

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 26 JULY 1922

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WEDNESDAY, 26 JULY, 1922.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*),
took the chair at 3.30 p.m.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt, from the Auditor-General, of his Report on transactions in connection with the Loan Acts Sinking Funds during the financial year ended 30th June, 1922.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

SETTLEMENT ON THE LAND OF IMMIGRANTS
FROM GREAT BRITAIN.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*) asked the Premier—

“ 1. Has his attention been drawn to the conditions of the emigration passage agreement just concluded by the Commonwealth with Great Britain?

“ 2. Is his Government seized with the opportunity that is now presented to help in the development and prosperity of the State?

“ 3. Is he in touch with the Federal Government regarding the conditions that are to rule between the States and the Commonwealth in connection with the proposed immigration?

“ 4. Will he make known to this House the particulars of any such negotiations?

"5. Will the Government give immediate consideration to the working out of Queensland's plan of preparation for the reception and placing of immigrants?"

"6. Will he consider the advisability of appointing under his presidency a committee or commission of officers of the Land and Agricultural Departments, together with representatives of Queensland primary and secondary industries, with a view to arriving at a complete determination as to the course best calculated to serve a satisfactory settlement of such immigrants?"

"7. If in the event of deciding on the course outlined in the foregoing, will he see that the centre and north of the State are represented in such a commission as well as the south?"

"8. Will he institute inquiries as to the class of cereals and plants of economic value suitable for the various districts for which profitable markets can be obtained both here and abroad?"

"9. Will he, with a view to facilitating and consolidating settlement, give consideration to the making of a general appeal to freeholders adjacent to existing railways as to the area of land they may be disposed to make available to immigrants, either on lease or share system?"

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"I am expecting a communication from the Commonwealth Government on the subject, but have no wish to anticipate it, as suggested by the hon. gentleman."

COST OF INKERMAN IRRIGATION WORKS.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Treasurer—

"Is it true that the holder of a block on the Inkerman irrigation area, alarmed at the greatly increased cost of these irrigation works, brought about by the system followed by the Government in their construction and installation, has offered the sum of £500, payable in annual instalments of £100 per annum, to be released from his obligations in this connection?"

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"No, it is not true."

SHIPPING CONCESSIONS TO IMPORTERS OF PEDIGREE BLOOD STOCK.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Premier—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to the following cable appearing in the Press:—

London, 21st July.

In order to assist New Zealand producers in their efforts to improve cattle and sheep, the New Zealand shipping lines have decided to accede to the request from a number of New Zealanders to convey pedigree blood stock to New Zealand free, the shippers finding the fittings, fodder, and attendance?"

"2. Will he endeavour to secure a similar concession for Queensland producers?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 and 2. Yes."

PURCHASE OF MUNGANA MINES.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Seeing that the Mungana mines were forfeited by the non-fulfilment of conditions by the original syndicate or company in 1917, what work was performed by the Reid syndicate from 1917 to 1920?"

"2. Was any work performed by the Mines Department during the option period?"

"3. From the 10th September, 1917, when the Reid syndicate purchased the Mungana mines, up to the time the Government purchased them, did the Reid syndicate obtain any exemption?"

"4. If so, what?"

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

"1. The provisions of the Act were complied with and mining operations engaged in.

"2. Yes. The department worked the mine on tribute.

"3 and 4. Am not aware that the Reid syndicate purchased the Mungana mines. Frederick Reid applied for the land as mining leases on 10th September, 1917, and was granted a period of six months' exemption from labour conditions from 15th November, 1917, and a further period of six months from 20th June, 1918."

STATE STATIONS—AREA, RENTAL VALUE, AND RATES PAID TO AND CLAIMED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Mr. GREEN (*Townsville*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. What is the area in square miles of each of the State stations?"

"2. What is the estimated annual rental value of each of the State stations?"

"3. What rates have been paid to each local authority for 1919, 1920, and 1921, in respect of each State station?"

"4. What amounts have been claimed by local authorities for rates in respect of each State station for each of the aforesaid years, which are still outstanding?"

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) replied—

"This information is being obtained."

REPORT CONCERNING TERMS OF AMALGAMATION BETWEEN FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND QUEENSLAND PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION.

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to the report of the monthly meeting of the Tarome branch of the Farmers' Alliance, contained in the 'Queensland Times' of 14th July, 1922, in which a statement is attributed to the general secretary (Mr. J. L. Graham), that the amalgamation of the Farmers' Alliance with the Queensland Producers' Association had received the approval of Mr. J. D. Story, administrative head of the Council of Agriculture, upon the following terms:—

(a) That the organisation of No. 12 district of the Queensland Producers'

Association—*i.e.*, the Rosewood, Albert, and Fassifern electorates, be left in the hands of the Alliance;

(b) That the branches of the Alliance now in existence be known as Local Producers' Associations;

(c) That the executive of the Farmers' Alliance as now constituted, together with one representative from each local association, be known as a district council;

(d) That all expenses incurred from 24th March by the Farmers' Alliance be borne by the Queensland Producers' Association?

2. Does he consider that the various primary industries in No. 12 district will be fairly and justly represented if the above arrangement is carried into effect?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) replied—

"1. No.

"2. This is a matter for the local producers in each district to determine, subject to the approval of the Council of Agriculture."

FRUIT CASES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INTRODUCTION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) moved—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to amend the Fruit Cases Acts, 1912-1916, in a certain particular."

Question put and passed.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION BILL.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*, in the chair.)

Clause 1—"Short title"—put and passed.

Clause 2—"Definitions"—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I have circulated an amendment to insert, in the definition of "Primary producer," the words "other than an employee" after the word "persons" on page 2, line 1. I find that the Minister also has an amendment on the same subject to come in line 12. For the purpose of meeting the views of the Minister, I do not propose to move the insertion of the words set out in my circulated amendment, but move the insertion, on page 2, line 1, after the word "person," of the words—

"not being persons engaged in primary production as employees on wages or piecework rates."

During the second reading of the Bill, I said—

"I say that the whole of this thing is wrapped up in the definition of 'Primary producer,' as to whether the Bill is an honest one or not."

I further said—

"I hope the hon. gentleman will be prepared to accept an amendment at a later stage to put in the words 'other than an employee.'"

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The Secretary for Agriculture, in reply to that, said—

"We will accept that."

Unless those words are inserted where I propose to insert them, after the word "person" on the first line, it will not be clear whether a "primary producer" will include an employee or not. I think it is generally admitted that it is not intended to include employees under this Bill. If that is so, why not insert the amendment in line 1, instead of inserting it in line 12, which is in a part of the clause which will only come into operation in respect of another class of persons being hereafter "declared by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Council, by Order in Council, to be primary producers for the purposes of this Act." Our object is to make the position absolutely clear, and, unless we do it in the first line, then I contend that we are leaving the matter open to a great deal of doubt; we are not providing for the very thing we desire to provide for.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Surely there can be no doubt in your mind as to who is a primary producer?

Mr. VOWLES: The definition says: "Every person engaged in the occupation," and it may be claimed that the word "person" includes an employee. The hon. gentleman admitted, on the second reading, that it was open to that construction, and he admits it by seeking to put in an amendment on line 12. For our purposes the amendment suggested by the hon. gentleman is hopeless, because that part of the clause may never come into operation. Why deal with the future? Why not deal with the present? And why not have the words inserted where I have suggested, so that the Bill will refer to existing industries which are set out under the definition of "primary producer"? Why it should be necessary for the Minister in a subsequent amendment, which he has circulated, to go as far as he does, and not be content with the amendment I have moved, I do not know, because an employee on piecework is still an employee.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): First of all, I wish to say to the leader of the Opposition, that I did indicate, by interjection, when he was speaking, that I was prepared to make the clause perfectly clear. The Government have no desire to include employees of any kind under this Bill. I went further than that, and consulted the Council of Agriculture, when a fair discussion took place on the matter, and, as a result of the unanimous decision of the Council of Agriculture, I had the amendment drafted which appears in my name. The amendment of the leader of the Opposition had not reached me at the time mine was drafted: in fact, I believe they were both circulated at the one time.

Mr. VOWLES: What does that matter? You knew what I said on the second reading.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member says he cannot understand why I will not accept his amendment. I am telling him that I did not know what his amendment was.

Mr. VOWLES: It is indicated in "Hansard."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I desire to make the matter perfectly clear.

My amendment was drafted in accordance with the resolution of the Council of Agriculture, but the leader of the Opposition appears to think that it does not quite meet the case. I would call attention to the fact that the amendment circulated by the leader of the Opposition is not the one he now proposes.

Mr. VOWLES: I brought it into line with yours, so that there would be no discussion. You can still move yours on line 12, but we should deal with the present and not with the future.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am quite agreeable to accept the hon. gentleman's amendment, but it will have to read in this way—

“not being a person engaged in primary production as an employee on wages or piecework rates.”

Mr. VOWLES: I move my amendment in the form suggested by the Minister.

Amendment agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it will still be necessary to insert my amendment on line 12.

Mr. VOWLES: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I move the insertion, after the word “persons,” on line 12, of the words—

“not being persons engaged in primary production as employees on wages or piecework rates.”

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): There are several classes of producers mentioned in this clause—namely, dairy farmer, wheat, maize, or cereal grower, canegrower, fruitgrower, or grazier. I would like to ask the Minister whether it will be compulsory for all these people to come under the Bill. With regard to the amendment moved by the Minister, it appears to me that, if the words suggested are put in, we shall accomplish just what the leader of the Opposition said a few moments ago we should endeavour to avoid. If the amendment is agreed to, the Governor in Council will still have the power to declare other classes of persons to be “primary producers” for the purposes of the Act.

Mr. FLETCHER: On the recommendation of the Council.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I do not care whose recommendation it is to be on. I want to see the Bill exclude the man who is working for wages.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So it does.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: In my opinion there is no need for these words to be inserted at all. Why should it be declared by the Governor in Council? It appears to me that, having inserted the amendment in the first line, there is no need to put the same words in again. When the Bill becomes law there should be no declaration required at all.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): Seeing that a similar amendment has already been accepted by the Minister in the first line, it appears to me that this amendment is going to do what has already been done, and is going to veto the position absolutely.

This amendment puts it into the hands of the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture, to do certain things. I think the hon. member for East Toowoomba is quite right when he suggests that the definition should be made so watertight that it will emphatically exclude every employee working for wages. If this amendment is agreed to, it will give something with the one hand and with the other hand take it away again.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think that any explanation is necessary, because this paragraph has been put in to enable some other form of primary industry to come in on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: That is all right.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This is experimental to some extent. I may tell the hon. member for East Toowoomba that there is no compulsion about coming under the Act.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Is the measure a voluntary one?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If any primary producer wishes to come under this measure it is provided in the Bill that he may do so. We have made provision for including every person engaged in the occupations of dairy farming, wheat, maize, or cereal growing, canegrowing, fruitgrowing, grazing, or a farmer engaged in mixed farming, cotton, potato, or vegetable growing, or poultry or pig raising. If we were sure that all those primary producers would come under the Bill there would be no necessity to make arrangements for any primary producer to come in later on. Still, it is just as well to have this safeguard, and, as the Council of Agriculture have to make a recommendation, I think it is quite safe to leave it as it is.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I cannot accept the assurance of the Minister as to the interpretation of the clause. He tells us that men engaged in other industries may want to come under the Act, but the amendment the Minister wishes to insert refers to men employed on wages or piecework rates. This is what the Minister wishes to insert—

“Not being persons engaged in primary production as employees on wages or piecework rates.”

