he disagreed with the ruling, he did not wish to test the feeling of the Committee by moving, as his friends opposite usually did, that the Chairman’s ruling be disagreed to, out of respect for the Chairman.

Hon. T. M. HALL: That is one way of putting it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Although they had a large number of members present, they bowed to the ruling, although they differed with it, and he thought that was the attitude they should take up in the Council. He knew that on previous occasions the Chairman had given sound rulings, and he was sorry to differ from him on this occasion.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN rose to a point of order. The Minister had intimated that he was going to accept the Chairman’s ruling, and yet he was going on as if he intended to move that it be disagreed to. He thought the Minister was entirely out of order.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He thought so himself. (Laughter.) He was opposed to the amendment, which he thought was very unfair to the members of the Assembly. There was no provision in the Bill for the recall of members of the Council. If it was right to give the people an opportunity of recalling members of the Assembly, it was right to give them an opportunity of recalling members of the Council.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They will have the opportunity on your referendum.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The referendum of his party would be for the wiping out of the institution altogether.

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL: That is what we propose to do—submit it to the people.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: With all due respect to the hon. gentleman, the Government were attacking the bicameral system, and not individual members of the Council.

Hon. T. M. HALL: Why don’t you tackle the Government for not bringing forward the Financial Statement?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman did not know anything about it.

Hon. T. M. HALL: I know something about it. I will probably expose it before we go on much further.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They would be glad of any exposure the hon. gentleman could give on that particular matter; he (Mr. Jones) was not aware of anything. It was not his business to anticipate the leader of the Government. The

Hon. A. J. Jones.]

Hon. Mr. Hawthorn had asked him a question on the subject which should not have been asked at the close of last night's sitting. It seemed to him very unfair that the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn should be prepared to recall a member of the Assembly, but would not give the power to recall a single member of the Council. The people should have the same privilege to recall a member of the Council.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: If you can provide any proper means of doing it, there would be no objection to it; but how can you do it?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Would the hon. gentleman not encourage the party with which he (Mr. Jones) was associated to make an organised attempt to have a vote taken as to whether he should be a member of the Council?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The country will say that on the referendum.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Personally, he did not believe in the recall, because he thought it would breed little cliques. While a member of the Assembly was down here doing his duty for his constituents, he was not altogether in touch with them when living away from the district, and some unscrupulous persons might get together and form themselves into a clique with the sole object of bringing about the recall of the member. He believed that, if a man was elected for a stated period, the people ought to put up with him for that time. He was really an ordinary citizen, and could not do things which an ordinary citizen dare not do.

HON. T. M. HALL: Your Government do a lot of things which an ordinary citizen dare not do.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman was jocular in making a remark like that, because no more upright and honest Government had ever held office than the present Government. (Laughter.) They would have to deny those jocular statements very vigorously one of these days, because they did not read as jokes in "Hansard."

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Is not an ordinary citizen supposed to live within his income? This Government does not.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman had a deficit.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: No, I never had a deficit.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: That has been a bee in the financial bonnet of the hon. gentleman.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It has been a very busy bee.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: A State with such undeveloped wealth as Queensland had would flourish in the near future. What was a mere million of money?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is how you have talked all along.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He knew a million was a lot to an individual or to a syndicate, but the hon. gentleman was trying to create a scare in the minds of the people that the State had drifted financially.

HON. T. M. HALL: How far have they drifted in the last quarter?

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Not at all. The hon. gentleman knew the cause of the present state of affairs. The hon. gentleman knew that they had gone through four years of war, which had disturbed the financial condition of all countries in the world, and also through a big drought.

HON. T. M. HALL: And yet little Victoria has a surplus.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman never dared to quote the success of the State enterprises, and to show what a bold policy like that meant to the people. When they started to produce as they ought to do, the finances would soon right themselves. He did not know that the recall was a plank in the Labour party's platform—if they cared to put it that way. In any case, in his opinion, it was not a fair provision. There could not be very much wrong with a man if he was elected for three years. Politicians had enemies, and why should they encourage those enemies? If the Hon. Mr. Leahy had been present, he would probably have quoted the following favourite verse of his:—

"You have no enemies, you say!

Alas! my friend, the boast is poor.

He who has mingled in the duty

That the brave endure, must have

made foes.

He who has none, small is the work

that he has done.

He's smote no traitor on the hip;

He's dashed no cup from perfumed lip;

He never turned the wrong to right;

He's been a coward in the fight."

All politicians and public men with courage must make enemies, who would form themselves into a clique, so that they might injure men in the performance of their public duties, and recall them from Parliament. The hon. gentleman himself had been a defeated candidate. He (Mr. Jones) had been a defeated candidate, and there was no harm in it. Many on his side of the Chamber had been defeated, and they would fifty times rather be defeated, going down with the principles they believed in, which were not inimical to the people of the State, than be false to their convictions. He hoped the hon. gentleman would not carry his amendment.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: What he had ventured to forecast on the second reading of the Bill had happened. He challenged the bona fides of the amendment. He was not going to say whether the recall was good or bad, but it was something which had never been considered by the electors.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Give them an opportunity.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: This was not the place to give them the opportunity. The way to do it was in the Elections Bill, or to pass this Bill and then let advocates of the "recall" agitate for it, and give the people the power to use it if they thought it was a good thing. It was a matter which had never been advocated by any progressive party in Queensland.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I thought this was a progressive Government.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: This was not a progressive Chamber. The Government was a progressive Government, but it was tied by its pledges to the people. It was pledged to do only what it had promised to do; and the recall had never been before the

electors. It was something that had only been talked about by a few enthusiasts now and again; he did not think it had been very much discussed in the most advanced Labour circles.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Do you believe in the recall?

