

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 1922

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The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 11 a.m.

PRIMARY PRODUCTS POOLS BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3—"Power to declare commodity and extend Act to same"—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. M. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "Council" on line 46, of the words—

"Upon the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture."

That is really to provide that the Governor in Council will not take any steps to create a pool except on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture. This amendment has been suggested by the Council of Agriculture, and I think it is a wise provision.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I intended to move an amendment after the word "time" in line 47, as I think the growers should be allowed to have a say before any pool is created.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will be in order in moving his amendment at the proper time.

Mr. DEACON: It is possible to combine the two amendments. My amendment provides that the Governor in Council shall only create a pool—

"if requested so to do by a petition signed by a representative number of growers of any particular commodity."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is provision already made for petitions.

Mr. DEACON: That is in regard to a poll, but I desire that a petition may be sent in asking for the formation of a pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I think that is amply provided for, because the petitioners would make representations through their representatives on the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. DEACON: They might not all be represented. We should deal with the matter here. I think that the growers should have a voice in the matter, as they are the people most interested. The Council of Agriculture may not always be in accord with the growers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Hear hear!

Mr. DEACON: Why not allow the growers to have the first word? That could be done by allowing a petition from the growers to the Council of Agriculture. I hope the Minister will consider the advisability of accepting my suggested amendment, as it covers the same ground as the hon. gentleman's amendment, but would go further.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I would point out to the Minister that the Council of Agriculture, as it will be composed if the present scheme is a success, will represent no industries.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It will represent all agricultural industries.

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Mr. BEBBINGTON: Under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act, the Council of Agriculture, when it meets after an election, will represent a certain number of people engaged in the agricultural industries, but it will not represent any industry or any power behind it. If a vote of the members of the Council of Agriculture was taken to-day, 75 per cent. of them would be in favour of altering the Act and reverting to the amendment which I proposed, after first submitting it to the Minister, in the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill—that is, to make the Council of Agriculture representative of industries, instead of representing a lot of people who may be engaged in agriculture but who know nothing about the industry. These men devote their time and attention to production, but, beyond the production of the raw material, they take very little interest in the industry. I am going to ask the Minister, by way of question this afternoon, to bring in an amendment of the Primary Producers' Organisation Act, with which I believe the Minister himself and 75 per cent. of the members of the Council of Agriculture will agree. I have been talking to some of the members of the Council this morning, and they admit that the Act, as it stands, is absolutely powerless. I said to one member, "You must admit that the wider the franchise for the election of the members of the Council, the more risk you are taking of getting inefficiency on the Council." He replied, "You take the same risk in electing a member of Parliament." I said, "Yes, but the result would be worse."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you speaking of yourself?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am not reflecting on anyone. You take the same risk in everything. To avoid that risk, and to make sure that the Council of Agriculture is representative of industries, the Minister should amend the Primary Producers' Organisation Act and provide that the Council of Agriculture shall be representative of industries.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will confine himself to the amendment, which provides that the Governor in Council may declare any agricultural product to be a commodity for the purposes of the Act on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If the Government are going to spend £20,000 or £50,000 in electing a Council of Agriculture which when it is constituted is going to be inefficient, it would be better to spend the money in other directions. I would like the Minister to recall the pamphlets which he is sending out to the State schools. He is practically asking the teachers to act as organisers for the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will deal with the amendment.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am pointing out that the Council of Agriculture has no chance of dealing with this matter, and that it will be far better if the Minister will agree to alter the constitution of the Council. We have plenty of time to amend it before Parliament prorogues. When we see we have made a mistake we should rectify it, and I hope the Minister will take steps to make the Council efficient so that it can deal with this question, because under the present circumstances it cannot deal with it.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I think the Minister's amendment is desirable, but we might go a little further. There are several commodities which may be the subject matter of a pool, the producers of which commodities are not sufficiently represented on the Council of Agriculture. When you consider the vast areas throughout Queensland with only one representative on the Council, he must be a thoroughly competent man to know the details of every class of agriculture. The producers affected by a pool should have some say in the creation of the pool. I suggest that the Minister should leave the words as they are and then include the words proposed by the hon. member for Cunningham. The Governor in Council has the right to request, and the Council of Agriculture also has the right to request; but, if the Council is indifferent, we do not want to preclude the growers from putting their request before the Minister or the Governor in Council. If that is done, no harm can result. The petition of growers comes in at a later stage. We want to give the growers the right to initiate the business. We are going to amplify the clause now by including the Council of Agriculture, so why not go further and say that a representative number of growers in a locality may also make a request? I think there can be no harm in accepting the amendment indicated by the hon. member for Cunningham. I understand that the Minister is President of the Council of Agriculture, and he may be in touch with their desires, but I think he will appreciate the possibility that you cannot always expect to have on the Council a representative of an industry who is thoroughly in touch with all the men engaged in it, and for that reason I think the growers or the people who are to suffer or gain, as the case may be, should have their requests considered.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): Whilst I support the amendment, I think that the further amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham is desirable. After all, the Bill is supposed to be framed to meet the wishes of the growers. The leader of the Opposition has pointed out that there may not be a representative of a particular branch of industry on the Council; but, even if there is one, it does not follow that he will carry sufficient weight to be able to carry a request for a pool for the commodity concerned. He has to get the consent of the whole of the Council.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not of the whole—of a majority.

