

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

FRIDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 1919

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, 7 NOVEMBER, 1919.

The PRESIDENT (HON. W. HAMILTON) took the chair at fifteen minutes to 4 o'clock p.m.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of messages from the Governor conveying His Excellency's assent to the following Bills:—

Appropriation Bill, No. 3.
Seaforth Repurchased Estate Bill.
Succession Act of 1906 Declaratory Bill.

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Royal Commission on Public Works on proposed railways to open up Northern Burnett and Callide Valley lands.

STOCK FOODS BILL.

MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY, NO. 2.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of the following message:—

“Mr. President,—

“The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Council, of date 4th November, relative to the Stock Foods Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“Insist upon their disagreement to the amendment in clause 3, line 17, but offer to accept the amendment provided the words ‘or prescribed by-products’ are inserted after the word ‘food’ on lines 17, 20, and 25, page 3; and also after the word ‘food’ in clause 5, page 4, line 40.

“In which proposed further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Council.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber.
“Brisbane, 6th November, 1919.”

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES (HON. A. J. JONES), the message was ordered to be taken into consideration in Committee forthwith.

COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee further insist on their amendment in clause 3, line 17, and agree to the Assembly's further proposed amendments in this clause, page 3, lines 17, 20, and 25, and in clause 5, line 40, inserting, after the word ‘food,’ in each case, the words ‘or prescribed by-products.’”

If hon. gentlemen would refer to clause 2, they would find “stock food” defined thus—

“‘Stock food’ includes hay, straw,

chaff, grain, or seeds, mixed concentrated or prepared stock foods, and by-products.”

It would be noticed that it included “by-products.” When the Bill was in Committee he argued at length that bran, pollard, and by-products of that character were really “by-products,” and not “mixed concentrated or prepared stock foods.” “By-products” were thus defined—

“‘By-products’ includes husks, bran, pollard, brewers’ grains, and materials produced from any kind of grain or seed in any process of treatment or manufacture, not being the primary object of such process.”

The doubt was now removed that clause 3 would not include hay and chaff, as was contended by the opponents of the clause. The amendment suggested by the Assembly would meet the wish of hon. members on both sides. The words “or any prescribed stock food” would be omitted, but the Assembly's suggested amendment would substitute for them the words “or prescribed by-products.”

HON. A. J. THYNNE: Will you read the clause as it will be amended?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Clause 3, as it was proposed to amend it, would read—

“Every wholesale seller of any mixed concentrated or prepared stock food, or prescribed by-products, before selling any such stock food, shall send or deliver to the Under Secretary a fair average sample of each such mixed concentrated or prepared stock food or prescribed by-products in which he deals.”

The amendment, he thought, would be an improvement, and would do away with the previous objection to the clause.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: In the absence of the Hon. Mr. Whittingham, who moved the amendment when the Bill was originally in Committee, he might say that he saw no objection to the insertion of the words suggested in the Assembly's message. As it was now proposed to amend the clause, it would be a vast improvement on the clause as originally drafted. (Hear, hear!) It would now be clear and workable. He would like to make it quite clear that the words “or any prescribed stock food,” which were originally deleted by the Council, would still be deleted. The amendment might have been made in another way by only omitting the words “stock foods” and inserting the words “by-products,” as they had a definition of “by-products” in clause 2. As originally drafted, the clause would have been unworkable, but now it would be perfectly workable. The only drawback was that certain by-products would not be in existence on 31st January, the date before which samples of all stock foods that were to be sold during the course of the year had to be sent to the Under Secretary. At the same time he thought the section could be complied with. By-products such as bran and pollard were the product of the milling of various grains, and they were not in existence until after the milling was done. As the milling might be done late in the year, in that respect it would be impossible to comply with the provisions of the section *literatim*; but he felt certain that no Minister would take advantage of that and say that the wholesale

Hon. T. J. O'Shea.]

seller must send in before 31st January a sample of a by-product which was not then in existence. The Minister might call for

[4 p.m.] samples of such articles from time to time, and he felt certain that no wholesale dealer in these goods would hesitate for one moment to supply samples, and he thought the Committee might agree to the proposal of the Minister.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: He thought the clause was improved by the proposed alteration. The flour miller would be the wholesale dealer in many cases, and it was in his power to regulate the quality of the bran or pollard or other by-product which he sold. If he supplied a sample of a certain quality at the beginning of the year, he would be liable to be pinned down to that quality, but if the quality was altered, all he would have to do would be to send in another sample.