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Whether he believed in it or not, he did not believe in sticking in an offensive amendment in a Bill with the idea of killing it. When speaking on the second reading he had asked hon. gentlemen opposite if they were going to do that, to be straightforward and throw the Bill out, and take the responsibility. They were acting in this underhand way, feeling certain that what happened last year would happen again—that it would be obnoxious to the Assembly, and would not be accepted, and the Bill would be lost. That must be the motive behind it.

[4 p.m.]

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He rose to a point of order. Was the hon. gentleman in order in imputing motives to hon. gentlemen and accusing them of trying to get amendments in the Bill in an underhand manner?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is certainly not in order in imputing motives to any hon. member of this Council.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He withdrew anything he had said that was not in order, but the effect of the amendment would undoubtedly be the same as it was previously. It was that amendment providing for the recall that killed the Bill last year, and caused it to be declared "lost" in the Assembly. Yet, in the face of that, hon. gentlemen, who really could not have any serious desire to make an amendment of that sort in the law, had moved the insertion of those words. When he was speaking on the second reading hon. gentlemen chipped in about the recall, and he asked them if they would be prepared to make it applicable to members of the Council, and, if so, he might be prepared to support it. But they had not the fairness to do that.

HON. T. M. HALL: The public would soon recall you.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He was willing to take that chance; they might recall the hon. gentleman. However, he hoped that before the amendment went to a division a further amendment would be moved in the direction he had indicated so that hon. gentlemen, if they thought the electors should have the right to recall any particular member of the Assembly, would also give them the same right to pick out any individual member of the Council who they might think was a block in the way of progress, and then, perhaps, it would not be so offensive. For the Council to insert in a Bill of that sort something that affected only the members of another Chamber, on the face of it, was offensive. It was inconsistent, and the amendment was loaded in the way he had indicated. He moved, as an amendment to the amendment, that, after the word "Assembly," the words "or member of the Legislative Council" be inserted. Hon. gentlemen opposite, if they were honest in their intentions, must carry that amendment.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: The amendment was verging on the humorous. So far as he was personally concerned, he would not remain

in the Council five minutes if he had the slightest idea that the public did not want him there.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Then you would not be here very long.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: On the other hand, he ventured to say that the two Houses were not on all-fours. In the first place, how was it possible to recall a member of the Council who had been appointed for life? Members of the Legislative Council, under the present system of party government, were elected for life; but there were very good reasons, so long as they were under a system of party government such as existed to-day, why the electors should have the right to recall a member of the Assembly. The emoluments of members of the Council were nil, but the other Chamber was composed for the most part of professional politicians—men who had adopted the high and noble calling of politicians; and—without attempting to reflect upon them in any way—he might say that politics to-day, especially with a certain party, had become a mere profession. He did not say that there were not people who were not influenced by mercenary motives sitting on either side of the House, but the policy underlying the Labour movement to-day had brought about a host of professional politicians. He was not saying that that was a bad thing, and he paid the Labour representatives the compliment of saying that they paid very serious attention to economical questions now agitating the world. But the supporters of the Labour party were victims of a machine system, and they knew that the practices adopted at election time by either party were not above suspicion, and that the election of a certain individual was very often brought about, not from any fitness that he had shown for the position to which he was elevated, but by reason of the operation of the political machine. They knew also that many side issues were raised. In fact, it was the chief business of the politician to raise side issues in order to cloud the real issue: to promise cheap food, for instance, when there was no possible hope of getting cheap food. Hon. gentlemen all knew that the main object of the professional politician was to cloud the issue and deceive the people—to sacrifice the people in furtherance of party interests. Hon. gentlemen who had the honour to be members of the Council had been appointed, supposedly, because they were free from those strong influences that must have a more or less demoralising effect upon the members of the Assembly. He was a very strong man who could spend a number of years in the Assembly under the present system of government without being more or less demoralised, because following the profession of a politician for seven or eight years incidentally took a man out of the ordinary occupation in which he was engaged before he entered politics and unfitted him to return there; and the exigencies of life, as well as the pressure of the machine, all had a tendency to demoralise him. There was an Act already on the statute-book which provided that the people had the power to secure any legislation which the Council saw fit to throw out. The referendum which it was proposed to take again on the abolition of the Council was the recall in a wholesale fashion. Hon. gentlemen on this side were only asking that the constituencies should be afforded an opportunity of saying when they

Hon. A. A. Davey.]