We are not disputing that the amendment of the leader of the Opposition has exempted them. Now the Minister wants to insert it again in the same clause. The Minister is not sound in his argument at all.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): The Minister has by no means made it clear whether this is a voluntary Bill or a compulsory Bill regarding those who are mentioned in the clause as being engaged in the occupation of primary production. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would be good enough to state whether it is compulsory or not, because, if it is compulsory, then we understand it will be a coercive measure. We want to see where we are, and we want to see the magnitude of the proposal, if it is to be carried out in its entirety. The report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for 1920-21 shows that the number of owners engaged in cultivation in 1920 was 26,921, whilst the number of persons owning

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up to 500 head of cattle in the same year was 43,634, so that the numbers are quite considerable; but the point I wish to make is that the value of the primary industries is very, very great. On the same page of the report you will find that a valuation of the primary industries at first values only—that is, without including anything in a manufactured stage—showed a total of £68,877,965. Certainly, so far as stock (horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, mules, camels, and goats) were concerned, it was merely a capital value; but in the case of the other articles, such as milk, wool, crops, poultry, and eggs, bee products, hides and skins, bones, hoofs, horns, hair, etc., the figures represent the real production. The report explains that, for it says—

“Last year a valuation was made upon the figures for 1919 of the primary industries at first values only, and without including anything in a manufactured stage, such as butter, cheese, etc., nor did it include the value of the products of stock in the form of meat, fats, oil, lard, tallow, etc., because these products are, in a degree, in the manufactured stage.”

And then it gives the figures I have mentioned. Now, if you take the figures that have to do with milk, wool, and so on, you will find that they run into about £25,000,000, so that this is going to be a pretty big business to be operated by twenty-five men, and I am far from dreaming that twenty-five men are going to control a business of that magnitude successfully.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is hardly in order in discussing that principle now. He will have an opportunity later. The amendment deals with the insertion of words which have the effect of excluding employees from the operation of the Bill.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: If I do not at this stage raise this point, then I am out of court. I say that the value of these commodities is so considerable that it is wise for the Committee to know just where they are, because, if it were a trifling thing, we might agree that the Council of Agriculture to be appointed by-and-by will be able to undertake the business; but, when we know the volume of the business—which will be a growing one—we realise the difficulties they may have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The point the hon. member is raising now can be dealt with on clause 8. The question before the Committee is the elimination of certain persons from the operations of this Bill, and I ask the hon. member kindly to confine himself to that point. He will be at full liberty to advance his arguments later.

[4 p.m.]

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Perhaps the position will be simplified if the Minister will say whether this Bill, when it becomes an Act, is to be a compulsory one or not?

Hon. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): This is the stage when we must have an answer to that question. I can only conclude that the Minister did not hear it, and that he does not wish to be discourteous. Is it compulsory for the classes of persons who are mentioned in clause 2 to come under the Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What part of the Bill does the hon. member think makes it compulsory?

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Hon. W. H. BARNES: That is not an answer to the question; it is sidetracking it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You have had plenty of time to study the Bill.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am of the opinion that the Minister does not know; because apparently he is hunting through the Bill to find out.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I challenge you to show me anything in the Bill that indicates compulsion.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman can say there is no compulsion and we will be satisfied. The later part of the clause says that, included in the definition of “primary producer” is—

“any class of persons declared by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the council, by Order in Council, to be primary producers for the purposes of this Act; and ‘primary produce’ and ‘primary production’ have correlative meanings.”

I hold that the Governor in Council in the past in connection with other Acts has stretched to the fullest extent the meaning of words; and with a clause like this, we may find that the Governor in Council—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not wish to restrict the hon. gentleman's observations; but there is an amendment before the Committee, and hon. members who rise to speak must address their remarks to that amendment. When that has been dealt with, the hon. member will be quite in order in raising the question he is now debating. I ask him in the meantime to address his remarks to the amendment.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I will do so; and, when the amendment has been disposed of, I will take the opportunity to deal further with the clause. To a very great extent the amendment is unnecessary by reason of the acceptance of the amendment suggested by the leader of the Opposition. It seems to me that to put it in the form now suggested is to undo, practically, the advantage gained by the leader of the Opposition in the acceptance of his amendment. I say, therefore, that it should not be put.

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to.

Hon. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): This clause gives practically unlimited power—on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture, I am prepared to admit—to the Government, if they so choose, to pull the strings as they have done previously in connection with other Acts, and to make this one of the widest Acts for punishing individuals. We know that there will be on this Council certain representatives representing the Government. Unless an amendment is accepted at a later stage, the Minister is going to be associated very directly with the Council, and this clause may be made use of, in the hands of a Government who do not care—and I say that this Government do not care—as an instrument to hinder, hamper, and persecute people; and it should not be allowed to remain in its present form.

Clause 2, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3—“*Establishment of Queensland Producers' Association*”—

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I move the omission of line 29, reading—

“The district councils of agriculture, and.”

I contend that those district councils will mean the incurring of unnecessary expenditure. The members of the local producers' associations should have a direct vote for the Council of Agriculture, instead of being saddled with a halfway house. The district councils are not required at all. A direct vote for the Council of Agriculture would be much more highly appreciated, and the danger would be obviated of men being elected to the district councils and practically pitchforking themselves into the Council of Agriculture. That can very easily be done with the provisions as they now stand. If my amendment is accepted, then the words in lines 36 to 56 in clause 4, dealing with the constitution of the Council of Agriculture, also will have to be deleted. I am proposing later to insert a new clause to take the place of those lines 36 to 56. I admit that the acceptance of my amendments will change the character and the principle of the Bill. The Minister may say that that will make it a new Bill, but that is not so. The Government started by calling together representatives of the different industries, such as the sugar-growers and representatives of butter factories and cheese factories. Under the Bill it is quite possible that there will be no representative of those industries on the Council of Agriculture; that you will have a mixed lot of people who do not understand the industries which they are supposed to represent. If the Minister will give his word that this is a voluntary Bill, and that only those members who are enrolled and registered will be liable for the expenses incurred, I will withdraw my amendment and leave the Minister to carry the Bill as he wishes. If you have a voluntary Bill, there is no reason for interference by anybody with the organisations. If only the members of these organisations are responsible, let them have the district councils and anything else they like, so long as they pay for them. I am informed that there is no power under the Bill to make a levy on any factory or any person except on members of organisations who decide to come under the Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is not that quite satisfactory?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is clear, and I am quite satisfied with it. Now that the Minister has indicated that only members who join up and are registered under the Act will be responsible for the expenditure incurred by the Council, that makes it a great deal clearer, and if the hon. gentleman has no objection, I will not proceed any further with my amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no objection to the hon. member withdrawing his amendment.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: With the permission of the Committee, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I indicated during the second reading debate that I did not like the clause dealing with district councils. If the hon. member for Drayton had not withdrawn his amendment, I would have endeavoured under this clause to secure the control of the different industries by the majority of those employed in those particular industries. That would alter the whole scheme of the Bill, and the Council of Agriculture would have to disappear. This unwieldy big union, the Council of Agriculture, cannot best administer the interests of every section of our rural industries. The Council of Agriculture

is the cardinal feature of the Bill. If we did away with the Council, as provided in clause 4, and established in its place advisory councils in our different rural industries and allowed the peoples so gathered in councils to control their own industries and look after the growing and marketing of their products, we would have the best and safest control of the growers' interests. Even under the amendment moved by the hon. member for Drayton, this Upper House—the Council of Agriculture—would still remain. In order to get the full benefits for sectional industries, we shall have to wipe out the Council of Agriculture and establish advisory boards in all the industries, giving the maize people the right to form an organisation throughout the State in the interests of the maizegrowers, and the same would apply to butter and other products.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is provision under the Bill for the creation of boards in all industries.

Mr. CORSER: The Council of Agriculture will be the supreme authority, and it is possible for those engaged in the cotton industry, or the sugar industry, or other industries to be dominated by other sectional industries on this supreme Council of Agriculture.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You want sectional co-operation, and not one big co-operation.

Mr. CORSER: No. The best results within an industry can be got by bringing together those who are interested in that industry. You will not get people interested in cotton-growing or maizegrowing to look after the interests of wheatgrowers in the same way as the wheatgrowers would look after their own interests. If we are going to have co-operative interests, then the individuals in an industry should look after their own individual interests. The cheese man has no interest in the butter man or the condensed milk man.

Mr. FOLEY: How would your suggestion apply to Parliament?

Mr. CORSER: We have representatives from all the various sections of the State.

Mr. FOLEY: Representing different interests.

Mr. CORSER: Representing the people. That is where the hon. member makes a mistake. The trouble with party politics is that hon. members come here and claim to represent individual interests when they should be here representing the whole people. That is the rottenest principle that has ever been built up by Labour in politics.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will discuss the clause before the Committee.

Mr. CORSER: I submit my suggestion for the Minister's consideration. It will alter the Bill entirely. I am sorry that there is no provision whereby sectional industries can look after their own interests and have the management of their own affairs.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I support fully the remarks made by the hon. member for Burnett. What he has stated is the better way of managing this great big business. So far as we can discern, there is practically no need for the Council of Agriculture. Judging from the attitude of the Government in connection with the management of the affairs of the State, I imagine that they are quite satisfied with one Chamber, or that one

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organised body of men is sufficient to control the affairs of this State generally.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You do not think so.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I do not think so in that respect; but, when the Government endeavour to deal with matters concerning people outside Parliament, they go to the other extreme. Surely, in all fair reasoning, a couple of councils should be ample in connection with this matter. It appears to me that the Government are perfectly indifferent as to the cost they are going to heap upon the people in connection with their endeavour to manage the affairs of the agricultural industry.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not true.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. gentleman does not know how to spend money faster than he is doing now. There is evidence of extravagant expenditure everywhere. In carrying out their propaganda in connection with this matter they are incurring an expenditure which is going to startle the man on the land, and, unless it is intended to continue expenditure in that direction, there is no need to incur it at the outset. There is no justification whatever for that huge expenditure. The evidence is that the primary producers will be up against a pretty big bill, and they will have to foot that bill. I differ in my attitude from the hon. member for Drayton, who was disposed to allow men who came in under this Bill to look after themselves. I want to protect those men and to save them from an expenditure which is going to be burdensome. If the Government are going to make heavy levies in connection with the various councils, and there is authority for doing it, then they are going to create a very great difficulty, and, instead of the good in the measure being realisable, they will find that it will be immediately discarded. I would like to see this matter tested, and, if no one else moves an amendment, I move the deletion, on line 28, of the words—

“The Council of Agriculture and.”

The CHAIRMAN: The general principle is laid down very definitely in “May” that, when a principle is affirmed in a Bill by the House, the Committee has no power either to alter or destroy that principle. The hon. member will appreciate that one of the fundamental principles of this Bill is the Council of Agriculture. The House, in approving of the second reading of the Bill, affirmed that principle, and therefore any amendment to destroy that principle is out of order. I regret that I cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: If we cannot take the head of the thing off, can we take off the tail, or can we take out the centre? We are burdened with too many councils in this matter. If we want perplexity, we should go on with it in its present form; but if we want simplicity, then we should reduce the number of these councils.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I do not think the Committee is going to make a perfect Bill, and it is an open question, even on the part of those who take a great interest in co-operation at the present time, whether it is advisable to cut out any of these councils. I quite believe that, after a year's experience, it will be found that there

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will be need for improvement in the organisation; but I am prepared to do my best to put this Bill, with moderate amendments, on the statute-book, and thereby give the farmers a chance to organise.

I understand that it is the desire of some hon. members to cut out the district councils, and, in that connection, I would like to give the experience of the fruitgrowers. The fruitgrowers cut their district council out, and they found that it was an absolute failure, as they lost touch with the growers, and subsequently they reverted to the district council system. It seems to me that there will be a considerable amount of expenditure in connection with the scheme; yet, with the improvements which should be brought about in primary industries as a result of a scheme, they should be able to bear that extra expense. We know that no co-operative effort is perfect at the start. I believe there is room for improvement in the Bill; but it is capable of doing some good for the primary producer. I hope the Minister will meet us in reason, and that hon. members will recognise that this is an experiment; but I do not see why we should not get good out of the experiment if we all work for it and the farmers take the matter up as they should. As the Minister has said that it is a voluntary measure to benefit the farmers, I do not see why the farmers should not take it up wholeheartedly. It is the pinpricks caused by compulsion that we object to, and I was pleased to hear the hon. gentleman say that it is not compulsory. It appeared to me on reading the Bill that there was a danger of compulsion.