Mr. CORSER: Well, of the majority. May I remind the Minister that year after year we heard here of the great principle of the popular initiative and referendum. We have an opportunity of introducing that principle into this Bill. Why should the growers not have the right to initiate, as the Minister claimed on the second reading they would be able to do? I cannot see where the Minister can find any objection to the amendment of the hon. member for Cunningham, if the Bill is framed to do a fair thing by the grower and enable him to have some say in the marketing of his produce, and I feel sure that the Council of Agriculture would not object to such a broad-minded and democratic principle.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: There is nothing in the Bill to prevent the growers from presenting a petition either to the Council of Agriculture or to the Minister.

Mr. CORSER: There is nothing in the Bill to provide that they can, and that is what we want. This is the time when we should put in the Bill what we claim is a fair thing; we should not leave ourselves in the position where we shall have to try to read something into it afterwards. Here is the opportunity to accept a rider to the Minister's amendment to provide that the Minister may, upon an application by the growers, constitute a pool. Personally I think there is altogether too much of the Minister in the Bill. I would cut him out entirely, and leave it to the people concerned.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You surely would not cut the Government out?

Mr. CORSER: I think the Minister must realise that in true co-operation we would not have the Minister there at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member will see that his remarks have no connection with the clause.

Mr. CORSER: The measure should be left absolutely in the hands of the growers. We should give them all the power necessary to carry out the marketing of their products unhampered by any Government or Order in Council.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I hope that the Minister will accept the amendment of the hon. member for Cunningham.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not wish to restrict hon. members, but I think they will realise that, if I allow a general discussion on amendments that are to come later, the amendment which is before the Committee will be lost sight of. I suggest to the hon. member for Pittsworth that he discuss the amendment which is now before the Committee. When the hon. member for Cunningham exercises his right later on to move a further amendment, if he so desires, the hon. member for Pittsworth can express his views on that amendment.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: This amendment is not going to give to the growers the freedom that they should have under this legislation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What freedom will it take away?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: There are men who are making their living out of lucerne growing. Is there one representative of the lucerne-growers on the Council of Agriculture? Is there one man representing the interests of the potato-growers or any of those smaller industries out of which many men to-day are making a good living? I think the Minister has overlooked the fact that the Council of Agriculture is looking after the larger industries—the interests of the co-operative manufacturers of butter, cheese, bacon—it is looking after fruit-growing as a whole. I feel sure the Minister will acknowledge that there is not on that Council one man representing lucerne-growing. Consequently, it seems to be a ridiculous thing that lucerne-growers should have to ask a body upon which they have no representation for permission to form a pool. That body may say, "These men do not want a pool." The same thing applies to the potato-grower and the egg man. There is no one on the Council representing the men who are making a living out of poultry. If those men want to have