were full up of the members of the Assembly who professed to be so democratic and to have such a complete confidence in the electors. Surely that was democratic enough for anyone. There was no member sitting in the Council who would be willing to stop there for one moment if he thought the feeling in the country was against the Council, but they knew perfectly well that the feeling in the country was with them. They absolutely felt that they had the confidence of the people; and it was all humbug for the Government to take a referendum after it had been already defeated by 63,000 votes, and then make a fuss about being returned by a two-to-one majority when they knew that even under the present Elections Act they only had a majority of 27,000. They talked about the huge majority and the mandate they got, when the Council had been backed up by a 63,000 majority.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government were returned by a two-to-one majority.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: That was what was said. The hon. gentleman could fool all the people part of the time, but he could not fool all the people all the time, and the Government would not be able to fool the people very much longer.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He was very glad to see that hon. gentlemen opposite were approaching the amendment from a reasonable point of view. Hon. gentlemen on his side were prepared to accept the suggested amendment, and he hoped hon. gentlemen opposite would meet them and allow the recall to go in. At any rate, they would be given the opportunity of doing so.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He wanted to make his position clear. He was opposed to the recall, and he was sorry that the amendment had been moved by the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify. However, it showed the independence of the Labour party—(laughter)—and it gave the untruth direct to hon. members opposite when they said that Government supporters were bound hand and foot.

HON. T. M. HALL: We will see how you vote on division.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: You are making the best of a bad job.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amendment showed that the question was not altogether a party one.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify thought he was going to put us in a hole.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It showed the unfairness of hon. members opposite in proposing an amendment to recall the elected representatives of the people when they were not prepared to apply it to members of the Council.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are prepared to accept it. Let us take a vote on it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He was not in favour of the recall as applied either to the Assembly or to the Council. He was not going to encourage any outside body to interfere with a constitutionally and properly elected member of Parliament while he was doing his duty.

Amendment on amendment (Mr. Page-Hanify) agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

[Hon. A. A. Davey.]

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He was very glad indeed to see that the other side had assisted him in getting in the recall. (Laughter.) It was quite refreshing to find that at last they saw the error of their ways, and he trusted that the other House would now agree to the recall. By way of further amendment, he moved the omission, on lines 40 to 48, of the following words:—

“ . . . ; or

“(b) Any proposed law, whether set out in detail or not, which appropriates revenue or moneys:

“ But a proposed law shall not be taken to appropriate revenue or moneys by reason only of its containing or requiring provisions for the appropriation of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the appropriation of fees for licenses or fees or payments for services under the proposed law.”

That would remove from the Bill the provision for excluding a referendum on any financial question. Hon. members on his side wanted to give the people power over finance, as well as over everything else. The Government levied taxation on the people, and yet refused to trust them with the power to say one single word with respect to the expenditure of that money.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: You know the Assembly will not accept the amendment.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Then they would only show that their professions about trusting the people were not genuine, because it would be manifest that they refused to trust them wholly. One of the planks in the Government platform was that they believed in legislation for the people by the people all the time. Yet they refused now to give the people the power of the purse.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES hoped the amendment would not be accepted. He did not entirely agree with the hon. gentleman in his contention that those words should be deleted, but he agreed with him that the Government were quite prepared to trust the people to the fullest possible extent. That was the object of introducing the Bill.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You trust the people just as far as it suits you.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Could anything be fairer than the Bill itself?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes; the amendments.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government not only trusted the people at election time, but they were prepared to give them power to initiate legislation and to take a referendum on any vital question on the petition of 10 per cent. of the electors. That was as far as it was necessary to trust the people, and as far as the people expected Parliament to trust them. But hon. members opposite now proposed to give the people power to take a referendum on intricate financial problems. It might be an unpopular thing to say, but he did not think the people understood intricate financial questions. It was not their business to understand them. It was the business of members of Parliament to make a special study of such problems; but they could not expect the man in the street to be familiar with them. Ninety per cent. of the people were not very much concerned whether there

was a small surplus or a small deficit at the end of the financial year.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Aren't they?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Personally, he was of opinion that a surplus was always better in the pockets of the people, and that the Government should as nearly as possible make ends meet in normal times.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Normal times! You have had abnormal revenues for the last four years.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: People might be very intelligent in their own line of business, but they had not got the time—and a great many politicians, especially members of the Opposition in the other Chamber, did not give the time—necessary to make themselves acquainted with questions of finance.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The people can surely decide whether a Government is extravagant or not.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He hoped the amendment would not be carried. The people did not want to be burdened with the duty of taking a vote on financial questions. The clause did not mean that no measure would be submitted to the people which had any bearing on finance; but the amendment would enable any financial question to be submitted to the people, and that would be a very serious blunder as well as being impracticable.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He would suggest another reason why the amendment should not be accepted. On the last occasion when the Bill was before them hon. members opposite inserted a similar amendment, and the Assembly refused to accept it, and then the Council did not insist on the amendment. Therefore, having waived the matter last year, to be consistent, hon. members opposite should be prepared to waive it now. Whatever might be said of the amendment dealing with the recall, certainly this amendment, if accepted, would kill the Bill. The hon. member must recognise the utter impracticability of suggesting that the people should have the power of initiative and referendum with respect to questions of finance. That was the sort of thing that might easily run a country into insolvency.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Your Government are doing that now.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He hoped that an amendment would not be inserted which would inevitably involve the defeat of the Bill. He believed the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn was sincere in his desire for reform in a great many directions, and he hoped that, realising the potentialities of the Bill as a method of securing those reforms, he would not amend it in such a way as to cause its rejection.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The hon. member had given a very good reason why they should insist upon the amendment on this occasion. Last year they waived it because it was thought that the Assembly would give way on other amendments. However, they did not do that, and now the action of the Council in not insisting on the amendment was being used against them, and it was urged that they had given way because they believed there was no necessity

