

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 1920**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 1920.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN (Hon. T. Nevitt) took the chair at half-past 4 o'clock p.m.

### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed—

Thirty-fifth report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, Building Societies, and Industrial and Provident Societies.

Report of the Marine Department for 1919-1920.

Report upon the operations of the sub-departments of Aborigines, Prisons, Government Relief, Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases, (South Brisbane), Jubilee Sanatorium for Consumptives (Dalby), Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, and Westwood Sanatorium.

### PROPOSED ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES, in moving—

"That in view of the fact that a large majority of electors of this State recently voted against the abolition of the Legislative Council, and in view of the fact that certain anomalies and imperfections in Parliament as at present constituted need adjustment, so as to restore and preserve that balance, efficiency, and co-operation so requisite in the machinery of government, and, in view of the further fact that the present serious condition of the State finances compels the most earnest consideration of legislators, this Council is of opinion that it is desirable to reconstitute the Legislative Council on a basis which takes into consideration the following, namely:—

(a) The substitution of a term of years for life tenure;

(b) The reduction of the number of honourable councillors to a fixed maximum;

(c) The election of three-fourths of honourable councillors;

(d) The appointment of one-fourth of honourable councillors by the Crown after nomination by an electoral board;

(e) The scale of remuneration, if any, of members and officers;

and that a reconstitution committee be appointed to prepare a Bill accordingly for presentation to this House"—

said: No one can look dispassionately upon our present parliamentary system without becoming aware that it needs, if not amending, at least some revision. Nor can anyone view the present condition of Australian politics without feeling very grave concern about the aftermath of war, the huge burden of expenditure, the drift of population to the cities—especially to the capitals—the unpeopled spaces, the tendency to unification, the white Australian problem—a beautiful ideal if we can maintain it—the basic wage difficulty, and other such pressing questions that so acutely affect the welfare of all

citizens, and compel us to inquire whether our system of government does not need the closest scrutiny. In the abnormal conditions of our own State, with our dislocated finances—and here I may as well say that I do not propose to enlarge in any degree whatsoever upon the unfortunate position of our State finances; that may be left to another occasion—there is no need for me, at all events, to say another word upon that matter, it is borne home so intimately to every citizen in the State.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Trying to square us?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: With our dislocated finances and party differences, there seems to be special need for such an inquiry; hence this notice of motion, which I commend to the generous attention of hon. members, and which I shall endeavour to discuss briefly, and without the slightest trace of party politics. (Hear, hear!) It is over fifty years since our charter of government—the Constitution Act of 1857—became law. Only a few modifications have been made since that year, notably the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1909—I omit reference to a few minor Acts. The fact that so few alterations have been made shows that the Act of 1857 was really a monument of foresight, liberality, and statecraft on the part of those who formulated its basic principles. We have had since then over half a century of social and economic evolution—a sufficiently sharp testing time for any Constitution—and only slight alterations have been made. But in that Act itself, strangely enough, the framers of it saw the likelihood—more than the possibility—of making alterations, for section 9 reads—

"Notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, the Legislature of the said Colony as constituted by this Act shall have full power and authority from time to time by any Act or Acts to alter the provisions or laws for the time being in force under this Act or otherwise concerning the Legislative Council, and to provide for the nomination or election"—

I will try and show later on that those words "for the nomination or election" imply that you can have either method, and possibly a combination of both—

"of another Legislative Council to consist respectively of such members to be appointed or elected respectively by such person or persons and in such manner as by such Act or Acts shall be determined."

That shows that the framers of our Constitution had in view not merely the possibility but even the necessity for subsequent substantial modifications. Probably, no method of government is ideal, not even the Soviet Government; nor, if it were ideal, could it remain so for half a century. No system is fool-proof, or buglar-proof, or time-proof. "The passing of time makes ancient good untruth." Even where any system has been so devised as to be almost automatic in its operation and quite above human frailties and party politics, nevertheless it cannot be proof against the shocks of time and circumstance. The lapse of years brings new duties and new occasions. The British Constitution itself, with its Cabinet system, would not have survived a quarter of a century if it had not been unwritten, and therefore elastic. It has been maintained so long only

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

because it has been changing continually. Under our own written Constitution, Queensland has grown from almost nothing to be a Queen State; but to-day the circumstances are so unique as to demand an inquiry as to whether the machinery of Parliament in its present form has not really outlived its usefulness. At all events, it invites the closest inspection and revision. It is comparatively easy to frame a paper Constitution, and to insist on having those checks and balances which other States of the Empire have found to be so essential; but it is a vastly different thing and not half so easy to dip into the future and draft a Constitution that will fit the political growth of the next quarter of a century. Nor can we forget that the Commonwealth Constitution itself may soon be in the melting pot, or, at all events, may undergo several substantial amendments. There is now a clamour for new States. Who knows but what the northern part of New South Wales may not, in the near future, become a separate State? Who knows but what the Hon. Mr. Curtis, who worked so hard for separation in Queensland I do not know how many years ago, may not yet play the role of ambassador for a tripartite division of Queensland into North, Centre, and South, so that at last the Centre and the North may get fuller consideration for their needs? There is a clamour abroad for new States. There is the insistence that in the very near future larger powers shall be given to the Federal Parliament. There is a tendency—look at it as we may—in the direction of unification, whereby the powers of the States may be whittled away until we become little more than glorified local authorities, and whereby the supreme power and the supreme destiny in almost every department shall reside in the Federal Parliament and not in the various State Parliaments. There are, moreover, the mandates in the Pacific that have come to us as a heritage from the war, and there is the very grave question of a whole continent, nearly the size of Europe, peopled by scattered communities, with a total population less than that of London, and governed at the present time by no less than 698 members of Parliament. Fancy 698 members of Parliament being needed for London! It is indeed somewhat appalling to note how large is the number of legislators necessary to rule Australia—whether wisely or well, this is, perhaps, not the place to say.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones): You provide for a reduction in the number of members of the Council?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Under our Constitution the number is unlimited.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, it is unlimited. It was supposed originally to be limited to one-third or one-half the number of members of the Assembly.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: You do not say what the limit should be.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will say in a minute or two what reduction I propose in the number of members. I have here a table showing the number of legislators on 1st August, 1920, in the Commonwealth. The numbers in the various Upper Houses, as I may call them, are—the Commonwealth Senate, 36; New South Wales, 68; Victoria, 34; Queensland, 64; South Australia, 20; Western Australia, 30; Tasmania, 18—a total of 270.

[Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is a good argument for abolition.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The numbers of members in the Lower Houses are—Commonwealth, 75; New South Wales, 90; Victoria, 65; Queensland, 72; South Australia, 46; Western Australia, 50; Tasmania, 30—a total of 423, or a total of 698 members of Parliament to govern Australia. No wonder that the taxpayers are beginning to cry out! I may say, for the information of hon. gentlemen who do not appreciate these figures, that the mere cost of Parliament—I do not refer at all to the Governors' establishments—for the Commonwealth of Australia is no less than £436,000 per annum.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Do you mean £436,000 in damage or in cost?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The damage is incalculable. I refrain from touching on the State finances, which would be a very live subject, and my reason for refraining from touching on that subject is that it would trench on party politics. I do not discuss the anomalies at present existing in our party system; but I will mention certain facts, one of which is that we are living to-day under a system which permits a majority of voters—I do not say of which party—voting in one direction, and a majority of their elected members voting in another direction. That is an anomaly. The majority of voters look with their faces in one direction, and the majority of the elected members look with their faces in another direction. The other exceptional circumstance to which I desire to allude is the superswamping—not merely the swamping, but the superswamping—of the Council. Keith, in volume II, page 536, pointed out over five years ago that the expedient of swamping the Council was obsolete in Queensland, because we were further advanced in our legislative functions than any other State in Australia, having passed the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908, which provides a simple method of solving difficulties between the two Houses. He pointed out that the drastic measure of superswamping would hardly be approved, in view of the new position created by the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act. I now come to the suggestions which I think will be of practical value. The first of those suggestions to which I would direct the attention of hon. members is the substitution of a term of years for a fixed tenure for members of this Chamber. I do not wish here to criticise too strongly the fixed tenure system, because it has worked so unaccountably well in different parts of the British Empire. I do not know whether the reason that it has worked so well is to be found in the excellent choice of members, who have had good health and have continued to maintain a keen interest in public affairs for a good many years. Much depends on the nominees themselves. The advocates of a life tenure argue that it is about as perfect a tenure as you can find, but it has not worked well in some places. There are various alternatives to this tenure, and one of those alternatives is to fix the tenure at three years. A three years' tenure would probably be considered by most members too short, as it would conduce to the introduction of that hurly-burly in politics which we get in the Legislative Assembly. Under such a tenure there would also be a lack of continuity in policies, something like that which we find