Question put and passed.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: He would call the attention of the Minister to the fact that the words "stock food" appeared on line 44, clause 5, and that it would be desirable to make the same amendment in that provision.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He had no objection to insert the amendment as suggested by the hon. gentleman, but he did not think it was necessary, and hoped the hon. gentleman would not press the matter.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: The words also appear in clause 6, but the amendment is not so necessary there.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. gentleman wished it, he would insert the amendment in the other places mentioned, but he did not think it was necessary to do so.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Very well, I will not press it; I have called the Minister's attention to the matter.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee did not further insist upon their amendment in clause 3, line 17, and agreed to the Assembly's further proposed amendment. The report was adopted.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The Bill was ordered to be returned to the Assembly with the following message:—

"Mr. Speaker,—

"The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, of date 6th November, relative to the Stock Foods Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Further insist on their amendment in clause 3, line 17, and agree to the Assembly's further proposed amendments in this clause, lines 17, 20, and 25, and in clause 5, line 40, inserting after the word 'food,' in each case, the words 'or prescribed by-products.'

"W. HAMILTON,
"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,
"Brisbane, 7th November, 1919."

[Hon. T. J. O'Shea.]

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The PRESIDENT: I have to report that I have received from the Assembly the following message:—

"Mr. President,—

"The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Council, of date the 4th instant, relative to the Queensland Government Savings Bank Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Insist upon their disagreement to the proposed new clause and the amended title, for the reasons previously assigned, and for the additional reason that it is inconvenient to introduce into the amending measure a subject which is entirely foreign to the purpose for which the Bill was introduced, and which can be more appropriately dealt with when a general amendment of the principal Act is under consideration.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,
"Brisbane, 6th November, 1919."

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the message was ordered to be taken into consideration forthwith.

COMMITTEE.

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

New clause 2—"Amendment of section 16 of principal Act"—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That the Committee do not further insist upon the insertion of the new clause to follow clause 1 of the Bill."

The Assembly insisted upon their disagreement to the proposed new clause and the amendment in the title for the reasons previously assigned, and for the additional reason that—

"It is inconvenient to introduce into the amending measure a subject which is entirely foreign to the purpose for which the Bill was introduced, and which can be more appropriately dealt with when a general amendment of the principal Act is under consideration."

That reason would, no doubt, commend itself to hon. gentlemen as a sufficient reason for not further insisting upon the new clause.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Will the Minister guarantee that the amendment will be brought in in the next amending Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He thought he stated when they were dealing with the message previously that the Treasurer stated he would give consideration to the matter, that it was worthy of consideration, and might be brought in when the principal Act was being amended, which he thought it was intended to do next session.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Does that mean next January?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That would not mean next session. He thought the hon. member could take that assurance.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: In view of that assurance, it seemed to him that they might agree to allow the Bill to go without

the amendment. There was no doubt that there were two or three good features in the measure, and he would be very sorry to see it lost at the present time, because they were necessary to bring the Act into conformity with the provisions of the Workers' Homes Bill. Under those circumstances, he thought the hon. member who moved the amendment, very rightly as he believed, might agree not to insist on it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He was pleased to announce to the Minister that the amendment had proved very successful in a large number of directions already, and whether it went into the Act or not, a very large number of depositors would have their attention directed to the £16,000 of theirs for which the Government were getting 5 per cent. In reply to the question put to the Minister, they were informed that there was an amount of £16,450 unclaimed deposits to the credit of depositors of over £2. The Government were lending that to borrowers under the workers' dwellings provisions of the Act at 5 per cent. That meant £800 a year that the Government were drawing from unclaimed deposits, for which they were not spending a penny.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It was not the fault of the Government that the money is lying idle.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They were getting a decent salary from the interest on depositors' money, and they would not let the depositors know that the money was there. There were 1,119 such depositors, some of whom had deposits running into over £300, and whose average deposit was over £16. He had worked out the cost of the work that would be involved by the amendment, reckoning a typist's wage at £4 a week, and it was a little under £9. Yet the Government made a song about the needless extravagance involved by the amendment. However, it had served a very useful purpose, and he sincerely hoped that the depositors who owned that £16,000, and a good deal more that they did not know about, would line up in person and lift it as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Committee did not further insist on the amendment in the title.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee did not further insist on the new clause to follow clause 1 or upon their amendment to the title. The report was adopted.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The Bill was ordered to be returned to the Assembly with the following message:—

“Mr. Speaker,—

“The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, of date 6th November, relative to the Queensland Government Savings Bank Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“Do not further insist on the insertion of new clause to follow clause 1, or on their amendment to the title.

“W. HAMILTON,
“President.