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an egg pool, they would have to go first of all to the Council of Agriculture. If the Council says, "We do not consider that these people should have a pool for eggs," what is going to be the position of the Minister? We are keen to see the Bill go through, but this is going to hamper the operations of the Bill. I trust that the Minister will withdraw this amendment, and later on accept the amendment of the hon. member for Cunningham, which will have the same effect as his, and, in my opinion, will be far more strengthening to the Bill. It gives the Minister absolute authority to act if a certain number of people who are directly interested in an industry ask for a pool. So far as I am aware, it was at the request of the Council of Agriculture that a poll was taken in connection with the formation of a banana pool. A disastrous result has followed. Some of those conditions might exist in connection with other pools that might be asked for. I hope the Minister will withdraw his amendment, and allow the growers to have the right to petition for a pool. The men who are interested in a particular industry should have the right to petition for a pool.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I am not opposing the amendment moved by the Minister, but I believe it should include a portion of the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham. Let me take the sugar industry, which is now working under an agreement made with the Commonwealth Government. Unfortunately, we are not at all sure that that agreement will be continued, and, if it is not, it might be desirable to bring that industry within the scope of the Bill. That industry is one of the most important agricultural industries that we have, yet I do not think it will have more than three representatives out of the twenty who constitute the Council of Agriculture, and, therefore, they will be in a very small minority. I think the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham should be incorporated in the amendment moved by the Minister, in order that an industry inadequately represented or perhaps unrepresented on the Council of Agriculture may petition for the formation of a pool. I do not see how the Minister can have any objection to that.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I understood the Minister to say that he was moving this amendment at the suggestion of the Council of Agriculture. Did I understand him to say that no pool will be formed unless on the recommendation of the Council?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the object of my amendment.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Unless the Minister is prepared to go further than that, I must oppose the amendment. I know that there are several industries which have no voice on the Council, and their interests would not be sufficiently safeguarded by the industries which are represented on the Council. I quite understand that the Council should have the right to make recommendations to the Minister, but I also think that the persons engaged in a particular industry should have the right to approach the Minister. A vote will have to be taken when a petition is presented. I heard the Honorary Minister say that those engaged in the industry could initiate a petition.

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They cannot initiate a petition unless the Minister proposes to establish a pool. They can then initiate a petition to prevent the pool operating. That is my interpretation. If I am wrong, then I would like to hear the Minister correct me.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would suggest to the Minister that we carry his amendment and then accept the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It seems to me to be inconsistent.

Mr. MORGAN: It does not interfere with the Minister's amendment at all. If the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham is adopted, it will enable persons engaged in an industry who are not represented on the Council of Agriculture to petition for a pool. I think the more liberal the Bill is made the better it will be. I think the Minister's idea is to give the growers every opportunity of forming pools if they so desire. The right to make a request for a pool should not be confined to the Council of Agriculture, but should be extended to those engaged in the industry concerned.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): Owing to the number of authorities that have been created in connection with the primary producers, it is difficult to ascertain really who the authority is and to whom it must report.

At the present time a number [11.30 a.m.] of people in my electorate are carrying on the poultry industry, which is an industry which requires a good deal of attention at the present time, and I want to make quite certain that the men in this industry, who suffer more severe slumps in certain seasons than those engaged in any other industry, are going to have some protection. At the present time, if a ballot is taken it is not conducted by the Council of Agriculture, but by the Department of Agriculture, and if those engaged in the poultry industry in my electorate desire to have a ballot on the question of the creation of a pool, I do not want the power of veto to be with the Council of Agriculture. If a majority of them require a pool to safeguard their interests and a ballot is taken, then I want the Minister to proceed with the formation of a pool. I am against the Council of Agriculture having the power of veto, because I am satisfied that the members on the Council of Agriculture do not represent anyone, and they should not be given the power to veto the formation of a pool, more especially if the people who are producing hundreds of thousands of eggs of a value of £500,000 per annum desire to have a pool. They have not sufficient representation on the Council of Agriculture. I have taken part in organising those engaged in the industry to form a Local Producers' Association in this industry—perhaps the first in the State—and I want those people to have direct representation on the Council. I am not against the amendment moved by the Secretary for Agriculture, but I am also in favour of the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham.

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "time" on line 47, of the words—

"or if requested so to do by a petition signed by a representative number of

growers of any particular commodity or by an organisation representing the growers of that commodity."

Not every grower or every section of growers will be represented on the Council of Agriculture, and this amendment leaves it open for those not represented on the Council to have a voice in initiating a pool, and it may save some unnecessary ballots.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Kacham*): It is very difficult to understand why there should be this suspicion that the Government which have brought in this Bill will not honestly carry it out, or why the Government should be suspected of an attempt to do anything that a large section of the primary producers do not desire. I would like to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that ballots are not taken without some considerable cost being incurred.