for insisting upon it. That was an absolute misconstruction of the position. With that spirit of compromise which always actuated them, they had endeavoured to get some of their amendments agreed to by giving way on that particular amendment. Now that they had achieved so much success in securing the adoption of the amendment providing for the recall, he hoped that hon. members opposite would agree to this amendment.

[4.30 p.m.]

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Hawthorn's amendment*) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

CONTENTS, II.

Hon. W. R. Crampton	Hon. T. Nevitt
„ W. H. Demaine	„ G. Page-Hanify
„ A. J. Jones	„ I. Perel
„ T. L. Jones	„ A. Skirving
„ G. Lawson	„ R. Sumner
„ L. McDonald	

Tellers: Hon. W. R. Crampton and Hon. R. Sumner.

NOT-CONTENTS, 19.

Hon. T. C. Beirne	Hon. C. F. Marks
„ F. T. Brentnall	„ E. D. Miles
„ J. Cowlishaw	„ B. B. Moreton
„ G. S. Curtis	„ C. F. Nielson
„ A. A. Davey	„ A. H. Parnell
„ A. Dunn	„ E. H. T. Plant
„ E. W. H. Fowles	„ A. J. Thynne
„ T. M. Hall	„ H. Turner
„ A. G. C. Hawthorn	„ A. H. Whittingham
„ J. Hodel	

Tellers: Hon. T. C. Beirne and Hon. A. H. Parnell:

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 4, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 9, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 10—“*Special provisions as to petitions for closing hours of licensed premises*”—

Hon. A. SKIRVING: On the second reading the Hon. Mr. Fowles stated that he had heard a rumour to the effect that the petition relating to that clause had been either accidentally destroyed or burnt in the Home Secretary's office. He did not worry personally about the petition at all, but after that statement had been made he made some inquiries. He got into touch with a number of those who had had to do with the petition, but not one of them knew that it had ever been presented. The conclusion he had come to was that it had been stolen, and that it was never presented. He heard some men last Saturday night discussing what the Hon. Mr. Fowles had said, and one man said he had heard that the petition had been sold, and that he believed that the Hon. Mr. Fowles knew something about it. (Laughter.)

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He will admit that he knows a good deal about it, but he does not know quite enough.

Hon. A. SKIRVING: He did not worry about the 6 o'clock closing petition. He believed in the party platform of State control or prohibition. In justice to the Hon. Mr. Fowles he wished to say that he did not think the hon. gentleman knew anything as to who sold the petition. In fairness also to the Home Secretary's Department, he might say he made inquiries from quite a number of reputable citizens who had had to do with the business, and not one of them could say that the petition had ever been presented. The only conclusion that one could

[*Hon. A. Skirving.*]

come to was that it had been made use of in some other way.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Or sold. (Laughter.)

HON. A. SKIRVING: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 14, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 15—"Who entitled to vote"—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved the addition to the clause of the following words:—

"A referendum poll taken under this Act shall not have any force, effect, or operation whatsoever, unless at least 40 per centum of the electors of the State shall have voted at such referendum poll."

Last year they fixed it at 50 per cent., but this year they were very anxious, indeed, to see the Bill go through. (Laughter.) With that idea, hon. gentlemen would notice that they had abandoned a large number of amendments which they suggested last year, and had confined themselves strictly to the three or four points upon which they thought the people should be particularly trusted. They considered it a reasonable thing that at least 40 per cent. of the electors should vote in a referendum of this kind.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He did not know that the amendment was at all necessary. Under the Elections Act voting was compulsory, and very few elections were held now where only 40 per cent. of the people voted.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Is this compulsory?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Elections Act applied, and, therefore, the voting would be compulsory.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: Forty per cent. is too low.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He was not arguing that the percentage should be raised. He had an open mind on the amendment. All the Government desired was to give the people an opportunity of taking a vote. That was better for the Government, whatever party happened to be in power. He did not think the amendment was necessary.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You do not oppose it?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Like the Minister, he did not think much about the matter, but he objected on principle to interfering with a majority. He thought the majority of voters at a poll should be considered, as they were the live electors. The compulsory provisions of the Elections Act would apply, and he was quite sure that there would be more than 40 per cent. of the electors voting. It was no use opposing the amendment, but he raised his voice against any interference with the majority. He believed the majority should rule every time.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: During his time he had read a good deal on that subject. As a matter of fact, at one time it was one of his pet subjects, and in the course of his studies he found that in some countries the people who had their names on the roll and did not go to the poll were regarded as having voted in favour of the