in the United States, where no sooner is one President elected than they get ready for a future presidential campaign. The tenure of members of the Legislative Council is six years in Victoria, six years in South Australia, and six years in Tasmania. Most of the members of those Councils hold their positions for six years, and some of them have held their positions for more than a quarter of a century. The term of six years has various considerations to recommend it. One consideration is that a term of six years would carry the members over two Parliaments. Seven years might be a better term, as that would prevent the clashing of elections for the Assembly and for the Legislative Council. It is possible that some members may advocate that the term during which members of the Council should hold office should be fixed at nine years. At any rate, it is obvious that fixing a term during which members should hold their seats in the Council would have advantages over a life system. The arguments in favour of fixing a term need not be recapitulated, as they are set out in Todd's "Parliamentary Government," and other books on the constitution of Parliament.

The next aspect of the question raised by my motion is the reduction in the number of members of the Council to a fixed maximum. What should that fixed maximum be? It certainly comes as a startling fact to us that Queensland in its Upper House has as many members as Victoria and West Australia put together, and fourteen more than South Australia and Western Australia combined. It has also just about the same number of members as there are in the Legislative Councils of South Australia, West Australia, and Tasmania combined. Surely, those figures show that the present is a time when we should consider the question of reducing the number of members in the Queensland Legislative Council. When Federation took place we did not reduce the number of our members, though most of the other States in the Commonwealth did reduce their numbers. It is quite certain that if we have no limit to the number of members, there is always the possibility that such a position may involve trouble and disaster. In Canada, where there are ninety-six members of the Senate, and where the members are appointed for life, care is taken that the numerical representation of the different provinces shall be well safeguarded. In the Dominion of Canada swamping is, of course, unknown. My suggestion is that there should be thirty-two members in our Legislative Council, and that twenty-four, which number is equal to one-third of the present number of members in the Assembly, should be elected, and the rest should be nominated. They should hold their seats for a fixed term of six years, and twelve of the elected members should retire every three years. Half of the eight nominated members should also retire every three years, and be re-nominated. Such an arrangement would render any swamping of the Council unnecessary, even if we had not the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908. What, then, is my proposal for the election of the twenty-four elected members of the Legislative Council? Three questions might arise in connection with this aspect of the subject—how should they be elected? who are to be the electors? and what is to be the franchise? This is scarcely the place for a discussion on the relative merits of elected and nomi-

nated members. That matter is fully discussed in Todd's volume on "Parliamentary Government." Generally, I may say it is admitted that the elected system has advantages over the nominated system; but neither the elected system by itself nor the nominated system by itself is a perfect system. There must be a combination of the two systems in order to avoid the abuse of either. Supposing we had a purely elective system, what might be the result? Consider the position of the elected Senate of the Commonwealth at the present time, where there are thirty-five Nationalists and only one Labour member. Such a position is a comedy.

HON. J. G. SMITH: It is a tragedy.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is obviously very poor representation for Australia. It is almost an incredible instance of what may come to pass under a purely elective system. I may say that there is nothing better in the world than the ballot-box and a purely elective system. But, as I have shown, under the elective system you may have thirty-five Nationalists and only one Labour member returned, when probably twenty to sixteen would be about the right proportion for the representation of those two parties. The Federal Constitution was so framed by its makers that it was intended to provide that there should be equal representation for the different States in the Commonwealth, but notwithstanding that fact the Senate has become merely a machine for party politics. The members of the Senate simply draw their salaries and increase the heavy financial burdens placed on the Commonwealth. If the fixed maximum for this Council were thirty-two members, I would suggest that twenty-four of those members, that is, a number equal to one-third of the present number of members in the Assembly, should be elected, and that half of them should retire every three years. Then it may well be asked, how should those twenty-four members be elected? Having regard to the experience of other parts of the British Empire, one suggestion is that North Queensland should elect six members, Central Queensland eight members, and Southern Queensland ten members. An allotment made in that manner would be in accord with the practice which prevails in at least five other States of the Commonwealth. In Victoria they have thirty-five members in the Upper House, and they divide the whole State into seventeen double-barrelled electorates, each of which returns two members to the Legislative Council. In South Australia the whole State is divided into five districts, one returns five members, and each of the others returns four members to the Council. West Australia is divided into ten provinces, each of which returns three members to the Council. In Tasmania, where the conditions are furthest away from the conditions which prevail in Queensland, there are fifteen electoral districts. Three members are elected for the Hobart district, two for the Launceston district, and one for each of the other districts. There is a fourth alternative in this matter, and that fourth alternative I submit for the special attention of members of this Chamber. It has been discussed in various quarters, and has received a good deal of consideration. Hon. members, I suppose, are aware that it is receiving a good deal of consideration at the present time. The fourth alternative is to allow the Legislative Assembly of the day to appoint

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

members of the Council. If there are twenty-four elected members in the Council, then under that scheme the Legislative Assembly will elect twelve members to fill the places of a like number who retire. That could be done in another place by preferential ballot, or it could be done by open ballot; or, still better, it could be done by apportioning to each party in the Assembly the number of representatives in the Council it would deserve according to the votes

[5 p.m.] polled at the preceding general election. That would ensure a rapid, direct, inexpensive method, and a method that would give exactly a reflex of the current opinion of the people at the polls. They would be as truly representative of the community of Queensland at the time as any possible method of election could make them. At all events, I submit that it is very well worth considering. It may be said, of course, that such a method might lead to the appointment in a wholesale manner of "rejects," and to the finding of easy places for disappointed favourites. It may be said that abuses would creep in under that system. At all events, it would be a direct and easy way, and in time the intelligence and honesty of the other place would be quite equal to the intelligence and honesty of any place in the British Dominions, and they would choose the very best men. I would like to refer specially to pages 706 and 707 of "Todd," and to a splendid paper published some time ago by Mr. J. E. Fitzgerald, C.M.G., Comptroller and Auditor-General, New Zealand, who points out exactly the type of man most likely to be appointed and to do most credit to the country. At all events, a suggestion such as that would do away with the anomaly we have at present in the other House—that those having the fewer number of votes have the larger number of members in the Assembly. Incidentally, I might be allowed to point out that that has been automatically corrected under Denmark's new dual electoral system—a landmark in political progress—which I commend to hon. gentlemen. It is described in full in "Current History" for August, 1920, pages 884 to 886. The plan there is for supplementary mandates for distribution to the parties which may not have obtained a just proportion of representation, and automatically the law takes the distribution of seats right out of the hands of political parties. If election under a general voters' roll is to be preferred to that, we may well inquire who are to be the electors and what is to be the franchise. Is it to be age, residence, marriage, property, profession, or what? After a survey of the qualifications in all the British Dominions, one would suggest the following as being worth consideration as a basis for the franchise only:—First, British subjects of either sex; secondly, over the age of thirty, or marriage. I find in a number of places that thirty is the age. A person who is unmarried, under the age of thirty, would not have a vote. Third, residence in the State for five years. Or there could be a ratepayers' qualification; or—and I put this in with a good deal of hesitation—a professional qualification. I put that in because I was surprised to find out in how many countries of the world there was a professional qualification. In Victoria, Tasmania, West Australia, and South Australia there is a professional qualification—members of universities, members of

[Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.

the medical profession—it left out members of the legal profession. At all events, the qualification for membership might well include a stated age or residence limit, simply because residence in a State for at least five years is necessary before one really gets a grip of the politics and the necessities of the country.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Would you have any candidates' examination for members?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That might be too searching. The fourth suggestion is that the appointment of the eight members should be by the Crown after nomination by an electoral board. I was speaking the other day to a gentleman who, I suppose, has had more to do with the Labour movement in Queensland than any other gentleman, and he gave it as his opinion that, if there were one system worse than another, it was the elective system, and if there were one system better than another, it was the nominative system—