“Legislative Council Chamber,
“Brisbane, 7th November, 1919.”

MAIN ROADS 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.

CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND ADVANCES TO FARMERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of the following message:—

“Mr. President,—

“The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the Legislative Council's amendments in the Co-operative Agricultural Production and Advances to Farmers Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“Disagree to the amendments, because they constitute a direct interference with and an infringement of the privileges of this House.

“WM. LENNON,
“Speaker.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber,
“Brisbane, 6th November, 1919.”

COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not insist upon their amendments in clause 7.”

When the Bill was in Committee amendments were inserted making provision for silos of imperishable materials, [4.30 p.m.] the maximum amount to be granted being £150, and the period of the advance fifteen years. The reason given by the Assembly for the disagreement with that amendment was the reason given by him when the Bill was in Committee—it was not competent for the Council to interfere with it or to amend money Bills. Naturally, the Assembly considered the amendment an infringement of their rights and privileges. He thought the Committee would be wise, in the interests of those engaged in the agricultural industry, not to insist on the amendment, knowing full well that the Assembly could not possibly agree to it. As the Bill would help a great many people who were engaged in primary production, many of whom were suffering from a severe drought, the blame would be on that Council if they insisted on the amendment and thus destroyed the Bill.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: They had come to a very pretty pass when the Assembly refused to accept such an amendment as that. Under the Bill without the amendment any farmer tackling the question of getting a silo costing £150 must pay £30 a year plus interest in order to recoup him. In their legislation they were going the length of lending hundreds of pounds to town residents to build houses.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This Government did more for the farmers in four years than all the previous Governments did in forty by way of advances.

Hon. A. J. Thynne.]

HON. A. J. THYNNE: The hon. gentleman was very adept at making statements of that kind.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is a fact.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: If the hon. gentleman only knew and could realise what had been done by previous Governments for the farmers he would not say so. He did not realise it. He was contrasting the treatment afforded to the farmers in the country, who wanted a permanent instead of a temporary, perishable thing, with that meted out to the town dwellers. They were making the farmers pay what would be a very heavy tax, and it was a great discouragement in regard to going in for silos. If they had material put in which would last longer than the town houses, and if the Government gave them a reasonable time for repayment, they would be encouraged and induced to go in for one of the most fundamental things a farmer required—provision for fodder. What ordinary farmer who did not understand the question of silos would not shy off the idea of putting upon himself the obligation of paying £30 a year more than he was paying? It would take years of persuasion to get a man to take up a burden of that kind. A mere point of dignity or something of that kind had induced the Assembly to refuse one of the most important amendments which could be made for the benefit of the farmers. Surely there was no reason why they should not waive their objection as they had often done! He was not going to press the amendment. Let the Government take the responsibility of it, and let the Department of Agriculture undertake the burden of popularising the introduction of silos amongst the farmers. But the Council must assert their position, and state that they did not waive their recognised claims regarding amendment or rejection of money Bills. The amendment had been *bonâ fide*. It was a good suggestion, and for a mere point of dignity or something of that kind the farmer had to suffer.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He had given reasons why they should not insist on their amendment, but had not attempted to discuss the merits or demerits of the amendment. Speaking both personally and on behalf of the Government, they did not say there was anything wrong with the amendment. The hon. gentleman knew that. The reason it was rejected was because it was not competent for that Chamber to amend a money Bill. That was a principle which was laid down by high parliamentary authorities, and naturally the Legislative Assembly stood on their rights. The hon. gentleman had sought to prove that the Government were opposed to the amendment. That was not so. The amendment might be dealt with probably next session, when the law was amended again. That was a matter for the Secretary for Agriculture. They did not say that the amendment was objectionable, but the Bill was a very good one, and would afford a great deal of relief to a deserving class in the community. They were not afraid of the criticism levelled at the Government by the hon. gentleman because they knew how the agriculturists of Queensland appreciated this piece of legislation and the other Acts of administration and legislation for which the Government had been responsible.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN thought it was a pity the Assembly had not seen fit

[*Hon. A. J. Thynne.*

to meet them in that particular case. The Minister admitted that the suggestion was a good one. It was intended to assist the farmer quite as much as any of the other amendments in the Bill. Yet, because the Government thought the Council were infringing in a trifling degree their rights by attempting to amend a money Bill, they declined to assist the farmer on what was a very material point.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Don't put that construction on it.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It was the truth. The Government could not deny that the suggestion that the farmers should have assistance to make silos—a most important feature in their agriculture—was a good one. They wanted to hedge themselves around with a little dignity. They were afraid of the Council trampling on their dignity. They said, "We will not admit it, although it will do the farmers good."