Mr. VOWLES: This is not a ballot, it is a request.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That request will be followed by a ballot.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It will have the same effect as your own amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We do not want any small section of dissatisfied growers to demand that a pool be initiated after the three-fourths have voted for a pool.

Mr. VOWLES: The clause says you "may"—not that you "shall."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If any small section of growers object, a ballot has to be taken.

Mr. VOWLES: It says they "may recommend."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It appears to me that hon. members opposite cannot trust the Minister because he is a Labour Minister. The very fact that I have brought in the Bill shows that I desire to trust the farmers. With regard to this silly argument that the Council of Agriculture does not represent the primary producers—

Mr. VOWLES: The members realise that themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill was going through Committee, the leader of the Opposition moved an amendment, which I accepted, that the election of members to the Council of Agriculture shall take place within nine months of the passage of the Bill. That means that every producer in Queensland will have a vote in electing the majority of members of the Council of Agriculture; therefore, the whole of the primary producers in Queensland will be directly or indirectly represented on the Council of Agriculture, and the Council is in a position to speak on behalf of the whole of the primary producers. Surely it is a fair thing to allow it to make a recommendation to the Governor in Council before we proceed to constitute a pool?

Mr. MORGAN: We do not object to that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You want to give fifty people power to delay it.

Mr. VOWLES: By request on petition.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They have that right now. Ten people can approach the Council of Agriculture, so far

as that is concerned. If a petition is received by the Council of Agriculture, it must take steps to ask the Governor in Council to create a pool.

Mr. KERR: They have no power to object to a pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In the Bill they have power to object. They certainly have the right to petition the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Do you not think that the people directly interested in an industry are the people who should make the request?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course I do. They have the right to approach me, or to approach the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: No; they have the right to go to the Council of Agriculture only.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They can come to me.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The Minister seems to be in a bad humour this morning, judging from the way he is receiving our suggestions.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not a bit.

Mr. VOWLES: Surely he understands his own Bill! He says we are slighting the Council of Agriculture; but did he not slight the Council himself by not including this in his original draft Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That recommendation comes from the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. VOWLES: This recommendation comes from us, and we represent the growers. The Committee has agreed to the Council of Agriculture having the right to request the Governor in Council to do certain things; but it may happen that the Council of Agriculture does not sufficiently represent certain industries which may be the subject-matter of pools. The persons interested in those industries should have a similar right to request the Governor in Council. The Minister says that they have a right to make a request, but that they can only exercise it through the Council of Agriculture. I believe that the Council of Agriculture realises that it is not truly representative of all the industries it is supposed to represent, from the fact that the men who sit on that Council do not participate actively in the industries concerned. The hon. member for Pittsworth referred to the growing of potatoes. If it is necessary to have a potato pool formed, is there one man on the Council of Agriculture who can be said to be an authority and who understands all the internal workings of that industry? Surely the growers of potatoes or any other commodity should have the right, if, in the opinion of the Minister, a sufficient number desire it, to be represented on the Council, and to be able to say to the Minister, "Will you be good enough to issue an Order in Council to that effect?"

At 11.43 a.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. VOWLES: We want to have the statutory right to go to the Minister and ask him to initiate proceedings. We want to take the onus off the shoulders of the Minister

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and of the department. We want the Council of Agriculture to be able to do it if they want to do it; but the people who are chiefly interested should, if they think it is desirable, have the right to ask the Minister to consent.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes; but you are tying the hands of the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. VOWLES: No; all we ask is that the producers should have the privilege of requesting the Governor in Council to consider the matter. That is, surely, the right of ordinary individuals; and a community of individuals should have a greater right to go to the Minister and ask for consideration, more particularly when their products are going to be commandeered. No expense will result from the adoption of the amendment. The expense will occur in connection with the ballot, and the ballot only takes place after the Governor in Council has taken the matter into consideration and decided that it is necessary to form a pool. All we ask is that, without expense to anybody, the people interested should have the privilege of going direct to the Minister instead of to the Council of Agriculture. The Minister thinks we were slighting the Council of Agriculture by this amendment, but I will impress upon him the fact that the question of submitting the matter to the Council of Agriculture was not included in the original draft Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The clause says, "The Governor in Council may."