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Do not give his name, because he will have direct action applied to him.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Because, under the elective system, the crowd might call for Barabbas. We come to the point of the appointment of the one-fourth by the Crown after nomination by an electoral board. It might not be exactly fair to throw all the onus of appointment on to His Excellency the Governor—and by His Excellency the Governor I do not mean the Governor in Council, but His Excellency himself. It would be unfair to throw all the onus of appointment upon him. So the suggestion comes that there be an electoral board to nominate ten or a dozen, and that the Governor should choose out of that number eight members to be appointed. Such a safeguard is obviously needed, and is much preferable to the leaky safety-valve of an indefinite maximum. The question arises, Who would be the electoral board? It is suggested that it might consist of seven persons quite apart from party politics who have lived long enough in the State—fifteen to twenty years—to know intimately the needs of the State, and who, by their office or their personal character, or their stake in the country, would be able to make a very fair choice.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: They might nominate themselves.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: They might even do that. It is difficult at this stage to suggest who the seven members of an electoral board would be; but they might conceivably include the Chief Justice of the day, the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor of the University, the president of the Local Authorities' Association—

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Not under the new conditions.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Men who are representative of large classes in the community, and who have an eye, not merely for Queen or any other street in Queensland, but for every part of Queensland. The presidents of large and responsible bodies might well be included in such an electoral board. At all events, the duty of that board would be to select ten or a dozen, and of His Excellency the Governor to choose from the larger number the eight members necessary to complete the total. There are certain details which might easily be filled in.

The Crown would fill all interim vacancies, and those nominated would hold office only for the unexpired balance of the term. I have not discussed so far the question of remuneration—whether at a fixed rate per year or at a fixed rate per sitting—both of which methods obtain in different parts—or payment at the rate of half the sum drawn by members of the Assembly.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I am not in favour of any at all; but why half the sum?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Of course, we are doing twice as good work as members in the other place; but it is supposed that this Council is working only six months in the year and members in another place are supposed to be working all the year. The general rule in other parts of the British Dominions is that the remuneration for the Upper House should be considerably lower than the remuneration for the Assembly.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Do you not think virtue should be its own reward in the country?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I might point out here that the members of the Senate in the Commonwealth receive £1,000. Payment of members was introduced in 1901. The members of the Upper House in New South Wales do not receive anything. In Victoria they received £300 a year from 1870 to 1880. In Queensland, as everyone knows, there is no remuneration—at least everyone does not know that. It was only when the last campaign for abolition was before the country that it was brought home to thousands of people in Queensland that this Council had worked for fifty years for nothing. In South Australia the remuneration is £200, and that has been paid since 1837. In Western Australia the remuneration is £400. It was less at the beginning, but payment of members has been in vogue there since 1900. In Tasmania the remuneration of the Upper House is £300, and that has been in vogue since 1890. I might here mention the final figures with regard to the abolition vote which was taken on 5th May, 1917. They appear in the "Gazette" of 10th October, 1917, No. 148—

"Against abolition	...	...	179,105
For abolition	...	...	116,196

Majority in favour of retaining  
this Council in some form  
or other ... .. 62,909"

We may take it the people of Queensland desire to have the bicameral system. If the question were put to them of an elective Chamber instead of the present, I do not know whether they would not choose the elective. However, that is uncertain. We do not know what they would do in the matter. At all events, they expressed most emphatically their endorsement of this Council as it stood in 1917. That is why, in the motion, I have not suggested the abolition of the Council. This Council responds at once to the wishes of the country in important matters such as that, and no one now would suggest its abolition if there were other methods by which its usefulness might be maintained in all its fullness, without impairing it in any way. This motion itself I submit to the generous attention of hon. members. If passed on the voices or adjourned for discussion on some future date, it does not, of course, commit the Council to anything more than an expression of opinion, nor are the various suggestions that have been made anything more than sugges-

tions. The committee, if appointed—and I suggest that this question might be removed quite high above party politics, and that unless we deal with it soon, it may be forced upon us—should be a Select Committee whose duty would be rather to gather information and facts than to submit any castiron recommendations to this Council. It would remain for the Council later to discuss the whole basis of reconstitution, and still later for Parliament to legislate accordingly. One fact, however, is certain—that the present extraordinary position cannot continue without increasing detriment to the whole community. (Hear, hear!) The more efficient our system of government is the more quickly will Queensland be rescued from her present time of tribulation.

I have spoken very briefly, not because the matter calls for brevity, but because there is so much that might be said in dealing with a question like this that one hardly knows where either to begin or to stop. I have chosen for mention the salient features, the suggestions that have been made in the motion itself, and I commend the motion to the generous discussion and reception of hon. members.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not rise to support the motion moved by the Hon. Mr. Fowles. If the motion means anything, it means certainly the amendment of the Constitution, and the motive for moving the motion—

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You should not attribute motives.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Wait till I finish. The motive is expressed in the motion—that is, to gain an expression of opinion from this Council, although it does not necessarily follow that the Government of the day would take it as an instruction to amend the Constitution in the way suggested. I take it that, if the Constitution is to be amended to bring about parliamentary reform, or to alter the system of government from the bicameral system to the unicameral system, the initiative will be taken by the Government without any instruction from this Chamber. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member has dealt with the motion at very great length in a well prepared and well delivered dispassionate speech. I followed him carefully, and I do not agree with many of his arguments. I do agree that some parliamentary reform in Australia is absolutely necessary. I have no hesitation in saying that I believe that in Australia we are overgoverned, and that I am a unificationist. I believe we should have one National Parliament, but I do not agree with some of the suggestions that have been made. I believe in a proper system of unification.

The hon. member spoke of the large majority of electors who recently voted against the abolition of the Legislative Council. That may be so; it is past history. A referendum was taken under conditions rather adverse to the abolition movement, but it does not follow that the people, if another opportunity were given to them, would vote again in the way they did three years ago. Personally, I have advocated in this Chamber the initiative and referendum as the right means for securing parliamentary reform. I am a firm believer in that principle, and I think that the hon. member's motion would have received better treatment in this Council than is likely to

[Hon. A. J. Jones.]

be accorded to it if he had moved in that direction. I believe we do require parliamentary reform. I am pleased that the hon. member admitted that we required some reform, and that he practically admitted that this Chamber is not necessary—at any rate, as at present constituted. In my opinion he put up a splendid argument in favour of abolition. He may have said that we need a certain number of members elected on a particular franchise—with which I entirely disagree—and a certain number nominated by a board; but his best argument proved that this Chamber as at present constituted is useless. It is not a reflex of the people. When the Conservative party were in power in the Legislative Assembly they had a majority here, and now, when the Labour party are in power there, we have a majority here, so that we cannot claim to be any other than a reflex of the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You would be under this proposed system.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No. I have not come here with a prepared speech, as did the hon. member. I have just followed his arguments very closely. His speech was very dispassionate and had no sting, but there is a little bit of sting in the motion. He refers to the financial condition of the State in these words—

“In view of the further fact that the present serious condition of the State finances compels the most earnest consideration of legislators, this Council is of opinion that it is desirable to re-constitute the Legislative Council.”

How can this motion, if carried, improve the serious condition of the finances, even admitting—which I do not admit—that the financial position is serious?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I did not put any party sting into it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Just with a wave of the hand the hon. member said, “I do not wish to introduce party politics, or to refer in any way to the serious financial position of this Government.”