[Hon. A. Skirving.

question submitted. It was a very debateable question whether the amendment was sound in principle or not. He remembered the time when the Hon. Mr. Davey and himself were practically on the one platform speaking in favour of the abolition of party government, thinking at the time that it was practicable; but their experience taught them that it was impracticable. He approached the amendment with a perfectly open mind, because he was one of those who tried to encourage people to vote, and it might educate the people as a whole to a higher political standard if they imposed on them the penalty that, if they did not record their votes, then their votes would count in favour of the proposal that the Government submitted to them. There was something very sound, indeed, in that argument; and it certainly placed the obligation on the people of voting. The amendment was not of very much value, but he did not think it was very destructive to the Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 21, both inclusive, put and passed.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Bill, if passed in its present form, might be subject to litigation, and, in order to get all the benefits of the Bill without throwing it open to any risk of protracted litigation, and thus delay the rights of the people, whatever they might be under the Bill, he proposed to clearly indicate the scope and operation of the measure. He, therefore, moved the insertion of the following clause:—

"This Act is subject to the provisions of the Constitution Act of 1867; the Constitution Amendment Acts of 1871, 1890, 1896, 1908, and 1909; the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908; and the Legislative Assembly Act of 1867, and any amendments thereof; and shall not be deemed in any manner to repeal, alter, or amend any of the provisions of such Acts, or to give any authority to repeal, alter, or amend any of such Acts."

It might be held, for instance, that the Bill would sweep away the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908, as they both dealt with similar matters, and lawyers could be found to argue anything.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Will that amendment prevent the electors from dealing with those Acts?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No. The new clause would allow the Act to have full force and effect, and, in the interests of the Bill itself, it should be accepted by the Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amendment was probably very well thought out by the Hon. Mr. Fowles, and might be a very important one, but he did not think the hon. gentleman gave the real reason for the amendment. He thought he could safely say that the new clause was loaded in some way.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is not meant to be loaded.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amendment would limit the power of the Government under the measure. He would like to hear some other hon. gentleman who might have been able to follow the Hon. Mr. Fowles more clearly.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He was not going to take up much time, as he recognised that it would be of no use; but he had asked the Hon. Mr. Fowles this direct question: "Will the new clause prevent the electors having the initiative in dealing with any of those Acts?" and the hon. gentleman said "No." The final words of the amendment were "or amend any provisions of such Acts, or to give authority to repeal, alter, or amend any such Acts." Of course, it would prevent the people having authority to deal with any of the constitutional matters referred to in those Acts, and he was sorry when he asked the hon. gentleman that straight question that he did not get a straight answer. If the new clause were not inserted, the Bill would give full power to amend or alter the Constitution. That was one of the strong points of the Bill, and they wanted to give the people that right. It was a moral right, and should belong to the people. What he complained of now was that the hon. gentleman, with his professional knowledge, should have deceived him in the way he did. The clause would be the final act of destruction, and he hoped hon. gentlemen would not destroy the measure by inserting the new clause. He hoped they would realise that they should act up to their professions. They said they trusted the people, and complained that members on his side did not trust the people. They knew in their own hearts that it was a reasonable thing to give the people the right to amend the Constitution, provided a majority of the people were in favour of it.

HON. R. SUMNER: In his opinion, the Bill had already been destroyed, and there was no chance of its being accepted by the Assembly, seeing that they had included the recall.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You agreed with us on that.

HON. R. SUMNER: The recall did not come within the scope of the Bill, and it would be impossible to carry it out. Take the case of the Premier. There were probably 3,000 or 4,000 electors in the whole of his electorate, and yet hon. gentlemen in that Bill said that every petition must be signed by at least 10 per cent. of the electors of the State. If it was necessary that 10 per cent. of the electors of the State should sign a petition before a referendum was taken, then, to be consistent, they should provide that 10 per cent. of the electors in any one electorate would be sufficient to have a poll taken for the recall of any member of the Assembly. That would mean that 366 electors could recall the Premier, which would be absurd. The absurdity was so great that the Bill was practically destroyed

[5 p.m.]

Question—That the new clause (*Mr. Fowles*) be inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

CONTENTS, 18.

Hon. F. C. Beirne	Hon. C. F. Marks
" F. T. Brentnall	" E. D. Miles
" J. Cowlshaw	" B. B. Moreton
" G. S. Curtis	" C. F. Nielson
" A. Dunn	" A. H. Parnell
" E. W. H. Fowles	" E. H. T. Plant
" T. M. Hall	" A. J. Thynne
" A. G. C. Hawthorn	" H. Turner
" J. Hodel	" A. H. Whittingham

Tellers: Hon. T. M. Hall and Hon. J. Hodel.

NOT-CONTENTS, 11.

Hon. W. R. Crampton	Hon. T. Nevitt
" W. H. Demaine	" G. Page-Hanify
" A. J. Jones	" I. Perel
" T. L. Jones	" A. Skirving
" G. Lawson	" R. Sumner
" L. McDonald	

Tellers: Hon. L. McDonald and Hon. I. Perel.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 22—"Method of questioning validity of writ"—put and passed.