Mr. VOWLES: So there is.

Mr. WARREN: I understood the Minister to say that there is to be no compulsion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no compulsion for anyone to come under the Bill.

Mr. WARREN: That will make all the difference between success and failure. I do not think you can compel a body of men to come under the Bill. If you attempt such a thing, they will commence to fight at once; but I believe there is sufficient in the Bill, with slight modifications, to make it a very good measure, and I am going to give it my support.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): We are dealing now with the establishment of the Queensland Producers' Association, and the Minister has assured us that there is no such thing as compulsion under this scheme.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said nobody is compelled to come under the scheme.

Mr. VOWLES: It is very hard to believe that, because clause 14 provides—

“The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council, may make regulations providing for—

* * * * *

(v.) The control and management of the fund; empowering the Council or any district council to make levies on primary producers generally or in particular industries.”

Mr. WARREN: Those are the ones who come into the scheme.

Mr. VOWLES: The original definition of "primary producer" read—

"Every person engaged in the occupation of—

- (a) Dairy farmer; or
- (b) Wheat, maize, or cereal grower; or
- (c) Canegrower; or
- (d) Fruitgrower; or
- (e) Grazier; or
- (f) Farmer, whether engaged in general or mixed farming, cotton, potato, or vegetable growing, or poultry or pig raising; and

any class of persons declared by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council, by Order in Council, to be primary producers for the purposes of this Act."

Does the Minister mean to say that, if the people in any district or any particular industry decide not to join up with this scheme, they are going to get the benefits and not pay anything? We have been told by the hon. gentleman's own organisers in the country that it is a compulsory scheme, and under clause 14 regulations may be made providing—

"if deemed advisable, for a poll of primary producers either generally or in any particular industry or section of industry or in any particular district or locality before any levy is made."

That can only be done if the Council of Agriculture deem it advisable; but they have to get the money somewhere, and therefore it seems to me that there is compulsion in clause 14, and it can be brought in by regulation. Clause 8 deals with local producers' associations, which are the foundation of the whole business. It is they who will elect the district councils; and am I to understand that only those persons who voluntarily come in as members of the local producers' associations are to do all the paying or who are to be levied on? That ought to be cleared up one way or the other. If it is going to be a voluntary concern, well and good. Let those come into it who desire to do so, and let them take the consequences, good or bad; but that is not the impression that has got abroad, and is not the explanation of the Bill which is being given by the organisers in the country.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): I would like to ask the Minister whether he considers the present Provisional Council of Agriculture represents the different agricultural industries?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What bearing has that on the Bill? The district councils have not yet been elected.

Mr. EDWARDS: It has been said that the meeting at which these gentlemen were elected was the largest meeting of producers throughout Queensland. The hon. gentleman will remember that the delegates went into a separate room to choose the representatives for the different sections of the dairying industry. After that the Minister, as he himself said, considered that the fruitgrowers were not represented at that meeting, and he asked the fruit people to choose a representative. Then the wheat people were asked to choose their representatives from amongst the wheatgrowers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Wheat Board was asked.

Mr. EDWARDS: The Wheat Board represents the wheatgrowers on the Downs, and they were asked to choose representatives from amongst the wheat-[4.30 p.m.] growers. The sugar people were asked to do the same with their organisations and appoint their representatives on the council. If that is a representation of the different agricultural producers of Queensland—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was the best thing under the circumstances.

Mr. EDWARDS: Why not accept it as a basis to go upon? If you do not accept that as a basis, you may compel all those fine organisations to go to pieces with the idea of building them up under the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We are not compelling any organisation to go to pieces.

Mr. EDWARDS: No, but you may do it by trying to bring outside industries into the organisation, some of which may not have representation on the Council at all. My experience of organisations amongst the primary producers is that it is better to let each section organise in the interests of their own branch of agriculture. It will be found that the best form of organisation will be got in that way. In proof of that, you have only to go to New Zealand, where they have successfully organised the cream suppliers.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I would like to be more satisfied with regard to the points that have been raised in so far as compulsory membership is concerned. I take it that the Council of Agriculture has power, under clause 14, to compel a man to come into the organisation or else get out of business. We know that he need not join the organisation; but, if he does not join it, he has to get out of the particular agricultural activity in which he is engaged. I certainly think that the control of each individual industry by those engaged in it would be preferable to what we are considering now. In regard to the constitution of the Council, it seems to me that, under the Bill, it is quite possible for the Council of Agriculture, including the Minister and the nominees of the Government, to be constituted of men of whom not one may be a primary producer.

The CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that the matter raised by the hon. member be left until we come to the particular clause dealing with it. The leader of the National party will realise that he will have full opportunity, under clause 4, to discuss the point he is now raising.

Mr. TAYLOR: The difficulty is that the objections which we are raising seem to run through the whole of the clauses more or less, and it is difficult to say exactly when and where discussion on any particular question should begin and end.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is now discussing the constitution of the Council of Agriculture, which is provided for under clause 4. If the hon. member has any objection, he can state it when we come to that clause, and move any amendment to the clause. Clause 3 only lays down the basis of organisation.

Mr. TAYLOR: As I said just now, it is quite possible for the Council of Agriculture, as well as the other organisations which are mentioned, to consist of men who are not

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primary producers at all. The whole thing seems to me to be unwieldy. We are all out to see that something is done to assist the primary producers, so that they may be placed on a better footing. If the Government had said to the existing primary producers' organisations, "Go ahead, and we will subsidise you to the extent of organising your industry," it would have been better than bringing forward such a cumbersome measure as this.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): The hon. member who has just spoken, and other hon. members, have raised the question whether this is a voluntary or a compulsory scheme. That is an important element. (Hear, hear!) We ought to know where we stand. I can assure the Committee that it is the intention of the Government—and it will be carried out in the Bill—to have the scheme a voluntary one. No one will be compelled to come into the scheme. The organisation will be based solely on the right of the farmers to come in or stay out; but the scheme will be an absolute failure and must die if in a few months' time the farmers do not join the organisations. If local producers' associations are not formed through farmers being suspicious or undesirable of coming into the organisation, the whole scheme will come to an end. They must come in voluntarily; they cannot be skull-dragged or forced in.

I want to refer to a question of great importance touched on by the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Murrumba—the question of how far levies will have to be obligatory. It is quite clear that all levies will have to be based upon purely voluntary effort on the part of the farmer; but the Council of Agriculture, exercising its authorities under this Bill, may impose levies with a view of financing any proposal for improving agriculture in a particular branch of the industry, or for assisting agriculture in a particular district. They may carry out a scheme of finance that affects others than those who are members of the organisations.

Mr. VOWLES: Taxation without representation!

The PREMIER: Not at all; they will all have the right of representation. Unless some system of that kind operates, the Bill will not be effective. I frankly admit that the power must be exercised by the council wisely and with discretion, and not tyrannically; but they must have power to raise a levy even on those who are not members of the organisation, just in the same way as is done in connection with the sugar-cane industry. The sugar industry has received considerable benefits under the cane prices legislation and other legislation of that kind. The financing is done by levies upon cane. Every man who supplies cane to a mill has to subscribe. The mills themselves subscribe, although the millowners were opposed to cane prices legislation. Again, with regard to the levying on the dairying industry, the dairy conference discussed the question of how a scheme applicable to that particular branch of the agricultural industry should be financed. I do not know whether they carried a resolution, but there was a strong feeling in favour of a levy of one-sixteenth of a penny upon all milk supplied to cheese factories and a somewhat commensurate levy in regard to butter-fat

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supplied to butter factories. But, whether the scheme is adopted in that form or in some other form, there is no doubt that it has to be general, if the benefits are general; and, provided dairy farmers are benefiting from it, no one, I think, will oppose it. At the same time the Council of Agriculture will have to be very cautious in the imposition of any levy to see that they are not imposing burdens which should not be imposed upon people against their will. But I am satisfied that you cannot have a general betterment of agriculture without proper financing. It must be recognised that for the first year the Government will carry the whole financial burden, and in subsequent years, for five years, the Government will subsidise whatever levies are raised on a £1 for £1 basis.

Mr. MORGAN: Similar to the old meat and dairy board.

The PREMIER: It has had to be done in many cases. There are some—probably a small minority—who will decline to subscribe to any organisation, although they are deriving considerable benefits from it, but I do not think anyone can properly object to these levies, inasmuch as the Council of Agriculture will not act tyrannically. Provision is made in clause 4 for a poll to be taken before a levy is made, if it is deemed desirable. I take it that the Council of Agriculture, if they think there will be general opposition in any particular branch or district to any levy imposed, before imposing the levy will ascertain the views of the primary producers in the district concerned.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Will you put it in the Bill? It is left to the Council of Agriculture. You should put it in the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: You are dealing with primary producers belonging to a particular industry.

The PREMIER: Belonging to a particular industry or to the general industry. It is provided for in the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: You should make it more definite.

The PREMIER: We must agree that the item is a small one. The amount of levy will be infinitesimal, but it must be enough to enable the Council of Agriculture to carry on. It is a very small thing, at any rate. It is necessary to raise funds, and this is the best way to do it. The Council of Agriculture, through their own officers, and with the authority of the local producers' associations, must make a levy, and it will not impose any great burden on the individual. At the present time, under our cane prices legislation, no canegrower objects to paying 1d. or 2d. a ton levy on his cane. Considering the immeasurable benefits that the primary producers will receive as a result of the administration of this legislation, they will not object to pay the levy. I think the scheme can be justified.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I do not object to raising a certain amount of revenue in this way, but there must be more protection given to the growers than is provided for in this Bill. We acknowledge in connection with our pooling system the necessity of exercising a certain amount of compulsion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot permit a general discussion on the statement

made by the Premier. That statement was made in response to a request for information, and I hope the hon. member will defer his remarks until we come to the particular clause that he wishes to deal with.

Mr. COSTELLO: They are all second reading speeches.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Murrumba will be quite in order in making his remarks when we get to the particular clause he is now referring to.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): The Premier enlightened the Committee very much, but in one particular direction there is no enlightenment. I take it that the Committee desire to know whether these councils are going to be controlled by primary producers or by outsiders. If others are to be brought in and taxed, they will want to have some control, and I think it should be restricted to primary producers. To put the matter in order, I move the insertion, after the word "Agriculture," on line 29, of the words—

"all of whom shall be primary producers."

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member's amendment would be more in order in the next clause.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Will it not be too late then?

The CHAIRMAN: The principle of district councils of agriculture must be approved before hon. members can discuss their constitution. The next clause deals with the qualification of the members, and I suggest that the hon. member should defer his remarks till we reach that clause.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Very well, I will defer my remarks till then.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The danger is that the district councils of agriculture, consisting of representatives of the local producers' associations, will have the effect of breaking up the present organisations. I will take as an example the United Canegrowers' Association and the Australian Sugar Producers' Association. Both of these organisations include canegrowers in different parts of the State. For instance, a canegrower at Bundaberg and a canegrower at Mackay, at the present time, both belong to the same association. If we adopt this scheme for district councils of agriculture, it will have the effect of breaking up those large organisations I have referred to, because, if they are not broken up, they will have no representation on the district councils at all. The district councils will have the effect of separating entirely the various interests in the community.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No. It will have just the opposite effect.

Mr. KERR: No. For instance, the farmer at Bundaberg must at the present time become a unit of an organisation which the farmer at Mackay may join. The object of this Bill is to constitute district councils of agriculture, and that will result in the wiping out of the two associations to which I refer, because the cane farmer will have to join the local producers' association in his own area. That will mean separate councils in Mackay and Bundaberg.

Mr. BULLCOCK: They are going to be harmonised.