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is pretty serious, is it not?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not. Unfortunately, we have too many persons sounding that pessimistic note, and saying that Queensland is in a serious financial condition. The “*Courier*” and the “*Daily Mail*” in their leading articles, and on every page of their papers, with big headlines, are trying to stampede members of the Assembly into a belief that the Government are in a serious condition. It is true—and I dare say we can discuss the question on this motion, because the hon. member raises it—that the Premier tried to raise a few million pounds by way of loan in London for certain specific purposes, and it is also true that he was unsuccessful; and it is probably true that the Government have had to reduce the amount of loan expenditure. Last year we were spending at the rate of something like £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 on needful public works. They are just as needful to-day, but the fact of the Government reducing their loan expenditure from £4,000,000 to £3,000,000 necessitates, in some cases, the curtailment of certain works. Whilst on this subject, I would like to say that I am one of those who

believe that it is a sound principle for any Government to borrow money for reproductive works, and I believe that in Queensland we are in such a position that we want a few million pounds of loan money to spend on needful reproductive works. I think it would be a good thing if we had the £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to go on with the iron and steel works, but we know they have to be held over until we get the necessary money. Then we want £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to develop the scheme of railways in the Southern Dawson and the Upper Burnett districts. In all we wanted about £9,000,000 so that we could do these things and settle a great many men on the land and engage in railway construction so that there would be no unemployed to-day. If we trace the thing right down to the root of the evil, we find it in the fact that Australia's sons who did so much for the Empire during the period of trouble and war, are being denied that amount of money.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Who is denying it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member admitted that he was one who was responsible in that connection.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I did not admit anything of the kind. In any case, your Government do not do these things. It is Federal money, and your Government are only agents for the Federal Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I want to point out that the Government are not in a very serious condition.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Everybody knows you are.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Then everybody knows something that is wrong. The hon. member will have an opportunity of reading the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and it is time somebody struck the optimistic note in Australia. I think we should be measured by our resources, and the opportunities and possibilities for their development; but, unfortunately, we have gentlemen like the hon. member striking that pessimistic note and giving Queensland a bad name—“We have no money; we are dead broke.” All we have done is to reduce our loan expenditure, which has been done by previous Governments. The hon. member and his friends think that this is an opportune time to try to stampede a few members of Parliament.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why do you not talk to the motion?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am talking to the motion. It deals with the serious condition of the State finances.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Well, isn't the condition serious?

[5.30 p.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have reduced loan expenditure.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Then, why do you wantonly apply force to get a loan?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Before the hon. gentleman came in I said that to develop Queensland we want many millions of loan money. In my opinion, we want £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 for certain works, in order to develop our natural resources so that they will become profitable. If we do that, I believe we shall become a lending country instead of a borrowing country.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Don't you know we are losing money on every £100 we borrow?

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think it is good business to borrow money at 4 per cent. or 5 per cent. and spend it on reproductive works.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: Order! I would call the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that, whilst he is perfectly in order in casually referring to these matters, he will not be in order in opening them up at length and in detail. If I allow him to elaborate the argument, later on I shall have to allow the same privilege to hon. members on the other side of the Chamber.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I bow to your ruling, Sir, but I just wish to quote the part of the motion referring to this matter. When I first read the motion on the business-paper, in my mind I accused the hon. gentleman of putting these words in with an ulterior motive—

“In view of the further fact that the present serious condition of the State finances compels the most earnest consideration of legislators.”

I really was of opinion, when I first read those words, that the hon. gentleman had put them in so that he might discuss the financial position of the Government.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I admit I was wrong. The hon. gentleman's speech exonerates him completely.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It was a great temptation to do it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Those words compelled me to make some reference to the financial position of the Government. The hon. gentleman suggested a very narrow franchise, as he would not give any unmarried person under the age of thirty years a vote for a member of the Legislative Council. That is very nearly as objectionable as the property franchise. Well, we on this side stand for a broad franchise—one adult one vote.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Do you stand for majority rule?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Certainly.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Then, why don't you act on it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: When the Hon. Mr. Fowles was speaking the hon. gentleman raised that question by interjection, and I will deal with it presently. The Hon. Mr. Fowles suggested a very narrow franchise.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: It was one of several suggestions that he advanced for consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was surprised that, when he was suggesting the reform of the Council, he did not propose that the franchise should be on the basis of one adult one vote. By proposing to exclude all unmarried persons under thirty years of age, those persons would either have to get married when they reached the age of thirty years or be disfranchised.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Wouldn't it be a good thing if you could compel them to get married?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Then, again, the hon. gentleman proposed to introduce a professional qualification. That means

that University professors and students would have a vote.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Haven't we got that principle now? We have professional politicians.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Just so, but the hon. gentleman did not mean that. He knows as well as I do that many men who give their lives to study a profession take no interest whatever in politics. A few of them who are inclined that way may take an interest, but a great many medical students, medical men, geologists, and other scientists have no politics at all, and they are not students of political economy. Yet the hon. gentleman would give such men a vote, and probably deny it to a successful business man or a successful working man under the age of thirty years, though the one is just as important to the community as the other. My experience is that a great many professional men have no fixed political views.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is a very frequent qualification.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In America one great man referred to this class, who are known as “Mugwumps,” as persons who are educated beyond their intellect. On the other hand, a man may have a lot of ability but his early education has been neglected, and the hon. gentleman proposes that such a man should be disfranchised.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: He would not necessarily be disfranchised.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: On the other hand, a professional man is to have a vote although he may have no knowledge of the requirements of the country, and is not able to form any ideas for the betterment of the social or economic condition of the people. I cannot follow the hon. gentleman over the whole of his speech, but he stated that in Queensland we have the majority of the electors looking one way and a body of elected representatives forming a majority in the Assembly looking the other way.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That is quite true.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman stated that we are a minority Government.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Everyone knows that that is so. There was a majority of 20,000 against you.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman knows that there is a great deal in common between the Labour party and the Farmer's party, who were elected quite apart from the National party. Their policy is much nearer to that of the Labour party than to the policy of the National party.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Then, how is it that they are voting practically against the Government in every division in the Assembly?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is how the people voted at the last general election—

	Votes.
“Labour ... ..	157,113
Tories (National party) ...	80,981
Country party ... ..	43,957
Northern Country party ...	22,967
Soldiers' party ... ..	9,217
National-Labour ... ..	7,076
Independent Country party	6,750
Industrialists ... ..	214”

Hon. A. J. Jones.]



There may be a few votes to be added since that return was compiled, but I think the later figures slightly improved the position of the Labour party. In any case, I will place the official figures before the Council. Will the hon. gentleman tell me that, had there been a straightout contest between the National party—or the old Conservative party—and the Labour party, that the Labour party would not have had an overwhelming majority?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You would have been worse off than you are now, and you know it, too.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman knows better than that. I would like to see some of the secondary votes counted.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I would like to see them counted, too.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Fowles also made some reference to the constitution of the various Houses of Parliament throughout the Commonwealth. Among others, he referred to the Senate. The condition of that House was brought about at the last Federal elections by the Prime Minister. I admit that there are anomalies in connection with our elections, because there are anomalies in connection with all existing methods of electing members of Parliament. Some of those anomalies cannot be avoided unless the hon. gentleman proposes a scheme that will give, in a sparsely-populated country like Queensland, the city of Brisbane and the other cities in the State greater representation than is given to the people in the country.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Isn't that democracy?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not think that the whole of the representation should be centred in the cities.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Your party stand for one adult one vote, and one vote one value.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Premier has stated in the Assembly that, when the time comes, there will be a redistribution of seats.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: When will the time come?

Hon. W. H. DEMAINE: When he thinks fit.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: When he takes a fit.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: A redistribution of seats is never carried out immediately after a general election, and there is a very good reason for it.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: It ought to have been done before the election. You would not be over there now if it had been done then.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It should be done towards the end of a Parliament.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why wasn't it done, then?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It should be done towards the end of a Parliament, for the reason that members should represent as long as possible the districts for which they have been returned.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why didn't the Government have a redistribution of seats before they went to the country?

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If it were otherwise, we might have members in the Assembly—like ourselves—who do not represent the people.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why didn't you do it prior to the election? That is the point.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We could not do everything.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You did a lot of foolish things, but you would not do a wise thing like that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Fowles did not raise this question of a minority Government in connection with the last Federal elections. Neither did the Hon. Mr. Leahy.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You were not a minority Government three years ago. You are now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Fowles referred to the Queensland Parliament, but he did not refer to the Federal Senate as constituted at the present time. He did not refer to the great anomaly that exists there, or to the fact that only one Labour senator was elected at the last Federal elections, whilst eighteen anti-Labour senators were elected, although the anti-National vote cast was 1,029,762, and the National vote was only 860,007.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You are leaving out the Country party vote.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: These are the first preference votes—

1st Preference. (to be returned.)	National Votes.	Elected.	Labour and anti- National Votes.	Elected.
N. S. Wales ...	242,336	2	405,092	1
Victoria ...	286,440	3	322,053	0
Queensland ...	164,844	3	138,919	0
South Australia ...	90,781	3	83,123	0
West Australia ...	45,012	3	48,908	0
Tasmania (4 to be returned)	30,594	4	28,578	0
Totals ...	860,007	18	1,029,762	1