Clause 23—"Regulations"—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Government started to go astray on line 26, and they got over the precipice on line 38. In order to save them, he moved the omission, on lines 26 to 33, of the following words:—

"All such regulations shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen days after the making thereof if Parliament is then sitting, or, if Parliament is not then sitting, within fourteen days after the commencement of the next session of Parliament.

"If either House of Parliament, by resolution passed within one month after such regulations have been laid before such House, resolves that the whole or any part of such regulations might not continue in force, in such case the whole or such part thereof as is so included in such resolution ceases to be binding, but without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done thereunder—"

with a view to inserting the words—

"Such regulations and any amendment thereof shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen sitting days after such publication, if Parliament is in session, and, if not, then within fourteen sitting days after the commencement of the next session.

"If either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing any such regulation or amendment thereof, of which resolution notice has been given at any time within fourteen sitting days of such House after such regulation or amendment thereof has been laid before it, such regulation or amendment thereof shall thereupon cease to have effect, but without prejudice to the validity of anything done thereunder in the meantime.

"For the purposes of this Act, the term 'sitting days' shall mean days on which the House actually sits for the despatch of business:

"Provided always that if such regulations and amendments thereof, if any, are not duly laid before Parliament as hereinbefore prescribed they shall thereupon cease to have any force, effect, or operation whatsoever."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 24—"Expenses"—put and passed.

Clause 25—"Bill for repeal or amendment of this Act or of Act approved hereunder to be submitted to electors"—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The clause practically provided that the Act could not be altered except by a referendum of the people. That was to say, it took away from Parliament its ancient and constitutional rights. Suggesting a Premier went to the

Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.]

country at a general election on some vital question which involved the amendment or repeal of the Act or of any Act which had been put on the statute-book as the result of the initiative and referendum, and he was returned on that vital issue, his hands would be tied by that clause, although he might have a tremendous majority in both Houses. Although he had been returned because of his advocacy of that amendment or repeal, it would be impossible for him to secure the amendment or repeal of the Act by any other means than a referendum of the people.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Constitution can only be amended by the people, and this is an amendment of the Constitution.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Parliament had amended the Constitution half a dozen times in the history of Queensland. In 1908 they amended the Constitution. Only last week they amended the Constitution without any referendum at all, except a referendum from hon. members in Sydney and elsewhere. The Government dared not put that question to a referendum of the people.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: The object of the clause is to protect the decisions of the people.

HON. F. T. BRETNALL: The Government would put us out of existence if they could without a referendum.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They would put us out of existence without a trial, although it would be a severe trial to the country. The clause would tie the hands of Parliament.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Don't you think the decision of the people should be respected?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Supposing the Premier appealed to the people at a general election for a mandate to amend or repeal the Act or some Act passed as a result of the application of the initiative and referendum, why should the country be put to the expense of taking a referendum on the question immediately after the election?

HON. T. L. JONES: You are prepared to put the country to the expense of a referendum in connection with the recall of a member or a Minister immediately after an election.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: In some of the American States they had the power of recall with regard to the judges. If they had a similar power in Queensland they might have Standard Oil judges or Tammany judges.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: That would be as good as some of the judges we have now.

HON. T. M. HALL: Our judges are the best in Australia.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The judges of Queensland were a credit to Australia; and when Sir Samuel Griffith was Chief Justice of Queensland they had the strongest bench in the Southern Hemisphere.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Griffith sold himself for thirty pieces of silver.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The only safeguard was to omit the clause and allow Parliament, if it liked, to alter or repeal any measure in an emergency.

[*Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.*]

Question—That clause 25 stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided:—

CONTENTS, 11.

Hon. W. R. Crampton	Hon. T. Nevitt
.. W. H. Demaine	.. G. Page-Hanify
.. A. J. Jones	.. I. Perel
.. T. L. Jones	.. A. Skirving
.. G. Lawson	.. R. Sumner
.. L. McDonald	

Tellers: Hon. T. Nevitt and Hon. A. Skirving.

NOT-CONTENTS, 15.

Hon. T. C. Beirne	Hon. J. Hodel
.. F. T. Brentnall	.. C. F. Marks
.. J. Cowlshaw	.. A. H. Parnell
.. G. S. Curtis	.. E. H. T. Plant
.. A. Dunn	.. A. J. Thynne
.. E. W. H. Fowles	.. H. Turner
.. T. M. Hall	.. A. H. Whittingham
.. A. G. C. Hawthorn	

Tellers: Hon. C. F. Marks and Hon. A. H. Whittingham.

Resolved in the negative.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments; and the report was adopted.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

JIMBOUR SELECTIONS BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, this Bill, received by message from the Assembly, was read a first time.

The second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PROFITEERING PREVENTION BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, this Bill, received by message from the Assembly, was read a first time.