Mr. KERR: They are not going to be harmonised at all. You are not going to get the same representation on the supreme Council as you would if the sugar-growers were allowed to join one association throughout Queensland.

Mr. BULLCOCK: They are not in one association now.

Mr. KERR: There are two associations for the sugar industry; but the same principle applies to the dairying industry. Under the scheme proposed in the Bill we shall have small organisations of sugar-growers right throughout Queensland instead of having one head and a number of small branches. That means that the different industries will not have the same representation, because they will have to send their representatives to the local district council, and the district council might consist of poultry breeders, fruitgrowers, and producers of other primary products. Therefore, they will not understand the wants of a particular industry as well as if the Council consisted only of the particular industry concerned, such as sugar. That should be taken into consideration before this clause is passed.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): If I may say so, the three bodies are placed upside down in this clause. In my opinion, the first thing to do is to form the local producers' associations, then the district councils of agriculture, and then they will send representatives to form the Council of Agriculture. The Council of Agriculture is the supreme body. That is the body that is going to carry out the wishes of the local producers' associations and the district councils. The Council of Agriculture is going to have supreme power independent of any wishes expressed by the district councils or the local producers' associations. Therefore, the fundamental basis upon which you are going to build up these organisations is the local producers' association. Is not that right?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Then I would suggest that we should alter the order, and make the clause read—

"(a) The local producers' associations;

"(b) The district councils of agriculture; and

"(c) The Council of Agriculture."

I take it that those three bodies will act in harmony in this way—that local matters will be discussed at meetings of the local producers' associations, and from the discussions which take place there matters will be referred to the district councils of agriculture, and from there to the Council of Agriculture. I would like to ask the Secretary for Agriculture what will happen in the event of a district council of agriculture turning down a request made by a local producers' association. Will the latter have the right of appeal over the head of the district council to the Council of Agriculture? That is an important point, and it should be distinctly outlined. I hope that this clause will be so set out that it will be easily understood, and the constitution will be of such a nature as to enable the co-operation of the producers in regard to the purposes for which they are elected, and which are set down here.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

Clause 4—“*Constitution of Council of Agriculture*”.—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): This clause deals with the representation of the primary producers upon the Council of Agriculture, and it raises the point I mentioned in my second-reading speech as to whether it is wise to have representation on the Council of Agriculture of districts or representation of industries. This matter should be taken away from any suggestion of politics, and I have already pointed out how it may be possible for representatives to be foisted into positions on the Council of Agriculture. On the second reading I also pointed out, with regard to the constitution of districts, that it would be an impossibility, particularly in districts of very large areas, to get any one individual to represent the whole of the industries in the area which elected him. There may be mining, timber, wool, meat, butter, cheese, cotton, and so on—all of them come within the definition of “primary produce”—and the Bill proposes to have one representative on the council of each district—that is, he is to be the representative of all of those industries, and he is to be expected to give an intelligent vote on matters which vitally affect them all. Now is the time, when we are raising the fabric of this organisation, to consider whether it is wise to continue on the course on which we have started, or whether these men should be representatives of the industries themselves. Under the system as it stands, you may have industries not represented when votes are taken in the Council of Agriculture, and decisions thus made on matters with which the Council may not be conversant.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Have you got an amendment drafted?

Mr. VOWLES: No. I am leaving that to the Minister.

Mr. MORGAN: I move the omission of subclause (2), page 3, reading—

“The Minister shall be the President of the Council.”

That will give the Council the opportunity to elect their own president, and, if that is carried, I intend to move the insertion, in line 17, of the words, “President and,” so that subclause (3) will then read—

“There shall be a President and Vice-President of the Council appointed by the Council in the prescribed manner.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Minister will still be a member?

Mr. MORGAN: Yes. We do not object to the Minister being a member, because the Government provide a certain amount of money, at any rate in the first year. We hold that, if we are to have a council of representatives of the district councils and five Government nominees, they should choose their own president and vice-president. They may choose the Minister. The Minister for the time being may be thoroughly conversant with all agricultural subjects—a man like the present Minister, who has had a lifelong experience of agricultural pursuits. On the other hand, the Minister may be a professional man, as has happened in the past. The present Minister may not be in the position very long—he may become Premier—and I think he will agree that this is a matter for the council to decide, and the adoption of the amendment would remove any suggestion of political influence.

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Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I have an amendment to move before that of the hon. member for Murilla. I move the insertion after “members,” in line 51, page 2, of the following words:—

“all of whom shall be primary producers.”

So that the paragraph will then read—

“The remaining members, all of whom shall be primary producers, of whom there shall be not less than fifteen, shall be elected by the district councils.”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If that principle had been applied to parliamentary elections, the hon. member for Warwick would not have been elected to this Chamber.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: He is a primary producer.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the definition of “primary producer” covers such a one, it is pretty wide. Personally, I would like to see the farmers select farmers as their representatives.

[5 p.m.] The real question is: Do the Committee desire that, if in the opinion of the primary producers a man who is not a farmer is better qualified to hold the position, those primary producers should be limited in their choice?

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The Country party have considered this matter, and we have come to the conclusion that it would be far better to leave to the organisations concerned the choice of who their representative is to be. They might desire to have a man who is not a farmer, but who is conversant with the whole business.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Under the circumstances, I cannot accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. G. P. Barnes*) put and negatived.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I now beg to move my amendment to omit subclause (2), reading—

“The Minister shall be the President of the Council.”

I hope the Minister will accept the amendment. The fact that the Bill makes it compulsory that the Minister shall be on the Council is a sufficient protection for the Government in respect of the money they intend investing in this scheme. The Government have further protection in that they will have on the Council of Agriculture four other nominees. The acceptance of this amendment will remove from the minds of the producers any suspicion that might exist of political control; and it will not affect the Bill in any shape or form.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I support the amendment. If Government representation is necessary because the Government are finding a portion of the funds, the Minister may appear as one of their representatives. There is nothing to debar him; but the Bill should not provide that the Secretary for Agriculture for the time being shall have the right to be also the President of the Council. There is something to be said for the contention that the Minister shall be one of the five Government representatives; and I expect he would be supported by the Government nominees for the chair. I think the deletion of those words will clear up quite a lot. This principle we opposed during the second reading; and the Minister said that,

if we could give good reasons why he should not be president, he would be prepared to consider an amendment. My good reason is that it would be far better to dissociate altogether from politics organisations which are interested in primary production; and, whilst we have a Minister of the Crown at the head of this organisation, and under him certain members of the public service, we cannot say that we have eliminated altogether politics from the scheme. A true organisation would be an organisation of primary producers.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The Council of Agriculture may think the Minister is the most suitable man to have as president.

Mr. CORSER: The provisional council was not elected.

Mr. DUNSTAN: But they are competent to advise.

Mr. CORSER: You could not expect them to advise the present Minister to get out of the chair, and I do not suppose they have done so. This is the place where we are supposed to consider the Bill as it will be affected by the future. We do not know what gentleman may be Secretary for Agriculture in the future, and we should therefore support the amendment.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I support the amendment. As far as possible, this body should be removed from political control. I can remember that during the late "nineties" we had in Queensland an organisation formed on very similar lines to what is proposed here. We had small local centres sending delegates to district councils, and over a year the Department of Agriculture convened a farmers' conference—as was being done at that time in America, from which country the idea came. The conference sat once each at Gatton, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Mackay, and, I think, once in Cairns. In 1902, when money was hard to get, the system was discontinued. At the commencement of the scheme, the Secretary for Agriculture occupied the chair, but from time to time the question arose as to whether matters submitted by the delegates conflicted in any way with the political policy of the Government, and it was not very long before there was a general feeling amongst the delegates who attended the conferences from the various districts that there would be freer discussion on matters of interest to the farmers if the Minister was not in the chair, and if they were allowed to elect their own chairman. I attended four out of the five conferences that were held, and, although there was no hostile declaration against the occupancy of the chair by the Minister, there was a general impression amongst the delegates that the Minister's occupancy of the chair had a restraining effect on the discussions, and did not make for good in the deliberations of that council. That council was constituted on similar lines to those proposed in this Bill for the constitution of the Council of Agriculture. I think it would make for the better working of this Council if delegates were free to elect their own chairman. As has been stated, there is nothing to prevent the delegates selecting the Minister, but the election should be left in the hands of the council. The Government nominees will represent 25 per cent. of the total representation, and that will constitute a sufficient safeguard of Government interests with respect to contributions, etc. I hope the Minister will accept the amendment.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I desire to support the amendment. A good deal depends upon the chairman of any board or society. Possibly not every gentleman who occupies the position of Secretary for Agriculture will be able to control a meeting. I have my own idea as to the capabilities of the present Minister as chairman, and I am sure he recognises that I am not making any personal reference to him; but it would be wise to allow the Council of Agriculture to choose its own chairman. I have no objection to fair Government representation. If this scheme is going to be anything at all, it is going to be a big thing, and if the Secretary for Agriculture is chairman, a lot of his time will be occupied in the business of this Council. From all points of view it would be very wise for the hon. gentleman to grant this concession, because it will make for the betterment of the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I very strongly support the amendment. The constitution of the Council provides that there shall be not less than five Government nominees. If it is necessary for the Minister to be on the Council at all, he can be one of those nominees. I cannot see any function that he has to perform as Minister which he could not perform as a member of the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture. It is provided in a subsequent clause that all important recommendations that come from the Council of Agriculture have to be finally dealt with by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture. It has been claimed publicly, not only by parliamentarians, but in the newspapers, that this Bill is a political move.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a Government move.

Mr. VOWLES: We say that it is more than that—that it is an electioneering move. The Bill proposes that the Minister shall be in charge of the Council of Agriculture as chairman. He was asked to-day whether he had seen a certain article in the "Queensland Times."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not like to be too severe on the hon. gentleman who asked the question, but I could have stated that the article did not appear in the paper on the date mentioned.

Mr. VOWLES: I have the article here.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It did not appear in the paper on the date mentioned by the hon. member for Fassifern.

Mr. VOWLES: The article appeared in the "Queensland Times" on the 14th instant, and it reads—

"TAROME FARMERS' ALLIANCE. THE GOVERNMENT'S SCHEME.

"The monthly meeting of the Tarome Branch of the Farmers' Alliance was held on the 10th instant (our Tarome correspondent reports), when Mr. F. Niebling presided over a good attendance.

"The General Secretary of the Alliance (Mr. J. L. Graham) wrote advising that with the inception of the scheme for the formation of the Queensland Producers' Association, a serious problem confronted the executive. The information available showed that the Queensland Producers'

Mr. Vowles.]

Association resembled in almost every detail the Farmers' Alliance. The manner of formation was the same, *i.e.*, the promoters of both schemes called a convention of those interested, and from that convention formed a constitution, an executive, and a scheme of organisation, the aims and constitution of both bodies being identical. The Alliance had the advantage of being first in the field, yet the Queensland Producers' Association had the greater advantage of having the support of the Government and of covering a much greater stretch of country at its initiation. Subsequent inquiry showed to the executive that the Queensland Producers' Organisation was going to be a live organisation and would benefit the farmer and had genuine men behind it, so the executive decided, subject to the approval of the branches, to take steps towards amalgamation. The terms of amalgamation decided on were:—(1) That the organisation of No. 12 district of the Queensland Producers' Association, *i.e.*, the Rosewood, Albert, and Fassifern electorates, be left in the hands of the Alliance. (2) That the branches of the Alliance now in existence be known as Local Producers' Associations. (3) That the executive of the Farmers' Alliance, as now constituted, together with one representative from each local association, be known as a district council. (4) That all expenses incurred from 24th March by the Farmers' Alliance be borne by the Queensland Producers' Association."

"A deputation from the executive, consisting of the president, the organiser, the general secretary, and Mr. J. Costello, had waited on Mr. J. D. Story, the administrative head of the Queensland Producers' Association, who put before the deputation the whole scheme and workings of the association, and gave his assurance that the Alliance had nothing to lose by joining it. He approved of the terms set out and promised to submit them to the Council of Agriculture."