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I admitted that, and members on this side give the Hon. Mr. Thynne a good deal of credit for the work he did in the Agricultural Department.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It seemed to him that it was straining at a gnat for members of the Assembly not to agree to an amendment like this. Although the Government believed in the amendment, they would not admit that the Council had any right to make it, and therefore they would not accept it. It might be some years before another amendment of the principal Act was brought in, and the farmers would have to wait all that time before getting silos, which were a most necessary part of their equipment.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: He proposed to move an amendment adding a protest to the message to be sent to the Assembly.

Question put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee did not insist on their amendments to clause 7 of the Bill.

The report was adopted.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

"That the Bill be returned to the Legislative Assembly with the following message:—

"Mr. Speaker,—

"The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, of date 6th November, relative to the Co-operative Agricultural Production and Advances to Farmers Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Do not insist on their amendments in clause 7."

HON. A. J. THYNNE: I beg to move—

"That the question be amended by 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, or that the

Council's amendments constitute any infringement of the privileges of the Legislative Assembly, nevertheless, they are desirous, in the interests of farmers, that the Bill should not be lost through its imperfections, and, therefore."

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not desire to speak at any great length in regard to the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Thynne, and will content myself by calling for a division. The amendment is hardly consistent with the speech made by the hon. gentleman on the second reading of this Bill, or with the remarks made by hon. gentlemen opposite when this Bill was in Committee, because the amendment alludes to the imperfections in the Bill. I do not suppose any Bill is absolutely perfect, but I rise to say that the Bill is not an imperfect measure by any means. The Bill is one which will be of great benefit to the people, and no Secretary for Agriculture in any other Government has ever attempted to introduce a Bill of this character—a Bill which will be so beneficial to the agriculturists of this State. The message may convey to the people of Queensland that the Bill is a very imperfect measure, because the Assembly insist upon what is their undoubted rights as regards money Bills. The second reading of the Bill was received splendidly in this Council, and member after member got up and eulogised the Government for introducing a Bill of this kind. This Government has done a great deal by legislation and by administration for those who deserve assistance—that is, the primary producers in this State. I am opposed to a message of this character going back to the Assembly, when the Assembly are acting constitutionally in insisting upon their rights, and protesting against any infringement of the rights and privileges of the people's representatives.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: The inconsistency is on the hon. gentleman's side. He practically has admitted that the amendment which was proposed in the Bill will be a great improvement, and the absence of it shows the imperfections of the Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. gentleman is not entitled to reply on an amendment without the permission of the Council.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: Might I ask the Council to allow me to reply?

THE PRESIDENT: Is it the wish of the Council that the hon. gentleman be allowed to reply?

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN: Hear, hear!

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: We believe in free speech on this side.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: The hon. gentleman is claiming that his Government is the only one that has assisted the farmers; but, if the hon. gentleman will go back a little in the history of the State, he will find that we introduced a Bill making advances to co-operative societies. When the Department of Agriculture was first formed, I think I was the first Minister in Australia to bring in a system of loans in aid of co-operative agricultural production.

HON. A. SKIRVING: You never brought in a co-operative Bill.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: We had no need of it. How many butter factories in the early days owed their existence to the assistance given?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: You insist on every regulation formulated by this Government being laid on the table of this Council, and now you admit that you did things without parliamentary authority.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: The hon. gentleman is again wrong. The Department of Agriculture did nothing of the kind. The vote was put on the Estimates and carried through Parliament, and administered by the department in accordance with the regulations, and I do not know how many factories were started with the assistance given to co-operative societies. Take the Maleny factory, with which I am acquainted. They had £500 given to them to start their factory, and now they have a factory worth many thousands of pounds. Many other factories were started in the same way. We gave them practical assistance to a greater extent in those days than this Government has done, or attempted to do. We did not commandeer the farmer's butter.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: You must have been a good Minister in a bad party.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: I hope I was a good Minister, but I say this for my colleagues, that I do not think I could be compared in efficiency with any one of the colleagues I had in those days—Mellwraith, Morehead, Macrossan, John Donaldson, Sir Hugh Nelson—men whose names to-day are names which ought to be worshipped and honoured in every way. I am the last of them, and I pay this tribute to them. No matter what may be said of my efficiency—and I hope I was efficient—I do not pretend in any respect to have excelled any of them.

Amendment agreed to.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

PORT DUES REVISION ACT AMENDMENT 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 of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

JIMBOUR SELECTIONS 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.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING RULES AND ORDERS.