The second reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

ELECTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

POSTPONEMENT OF ORDER FOR SECOND READING.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the second reading debate on this Bill,

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said: Mr. President—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I thought you were going on with the Workers' Homes Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have no objection, if the hon. gentleman wishes. I rose to save the situation. I have a right to speak in reply.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: If you are going to speak in reply, I would like to have a few words myself.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am quite willing to meet hon. gentlemen, if they desire that this Order of the Day should be postponed until after the next Order of the Day is disposed of.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I understood you were going to do so. Do you want to go on with the Workers' Homes Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I desire to consult the convenience of hon. gentlemen, and I hope they will remember that when I desire to alter the order of business on some other occasion.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You can go on with whatever you like. I do not want to interfere with the Government business, but I understood you had made arrangements to go on with the Workers' Homes Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—That this Order of the Day be postponed until after the consideration of Order of the Day No. 8.

Question put and passed.

WORKERS' HOMES BILL.

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF ASSEMBLY'S MESSAGE.

(Hon. W. F. Taylor in the chair.)

Clause 2—"Interpretation"—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That the Committee do not insist on their amendment in clause 2, page 1, line 13, of the Bill."

He would not detain the Committee at any very great length arguing the question, because it was simply the same old question of land in fee-simple, otherwise freehold, versus leasehold tenure. He would ask hon. gentlemen to recognise that the leasehold tenure, rightly or wrongly, was the policy of the Government—he thought rightly, as he was a great believer in the leasehold tenure. Hon. gentlemen knew, as he had previously explained when the Bill was in Committee, that the Government Savings Bank Act, in that portion dealing with workers' dwellings, gave the option, to those who did not care to avail themselves of the provisions of this measure, of getting a freehold tenure. He gave hon. gentlemen the credit of wanting the Bill, knowing that it would afford a

[5.30 p.m.] great deal of relief by enabling workers to get homes practically on a rental basis; and, rather than risk the Bill, they should not press the amendment any further. If the amendment was insisted on, the Government would either have to climb down on the principle that the party stood for or else lose the Bill altogether. When it did not interfere with existing freeholds, why insist on the amendment and practically destroy the Bill? He hoped hon. gentlemen would be reasonable and agree to the amendment.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Minister had intimated that, if they insisted on the amendment, it would wreck the Bill. That side of the Council did not at all desire to wreck the Bill, as they saw that it had some virtue in it, which was rather an exception in Bills brought in by the Government. They wanted to assist the Government as far as they possibly could, and, seeing that they had done their best to give the option of a freehold to those who were desirous of erecting houses of their own, they would not press the amendment. The Government again, in spite of their reiterated outbursts of sympathy for the people and talk of trusting the people, showed that they were afraid to give the people the right of saying whether they would have a freehold or a perpetual lease. If they were so confident that the perpetual leasehold system was

popular and acceptable to the bulk of the people, they would not hesitate for one moment to allow a provision of that kind to be inserted in the Bill. They showed that they had not the courage of their convictions, and their assertion that perpetual lease was a popular form of tenure was absolutely wrong. Seeing that hon. members on his side had done their best to give an option in the method of tenure, and seeing that the Government were disinclined to accept that option, rather than wreck the Bill they would consent to the deletion of the amendment.

Hon. A. J. THYNNE: He had not very much fear in letting the Government have their way with regard to perpetual leases, for the reason that the more perpetual leaseholds there were the more irresistible would be the force that would come along presently and compel the Government to change the tenure.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That the Committee do not insist on their amendments in clause 2, page 1, lines 18 to 20."

The Assembly had taken the same view as he had expressed in connection with the amendments at the time the Hon. Mr. Fowles moved them. He did not see any harm in the amendments other than that they were an infringement of the rights of the Assembly.

Hon. A. J. THYNNE: We cannot concede that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: At all events, for that reason the amendments were rejected by the Assembly. He hoped the Committee would not insist on the amendment. He would point out that other amendments inserted in the Bill by the Council had been accepted by the Government. Therefore, the Government were not getting all their own way.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES moved the insertion, after the word "Committee," of the words:—

"while not waiving any of the undoubted rights possessed by this Council with regard to the amendment or rejection of money Bills, nor agreeing to the claim that this Bill is a money Bill."

He did not agree for a moment that it was a money Bill; it was a Workers' Homes Bill. As a matter of fact, they could alter the rate of interest, but that was quite a different thing from getting in the interest—there might be no interest paid under the Bill. The Minister previously accepted the amendment on its merits, because he saw that it was a very useful one.

Amendment agreed to.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 6—"Power to acquire land for purposes of Act"—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That the Committee do not insist on their amendment in clause 6, page 3, line 47."

The Council had inserted another amendment in clause 6 which the Assembly had accepted, and he hoped that the spirit of compromise would prevail right through. The Council had inserted the words "at the option of the owner," thus providing

Hon. A. J. Jones.]

that any land acquired by the Government could be paid for in cash or, at the option of the owner, wholly or in part by the issue to the owner of debentures.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Assembly had fallen back on their old assertion that the amendment was an interference—

“with the undoubted and sole right of the Legislative Assembly to direct, restrict, or condition the expenditure of public money, and this right cannot be waived by the Legislative Assembly, nor can it be conceded to the Legislative Council.”