Mr. VOWLES: On recommendation by the Council of Agriculture to the Governor in Council or on the petition of a sufficient number of persons in a locality representing an industry, we desire to have the right to say to the Minister, "Will you consider the question of forming a pool?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The word "or" does not occur at all.

Mr. VOWLES: It does. There is an alternative. The initiative is to come from the one body or the other. The thing is plain English. I think the position has been misunderstood, and I trust that the Minister will accept the amendment.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): I do not know whether the Minister is prepared to reply to the leader of the Opposition with respect to the amendment, which I hope he will accept.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I did not understand that the word "or" had been inserted, and that makes all the difference. Although I do not think the amendment is necessary, it has nothing very objectionable in it, and I am therefore prepared to accept it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): Subclause (3) provides that notice of the intention to make an Order in Council shall be published in the "Gazette" twenty-one days before the making of the Order. I pointed out to the Minister yesterday that the publicity which would be obtained by publication in the "Gazette" would not be sufficient to meet the case, and that it would also be necessary to insert the notice in a local publication. I consider that twenty-one days' notice is

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not sufficient time, and I would like the Minister to consider an amendment, of which I have given him a copy, in this regard.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You suggest sixty days; I think thirty days will be sufficient.

Mr. VOWLES: I will accept that compromise. With regard to advertising in a local paper, I admit that it is pretty hard to frame an amendment to meet the case, because some pools will be of general and others of local concern. In the latter case I think that notice should be published locally, because, in connection with pools which are of general application publication in the "Gazette" is insufficient, although publication in the "Gazette" might be sufficient notification in the case of Brisbane.

At 11.50 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. VOWLES: On the Darling Downs the notice should be inserted in the local newspapers, and similarly in the North.

Mr. STOPFORD: Would not the local paper have sufficient interest in local matters to copy the advertisement from the "Gazette?"

Mr. VOWLES: Not necessarily. Take the electorate in North Queensland which is represented by the Secretary for Agriculture. An application may be made for an Order in Council in connection with the creation of a maize pool. If the Minister or the editor of the local paper does not go to the trouble of notifying all persons concerned, the growers who live in the scrub will not know anything about it until the twenty-one days are over.

Mr. STOPFORD: They won't know any more from the advertisement in the local paper.

Mr. VOWLES: An advertisement has to be inserted in newspapers circulating in the district in connection with probates and letters of administration, and it should be done in this case.

Mr. BRENNAN: It means more expense.

Mr. VOWLES: It is better to go to the expense of £1 for an advertisement to let the people see what is taking place. The persons concerned should be notified that there is a ballot to take place, so that they will be given an opportunity of recording their votes. If you insert the advertisement in the local paper, that will give them an opportunity of doing so. I move the insertion, after the word "Gazette," on line 19, of the words—

"and in at least two newspapers circulating in the district or locality to which the Order in Council is intended to apply."

Mr. STOPFORD: That is, if such papers exist?

Mr. VOWLES: There will always be at least two papers circulating in the district. I remember on one occasion that I had to insert a notice about the death of a man in the Northern Territory, and I inserted it in the Sydney "Bulletin" because that was a paper that circulated in the locality. There is no district in Queensland in which some newspaper does not circulate, even if it is only the "Daily Standard."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I think this is quite a reasonable proposal.

I admit that a great many people do not see the "Gazette." The amendment is quite in keeping with present practice, because the Public Curator advertises matters of this kind in the newspapers. Electoral matters are also advertised, and a number of other matters. It is better to insert a notice in the local papers; there are always two newspapers circulating in a district. I will accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Vowles*) agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES: I beg to move the omission of the words "twenty-one" from line 20, with a view to inserting the word "thirty." That provides that the intention to make such Order in Council shall be published thirty days before the making of the order.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES: As a consequential amendment, I move the omission, on line 21, of the words "twenty-one," with a view to inserting the word "thirty."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. VOWLES: I move the insertion of the words "in writing" after the word "petition," on line 24. This relates to the petition to the Minister, which should be in writing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A petition must be in writing, but I do not know if it is necessary to insert those words. How would you present a petition other than in writing? The hon. member ought to know, because he is a lawyer.