One of the terms set out is the payment, right back to 24th March last, of the expenses of founding a Labour political organisation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you call the Farmers' Alliance a Labour organisation?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, it is recognised as such. The report continues—

"The general secretary further stated that the deputation was heartily of opinion that the alliance has everything to gain by amalgamating at once, and so achieving a step towards the object for which it was formed—the betterment of the conditions of the farmers.

"A motion in favour of amalgamation was moved by Mr. J. Knuth, seconded by Mr. A. Maddocks, and carried.

"The general secretary also supplied information sought concerning the handling of branch funds."

There is a case where what is known to be a political organisation in No. 12 district has been to Mr. Story, and he has decided that out of the funds which are to be levied in the future the cost of starting that organisation is to be paid.

[Mr. Vowles.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him by the Standing Order.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): On the second reading of the Bill hon. members on this side intimated that one of their objections to the Bill was the provision that the Minister should be the President of the Council, and I hope, therefore, that the hon. gentleman will accept the amendment.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That shows your sympathy for the primary producer.

Mr. FRY: I have it on very good authority that one man was invited to stand as a Labour candidate, and was subsequently requested to act as organiser. He was appointed organiser, and probably he will be a Labour candidate at the next election.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Who is that?

Mr. FRY: The Minister has nothing to lose by accepting the amendment. As a matter of fact, he has everything to gain. There is no reason why the Secretary for Agriculture should be the permanent president of the Council of Agriculture, and certainly his position would be much stronger were he elected by the Council itself. The amendment gives the Council power to elect the Minister as chairman, and I have no doubt the Council will elect the Minister. He will be there representing the Government, who are interested from a financial point of view, and no doubt he will get a majority of votes. This is not a personal matter at all, and in any case the Government of to-day will probably not be the Government of next year or the year after, and therefore it would apply to all alike.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): I hope the Minister will accept the amendment, because, apart altogether from the political significance of the Minister being always in the chair, I think it will be very much better for the Council of Agriculture to appoint their own chairman. Possibly they may appoint the Minister. Personally, I think the Director should be the chairman, and my opinion is that the Council of Agriculture should appoint the Director. The success of this scheme very largely depends upon the abilities of the Director, and I hope the man appointed to that position will prove to be a very efficient man indeed. If the man controlling an organisation is in the chair, he has power to control and direct affairs in a very much more efficient manner.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I hope the Minister will not accept the amendment. This is a Primary Producers' Organisation Bill, and, if any man can keep in touch with the Council of Agriculture, it is the Secretary for Agriculture. The Bill does not say that the present Minister is to be president for all time. There may be a change of Government as time goes on, and a more radical party may take our place—not coming from the Country party, because they are too conservative. Owing to the very fact that the Minister attends the meetings of the Council of Agriculture as president of the council, he will keep in touch with the men who comprise the council, and I take it that the men who comprise it will be the more intelligent farmers in the community. They will be a long way above the average, otherwise it will be a reflection on the men who put them in that position. If the Council of

Agriculture is comprised of the more intelligent farmers, does anyone think for a moment that the Minister is going to exert any influence over them? It is a reflection upon the farming community in general to say that twenty men elected by the farmers are going to be swayed by the Secretary for Agriculture. If the men who claim to represent the farmers of Queensland want to see good and effective work done, they want the Secretary for Agriculture, whoever he may be, as president of the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): The statement of the hon. member for Bowen indicates very plainly why the Secretary for Agriculture should not be chairman of the Council of Agriculture. In the first place, the hon. member stated that it was a reflection on the members of the Council of Agriculture to say that the Minister would influence them. It is a reflection on the intelligence of the Council to say that the Council of Agriculture will not be capable of choosing their own chairman. Apart altogether from that, the chairman of the Council, particularly if he knows the whole ins and outs of the working of the Government, must naturally have some influence over the Council. In fact, every chairman of any body has a certain amount of influence over and above that of the ordinary member, and I am sure that the Council of Agriculture will elect the best chairman. I am sure the hon. member for Bowen would not suggest for one moment that the Council of Agriculture will choose as their chairman the Secretary for Agriculture, whoever he may be, if he is not the best man. The man who really does the work is the man who should be appointed to the chair.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): During the second reading debate on the Bill, we were informed by the Minister that he would be prepared to accept any reasonable amendment that came from this side. I do not think there can be any amendment more reasonable than the one proposed by the hon. member for Murilla, who seeks to give to the Council of Agriculture those sovereign rights that any self-respecting council should demand when they have the right to elect their own officers. Members of this party

[5.30 p.m.] are not supporting this amendment with the object of deposing

the Secretary for Agriculture from the chairmanship of the Council. What we are desirous of doing is to give the Council of Agriculture the right to select the Secretary for Agriculture if they so desire. It would be much better if the Minister was selected by the members of the Council, rather than that the position should be an *ex officio* one. How much better it would be for the members of the Council to know that the positions in the Council are elective instead of men being nominated. I trust that the Minister will see the wisdom of accepting the amendment, because it will operate in the best interests of the primary producers. I have no doubt that the present Minister will be elected chairman of the Council of Agriculture when it is formed, but there may come a time when we shall have a Secretary for Agriculture who is not entirely sympathetic with the primary producers, and, if such an occasion does arise, it will be a great advantage if the members of the council can elect their own chairman. I submit that the amendment is a reasonable one, and one which will improve the Bill, and I hope that the Minister will accept it.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I hope that the Minister will accept the amendment. If the Bill does not start with the acceptance of the farmers, it will never start at all. If the farmers are led to suspect that there is a certain political colour attached to the Bill, it will never do any good. The Council will want an executive to carry out their functions, and, as a general rule, the president is the main factor in any executive. It would be much better to cut any political influence out of the Bill altogether, and leave the Council free to elect their own president.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I wish to support the amendment of the hon. member for Murilla. The office of a member of the Council of Agriculture is not going to be a sinecure whoever the president and the members of the Council may be. The Secretary for Agriculture has quite enough work to do in controlling the activities in his department, without being asked to devote the tremendous amount of time he will have to spend if the Council of Agriculture is to be a success. The members of the Council of Agriculture should have an unfettered right of electing whoever they consider best suited to act as president, and who will devote the necessary time in order to make a success of the proposed organisation.

Mr. COLLINS: We will soon make a republican of you. (Laughter.)

Mr. TAYLOR: I am quite satisfied that we are making a real hard-shelled Tory of the hon. member for Bowen. (Renewed laughter.) I would not be surprised if we saw him over in the Queensland Club before long, amongst the red waistcoats. (Laughter.) It should be our endeavour to free the proposed organisation from any taint of what may be termed political control or influence. I quite recognise that the Government, who will find the whole of the money this year, and give a subsidy of £1 for £1 in subsequent years, should have a certain amount of representation; but I do not think that the appointment of the Secretary for Agriculture as president of the Council should be mandatory. As other speakers have said, the president and secretary of an organisation are practically the organisation to a great extent. The position which the Minister occupies as a member of the Cabinet is certain to have an influence on the deliberations of the Council of Agriculture. I hope that the Minister will see his way clear to accept the amendment, and allow the president to be elected by the members of the Council.

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

AYES, 32.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Huxham
„ Bertram	„ Jones, A. J.
„ Bulcock	„ Land
„ Collins	„ Larcombe
„ Conroy	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Pease
„ Coyne	„ Riordan
„ Dash	„ Ryan
„ Dunstan	„ Smith
„ Ferricks	„ Stopford
„ Foley	„ Theodore
„ Forde	„ Weir
„ Gilday	„ Wellington
„ Gillies	„ Wilson
„ Hartley	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. F. A. Cooper and Mr. Weir.

Mr. Taylor.]

	NOES, 31.
Mr. Appell	Mr. Kerr
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ King
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Logan
„ Bell	„ Macgregor
„ Brand	„ Maxwell
„ Cattermull	„ Morgan
„ Clayton	„ Nott
„ Corser	„ Peterson
„ Costello	„ Robert, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Warren
„ Jones, J.	

Tellers: Mr. Costello and Mr. Deacon.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): If that amendment had been carried, I intended to move a consequential amendment, but as it was defeated, there is no necessity for me to move the other amendment which I had circulated.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have an amendment in subclause (7) in regard to the quorum. I move the omission of the words "any six," on line 43, page 3, with a view to inserting the words "a majority of." The subclause will then read—

"Subject to this Act a majority of members of the Council shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the council."

I may say that this amendment was suggested by a resolution of the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I am glad to see that the Minister has taken advantage of one of the suggestions which I made on the second reading. He has now provided that a majority of the members of the Council shall form a quorum, which is much better than leaving it at six members.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That shows the reasonable spirit in which I meet you.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, in some of the minor details.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: This is not a minor detail.

Mr. VOWLES: It is a detail. I might point out where there is something wrong in connection with the forming of a quorum. Clause 6 of the schedule provides—

"The Council, a district council, or local association may make by-laws with respect to the times for holding meetings, the summoning and adjournment of meetings, the number of members that shall constitute a quorum at any meeting," etc.

It will be necessary to strike that out, because the quorum is already provided for in the Act. I am perfectly satisfied to accept the amendment of the Minister. It is really better than we expected. I pointed out on the second reading that a quorum of six was far too small in a council of twenty-five; and, as the Government have five nominees on the Council who will always be present that would leave them, perhaps, five out of nine, and, from a Government policy point of view, it would be a majority. However, I am quite willing to accept the alteration suggested by the Minister.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): I have an amendment in paragraph (d) in subclause

[*Mr. Morgan.*

(3), page 4. I move the insertion of the word "district" before the word "Council," or line 3, and the insertion, after the word "Council," of the words—

"for which he is the representative."

The subclause provides that a memorial may be presented to the Governor in Council signed by three-fourths of the Council for the removal of a member. I do not think it is right that the Council of Agriculture should have that power. The district council elects the representatives to the Council of Agriculture, and it may elect a man who may turn out to be unsatisfactory in every respect so far as the district council is concerned, although the Council of Agriculture may approve of him. It seems to me that it is the district council who should decide whether a representative shall be removed or not; and I think, therefore, it is necessary that the Minister should accept the amendment. If we leave the clause as it is, a representative may be unsatisfactory and unworthy, yet the district council will have to put up with him as their representative for possibly three years. They will not know whether he is satisfactory or not when he is first elected, but after six months they may discover that he is not fulfilling the duties he was appointed to carry out. I think my amendment will improve the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think it is desirable to make this amendment. The people in the district may make a mistake in electing a man, but it is the Council of Agriculture, who have to work with him, who will appraise his value. If, in the opinion of the executive of the organisation, he is not a suitable man to carry out his duty, then it rests with that body to say so, and not for the district council. The memorial must be signed by three-fourths of the members of the Council of Agriculture, and I think that is a sufficient safeguard. I do not think the amendment is desirable, although I quite understand the point of view of the hon. member for Port Curtis. After a member is elected to the council, it is for that body to appraise his value.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not agree with that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): I am not satisfied with the Minister's answer. I am sorry that I did not have time to circulate my amendment, so that the Secretary for Agriculture could have given it mature consideration. To my mind, it is an important amendment. The Council of Agriculture may think that a representative is doing all right. He may be unnoticed amongst them, and he may be a "dud." He may not be bringing forward matters which the district council require to be considered; and, as the district council put him there, they should have the power to ask for his removal. Otherwise, they may have to wait for three years before they can get rid of him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They elect him in the first place.