It was a most reasonable thing that, if a man's land were taken away from him at a valuation for Government purposes, the Government should be prepared to give him cash, or, if there was any question as to whether he should take cash or debentures, the option was with him, and he was not compelled to take a form of payment which might not be acceptable to him, and which in the long run might mean that he was going to lose money by it. The Minister was always saying that the Government desired to be fair; but that was not treating the vendor of property—a compulsory vendor—with anything like fairness. The Government said that the Bill was a money Bill. That was the way they always tried to get out of a difficulty when they could not give any reasonable arguments for not accepting the amendment. He would like to hear some valid reason why the amendment could not be accepted; and, if hon. gentlemen on that side were compelled to give way, he would suggest that an amendment should be added to the question similar to the one agreed upon the previous question, to the effect that they did not waive any of their undoubted rights to amend money Bills.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The clause without the amendment inserted by the Council was all right. In a very large estate the Government would probably make some arrangement with the vendor to pay in debentures, but in a small deal they would not bother to issue debentures.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: What do you call a small deal? You talk of a million as nothing.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Speaking of high finance, a million was a mere fleabite. He would point out that a few days ago the Mines Department purchased the Irvinebank smelting works, tramline, and mine from the Irvinebank Company, and the price, as stated in the Press, was £22,500. He was conducting the negotiations on behalf of the Government. They had an opportunity of paying in debentures, but they paid in cash.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Where did you get the cash?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It suited the convenience of the vendors, and for a very trifling higher price they could have paid part cash and part debentures. That would apply to the purchase of a small area of land. He did not think there was much danger of what hon. gentlemen opposite feared. The owner would have an opportunity of expressing his wish in the matter. There was nothing very drastic in the clause, and he hoped hon. members opposite would allow it to go.

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Hon. members on his side were not prepared to fight the money question on this occasion, but some other occasion might arise when they would feel it necessary to do so. He moved the addition to the motion of the following words:—

“while not waiving any of the undoubted rights possessed by this Council with respect to the amendment or rejection of money Bills, nor agreeing to the claim that this Bill is a money Bill.”

Amendment agreed to.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 10—“*Limit of purchasing price*”—to which the Council had added the following amendment:—

“Provided that the capital cost of a home shall not, in any case, exceed one thousand pounds sterling.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not insist on their amendment in the clause.”

The same argument applied as with respect to the previous amendments. The amendment was not a bad one. As a matter of fact, in another Bill, the Government had fixed the limit at £800, and the Council's amendment fixed it at £1,000.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are rather sorry we spoke that time.

Question put and passed.

Clause 13—“*Purchaser's rights under contract of sale*”—which the Council had amended by inserting in paragraph (b) the words “or at his option a title in fee-simple”—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not insist on their amendment in lines 44 and 45.”

This amendment also introduced the freehold tenure into the Bill, and hon. members opposite had now approved of the perpetual leasehold tenure.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We have not approved of it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Well, they had waived their rights in that direction, and no further argument was needed.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They had neither approved of the perpetual leasehold tenure, nor had they waived any of their rights. They had tried their best to give workers the option of acquiring a freehold or a perpetual leasehold, and he was surprised that the Government would not agree to such a democratic addition to the Bill. Under the circumstances, there was nothing for them to do but to withdraw.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Chairman leave the chair, and report that the Committee do not insist on their amendments in the Bill to which the Legislative Assembly have disagreed.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved the insertion, after the word “Committee,” of the following words:—

“while not waiving any of the undoubted rights which they possess with regard to the rejection or amendment of money Bills, nor admitting the validity of the claim that the present measure is a money

Bill, nevertheless they are desirous, in the interests of workers, that the Bill should not be lost through its imperfections, and therefore they—”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amendment was moved for a certain purpose, and he just wanted to say that he did not propose to divide the Committee on it because it would be foolish to do so. All the Government were concerned about was passing the Bill to give the workers an opportunity to build homes for themselves, so that they might not have to pay such exorbitant rents as they were compelled to pay under the present system. The hon. gentleman might have his amendment so long as the workers were able to get cheap homes, which would help to make them better citizens.

Amendment agreed to.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee did not insist on their amendments to which the Assembly had disagreed, including in his report the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn.

The report was adopted.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—That the Bill be returned to the Legislative Assembly with the following message:—

“That the Legislative Council, having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly of date 22nd October, relative to the Workers’ Homes Bill, beg now to intimate that they do not insist on their amendments in the Bill to which the Legislative Assembly have disagreed.”

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I beg to move the insertion, after the words “intimate that,” of the following words:—

“while they do not waive any of the undoubted rights which they possess with regard to the rejection or amendment of money Bills, nor do they admit the validity of the claim that the present measure is a money Bill, nevertheless they are desirous, in the interests of workers, that the Bill should not be lost through its imperfections, and therefore.”

Amendment agreed to.

Message, as amended, agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—That the Council do now adjourn. The first business on Tuesday next will be the resumption of the debate on the second reading of the Constitution Act Amendment Bill, to be followed by the resumption of the debate on the second reading of the Elections Act Amendment Bill, the second reading of the Profiteering Prevention Bill, and the second reading of the Jimbour Selections Bill. There is no reason to sit to-night. We can adjourn now, by reason of the fact that we have only one item left on to-day’s business-sheet, which we can go on with on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at 5 minutes past 6 o’clock p.m.