In conclusion, I wish to say that I cannot support the motion.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You can move an amendment to improve it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe, as I have stated on previous occasions, that this Chamber is not truly representative of the people. Until quite recently I could say truly that I represented the people, and I resigned my seat to go before the people again.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Would you abolish this Chamber to-day?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I resigned my seat, and I was rejected by an electorate, just as some members opposite and probably some members on this side, were rejected by electorates. By taking the step I did I forfeited the right to say that I truly represented an electorate; but indirectly I am probably representing the people, because the party with which I am associated were returned to power by a majority, and that party appointed me to the position of Secretary for Mines. I console myself for my defeat in Carnarvon with the fact that the

electorate of Maryborough, which I formerly represented, elected a member of the party with which I am associated by a larger majority than they had elected me previously. If I had had an opportunity of appealing to the electors of Maryborough, I should probably have been elected a member of the Legislative Assembly. Possibly, the electors of Carnarvon thought that I would do better service to the State by coming back to the Council. At any rate, I admit that I failed to convince the electors of that constituency that I would render better service in the Assembly. However, all this is by the way. There is business to be done by Parliament, and it does not matter very much whether I was successful in my contest for the Carnarvon seat or not. The Hon. Mr. Fowles has submitted a motion which does not really mean parliamentary reform. I do not agree with the scheme he suggests, and I do not like his proposed narrowing of the franchise for the election of members of the Council.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Would you abolish the Council?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member should give notice of that question. On two occasions I had the pleasure of introducing a Bill to abolish the Council, and I believe that on both those occasions I gave very good reasons why the Council should be abolished; and I do not take back one word that I said on those occasions. In my address this afternoon I have stated the reasons why we should have parliamentary reform, not in the way the hon. gentleman suggests, but by a method which the Government will propose in their own time—a method which means the abolition of this Council. The weak points in the argument of the hon. gentleman are his proposed narrowing of the franchise and his proposal that the Council should be constituted by some members who are elected and others who are nominated.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is working splendidly in South Africa.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe that the money spent on the election of the Senate of the Commonwealth Parliament is a useless expenditure, although the Senate is elected on a broad franchise. I believe also that an amendment of the Constitution of Queensland and of the Constitution of other States of Australia is necessary, because we are overgoverned; and we should start to reduce expenditure by reducing the number of members appointed or nominated to the Upper Houses.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: 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 Wednesday next.

#### COMMONWEALTH BANK AGREEMENT RATIFICATION AND STATE AD- VANCES BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Evidently this was the outcome of the conference of

Premiers and Treasurers held some time ago. I would like, even at this late stage, to put on record my protest against handing over the deposits of the children of Queensland and the smaller savings of the people to a central Federal authority in Melbourne. Tasmania made a much better agreement with the Federal Treasurer than Queensland has made. Tasmania gets 75 per cent. of the deposits, and we have to be content with 70 per cent. I have no doubt it was because of the condition of destitution in which this State finds itself that we had to take practically any bargain that was offered, and we were not in a condition to make terms with the Federal Treasurer.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is a better bargain than the 1912 bargain.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, this is a tendency towards unification—merely one step in a long process. For my part, I strongly protest against handing over the Queensland Savings Bank to the Federal authorities. Instead of doing that, the policy should be to build up strongly our own Savings Bank.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Do you think it will be harder for you to make a run on it when it belongs to the Commonwealth?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Government made a run on it to the extent of £1,000,000 at call, and paid not a penny back. That accounted for their sham loan balance, as displayed in the Auditor-General's report. I have no doubt Mr. Watt will be asking for that £1,000,000.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Mr. Watt will not be there at all. He is not Treasurer. Of course you do not know that, although it is a fact. (Laughter.)

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: At all events, when the proposals came before the various States it was rejected by New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANFY: That is not this proposal.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: A similar proposal. It was made at the Treasurers' conference held, I think, at the beginning of last year. The strong States resisted it; so it was simply pawning the family jewels.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Which were the strong States?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: New South Wales was one at that time. Victoria had a surplus then.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Victoria was refused a loan in London, as this State was.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Victoria obtained a part of the loan, and they subscribed the rest themselves. I hope this Government will be lucky enough to get a quarter of its loan subscribed, and not have to go down on its hands and knees to the banks.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: They would get nothing subscribed if they went to the "stinking fish" crowd.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, there will not be any fish, stinking or otherwise, soon, because the trawler is going to be sold. They are pawning all the furniture in order to pay another Minister £1,000, though it is not merely a question of the

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

£1,000, but of the cost of a whole department. I was endeavouring seriously to protest against the passing of this Bill. There are about £15,000,000 of small deposits in the Government Savings Bank, and that has been the petty cash purse of the Government for the last forty-five years.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Are the small depositors affected adversely or otherwise?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Queensland is affected adversely.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: You are shedding crocodile tears over the small depositor. What do you mean by it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why should we not keep the deposits in Queensland? Queensland will regret this hasty and ill-advised action for all time.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am sorry I was not here yesterday.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Why were you not here?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: My attendance is as good as that of any hon. gentleman in this Chamber. I was away doing some very useful work yesterday. I did not think the second reading of this Bill would have been finished. Had I been here I would have had a few observations to make. I intend to make my observations very brief, simply because it is a third reading speech. When I heard that the State Savings Bank was about to be transferred to the Federal Government I confess I heard it with regret. I felt it was an institution that had done good work for Queensland. It might have done a great deal more than it did, in the direction of financing settlers, but, on the whole, it was a good and useful institution.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Will it not continue to do that good work?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am very doubtful. That interjection brings me to this aspect of the question. I would like to know what provisions there are for continuing to finance the farmers—I hope on a more liberal scale than heretofore—and also for the purpose of financing those who desire to erect workers' dwellings under the provisions of the Workers' Dwellings Act. Roughly speaking, I think about a million and a-half has been lent to farmers and settlers, and I think something like an equal amount has been devoted to the erection of workers' dwellings. I understand also that in round figures about £10,000,000 of the total amount in the Government Savings Bank has been lent to the Government, either debenture or at call. I know there is £1,000,000 at call. I do not know whether the Federal Government are taking over that £1,000,000, and whether the State Government will continue to owe it to the Federal Government as they have owed it to the State Savings Bank for some time past. The Minister, I think, should give us some explanation upon that point.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Provision is made for advances to settlers.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: It is my belief that, under this arrangement, a sufficient amount of money will not be lent to farmers in the future. I do not think a sufficient amount has been lent to them in the past. It is absurd, when you think of it, that in a great country like this, capable of such large

expansion in the producing industries, we have lent about as much for the erection of workers' dwellings as we have lent to all the farmers and settlers of Queensland. I do not think the old Agricultural Bank or the Savings Bank has done as much as should have been done in advancing money to farmers in the State, and I am afraid the Commonwealth Bank will do less.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They will not do anything. We will do the lot. We have power to raise £5,000,000.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: What chance have the Government of raising £5,000,000? They might as well take the power to raise £50,000,000. While we had the bank here, there was a limited amount of money which was available for loans to farmers and in the erection of workers' dwellings; but, if we are to rely upon the power of this Government to raise £5,000,000, and if we are to rely on the hope that they are going to get the £5,000,000, I am afraid the farmers who want money will be in a very bad way indeed. I do not think the Commonwealth Bank has ever done anything to develop primary production. When the bank was established, Mr. Fisher was the Labour Prime Minister of Australia. I remember reading his speech in connection with it. He said he hoped the bank would be a bank to help the small man. From my knowledge, gained from what I read in the newspapers, that is the very thing the Commonwealth Bank has never done. It has set itself out to get the gilt-edged accounts. I have not seen any evidence of its having lent any amount worth speaking of in connection with the poorer portion of the community. The Commonwealth Bank has not carried out the purpose for which it was started. I do not intend to delay the passage of this Bill; but I sincerely hope that the Government will, somehow or other, manage matters so that the amount of money necessary for advances to farmers will be forthcoming. We in Australia—Queensland perhaps is not much worse than other States—have been living for some years back in a fool's paradise. We have been living not altogether on the wealth we have produced, but very largely on borrowed money. That cannot last, and it is only a question of time when this State and other States will have to face the position and realise that they must live on what they produce. It is incumbent on this Government to see that the producing industries are assisted financially, at the very least to the extent they were before, and, if possible, they should be assisted to a further extent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is a pity that hon. members were not here yesterday to listen to my explanation of the Bill, and offer their criticisms on the second reading stage. I do not propose to make another second reading speech; I simply want to say that, had hon. members read the Bill and the agreement, they would know that proper provision is made for advances to settlers and for workers' dwellings. The Government realise that they can carry out the function of a rural bank in the interests of Queensland settlers better than the Commonwealth Government, and in the Bill the Treasurer is constituted a corporation to do that.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Will he have sufficient money to do that?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Certainly. Proper provision is made, and the