PASSAGE OF REMAINING STAGES OF BILLS.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That so much of the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended for this day as would otherwise preclude the passing of the Governor's Salary Act of 1872 Amendment Bill and the Daraji Railway Bridge Bill through their remaining stages."

Question put and passed.

Hon. A. J. Jones.]

GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACT OF 1872
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. A. H. PARNELL: I moved the adjournment of the debate last evening because I considered the Bill so important that it was worthy of consideration in a full House. There is no justification for bringing in a Bill like this. It cannot be said that it has been brought in

[5 p.m.] on the plea of economy, because the Government have been in power for four and a-half years, and never before attempted to bring in such a measure. It is on a par with a Bill which was submitted to this Chamber two years ago—a personal Bill that never should have reached here at all. The Chief Justice, who acts as Governor during the absence of the Governor, draws a salary of £2,500 per annum. Under the Governor's Salary Act of 1872 he is entitled, while acting as Governor, to draw one-half the Governor's salary—that is, £1,500 per annum—and one-half his own salary—that is, £1,250. That makes a total of £2,750 per annum. Even if the Bill goes through, there will only be a saving of £250 if the Chief Justice should act as Governor for a whole year, which is very unlikely.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not doing him any injustice, is it?

HON. T. M. HALL: It is an insult to him.

HON. A. H. PARNELL: There is something else underlying the Bill which has not yet been brought out.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What is it?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. A. H. PARNELL: The hon. gentleman knows very well what it is. If I were to allude to it, I would be ruled out of order by the President; but every hon. member knows what it is.

HON. R. SUMNER: I don't know what it is.

HON. A. H. PARNELL: Practically this Bill is the first instalment towards abolishing the office of Governor—one of the planks of the Labour platform.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: They make no secret about that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How can this Bill abolish the Governor?

HON. A. H. PARNELL: I say it is the first instalment. Then it is to be left to the sweet will of the Ministry whether the Acting Governor is to have a staff, or whether any other expenses incurred by him are to be paid.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The staff will not be interfered with.

HON. A. H. PARNELL: We have only the hon. gentleman's word for that. According to the Bill, it is left entirely to Ministers to say whether the Acting Governor's expenses are to be paid, and whether the staff is to be kept on or not. I hope the Council will refuse to pass the Bill. If they do so, I am certain the country will agree with them. (Hear, hear!)

[*Hon. A. H. Parnell.*]

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the Council divided:—

CONTENTS, 9.

Hon. W. R. Crampton	Hon. G. Page-Hanify
“ A. J. Jones	“ I. Perel
“ L. McDonald	“ W. J. Riordan
“ P. Murphy	“ R. Sumner
“ T. Nevitt	

Tellers: Hon. W. R. Crampton and Hon. I. Perel.

NOT-CONTENTS, 16.

Hon. T. C. Beirne	Hon. P. J. Leahy
“ G. S. Curtis	“ C. F. Marks
“ B. Fahey	“ T. J. O'Shea
“ E. W. H. Fowles	“ A. H. Parnell
“ A. Gibson	“ E. H. T. Plant
“ T. M. Hall	“ A. J. Thynne
“ A. G. C. Hawthorn	“ H. Turner
“ J. Hodel	“ A. H. Whittingham

Tellers: Hon. P. J. Leahy and Hon. A. H. Whittingham.

Resolved in the negative.

DARAJI RAILWAY BRIDGE BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

Question stated—That clause 2—“ *Authority to erect bridge*”—stand part of the Bill.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA moved the insertion of the word “ *five* ” after the word “ *thirty*,” on line 14. The clause, as it stood, made provision for a headway under the bridge 30 feet above high-water mark. He was assured by individuals who were competent to give an opinion upon the point that that was not sufficient for the traffic, and that it would interfere with vessels which were now using the river. He thought that the extra cost incurred in raising the bridge 5 feet would not be very material, and that the amendment would satisfy the requirements of those who were at present using the river. Subclause (2) of the clause gave the Commissioner immunity from any claim against him for stopping a public highway, which a navigable river was; and, seeing that they were giving the Commissioner for Railways a right which every member of the public possessed, he thought they should guard the rights of individuals as far as possible. He trusted that the Minister would accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The previous night he was asked for certain information. The Bill was introduced to permit of the building of a bridge at a low altitude without incurring very heavy expense, and the cost of compensation that probably would be incurred without the Bill. The estimated cost of the bridge at 30 feet above high-water mark was £26,000 in 1915, and that estimate would be considerably increased now. To build a bridge 50 feet high—a very high level—would cost £55,000. His knowledge of streams, particularly of Australian streams, led him to the conclusion that either a low-level bridge or a very high-level bridge was necessary, because a bridge of medium height seemed to catch the flood waters and debris, and there was a danger of its being swept away. Recent floods and cyclones had taught them that they did not know what flood level really was. The Sandy Creek Bridge on the other side of Mackay was built 10 feet higher