Mr. VOWLES: I think the petition should be in writing. However, I will not press the amendment.

Clause 3, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 4—"Commodity Board"—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (Pittsworth): I beg to move the insertion of the word "elected" before the word "representatives," on line 46. The clause provides for the appointment of a board of representatives of the growers. I think they should be elected representatives of the growers. The Board should be elected at the beginning of the formation of the pool. That was the policy carried out at the request of the Government in regard to the wheat pool. Before the pool was in working order the board had to be elected. In any future pool it should be necessary for the board to be elected before the pool becomes effective.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is intended to elect the representatives by ballot.

Mr. VOWLES: There may be provisional representatives.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not object to the amendment at all; but the urgency of the case may necessitate the appointment of a temporary board before the election takes place, and, if we agree to this amendment, we shall prevent [12 noon] that being done. The amendment may cause some delay or inconvenience, but, as it is a safeguard, I am willing to accept it.

Amendment (*Mr. J. H. C. Roberts*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON (Cunningham): I move the insertion, after line 48, page 3, of the following proviso:—

"Provided that, if the Board shall, at

any time, by resolution, decide, according to circumstances, that the number of members of the Board ought to be increased or decreased, then such number shall be so increased by the election and appointment of a member or members in accordance with such resolution; or such number shall be so decreased by the termination of the appointment of a specified member or of specified members by the Minister in accordance with such resolution."

There might be a district which, in the opinion of the producers in it, is not properly represented. Of course, the question will not arise very often, but there may be cases where the Minister should have power, on the resolution of the Board, to increase or decrease the number of representatives. The amendment will not alter the conditions of election.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I would like to hear some further argument on the amendment. It is rather a drastic provision, and I do not know that it is really necessary. I have no doubt that if a pool were created, and it was found that one portion of the State or a number of producers were not represented, and that fact was brought under my notice, steps would be taken to rectify it.

Mr. VOWLES (Dalby): All we know about a Board to be appointed under the Bill is to be found in the definition, in conjunction with the regulation clause. The definition of "Board" reads—

"The Board constituted in relation to a specified commodity by the Governor in Council under this Act and appointed under this Act as prescribed."

There is nothing in the Bill to tell us how many members the Board shall consist of, and I take it that the words "as prescribed" refer to the later clause which gives the Governor in Council power to create a Board of whatever number of members the Minister considers desirable. All that the amendment proposes is that, once a Board has been created and it appears that its numbers are insufficient to carry out the functions for which it is created, the Board should have the right to ask the Minister to increase its numbers so as to remedy the defect, or, on the other hand, to decrease its numbers if there is not sufficient work for so many members. As the Bill stands, there is nothing to show whether a Board is to consist of one person or a dozen.

Mr. MORGAN (Murilla): I would like to know from the Minister whether it is the intention of the Government to prescribe by regulation the number of representatives who may be upon a Board. I think we should provide that a Board shall consist of not fewer than three members nor more than nine.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think it is advisable to put it in the Bill. Circumstances will determine that.

Mr. MORGAN: The Governor in Council might decide that the Board shall consist of one man, who might not meet with the approval of the growers. On the other hand, he might decide that the Board shall consist of so many members that it will be cumbersome and the expense be too great. I think the Minister will admit that he should not

Mr. Morgan.]

constitute a Board with fewer than three members or more than nine, and within those numbers he would have a wide discretion. A Board might consist of three, five, seven, or nine members. I do not think this matter should be left altogether to regulation. I said on the second reading that the farmers would like to see in the Bill exactly what is going to happen. We know that regulations under Acts of Parliament are placed on the table of the House, and even members of Parliament do not see them. I suppose the hon. member for Bowen takes as much interest in such matters as any other hon. member, but I do not suppose he takes any notice of them.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you think I want to get into Woogaroo? (Laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: On the other hand, members of Parliament generally know what is provided in an Act of Parliament, and I think an amendment on the lines I have suggested ought to be inserted. I believe that it would meet with the approval of the hon. member for Pittsworth.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I do not know whether the Opposition are out to spoil the Bill. (Opposition laughter.) They could not have gone about it in a better way than by moving this ridiculous amendment. The clause provides that the Minister shall, as soon as practicable after the application of the Act to a commodity, appoint a Board of such representatives of the growers of the commodity as is prescribed.