Mr. FLETCHER: When they elect him they may not know how he is going to succeed. It is only after he has been a member that they can see what he is like, and they should be given a chance to remove him. I think this provision is on all-fours with allowing members on the front bench to

object to one of the members of the House. It should be a matter for the constituency to say whether a man shall be retained or whether he shall be dispensed with, and I hope the Minister will reconsider his decision.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I cannot understand why the Minister will not accept the amendment, which, after all, only embodies a principle which the Government support. It is simply the "recall," and every member opposite supports that principle in the Labour platform. It seems to me that members opposite are hypocritical upon this question, as they are on many other questions. After all, who is the best judge of a man's qualifications to represent any body of people—the people with whom he sits or the people he represents? So long as he satisfactorily represents the people who sent him to the Council, and breaks no law and commits none of the disqualifications specified, he should remain a member; but it is only a fair thing that his own electors should be his judges.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I appeal to the Minister to give this matter further consideration. I take it that this clause places upon the Council the very onerous duty of asking one of their members to resign. If the district council are absolutely dissatisfied with the representative they have sent to the Council of Agriculture, surely they have the right to ask for his resignation and the power to elect another representative. Suppose there is a particularly obstreperous man on the Council, who is making himself particularly disagreeable. He may be acting in perfect accordance with the wishes of his district council, yet, by a majority of the Council of Agriculture, he can be put out and the district council called upon to elect another member in his place. The Secretary for Agriculture should give the question very much more consideration than he has up to the present. The people who deal with the representatives they send to the Council are undoubtedly those who form the district council, and, so long as the man they send is carrying out their wishes and ideals, surely the central council should not have power to put him out. If the Minister had the power, he would put half of the Country party out of this House to-morrow. If the Government party took a vote as to whether they would eject the leader of the Opposition from the House altogether and get his electorate to choose somebody else, it would be an absolutely ridiculous state of affairs. And, believe me, we would do a similar thing by the Government party if we had the chance. (Laughter.) Since we wish to perfect the Bill, and as I am asking for the support of the country people to a Bill of this kind, it seems to me to be the right and proper thing to give the district council the absolute right to say whether their representative is giving satisfaction or not.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I certainly agree with the amendment, and I hope the Minister may yet see his way to accept it. It would be a very pernicious principle to allow any elected body, whether the Council of Agriculture or any other, to say that any member of that body—who had been elected by another body—should be ejected from their deliberations. Yet that is what we are asked to approve in this clause.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The amendment simply transfers the power to the district council?

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes; it simply gives back to the people who elected the representative to the Council the right to say that he shall retire, if they are not satisfied with his work.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would like to see this provision cut out altogether, because I think it places too great a power in the hands of the Governor in Council. It gives him power, merely upon a memorial from three-fourths of the members of the Council, to remove any representative. I do not know that it is in any other Act of Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is a power that applies to every public body.

Mr. MORGAN: It does not apply to members of Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Parliament has the right to remove a member after cause is shown.

Mr. MORGAN: That is quite a different matter altogether. I do not think the provision is required, but the amendment is ever so much better. In fact, when all is said and done, should we not go right back to the primary producers and give to three-fourths of the members of the local producers' associations the right to recall a representative on the Council of Agriculture?

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The paragraph is remarkable, because it merely says that the Governor in Council may, upon a memorial signed by three-fourths of the members of the Council, remove any representative. One would at least think that some good cause should be shown before a district council's wishes could be flouted and their nominee turned off the Council. The provision does not say that good cause shall be shown, or that the memorial may be presented only upon his misbehaviour or for any other good reason. It merely says, "upon a memorial." Why should a man be "outed" under those circumstances? He may be actuated by the very best of motives, and he may be representing his district council perfectly. They, on the other hand, may not be in sympathy on various points with the Council of Agriculture, and, surely, unless the representative has misbehaved himself, he should be entitled to continue to sit and represent the wishes of the people who elected him. I consider that it would be better to have the paragraph omitted altogether, because it is too indefinite, and the principle is wrong.

The Government refused to sanction a [7 p.m.] request for the "recall" in a previous Bill, and, if they would not consult the electors on that principle, why should the Council have the power, without consulting the electors, to get rid of any member because he is obnoxious to them? The Government are practically recognising the principle of the "recall," not by the persons who elect the representatives, but by a representative's co-members of the Council. Surely the persons who have the right to recall a member are those who send him there—not the representatives of other districts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would it be satisfactory to you if we delete the subclause altogether?

Mr. VOWLES: That will suit me.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): I would not mind the deletion of the subclause if no amendment had been moved; but the amendment is absolutely vital. If this were a scheme of long standing, it would not so

Mr. Fletcher.]

much matter; but at the initiation it is quite possible to have a representative from a district council comprising only a few representatives of local producers' associations. As time goes on and new local producers' associations are formed, the representatives of those associations on the district council may swell to three times the number which existed when the Council of Agriculture was elected, and the new members may absolutely disapprove of the district representative on the Council of Agriculture and the work he is performing. Seeing that he can be appointed for three years, they may have to wait two and a-half years before they can effect a change in their representation. It may possibly wreck the scheme in that particular district. We do not want to see the scheme wrecked; we are out to make it a success if possible, and to make this as safe a Bill as we possibly can. We are asking for the Council of Agriculture to be formed as soon as possible, and it is quite likely that the representatives from the district councils will be sent forward to the Council of Agriculture before the district has been thoroughly organised. This provision may never be used, but it is absolutely necessary that it should be there.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I am inclined to favour the withdrawal of the subclause, as it leaves the way open to a good many abuses, and is more likely to do injury than good. The clause as it stands in the Bill is not required, and it should be withdrawn.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I see no necessity for the subclause in the Bill. I would prefer that it be omitted altogether, and I hope the Minister will do that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I agree with that.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand that the hon. member for Port Curtis still insists on his amendment?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes.

Mr. NOTT (*Stanley*): I hope the Minister will accept the amendment moved by the hon. member for Port Curtis. It is very desirable that the subclause should be retained and that the amendment should also be adopted. There may be an election of members representing the sugar, dairying, cotton, and wheat interests, and probably a number of members on the Council of Agriculture may desire to get rid of a person who has been elected to represent the maizegrowing interests. That man may have been elected from a certain district with express instructions to press for certain things that are required in that district. It may be possible, but I do not think it is very probable, that the majority of the men elected to the Council will represent one or two industries, and they may conspire to get rid of the man elected in the interests of the maizegrowers, and that one representative would receive very slight consideration from the representatives of other industries. The Government will have not less than five nominees on the Council, and if the amendment is not accepted, there will be opportunities for intrigue, and the safer and better way of allowing representatives to remove a man for any reason is by the method suggested in the amendment.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): In the amendment it is sought to give the power of "recall" to district councils. Does the Min-

[*Mr. Fletcher.*

ister intend to accept the amendment? If there is a representative on the Council who is not suitable, why should he not be removed? It is not very likely that the right will be exercised, but it is the business solely of the representatives on the council. I think the Minister should consider the matter.

Amendment (*Mr. Fletcher*) put and negatived.

Question stated—That clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I understood the Minister to say that he would agree to the deletion of subclause (*d*).

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): We did not divide on the amendment, as we understood the Minister had agreed to the deletion of the subclause. We have different opinions on this side.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee have practically agreed to the retention of the whole of subclause (*d*) up to the word "the" on line 3, and it will not be in order now to move that the whole paragraph be deleted. If it is desired to omit the paragraph, the Bill will have to be recommitted.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The amendment was to insert the word "district" before the word "council."

The CHAIRMAN: And I declared that the "Noes" had it.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I never heard a single voice. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I beg to move the deletion of paragraph (*d*), page 4.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is not in order, as the Committee have already decided to insist on the retention of the clause up to the word "the" on line 3. An amendment can now only be moved subsequent to the word "council." If it is desired to omit subclause (*d*), there is only one way to do it, and that is by recommitting the clause.

Clause 4, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 5—"Appointment of Director of the Queensland Producers' Association"—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The clause at present provides—

"The Governor in Council—

(i.) Upon the recommendation of the council may from time to time appoint an officer to be called the Director of the Queensland Producers' Association, upon such terms and at such salary as the Governor in Council may determine."

I have circulated an amendment to omit the word "may" and substitute the word "shall," in order to make it mandatory so far as the Governor in Council is concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Surely you are not going to press that?

Mr. VOWLES: I am not going to press it, as it is scarcely the language to be used in connection with the Governor in Council. We do not see, more particularly in respect of the future, when the fund will be to some extent self-supporting, why the Governor in Council should have the appointment and the fixing of the salary. If the Council of Agriculture represent the various agricultural industries, they should be the best

persons to decide who is to be appointed and on what terms. There is no occasion for the Governor in Council or the Government to push themselves into that. They have the privilege of appointing the first Director, and I take it that the appointment will be renewed by the Council of Agriculture, or, at any rate, that they will carry out the appointment for the term agreed upon. The provisional Council will terminate at a definite period under this proposal, and the provisional councillors will then go out of office; but there is no reason why the Director also should go out of office. It would be far better to leave the fixing of the salary in the hands of the Council. I therefore move the omission, on line 10, of the words "Governor in."

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot accept the amendment. The provision that the Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture, appoint the Director and pay his salary appears to be quite safe. The same thing applies with regard to the removal of the Director from his office in case of incapacity or misbehaviour. The Director has really been selected by the provisional Council, and will be appointed by the Governor in Council, and I see no reason why that safeguard should be removed. In the first place, the Government will pay the whole of the salary for one year, and, in effect, will pay half the salary for five years, and, that being so, I think the Governor in Council should have this power.

Mr. MORGAN (Murilla): It will be noticed that the clause provides that the Director may be appointed by the Governor in Council, upon the recommendation of the Council—

"upon such terms and at such salary as the Governor in Council may determine."

But the Governor in Council may appoint the Director "upon such terms and at such salary" without consulting the Council. The recommendation of the Council only applies to the appointment; but the Governor in Council will have power, even against the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture, to fix whatever salary they like and appoint the Director on such terms as they may think fit.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know that would not be done.

Mr. MORGAN: It may be done. We ought to make the matter clear in the Bill.

THE PREMIER: You have a rational Government in office.

Mr. MORGAN: That is a matter of opinion. We do not think this Government will be here very long, and we do not think it is rational. The Minister will agree with me that the appointment does not rest on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It will in practice.

Mr. MORGAN: It may in practice, but not in accordance with the Bill. If the appointment was to be made on the recommendation of the Council, I would not object. A most important function is being taken from the Council, whose duty it should be to appoint the Director and fix his salary. It has been said that the whole success of this scheme will depend on the Director of

Agriculture. I agree that the success or otherwise of the scheme may depend upon the ability of the man who is appointed Director, which is the most important position created under the Bill. The Minister would be wise to accept the suggestion I make.

Mr. WARREN (Murrumba): It seems to me that there is altogether too much "Governor in Council" in this clause. I do not see why there should be any difficulty in allowing the Council of Agriculture to appoint a Director and fix his salary, and it would be only right for the Minister to accept the amendment. The Director, secretary, and organisers will all be the servants of the Council of Agriculture, and it is only right that the Council should have full powers to appoint those officers and fix their salaries. I do not think there is anything political in it at all; but, looking at it from a business point of view, the Council should have full control over their officers.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (Pittsworth): I hope the Minister will accept the amendment. The Premier told us to-day that for the first twelve months the Government will finance the undertaking, and for four years afterwards it is expected that the Government will find £1 for every £1 found by the people affected by the Act. There can be no logical objection to the Council of Agriculture fixing the salary and terms of office of the director without referring the matter to the Governor in Council.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (East Toowoomba): According to subclause (ii), the Council of Agriculture can recommend the suspension or dismissal of the Director. In that case, the Council might also be entrusted with his appointment and with the fixing of his salary.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the leader of the Opposition will withdraw his amendment, I will move the insertion of an amendment to make the latter part of the subclause read—

"the Governor in Council may, on a like recommendation, determine."

That will give the Council of Agriculture power to make a recommendation regarding the salary and terms of the appointment of director.

Mr. VOWLES (Dalby): I am quite agreeable to that amendment, and I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Vowles*), by leave, withdrawn.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I move the insertion of the words "on a like recommendation" before the word "determine," on line 11.

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to.