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

only portion of the business taken over is the Savings Bank business, to prevent unhealthy competition and unnecessary rivalry and duplication. The Commonwealth depositors really gain, because they get an additional one-half per cent. interest, because under the agreement the rate of interest conforms to the higher rate which was paid by the State Savings Bank. I say that the reform is absolutely necessary. The hon. member has tried to argue that the Government were forced into the agreement. This agreement was made long before the Premier went to England, when we thought we would have millions of loan money to spend.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why did Victoria turn it down?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Because they are not a progressive Government.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why did New South Wales turn it down? Because they are strong enough to do their own borrowing.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We say that the agreement is a distinct advantage to the people of Queensland. We get 70 per cent. of the deposits, and we have the assurance of the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank that the other 30 per cent. will be used chiefly in the districts in which it is raised. The Governor of the Commonwealth Bank is after Government business and local authority business, because he recognises, as some London financiers did not, that Government business is very sound business. The Hon. Mr. Leahy raised the question as to whether the farmers would be provided for. They will be just as well provided for in the future as they have been in the past; and our Government advanced more money than any other Government.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: What provision was made about the £1,000,000 which the Treasurer owes the Savings Bank at call? Will he owe that to the Commonwealth Bank?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Of course. Provision is made for all the money that is being used by the Government. I explained that yesterday, and gave a whole list of figures. We give debentures for something like £3,000,000 by way of loans. The hon. member knows that it is a distinct advantage to the depositors.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: How? They do not get a ha'penny worth more interest.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Queenslanders who are depositing in the Commonwealth Bank get a distinct advantage, because now they are getting one-half per cent. less on their money than depositors in the State Savings Bank. The hon. member asked why the Victorian Government did not accept this proposal. A proposal was made to the Queensland Government in 1912 and rejected; but the terms of this agreement are much more liberal and advantageous to the State. Hon. member, oppose it, because they say it is a step towards unification. What if it is, if it is in the interests of the whole of the people?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That is the question—is it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And if it does away with unhealthy competition in banking in the interests of the people?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Do you believe in monopoly?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe in State monopoly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is not State; it is Commonwealth.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: State or Commonwealth—it doesn't matter.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Is the State Savings Bank building in Rockhampton exempted from this proposition? I understand the building in Brisbane is exempted.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, both are exempted.

Question—That the Bill be now read a third time—put and passed.

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

## OFFICIALS IN PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones): This is a Bill "to further amend the Constitution of Queensland by amending the Officials in Parliament Act of 1895 in certain particulars." This Bill met with the approval of the members of the Assembly, and the Government, in introducing it, claim that an additional Minister is necessary. We have heard quite a lot of this Bill by way of interjection from hon. members opposite when other matters have been under discussion, and we have also read a little criticism of it in the Press. When we assumed office in 1915, certain changes had to be made in the administration of affairs. Much new legislation had to be passed; and, having come in as a new Government with certain ideals and principles different from those of the previous Government, a great deal of additional work on Ministers was involved. Had we assumed office and determined simply to carry on without any alteration, the work of Ministers would not have been as great as it has become by reason of our putting into effect a fresh policy and embarking upon something new. We have, for instance, embarked on a policy of State [7.30 p.m.] enterprises. I personally justify that policy. The figures given in the Auditor-General's report justify it, and the success of most of those enterprises justifies a continuation of that policy.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have not got the Auditor-General's report yet.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Treasurer is just delivering his Financial Statement in the Assembly, and he will be able to tell the members of the other Chamber that all the State enterprises with one small exception have shown a profit during the past year. The point I desire to make is that embarking upon that new policy has involved a great deal of additional work. Referring to my own department, had I taken the easy course and simply carried on in the same way as my predecessors in office, there would be very little for me to do. During the short time that the Hon. Mr. Leahy was Secretary for Mines, all that he needed to do was to initial a few papers. As a matter of fact, under previous Governments the Mines Department was always

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

attached to some other department, as all the Minister did was to initial papers that were placed before him.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You are entirely wrong. I gave about four hours every day to the work of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was a member of the Assembly when the hon. gentleman was appointed Secretary for Mines, and the day after his appointment a friend of mine, who was also a member of the Assembly, asked the hon. gentleman if he knew a shaft from a winze. The hon. gentleman's reply was that, to administer the department well, a Minister needed to know very little about the industry, because, if he knew a little about it, he would be likely to flaunt his little knowledge and to use that little knowledge to the detriment of the experts of the department who understood all about it.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That shows how modest I was; but let me tell you that those remarks were not original. They were a repetition of what the late Sir Samuel Griffith had said years before.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not claim to know all about the mining industry; I know I have a great deal to learn, but the hon. gentleman has a great deal more to learn. As I say, under previous Governments, the Mines Department was attached to another department, and very secondary consideration was given to the great mining industry, whereas under this Government one Minister was allotted to control that department solely. It is a great industry, and it needs the close attention of one Minister. As a rule, under previous Governments it was attached to the Home Department, because it was close to the office of the Home Secretary, and it was handy for that gentleman to run upstairs and sign papers. The mining industry requires the undivided attention of one Minister, because it should be the greatest industry in any country.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Will you explain why the mining industry was more prosperous and the yield was greater while I was Minister than it has been during the time you have been in charge?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Probably because the hon. gentleman was only there a very short time.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is not a Bill to appoint a Minister for Mines.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is a Bill to appoint an additional Minister. I have used the Mines Department as an illustration, because that is the department I know most about. Apart from the preliminary work that has been done in connection with the establishment of the iron and steel industry, we have eight or nine new enterprises connected with the Mines Department which I could enumerate if it were necessary to do so. It is twenty-four years since the principal Act was passed, and surely the State has progressed in twenty-four years and requires an additional Minister! We have the same number of Ministers now that we had twenty-four years ago.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: But we have had federation since then, which took away a great deal of work. The Customs, Post and

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

Telegraph, and Defence Departments have all been transferred to the Commonwealth, and a number of others.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Even allowing that there is something in the hon. gentleman's argument, no additional Minister has been created since federation.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: There ought not to be an additional Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Now necessity demands that we should appoint an additional Minister. We have been told that it involves a certain sum of money. The salary of a private member of the Assembly to-day is £500. As the Bill provides for an additional Minister at £1,000 a year, the extra amount of expenditure is only £500. This does not mean an additional salary to any Minister. While our salaries as Ministers are scheduled at £1,000 a year each, it is well known to hon. members, and it is well that it should be known to those outside who criticise us, that we do not receive £1,000 a year. A private member of the Federal Parliament, who does less work than a Minister of the Crown in Queensland, receives a much larger salary.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Yes, but how did they get it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Until recently each Minister contributed £112 10s. a year out of his salary to pay the Assistant Minister, so that our salaries were £887 10s., and that is little enough for the position. With the increased salaries of private members of the Assembly—Ministers' salaries were not increased—the contribution was reduced from £112 10s. to £75, so that a Minister's salary to-day is £925. With the additional Minister, if the salaries were pooled again, it would only mean a paucity of £3 or £10 a year to each Minister. I do not think anyone can attack the Bill from the point of view that it means an additional salary to any Minister, or that Ministers in Queensland are overpaid.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: They would not be overpaid if they gave value for the money.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The argument I adduce for the passage of the Bill is that it is quite necessary, having regard to the work that Ministers have to do. During the debate in the Assembly, two departments were singled out as involving particularly heavy work—the Home Department and the Department of Agriculture; but we know what a great volume of work the Premier and Treasurer have to do; and the Mines Department is a department which involves a great deal of detail work on the part of the Minister. Surely a Minister can save more to the State than his salary. The additional Minister will relieve present Ministers of a great deal of work. I can assure the Council that I do not get through my work in the Mines Department in an average of eight hours a day, without taking into consideration the work that I have to do here.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why don't you apply to the Arbitration Court?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have to give a considerable amount of time to the study of the Bills that are sent to this Chamber. I admit that the work of the Minister in the Council is less since last session of Parliament; but hon. members opposite have admitted, and will admit, that