than what was called flood-water mark, and yet it was swept away.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Can you give me the difference in cost of a bridge 30 feet and one 35 feet high?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He could not at present. No doubt, the department could make a calculation, but he knew that a good deal of the material was ordered, and plans were already made, and it would cost a considerable amount to raise the bridge another 5 feet.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: You are in error in saying that material is ready, because tenders have not been called.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He understood that the approaches were ready.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: What is the height of the bank at the bridge site?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He could not say. He had the Commissioner's report, and the bridge was sufficiently high to allow coastal steamers engaged in trading to go to the Goondi Mill, but the heavy traffic did not need to go under the bridge, which was above the town. He thought there would be little, or no inconvenience to trading by shipping. He hoped the hon. member would not insist on his amendment.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: The Bill had come to them with very little information, but he recalled some information which he had some years ago with regard to some of the lands in the district. He remembered reading a report of some of the land that was acquired by the Goondi Mill, which described a bank of 30 feet of alluvial soil down to bedrock, practically level with the river. The late Sir A. C. Gregory once gave him a very important piece of information which had remained in his memory—that was, that wherever one found alluvial land, one might come to the conclusion that there had been a flood over that land at some time or other, and, if the alluvial banks of the Johnstone River were 30 feet high—and his recollection was that they were in certain parts—they might be sure that at some time or other there must have been a flood higher than 30 feet. Although he knew very little about that particular proposition, he was inclined to think that the higher the bridge was made, if it was made properly, the better for the railway and the safety of the people.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is what I say—it has got to be either very low or very high.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: A low-level bridge was 3 feet, or 4 feet, or 5 feet above the ordinary level of the water, and a high-level bridge was one supposed to be above a high flood. Looking at the question from the point of view of the possibility of heavy floods from the range at Atherton, which he had ridden down, he could quite conceive that, with the heavy rains they had there, a flood in the Johnstone River would be very big, and might carry away a bridge only 30 feet high. He understood that the bridge was part of the North Coast Railway. Details of that sort of thing should be submitted to the Council, so that their Select Committee system could be applied, and they would then be able with a clear conscience to say, "That is a good proposition.

We have all the information before us, and we have brought to bear on it the best of our judgment." But they were asked to deal with the Bill on the last day of the session, and they had not the information before them. From his recollection and knowledge of the district, however, he thought 30 feet was not high enough, considering that they had had a flood in the Brisbane River 33 feet above high-water mark.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Burdekin Bridge is a low-level bridge, and look at the number of times it has been swept away.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: Of course, that was quite a different proposition. The country dealt with there was sandy and gravelly foundation, whereas in the Johnstone River they were dealing with alluvial red soil washed down from the mountains and accumulated in years gone by. He was inclined to think that the Hon. Mr. O'Shea was on the right lines. He thought a bridge of 35 feet was safer, but he said so subject to his want of information as to the actual position.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment; and the report was adopted.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Assembly by message in the usual form.

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is "A Bill to further amend the Liquor Act of 1912 in certain particulars." I do not intend to take up the time of the Council at any great length, for the reason that it is desirable to adjourn this afternoon until early in January. I understand that the adjournment of the debate will be moved after one or two speeches have been made, or even after my speech, on this all-important question, and that the Bill will be further considered immediately we assemble next year. I do not now intend to deal with the whole of the liquor question. The question is a very important one and probably worthy of consideration. There is no

[5.30 p.m.] time at our disposal to-day to do justice to the subject from this side of the Chamber. Hon. gentlemen on this side are anxious to place their views before the Chamber and before the people of Queensland, which is their right. They will do that immediately we meet again next year. I can probably preface my remarks by saying that, since the advent of the Labour party into politics, we have claimed to be a reform party, not only in this but in very many other directions. The Labour party have always been the most sober party in the Federal Parliament, and in this and every other State Parliament.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: You have not. Your Labour members here are not more sober than we are—not so sober.