Mr. GREEN (Townsville): I beg to move the omission of the words "Governor in" from line 21, in subclause (3). If the amendment is agreed to, subsequent amendments will be necessary in the clause. The Council of Agriculture should have power to appoint their various administrative officers, such as secretary, organisers, instructors, and experts. We feel sure that the best men will be appointed by the producers to administer the affairs of the Council, and it can be safely left to them to see that they choose the best officers to carry out the work of the organisation. More power should be given to the

Mr. Green.]

council to appoint its own officers, and by so doing the Government would remove from this part of the clause any suggestion of political influence. I am pleased to realise, from the consideration which the Secretary for Agriculture is giving to our amendments, that he is desirous that this measure shall be free from political control, and by accepting this amendment he will only be extending that consideration.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In view of the fact that the subclause deals with the appointment of the council's officers, I accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Green*) agreed to.

Mr. GREEN (Townsville): I move the omission, from lines 21 and 22, page 4, of the words—

“Upon the recommendation of the Council, also.”

This is consequential on the amendment which the Minister has accepted.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. GREEN (Townsville): I move the insertion, after the word “Act” in line 25, page 4, of the following words:—

“and with such salaries, wages, and allowances as may be determined by the Council.”

That will give the Council absolute control over the expenditure upon its officers. The Council has the appointment of the officers, and I think it only right that it should have also the right to say what salaries and allowances they shall receive.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This is really a consequential amendment. The Council, having the power to appoint its officers, should also take the responsibility regarding their remuneration. I accept the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 6—“*Functions and objects of the Council*”—

Mr. CORSER (Burnett): I have a rather important amendment to move in this clause. The whole of the machinery of the Bill is designed for the union of the primary producers for one object, without which the measure would be of no use at all. That object is to increase the possibilities with regard to the primary producer and to give him a fair remuneration. The clause reads—

“The functions and objects of the Council shall be to co-operate with the department, district councils, local associations, and other bodies and persons in”—

and then follow certain directions in which their functions and objects are to lie. I move the insertion, in line 37, after the words I have read, of the following words:—

“(i.) Effecting the stabilisation of prices of primary produce for the purpose of ensuring to the primary producer a fair remuneration for his labour, and that where necessary such prices shall be based on the cost of production.”

Without the amendment there appears to be nothing in the Bill to say that the producer shall be entitled to a fair remuneration for his labour, and it should be carried in the interests of the dairy farmer, the wheat-grower, the cane farmer, the fruit farmer, and the grazier in order to bring about those

[*Mr. Green.*

results which were promised by the Premier when he launched his scheme. [7.30 p.m.] The amendment only makes possible those things to which reference was made by the Premier at the conference. I notice from the reports that the Premier said—

“Most of the factors that operated now adversely against the dairymen in this State could be overcome by intelligent consideration of the difficulties, and by the formation of a definite policy, and adherence to that policy by the farmers and by the Government. The industry itself must be stabilised. Prices, at any rate, must be stabilised; and he agreed heartily with what His Excellency said about the necessity of assuring to the producers in the agricultural industry a fair remuneration for their toil. (Hear, hear!) Every man at least was entitled to that. No man, at any rate, who had been, as he had been, largely interested in stabilising the conditions of industrial workers could contend against the most essential and indispensable worker in the community having his remuneration stabilised. (Hear, hear!) It was not outside the bounds of possibility for the dairyman, in conjunction with the Government, to bring about conditions that would lead to the stabilisation of prices in their industry.”

On that occasion the hon. gentleman was speaking to the primary producers assembled in conference. We want to carry out those promises, and I am moving an amendment which is going to make possible that which the Premier propounded.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Why not put the whole speech in the Bill? (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: We want actions, not words, and this is the time for action. I am going to assist the Premier in trying to bring about what he claims this measure is going to be—something to stabilise prices.

Mr. COLLINS: You had better move the objective of our party.

Mr. CORSER: From what I can gather, there are two objectives in that party—one of which is the socialisation of industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORSER: Another objective is “Production for use and not for profit.” We are going to see that a fair return is possible, and this is the opportunity to secure it.

Mr. PEASE: The main objective is to stay on these benches. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: We want to make sure that the Bill is going to provide good things and not bad. We are not asking for anything which has not been promised or foreshadowed. The amendment merely makes possible what the Premier claims is the principle of the Bill; and I have very great pleasure in moving it.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is certainly no need for the amendment, because the functions of the Council of Agriculture permit that now.

Mr. CORSER: You would not define those functions if there were no limit.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: As indicating the powers of the Council of Agriculture, at the last meeting of the provisional Council a resolution was carried that the banana industry was in such a condition that a compulsory pool should be established. That was immediately given effect to by the

Department of Agriculture, who are now taking a poll of the banana-growers. If the necessary majority—75 per cent.—say they require a pool, the necessary legislation will be passed and the pool will be granted. That shows there is practically no limit to what the Council can do in an advisory way. I have no objection to accepting the amendment circulated by the leader of the Opposition. I understand that the hon. member who moved the amendment added to it some words—which I have not been able to grasp. If it meets the wishes of the leader of the Opposition, I am prepared to accept the amendment he has circulated.

Mr. CORSER: I will accept that. The amendment will now read—

“Effecting the stabilisation of prices of primary produce for the purpose of insuring to the primary producer a fair remuneration for his labour.”

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I suggest that the amendment should be inserted after line 38, and be made paragraph (ii.). Paragraph (i.) reads—

“Developing the rural industries.”

That is the general objective of this scheme, and the subsequent paragraphs deal with the details.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I ask leave to move the insertion of the amendment to follow line 38, as suggested by the Premier.

Amendment (*Mr. Corser*), after line 38, agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 7—“*Constitution of Districts*”—put.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I took the opportunity of standing up, Mr. Chairman, before you declared the last clause passed. I have circulated an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: To which clause is the hon. member referring?

Mr. KERR: Clause 6.

The CHAIRMAN: I very much regret to state that that clause has been passed. When an hon. member rises he should address the Chair.

Mr. KERR: I thought you were quite prepared to receive what I had to say.

The CHAIRMAN: I distinctly put the question on clause 6. If the hon. member wishes to catch my eye, he should address me.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I would ask the permission of the Committee to be allowed to move this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should consult the Minister in charge of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no objection to the amendment. The clause can be recommitted in order to allow the hon. member to move his amendment.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I beg to move the omission on page 5, clause 7, line 41, of the words “the prescribed terms,” with a view to inserting the words, “a period not exceeding three years.”

That principle has already been recognised in connection with the appointments on the Council of Agriculture, as it is provided that a member shall be elected for a period not exceeding three years.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Morgan*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): Subclause (3) provides—

“The duties and functions of a district council shall be—

* * * * *

(iv.) Such other duties and functions as the council may determine.”

Does that refer to the Council of Agriculture?

The PREMIER: It means such other duties as may come within their power.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 8—“*Local producers' associations*”—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I beg to move the omission on line 21 of the word “may,” with a view to inserting the word “shall.” The constitution provides that the Council shall register as a local producers' association any association of not less than fifteen primary producers, but it should be obligatory on the Council to register any local producers' association where the provisions of the Act have been fully complied with. The Council should not have the power to discriminate. The very fact that people band themselves together and form themselves into associations should be quite sufficient proof that they are bonâ fide primary producers. If they are bonâ fide primary producers and they have their local associations, they should be entitled, as a matter of right, to the benefits under this Bill.

The PREMIER: So they are, if they adopt this scheme and conform to the constitution laid down.

Mr. VOWLES: How do they adopt this scheme?

The PREMIER: A primary producers association might be formed for an entirely different object, and you should not force the Council to accept them.

Mr. VOWLES: The Bill is meant to apply to all primary producers, and the franchise is extended to primary producers who have banded themselves together under this Act to form local producers' associations.

The PREMIER: They must conform to the objects set out in the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: Applications must be made in the prescribed form, and I take it that in doing that they are subscribing to the principles contained in the Bill. Why should not the Council be compelled to register them instead of being able to say “Yes” or “No”?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think that it is desirable to accept the amendment, unless there is a proviso to the effect that the primary producers subscribe to the aims and objects of the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: Application must be made in the prescribed form.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will accept the amendment on that condition.

Amendment (*Mr. Vowles*) agreed to.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I have an amendment circulated in the name of the hon. member for Drayton. I beg to move the insertion, after line 35, page 6, of the following words:—

“Provided that, notwithstanding anything in this Act, where the owner or governing body of any factory, mill, or

Mr. Corser.]

business within a district is called upon to pay and does pay any levy under this Act on behalf of a primary producer supplying produce to such factory, mill, or business, every such primary producer on whose behalf any such levy is so paid shall, by reason of that fact alone, be and be deemed to be a member of a local producers' association, and shall be entitled to the right to vote and all other privileges as such member."

The amendment is to make it clear that, where a primary producer is a supplier to a factory outside a district where a district council has been constituted, and is levied upon, he shall be entitled to a vote.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have heard no good argument why this amendment should be accepted. The hon. member for Mirani proposes to move an amendment further on providing for a poll to be taken before a levy is made, and I propose to add to that amendment that, at the request of a certain number of primary producers, a poll shall be taken before any levy is made. I hope the amendment just moved will not be pressed, as it is not necessary in view of what I have just stated. It is really bringing men into associations whether they want to come in or not.

Amendment (*Mr. Corser*) put and negatived.

Clause 8, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 9—"Rules for conduct of Council, district councils, and local associations"—put and passed.

Clause 10—"Council of Agriculture and every district council to be a body corporate"—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I beg to move the insertion of the word "securities" after the word "take," on line 27. If that is agreed to, I propose to move the omission of the word "securities" on line 28. A good deal of doubt has been expressed in certain quarters as to the meaning of that word "take"—whether it is a technical word in connection with the holding of land or whether it is a general power given to seize.

The PREMIER: Do you think we want to create a class of Bolsheviks amongst the farmers?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know what you want to do; but I know you would not agree to the term "on just terms" on one occasion. (Laughter.) The difficulty can be overcome by making the clause read—

"The council and each district council shall be capable in law of suing and being sued, and shall have power to take securities, purchase, sell, exchange, lease, and hold lands, goods, chattels, and any other property whatsoever."

The PREMIER: Why should they have power to "take securities"?

Mr. VOWLES: They are the only words you can apply to securities. If you leave the clause as it is, it might mean that they would have power to take property, and I do not want it to be open to any doubt whatever.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not see that there is any occasion for the word "take" to be there at all, and I prefer to omit it. If that will meet the wishes of the hon. gentleman, I will move the omission of the word "take."

[*Mr. Corser.*

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I will agree to that, and beg leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I beg to move the omission, on line 27, of the word "take."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 11 and 12 put and passed.

Clause 13—"Provisional Councils"—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "prescribed," on line 9, of the words—

"but in no case shall such office continue after three months from the passing of this Act."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is an impossible time.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is absolutely necessary that a time limit should be fixed. If the Minister will accept six months, I am quite prepared to agree to that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Queensland has to be organised and the new Council has to be elected.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In the time indicated there would be sufficient districts organised from which members can be elected to the Council to carry on the work which is being carried out now by the provisional Council. It is quite a reasonable thing to provide that within six months we shall have a Council, part of which, at any rate, has been elected by the members of the organisation. Under the present state of affairs, the provisional Council may run for twelve months or two years; they may be there for three years; and, although we are told they have been elected by the farmers, they have also been largely elected by the Minister.