the work of the Minister here is heavy, quite apart from the fact that I have a pretty large department to look after. Of course, the volume of work was particularly heavy when we on this side were in a minority and the Opposition to the Government really sat on the other side of this Chamber.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: There is no Opposition here. This is not a party House. We supported you whenever you were right.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why, hon. members on the other side debated one Bill in Committee for three weeks.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Because it was a bad Bill.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I advocate the passage of the Bill because I believe that an additional Minister is necessary. I regret that I have been drawn off the track a good deal. For the four years after I came here this Council had a reputation, not only in Queensland, but in the Southern States among those who read the debates—and I have heard it said in the South—of debating questions intelligently, and it was said that the tone of debates was higher in this Council than in any other Legislative Chamber in the Commonwealth. I do not know whether that is altogether correct; but I am bound to say that I find it very difficult to make a speech in this Chamber because of the running fire of interjections.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It shows how interesting your matter is.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not mind a few interjections—as a matter of fact, they are rather helpful—but, when one turns to the report of a speech of mine in "Hansard," it is so full of interjections that one can hardly follow my trend of thought.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Your side interject just as freely when we are speaking.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: However, I hope to be able to retaliate when the hon. gentleman gets up to speak, and to interject just as freely as he has interjected during the course of my speech. I beg to move—That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This Bill is really the climax of the impudent and shameless extravagance of a minority and spendthrift Government. The Government are determined to go dancing to their death in this matter, and, so long as there is a single shilling in the Treasury, the Government will make a raid thereon. What does this apparently innocent Bill mean? The Government say they want to appoint another Minister, and yet one Minister has been continually absent during almost the whole of his tenure of office.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Who was that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Mr. Ryan, who made a trip to England, and several trips to the Southern States. The State did very well without him while he was away, and nobody missed him. The work of the State was carried on just as well by the Ministers who were present. The State also did very well without Mr. Theodore, when he was away. When those hon. gentlemen were not absent, Mr. Fihelly was over in the United States of America, and trotting round the globe

at the expense of the Queensland taxpayer. Yet now Ministers come along and say they are overworked. The first thing they do, when returned to power by a minority of the electors, is to make another raid on the Treasury.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You say there is nothing in the Treasury. How could they make a raid on it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They would steal the wedding ring off a corpse. This proposition is practically to expend £1,000 a year upon a new Minister. Everybody knows exactly what that means. The smallest expenditure on any department of the State is £97,000 per annum, and, as surely as a new Minister is created and a new department established, that will mean at least the expenditure of another £97,000 per annum. You only need to give them one key to open the door. As a matter of fact, the new department which ought to be created for a new Minister is a department of insolvency to deal with State Enterprises. What do we know about the State stations? Nobody knows how many cattle the Government have on them at the present time, and nobody knows whether the State trawler has been sold or not.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The State Insurance Department shows a profit.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The State Insurance Department is stuffed with employees at the present time. It is packed, overcrowded, and super-swamped with employees. Those who were employed in the department at its initiation, no doubt, did their work with expedition, but that was because at its initiation the department was under good management. The proposed new department will certainly grow, so far as expenditure is concerned. I hope that the new Minister will be a Minister for Health, because, no doubt, the health of this Government needs attending to. An undertaker would be about the best thing for them, but you would not get anybody to undertake them. As I have just said, the lowest expenditure on any State department is £97,000 per annum, and that department is the Department of Agriculture and Stock. The Mines Department last year spent £108,000. To propose the appointment of another Minister at £1,000 per annum is a shameless piece of effrontery on the part of a Government who have been telling the people that there is no money for local authorities or for construction work, and that they have to retrench. The retrenchment policy of the Government is to retrench the other fellow; they do not care twopence about the position of the families of men in Brisbane or Ipswich who have been retrenched. Supposing this new department costs only £21,000 per annum—

HON. R. BEDFORD: Why not sixpence?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Supposing it costs only £21,000 per annum, that sum would keep 100 families for a year at the rate of £4 per week. Would it not be better to keep four families at the rate of £4 per week rather than keep one Minister in junketing trips round the world?

HON. R. BEDFORD interjected.

THE PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: Order! I would call the attention of hon. members to the fact that the Minister complained of interjections during the course of his speech, and that many of those interjections came

*Hon. T. Nevitt.]*

from his own side. I hope that the hon. member who is now interjecting will allow the member who has the floor to proceed with his speech.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Public Works Commission costs, on an average, £2,000 every year, but, fortunately, the Premier has said they should take a "smoke on" now, because the Government have not money to allow them to go round the country junketing.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why don't you admit that Ministers in other Governments have travelled over the country?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They did not make useless jaunts.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: You know that the cost of travelling has increased considerably?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes; it increased when £19 was spent on whisky and cigars at Townsville. The Government camouflaged that expenditure by debiting it to the Railway Suspense Account.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in discussing the Railway Suspense Account on the second reading of this Bill?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: My remarks are quite in order, as I wish to show that, if one Minister will incur such heavy expenditure, another Minister will do the same thing. That sum of £19 was spent on high-priced whisky and cigars. I have got the voucher for the expenditure, and can produce it here to-morrow if hon. members wish to see it.

HON. J. G. SMITH: You could not get much whisky for £19 now-a-days.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: You could get enough to make one man drunk—though, of course, it would depend upon the capacity of that one man. That expenditure, as I say, has been put down to Railway Suspense Account.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You read that in some newspaper during the elections.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No; I have got the voucher, and will produce a copy of it to-morrow.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: You bring us the original voucher.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have the voucher, and will produce it to-morrow. This Bill will simply lead to unlimited extravagance on the part of another Government department. Of course, it is said that the appointment of an additional Minister is necessary; but I would remind hon. members that we have been informed that the work is well done by the officers of the different departments. I have in my hand a copy of a similar Bill which was brought in last year. The arguments used against that Bill apply with double force at the present time, as this measure is exactly the same as the one previously introduced. The Minister always talks about having received mandates from the people, and I would ask him if he said one word about the necessity for appointing a new Minister when he was contesting the Carnarvon seat? Did the Government, or any accredited

[3 p.m.] representative of the Government, mention the fact that they were going to make a further raid on the Treasury, after antedating their salary to the

[Hon. T. Nevitt.

beginning of last Parliament, and hoodwinking the people in that direction? Most of the people thought the salary would begin with the Bill, but it was made retrospective. I hope, when the Minister brings in a Bill for the remuneration of members of the Council, that he will make it retrospective.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I said during my election campaign that Ministers were overworked and underpaid. I stand to that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Was the Hon. Mr. Pihelly overworked in New Orleans? Was the Hon. Mr. Theodore overworked in Roumania? All our money has gone over the precipice, and the country is beginning to wake up to the fact. This is a final desperate attempt to clutch the few sovereigns that are left in the Treasury. If this were put to the country, the Government would not have a hope of getting more votes than their own; it would be turned down with a dull, sickening thud. The Government have the numbers to enable them to pass this, but, when they look back to forcing this Bill through Parliament in defiance of any mandate they have from the electors, they will be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. When the call is for economy in every direction, surely the example should be set by the highest in the land, and legislators should be the first to set the example. Everybody knows that, when there were lean years previously, Ministers docked their own salaries. Now, when we are at a crisis—one of the four times of special tribulation, so far as finance is concerned, in Queensland history—the Government come along with a proposal to appoint another Minister, and they say, "Let the taxpayer sweat and pay the bill." If the present Cabinet cannot run Queensland, with a mere handful of three-quarters of a million of people, I venture to say I could pick out from the Opposition eight men who could do it. It may come to a proposition that five business men should run Queensland, and get it out of the mire. When we have over sixty members here, seventy-two in the Assembly, and deficits four or five years in succession, with the accounts as they are presented by this most damning document—the Auditor-General's report—it is time to have a business commission to rescue Queensland from the abyss of debt and destruction into which it is rapidly plunging. I have very great pleasure in offering a protest against the passing of this shameless measure.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I can quite justify any vote I am going to give on this subject, either here or anywhere else. When this Government came into power, it came into a system of bureaucracy, with a number of Ministers who gave the fag-end of their intelligence to the business of the State, after finishing with their ordinary business. We have had traders in Australia as Ministers for Defence. After they had finished with rags at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, they came down and gave a quarter of an hour to the business of the Defence Department, and then toddled off to the club. We have had Ministers for Customs who were importers. After stopping in their businesses all day for the purpose of finding the best ways of circumventing Customs duties, they went back to the Customs Department and did their worst there. Under the old franchise in Australia, we had men of the propertied class, who had

leisure enough to devote themselves to a job for which they were paid, and which money they never earned. You had those men working at their own businesses all day, and giving the fag-end of whatever intelligence and energy they had to the business of the country late in the evening.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Men like Griffith and McIlwraith?