Hon. A. J. Jones.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not saying that any other party—

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Yes, you did. We will have no reflections from that side on this side.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was not by any means saying that the other party were a drunken party. The hon. gentleman knows that I would not dare to say that. I know there are men on the other side who know not the taste of liquor. I am not posing here as one who has never tasted liquor. I admit I do know the taste of liquor. I am not acting hypocritically in any way.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: You cannot suggest there is any want of sobriety on this side of the Chamber.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I never suggested it. I said the Labour party are more a reform party than any other party. When the Federal Labour party were governing Australia, I think out of nine Ministers no less than seven were absolute teetotallers.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: The Labour party are a very intemperate party in some ways.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It has been found by experience that it is not advisable to have local option polls taken simultaneously with State or Federal elections, as the issues are apt to become clouded. Personally, I do not think it is wise to cloud an election with a referendum on the liquor question. Vice versa, I do not think it is fair to cloud a vote on the liquor question with a Federal or State election. I think it cuts both ways. If a referendum is to be taken on this all-important question, it should be taken on some day other than polling day, when the people shall be absolutely free to vote without the interference and without the influence of the personality of any candidate, no matter to which party he belongs. We propose, therefore, that every local option vote shall be taken on a given day in May in every year, provided that it shall not be taken on the same day as that on which a State or Federal election is being held.

Apart from the ordinary local option poll, we wish to provide for a triennial poll of the electors of every electoral district of the State upon three resolutions which hon. gentlemen will find in clause 8. They are—

"A. State management of manufacture, importation, and sale of fermented and spirituous liquors.

"B. Prohibition of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors, to take effect in July, 1925 (in the case of the poll in 1920 or 1923, or insert other date three years ahead in the case of subsequent polls).

"C. Continuance of the present [or if A or B has been carried, return to the earlier] system of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors."

The first of such polls is to be taken in October, 1920, and no poll is to be taken within sixty days before or after a State general election or a Federal election. The voting is to be contingent voting; that is, each voter must indicate his second and

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

third preference, in addition to voting for one of the resolutions A, B, C. If either State management or prohibition is carried at the 1920 poll or the 1923 poll, the resolution carried shall take effect from 1st July, 1925. If either of the resolutions is carried at a subsequent poll, the resolution is to take effect on the 1st July in the third year thereafter. The object of this provision is to allow publicans and others engaged in the trade time to arrange their business affairs, and avoid the big loss which would ensue upon a sudden closing down of business. If a similar resolution were carried under the law as it stands at the present time, it would not take effect till 1925. Of course, if prohibition is carried, the people may afterwards return by a majority vote to the present system. This is the principle of the initiative and referendum. The majority of the people will say whether they will have prohibition, or, if prohibition is not adopted, whether they will return to the licensing system. The Government are willing at all times to leave themselves in the hands of the people.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Are the Government temperance reformers or not?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes. The Government are always willing to leave themselves in the hands of the people, provided we have an adult franchise.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why don't you have a redistribution of seats?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: As I said, this principle is embodied in the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill, and, as my friend the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify has often said when speaking on that Bill in this Chamber, if those people who oppose the initiative and referendum principle were really sincere in liquor reform, they could have had it by passing that Bill.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Nonsense! You know that was mixed with a dozen other issues.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify is staking his political existence on the carrying of the Bill, so that he can get what he has so long ardently desired—that is, liquor reform.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He would sacrifice the world for his own hobby.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No, he holds strong views on the matter, and I appreciate the conduct of any man who has a high ideal or principle, even if I do not exactly agree with the principle advocated. It is well known that the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify has always fought for his temperance principles. I think that he made a splendid speech on the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill the other day, not only on that particular phase of the question, but on the main principles of the Bill.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Are you in order?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am in order. When I first introduced the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill in this Chamber, which was the first second reading speech I had the honour of making here, I laid down the very important principle which the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify laid down in his speech.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: What is that?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That, if those who desire liquor reform wanted a say on it, they could have it under that Bill.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Supposing you were offered liquor reform and German rule, would you take both?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No. We never advocated German rule. The Elections Act will apply to the triennial polls, and voting will be compulsory. The provision with regard to petitions under the Bill is a very desirable one, and is similar to an amendment which this Council inserted in the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill on one of the numerous occasions when it considered the measure. It is designed to remove the possibility of fraud and malpractice in the preparation of local option petitions. I refer hon. gentlemen to clause 9, which makes provision for the form and signature of requests, petitions, and memorials. Each page of the petition must be endorsed. I claim to have first advocated that in this Chamber myself. While I was Acting Home Secretary, petitions were presented from the licensed victuallers and the temperance party. The petitions were written on the flimsiest paper, and blank sheets were used. I say that every sheet of a petition should be endorsed as prescribed in the clause.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: That was introduced from this side of the Chamber.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, at my suggestion. I think I was the first to suggest it, so that I can claim to have suggested something original, and which has been adopted. I know the trouble we had by both parties getting access to the petitions, and comparing the signatures with the claims to get on the electoral roll. I have no desire to make a long speech, but I do not want the brevity of my remarks to be taken in any way to indicate that this is not an important Bill, or that I am not in favour of its introduction. I may have another opportunity when the Bill comes before the House to speak again. I hope that the Bill will be carried, and that the people will have an opportunity of having a voice on this question. I am one of those who believe in the people of the State being given an opportunity of expressing their opinion at the ballot-box. I think that is a sound principle.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You are not the only one who believes in that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have much pleasure in moving—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. G. S. CURTIS: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for the next sitting day.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until 6th January next.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council do now adjourn. As we shall not be here in December, I desire to wish you, Mr. President, and hon. gentlemen, the compliments of the season. This part of the session, although it has not been very long, has been somewhat strenuous, and all hon. gentlemen will receive some benefit by the rest. I know that I shall receive some benefit by a rest or a change in occupation. I am not going to be hypocritical and say that I am thoroughly satisfied with the progress made or with the amount of business that has been done. There are some Bills that I would have liked to pass, and hon. gentlemen probably will like me all the better for not being hypocritical. I tried to get some measures through this Chamber before we adjourned. This Council is where we fight our political battles, and I do not bear any illwill towards any hon. gentleman when once I am outside. We do not get all our own way here, and I think hon. gentlemen sometimes do wrong in not giving us all our legislation and in treating some of our legislation in the way they do.