Mr. MORGAN: Prescribed where?

Mr. GLEDSON: Prescribed in regulations.

Mr. MORGAN: It should be prescribed in the Bill.

Mr. GLEDSON: An amendment has been inserted providing that the representatives shall be elected. Now a further amendment is moved providing that—if the Board shall at any time by resolution decide, according to circumstances, that the number of the members of the Board ought to be increased or decreased—such number shall be so increased by the election and appointment of a member. That gives to the Board complete power to determine how many members shall sit on that Board. Supposing a pool is formed for maize, and the Minister prescribes that each district in Queensland shall have representation. He appoints a Board of seven members, that Board having a majority of representatives resident in one portion of the State. Those seven members decide that they will cut out a couple of members and reduce the strength of the Board to five members. Under this amendment the Board would be able in that way to wipe out the representation of certain districts. The Minister, the Government, Parliament, would have no option; it would be totally in the hands of the Board to determine if the number should be decreased, practically wiping out the representation of certain districts. The Minister would have no power to give those districts representation. Non-members opposite want to set up an autocracy in connection with the Board. We say that this shall not be—that the Minister, the Government, or Parliament, which is the greatest body, shall have the power to control such matters. Look at the other side of the question. There might be a certain number prescribed, and the Board might say, "Let us have on the Board every man who is producing." The Board, by resolution,

[*Mr. Morgan.*

could say that the Minister shall elect every one, making the thing unworkable.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The growers are going to elect them—not the Minister.

Mr. GLEDSON: Under this amendment, if the Board decide that there shall be another representative, there shall be one.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If they decide there shall be one less, there shall be one less. Do not all boards of directors do the same thing? Have they not the same power?

Mr. GLEDSON: No; they are bound by their articles of association, which are registered, and state the number of directors there shall be.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: They can make their recommendation to a special meeting of shareholders.

Mr. GLEDSON: No board of directors has the power, of its own volition, to increase or decrease the number of its members. It would be folly to allow that. The people who draw up the articles of association provide in those articles what shall be the number of members on the board of directors. It would be a false step to give to any body the power to say how many members shall be elected. I am glad that the Minister is not going to accept such an unworkable amendment.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): Under the amendment it is suggested that, on the recommendation of the Board, the Minister shall either increase or decrease the number of boardsmen constituting the pool board.

Mr. GLEDSON: That is not in this amendment.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Is there any very great harm in that? We may have a small industry which decides to have a pool, and there may be only two or three members on the Board. Later on it may be necessary, owing to the growth of that industry, to increase the number of members on the Board. Why should it not be on the recommendation of the Board that certain districts be given representation?

Mr. GLEDSON: There is no recommendation suggested in your amendment.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is meant as a recommendation, and the Minister will act upon it. The Minister said, "Why not leave it to the common sense of the Minister?" We are quite prepared at all times to realise the common sense of the Minister. We are not doing this in an attempt to bind the Minister or to affect the smooth working of the Act. All we want is that certain powers shall be given to the Board. The hon. member for Ipswich stated that boards of directors are not decreased or increased. They are, on the recommendation of the board of directors to a meeting of the shareholders. The same thing would be done here. The growers—the shareholders in the pool, so to speak—will deal directly with the Board, not with the Minister, and the Board will deal directly with the Minister. What position would the Minister be in if all the wheatgrowers on the Downs were to come down and approach him one after the other instead of going to the Board? It is the Board that represents to the Minister that certain action shall be taken; and the Minister gives the matter consideration and arrives at a decision. Surely, when we are told that this Bill is practically based upon the Wheat Pool Act.