The PREMIER: Make it twelve months from the time the provisional Council was constituted on 24th March last.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If the Minister will agree to that, I will alter my amendment accordingly.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That will be acceptable.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I beg to move the insertion, in line 9, after the word "prescribed," of the words—

"in no case shall any member of the Council or any district council continue in office after the twenty-fourth day of March, 1923."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 13, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 14—"Regulations"—

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I have an important amendment to move in this clause. While recognising the very good work that may be accomplished by the Bill, it seems to me that there may possibly be some branches of agriculture which may consider that they are sufficiently well served by their own organisations, or for other reasons

[8 p.m.] may think that it is to their advantage to remain out of the scheme. I understood the Minister to say that the scheme is entirely voluntary, and my amendment will ensure that any section which considers itself already sufficiently well organised, and that there is no need for

it to come in and share the liabilities which will be incurred under this scheme, may remain out of it. I move the omission, on lines 21 to 26. of the words—

“Providing, if deemed desirable, for a pool of primary producers either generally or in any particular industry or section of industry or in any particular district or locality before any levy is made”

with a view to the insertion of the words—

“Provided that before any levy is made on the primary producers in any industry or section of industry a poll of such primary producers shall be held as prescribed, and, if upon such poll the majority of votes is against the making of such levy, no such levy shall be made upon the primary producers in that industry.”

The amendment will ensure that no agricultural industry or section of it shall be taxed against their will. I recognise that once an industry comes in, it may not be a fair thing that, while some are paying towards a fund for the benefit of the industry, others should be allowed to remain out. But if this amendment is carried, it will mean that an industry or section of an industry shall remain out, so that there will be no selfishness on the part of a few by taking advantage of others who contribute. As I said before, some industries may think they are already sufficiently well served by their existing organisations. It seems to me that we already have in the organisations connected with the sugar industry nearly all the functions which are declared in this Bill to be the functions of the Council. In clause 6, some of the functions and objects of the council are stated to be—

“Making research on subjects pertaining to the rural industries. Securing effective action for the controlling of diseases and pests generally.”

In the sugar industry we have already provided for those things. We have our own sugar experiment farms; we have our own entomologists, to whose salaries we contribute; and we also have publications issued giving information relative to the industry. We have our own report from the sub-branch of the Department of Agriculture in the case of sugar experiment farms. Another function of the Council of Agriculture is stated to be—

“Encouraging and assisting in the promotion of farmers' co-operative associations and enterprises.”

All that applies to the sugar industry. We have now two powerful bodies in the industry comprising, I think I am safe in saying, 85 per cent. of the sugar-growers. Those organisations look after our interests. Assistance is also given in regard to the sale of the produce of the sugar industry. We sell our cane to the millers, under the jurisdiction and control of the Central Cane Prices Board. There are local boards which decide the terms and conditions of sale. Then, again, if there is any dispute between the buyer and the seller, an appeal is allowed to the Central Cane Prices Board. We are at present working in the sugar industry under an agreement with the Commonwealth Government, which arranges the selling of our sugar, and it looks as if that agreement will be continued in some form or other. Of course, I quite realise that, if anything happens to that agreement, that might be a

reason for us to come within the scope of this measure. Furthermore, those who come under the operations of the Bill undertake certain responsibilities. For instance, I find that they will be liable to pay whatever levies the Council of Agriculture, on which they will have very small representation, may decide upon. Then, again, the Council of Agriculture has the power to impose a fine of £50, and lower down in the clause we find that a penalty of £100 is provided for. Taking into consideration that there are industries already well organised—and the one I know best has dipped pretty heavily into the pockets of its members already—if they desire to remain out of the organisation, they should be allowed to do so. At the present time, in some districts the cane-growers are paying 1d. per ton for the sugar experiment stations, and also a levy of 2d. per ton for the upkeep of the local and Central Cane Prices Boards, and a further 3d. per ton to their own organisation. I would like to know from the Minister, if the sugar industry does come under the provisions of the Act, will the growers still have to pay the levies for the upkeep of the experiment stations and the upkeep of the cane prices boards?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a separate thing altogether. The sugar experiment stations will still go on, and a special collection will have to be made from the growers.

Mr. SWAYNE: It is a fair thing for any branch of agriculture which thinks that its interests can be served in some other way, that it should be allowed to remain outside the provisions of this Act. It has been remarked that this is a voluntary measure, and, as it will ensure taxation, the primary producers should be able to say whether they are willing to be taxed or not. Any fifteen producers engaged in an industry can bring that industry under the Act. While it is desirable to open the door of entrance as wide as possible, if any industry wishes to remain out, it should be allowed to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have a prior amendment to that of the hon. member for Mirani. I beg to move the insertion, after the word “authorities,” on line 49, of the words—

“the appointment of associated members on such standing committees without the right to vote.”

For instance, Mr. Ellis, the secretary of the Southern Queensland Fruit Growers' Association, is at present an associated member of the provisional council, and Mr. Graham, the dairy expert, is also a member to advise on matters connected with the dairying industry. It might be advisable to appoint these gentlemen as associate members of the Council of Agriculture, and there may be other experts whom it is desirable to have on the Council. They will not have any vote, but will simply be associate members.

Mr. CORSER: Is it necessary that all the associate members shall be Government officers?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not necessarily. Mr. Ellis is not a Government officer. He is the secretary for the Fruit Growers' Association.

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): On line 18, page 9, reference is made to the imposition

Mr. Deacon.]

of fines not exceeding £50. I think that such a fine is excessive, and I do not think that any board should be given such power. To give an illustration of what might be done, I will read a letter which was sent by the State Wheat Board to an old lady in my electorate. I will not mention the name, but any hon. member can see it if he wishes. The letter reads—

“Dear Madam,—I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of recent date relative to the matter of the delivery of your wheat to the Wheat Board. I would like to point out to you the penalty to which you have left yourself liable by failure to send in a grower's return, and at our next board meeting it is quite possible that the board will insist on inflicting the full fine of £50 for non-compliance with the proclamation made away back in December of last year.

“How on earth you people expect the board to arrive at an estimate of the crop it has to handle when growers' returns are not furnished until twelve months after they are due, is more than I can understand. At this stage of the proceedings the board would be quite justified in refusing to have anything to do with your wheat or make any payments whatsoever in connection therewith, because of your non-compliance with the request made dozens of times previously.

“With a view to securing the most lenient view that the board might take, I am attaching hereto the necessary forms for immediate completion, and again have to warn you that should you fail to send these returns in by the next mail back, no further leniency will be given.

“Yours faithfully,

“H. R. BEVERLEY, Secretary.”

That lady only had six bags of wheat.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do you suggest the maximum penalty should be?

Mr. DEACON: £5.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Make it £20.

Mr. DEACON: Very well. I move the omission of the word “fifty,” on line 19, with a view to inserting the word “twenty.”

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) agreed to.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I now desire to move the amendment standing in my name. I have already read the amendment and spoken on it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The amendment meets with my approval, with the omission of the words “or section of industry,” which the hon. member has added to the amendment as circulated, and with the addition, after the word “industry,” where it first occurs, of the following words—

“at the request in writing of at least one hundred primary producers in that industry.”

If those words are omitted, the amendment will read—

“Provided that before any levy is made on the primary producers in any industry, at the request in writing of at least one hundred primary producers in that industry, a poll of such primary producers

[*Mr. Deacon.*

shall be held as prescribed, and if upon such poll the majority of votes is against the making of such levy, no such levy shall be made upon the primary producers in that industry.”

My suggestion really embodies the principle in the Local Authorities Acts, by which, before a loan poll is taken, a certain percentage of the ratepayers must demand it. In this case I think it is sufficient safeguard to require that 100 primary producers—sugar-growers, or dairy farmers, or as the case may be—shall demand a poll before one need be taken.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I accept the suggestion made by the Minister.

Amendment, by leave, amended accordingly, and agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I move the omission, on line 35, page 9, of the words “one hundred,” with a view to inserting the word “fifty.” I think a maximum penalty of £50 is sufficient.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I accept that amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 15 and 16 put and passed.

Schedule—“*Rules governing proceedings and business of the Council of Agriculture, district councils, and local producers' associations.*”

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The words, “the Council,” on line 44, page 10, should be deleted. I have already referred to this amendment as being necessary, as we have provided for a quorum of the Council in the Bill itself. I therefore move the omission of those words.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I accept the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It will now be necessary to omit the words, “the president of the Council or” from line 49, page 10. That is consequential on the amendment of the hon. member for Dalby.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I move the insertion, after the word “association,” in line 31, page 11, of the following words:—

“A detailed account of expenditure shall once at least in each year be furnished by the Council and every district council to the Auditor-General, showing in detail the salaries, expenses, and allowances, on whatever account, paid to each member and officer thereof, with the names of all members and officers to whom such payments have been made. Any member of a local producers' association shall be entitled to be furnished with a true copy of such account upon application accompanied by the proper postage stamps.”

The intention of the amendment is plain upon its face. Provision is made in the schedule for the auditing of accounts, and we claim that the persons who are interested are entitled to all details.

[8.30 p.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Although I do not think it is really necessary, I have no objection to accepting the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Vowles*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I move the omission of the word "twenty," on line 46, in paragraph 14—"Obstructing execution of the Act"—and the insertion of the word "five." That will reduce the penalty from £20 to £5.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no objection to that.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I move the deletion, in paragraph 16 (2)—"Application of penalties"—of the words—

"Except where it is by this Act provided to the contrary."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I move the omission in paragraph 16 (3)—"Penalties"—of the word "twenty," and the insertion of the word "five."

Amendment agreed to.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved—

"That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of further considering clauses 4, 5, and 7."

Question put and passed.

RECOMMITTAL.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

Clause 4—"Constitution of Council of Agriculture"—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I move the omission of the word "or," on line 54, page 3, and the omission of sub-clause (d) on page 4, lines 1 to 4, which reads—

"Upon a memorial to the Governor in Council signed by at least three-fourths in number of the members of the Council praying that he be removed from his office of member."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as further amended, put and passed.

Clause 6—"Functions and objects of the Council"—

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I move the insertion, after line 31, of the following amendment—which has been agreed to by the Minister—

"(xv.) Making research on the subject of the utilisation of rural products in manufactories; co-ordinating and assisting in the promotion of such industries by the extension of the Bureau of Information, and, where necessary, convening conferences for this purpose."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as further amended, put and passed.

Clause 7—"Constitution of districts; district councils"—

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): I move the insertion, after line 44, of the following subclause—

"Upon a memorial to the Governor in Council signed by at least three-fourths in number of the members of any local

producers' association, praying that the representative of such local producers' association on a district council may be removed from office—as their representative he shall be so removed."

This is the same provision which I did my best to have accepted in clause 4. It aims at providing for the recall of representatives from the local producers' associations to the district councils. The Bill provides that those representatives can be appointed for any period up to three years, and in that I see the possibility of a very great danger. If the scheme were an old-established one and had been well developed, it would not matter so much. It has yet to be developed; it is on its trial; and in its initiation you are bound to have local producers' associations springing up with only a small percentage of the primary producers in those localities members of the associations. After a representative is appointed to the district council, probably the number of primary producers in an association may be increased considerably, and the majority may then not approve of the representative already appointed to the district council, and they may want to recall him. The Bill provides that a representative may be appointed for any period up to three years, and, if a representative was quite unsuitable and unsatisfactory, and they could not change him for three years, it may have the effect of causing the people in a particular district to become disgusted with the whole scheme, and possibly it may be wrecked in that district. I have moved the amendment with a view to safeguarding any such contingency.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When the hon. member for Port Curtis forecasted his amendment on a previous occasion I had no opportunity of perusing it; but I certainly think now that it would be a dangerous thing to give power to local producers' associations to recall their representatives. I promise the hon. gentleman that I will urge upon the provisional Council that the first election to the district councils shall be for a term of twelve months. That was my original idea. Under the New South Wales Local Government Act it is provided that elections shall be for a term of twelve months on trial and, after expiration of that period, the term shall be three years. I will urge upon the provisional Council that regulations shall be made to that effect.

Mr. FLETCHER: Will you also urge upon the provisional Council that they shall make the same provision with respect to elections to the Council of Agriculture? I think it would be a wise provision in each case.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, I will urge upon the provisional Council that regulations be made to that effect in respect to both councils.

Mr. FLETCHER: Under those circumstances, with the permission of the Committee, I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 7, as amended, agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with further amendments.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 2nd August.

The House adjourned at 8.45 p.m.