Hon. B. FAHEY: You don't consult us before you frame your Bills. (Laughter.)

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That is all the trouble.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I hope hon. gentlemen will have good health during the remainder of the year and up to the time we meet again, and that we shall all meet here again on 6th January. One never knows what changes may take place, but I sincerely hope that hon. gentlemen will have good health, and, although it is a little early, I wish hon. gentlemen on both sides, and you, Mr. President, the compliments of the season.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I rise to reciprocate the kindly wishes expressed by the Minister towards hon. gentlemen on this side. I would like to say that, though the Minister has had a strenuous time—indeed, I think a too strenuous time, because I think he is asked to do more work than one man ought to be asked to do—some of us have also had a strenuous time. Naturally, we cannot see eye to eye with the hon. gentleman and his friends on all political questions; but I think the Minister will give us credit for not making his burden any harder than we believed was necessary, consistent with our duty. The hon. gentleman may think I am wrong, but he has no right to assume that I am wrong and know that I am wrong, nor have I any right to assume the same towards him. There is a great necessity for charity and toleration in politics. I say that in all sincerity, and, considering all the circumstances, I think we have got through a very fair amount of business. Some of the Bills are Bills which, I venture to say, are not altogether for the benefit of the country, but we on this side have endeavoured to recognise that we are a part of the Constitution, and we do not feel it is our duty to throw out everything that comes to us from the other place, even though some of those things may be things we are opposed to. What we have endeavoured to do with the majority of Bills is to make reasonable amendments, and so to shape those Bills that they will either be beneficial to the people or that they will work the least

Hon. P. J. Leahy.]

amount of injury. I desire to reciprocate the feelings of goodwill expressed by the hon. gentleman, and I also extend to you. Mr. President, on behalf of this side, our appreciation of the manner in which you have carried out your duties. I desire, also, to thank the Chairmen of Committees and the officers of the Council, and last, but by no means least, the Press. This Chamber is considerably indebted to the Press, without whose assistance the public at large would know very little of what we are doing.

HON. T. NEVITT: I just wish to add a few words to those spoken by my colleague, and I wish to tender to you, Mr. President, and the officers of the Council, the "Hansard" staff, and the Press the compliments of the season—although it may be rather early—and to express our thanks, particularly to the staff of the Council, for the way in which they have looked after the welfare and interests of each individual member. I wish, also, to tender hon. gentlemen on the other side of the Chamber my sincere thanks for the assistance they have rendered me since I came here, and I wish them the compliments of the season.

THE PRESIDENT: I reciprocate the kindly feeling expressed towards me by hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House. It is hard for a Chairman, unless he has the assistance of hon. members, to carry out his duties and keep order. I am much indebted to all the members of the Council and the officials for the manner in which they have treated me since I have been in the chair, and I wish them all the compliments of the season, including the members of the Press and the "Hansard" staff. I hope we shall all meet again when Parliament reassembles, and that we shall all be in our usual health.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at 6 o'clock p.m.