HON. R. BEDFORD: I could mention dozens of names of men who have been in power in Australia who never attended to their departments. I have seen cases of the laziest men in the world put into the position of controlling departments, and leaving it either to the Under Secretary or the chief clerk. We have had cases in this State of men remaining away from their offices for weeks, and having a clerk carry a portfolio or a despatch-box to their place in the country every two or three days, and the alleged Minister signing blindly anything the bureaucrat liked to put before him.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They do that now.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Not to anything like the same extent. When this Labour Government came in they were mostly young, enthusiastic men, with the pride of a job that was new. I know from my own knowledge that the Premier is in his office at 9 o'clock every morning, and puts in his time there until late at night. I know two or three other Ministers who do the same thing. I probably would be able to say the same of all of them if I had ever had occasion to visit all the departments. Here we have men who are absolutely earning their money, and immeasurably more. If there is one thing which is sweated in Australia, it is the executive heads of the country.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They must sweat to produce the deficits they do.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Out of the fact that loafardom has been largely in charge of departments in the past, there has grown up a bureaucracy from end to end of Australia. For instance, the Commonwealth Government, situated in Melbourne, is a Melbourne Government. Except for light-houses and Customs-houses, the extent of its dominion is Spencer street on the one hand and Spring street on the other. That is all bad for this tremendous territory.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is partly true.

HON. R. BEDFORD: It is mostly true. Seeing the hon. member recognises part of it, it is as much as I could expect of him. Anybody can see that nearly every trouble of government in the world has grown up from this bad arrangement of executive heads. Nobody would say, for instance, in the old days when Ministers were appointed direct by a king, that all those men could be the scoundrels and blackguards which history and the result of history would make them appear. But the fact is that they loafed on the job; they delegated their affairs to mean little men—and there is nothing worse than a mean little man clothed with authority. But for the fact that the general aftermath of war has left this country in a condition in which very careful attention to the finances is demanded—and that attention they are getting—this Bill does not go far enough. Who, for instance, would put a man in the control of a bank, or in the

control of even £20,000 or £30,000, and give him £500 or £750 a year? The Hon. Mr. Hail knows that that would not be done. But you can put a man in charge of a tremendous State territory, and pay him no more than that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is caucus politics.

HON. R. BEDFORD: It is not caucus politics; we have inherited this bad old system from the rottenness of the Conservatives. The hon. gentleman's objection to us is that we have not allowed things to go on as they were. We have been a party of people who believed in alterations—in betterment. We are altering the old order of things in various places. We have altered it in the direction of giving cheaper insurance and cheaper meat to the people. In order to give some idea of the kind of Government the Hon. Mr. Fowles demands, I am about to read one literary effort of his in the "Daily Mail," written in the impossible and unsuccessful attempt to get this Government out of power. Said he—

"The chief musical item on the Government's western programme is to make the pastoralists squeal and to tear up Crown leases under which both pastoralists and graziers have added to the wealth of the State."

He says the pastoralists and graziers practically are responsible for the increase of the flocks and herds of this State.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Their enterprise is.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Not a word of admiration for the busy bull or the indefatigable ram! He would have you believe the Queensland Club did it all. Likewise he said—

"They have paid hundreds of thousands of pounds to shearers and meatworks employees in hard cash."

These men paid in hard labour, and the tremendous philanthropists of Queensland only paid them in hard cash, and not in gun-leaves. Marvellous! Then he goes on to object to what this Government have done, which is one of the reasons he has for the Ministry having no right to increase its efficiency.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It needs it badly.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Listen to the little municipal poet—

"Has this Government established one garden city, one industrial centre like Bournemouth or Port Sunlight, one factory humming with life?"

I remember the Hon. Mr. Fowles once objected in this Chamber to certain regulations which were made in the interests of the Health Department for the better conduct of restaurants. He did not want to see a factory humming with life. He did not mind seeing a restaurant humming, and he objected to our making any alteration in regard to it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Your fish shops are humming.

HON. R. BEDFORD: They hum with life sufficiently for the hon. gentleman. Also he says—

"Vickers buys acres for airship factories in Corto, not in Queensland. Chocolate people choose Tasmania."

*Hon. R. Bedford.]*



Chocolate soldiers choose the Legislative Assembly—

"Woolen mills capital is attracted out of the State. These straws show the way of the wind. Certainly, the present Government have dropped £47,000 down a coalhole at Warra."

You wanted the Government to drop a few more thousands down your "bum" coalmine at Ipswich, which we would not take on, belonging to you and Brentnall, and you had to be prosecuted—you tremendous patriots—because you would not conduct it in a way safe for the operatives. Wonderful people you are! And so finally, perorating like a cuttlefish, the hon. member says—

"Queensland needs a change of Government next Saturday, so that the great humanitarian movement stirring in every white heart"—

and white liver too!—

"may still, like John Brown's soul, go marching on."

And finally he says—and this is where you get out your handkerchiefs—

"I remain, yours in equal industry and citizenship, E. W. H. Fowles."

He does not mean that. He means equal industry and citizens' life—the Citizens' Life Insurance Company, attempting as he did successfully to prevent this Government from carrying the work of its Insurance Office into other States; and he only did that in the interests of private insurance companies.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I give you first prize. That is a nice recital.

HON. R. BEDFORD: My position in respect to the Bill is this: I have nothing to fear in upholding it. I have nothing to parallel the tremendous statesmanship of the Hon. Mr. Fowles in remarking, with an insolence that would be admirable if it were not tragic, that, because a new Minister is being appointed, £97,000, or £21,000, or £9 12s. 3d. is to be spent in a new department. The fact remains that, considering the State has taken on so many more activities than any previous Government has done, the old system which allowed the Government to be carried on by bureaucracy and not by representatives of the people had to go. This Bill in the interests of efficiency and government by the people is abundantly justified. I shall give it one vote, and I would give it two if I had them.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

(Hon. L. McDonald, one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3—"Application of Act"—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As that was the last clause, he would like to suggest to the Minister that in future Bills, instead of turning up the original statute and fitting in the words, it would be preferable to repeal the whole of the paragraph and sections involved and substitute new paragraphs or sections. Then hon. members, instead of having to go fossicking through the statutes to find out the meaning of

[Hon. R. Bedford.

amendments, would be able to see at once what was proposed. Take the previous sub-clause—

"In section 6 the word 'eight' is repealed and the word 'nine' is inserted in lieu thereof."

That did not carry any signification whatever.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Unless you get the principal Act.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes. It would be much simpler to say that section 6 was repealed and put another in place of it. It would mean less work for lawyers, he admitted, but it would be clearer.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: He thought the phraseology of the clause could be improved. It said—

"This Act applies as well to this present Legislative Assembly as to every Legislative Assembly hereafter to be summoned and chosen."

He suggested that it would be clearer and safer to say—

"This Act applies to this present Legislative Assembly and to every Legislative Assembly hereafter to be summoned and chosen."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member quoted the clause as they would say it, but it was quite correct as it was in the Bill. He relied a good deal on the Parliamentary Draughtsman.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Do you think he is infallible?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The other day a point was questioned by legal men in the Council regarding the phraseology of a certain clause, and when they came to make inquiries they found that the Parliamentary Draughtsman's rendering had the meaning intended. The hon. member could not ask them to amend the Bill in that paltry way and then have it back again from the Assembly.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am not pressing the matter; but I think it would be an improvement.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES asked the Minister what would be the designation of the new Minister?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It was not known yet, and so he was not in a position to give the hon. member the information.

Question put and passed.

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

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council do now adjourn. The first business to-morrow will be the third reading of the Officials in Parliament Act Amendment Bill, to be followed by other business we expect from the Assembly.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at thirty minutes past 8 o'clock p.m.