it is reasonable to ask that the same rights shall be given to the Boards under these different pools as were given to the Wheat Pool Board two years ago. The Wheat Pool Board has done excellent work; and I am sure it has never caused the Minister any worry or trouble. I hope that the Minister is going to accept the amendment.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would like to make a suggestion, with the approval of the mover of the amendment, to make the Bill more definite from a farmer's standpoint. I would suggest that it be definitely stated in the Bill that the Board shall be composed of not less than a certain number and not more than a certain number. At the present time the Bill is indefinite, and we want the farmer to understand what number shall constitute the Board. At the present time one member could constitute a Board; on the other hand, fifteen or twenty could constitute it. We should definitely state that a board shall not consist of less than three or more than nine members. I would suggest that after the words "as prescribed," on line 47, the words, "to consist of not less than three or more than nine," be inserted. The Minister then would have power to say that a certain board shall consist of five representatives, and if in time he finds it advisable to increase the number he can appoint other members without in any way interfering with the Bill. If, on the other hand, the Minister appointed five, and afterwards thought three would be sufficient, he could reduce the number accordingly. The farmers should know the position definitely. They should know that the number of representatives shall be not less than a certain number nor more than a certain other number.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I see no reason why Parliament should limit the number of representatives by creating either a minimum or a maximum. That is not done under the Wheat Pool Act nor under the Cheese Pool Act. Both of those Acts have worked very satisfactorily. I would like to call attention to the fact that clause 3 states—

"Provided that, in declaring the constitution of the Board and the number of representatives to be chosen, the Governor in Council shall have due regard to any representations by the growers made in any petition or memorial to the Minister by them."

I shall certainly have due regard to the whole of the circumstances and to representations made by people who are vitally concerned in the formation of any pool. I would also like to point out that the number in each case would have to be prescribed. If a maize pool was created—the maize industry covers the greatest area of the State—to consist of, say, nine members. I would have to prescribe that that number of members be so appointed as the Board to control that particular industry. I see no reason why I should accept the amendment. It is unnecessary.

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

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): Clause 4 is the crux of the whole Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is the hon. gentleman moving an amendment?

Mr. SIZER: I am foreshadowing one. By the creation of pools to deal with commodities the consumers will be placed in the hands of the growers or the boards. There is not one provision in the Bill showing that the views of the consumers have been considered. I am absolutely in favour of the primary producers establishing anything that is going to benefit their interests, yet, at the same time, I think it is in their own interests that they should make adequate provision to prevent any unnecessary burden being placed upon the consumers in the formation of the boards.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I quite endorse that.

Mr. SIZER: There is a danger of the men on those boards becoming somewhat extreme, and probably running amok for the time being in just the same way as extremists in other portions of the community sometimes get control and run amok. The producers, through the boards, might impose upon the consumers such a burden that it will be necessary for the consumers to seek an increase in wages to carry that burden. The board then will probably be compelled to increase the price of the commodity they are handling, and the workers will be compelled again to seek an increase in wages to meet the increased cost as the result of the action of the board. We should give some consideration to the views of the consumer in the creation of these boards.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do the Country party think about it?

Mr. SIZER: They are reasonable. There is nothing unreasonable in my suggestion. The members of the Country party realise that, if anything unreasonable is done, it will rebound against them in the same way as unreasonable measures have rebounded against the Labour party. They realise perfectly well that moderation must exist in a community. Whenever extremists, whether in country or industrial interests, get control, chaos must follow. Let me take the sugar industry. Undoubtedly, the agreement under which the sugar industry is working is required so that the conditions imposed upon the people in the industry may be fulfilled; but that does not overcome the fact that there is a tremendous agitation in Southern States, brought about largely by consumers, against the high prices that have been ruling in the industry. Those high prices have been necessary to satisfy the obligations of those engaged in the industry to the extreme element among the workers in the industry, who have approached the Arbitration Court. I do not want to see those conditions created as a result of this Bill. We have to face the danger of losing control of the sugar industry; and we certainly shall lose control of it unless a Nationalist Government is returned in the Federal Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The whole salvation of the sugar industry lies in the election of a Labour Government in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. SIZER: We know that if a Labour Government were elected in the Federal Parliament the sugar agreement would go immediately.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will show where a board has been created for the sugar industry.

Mr. Sizer.]

Mr. SIZER: I am just giving an illustration. There is an agitation on the part of consumers, who state that they have been harshly treated, for a reduction in the price of sugar. I do not think they have been harshly dealt with.

Mr. COLLINS: The sugar producers admit that sugar should be placed on the market at 4½d. per lb.

Mr. SIZER: Realising that danger, and realising also that the consumers as well as the farmers will have to pay any increase—if there is any increase—under this Bill, we must consider the interests of the consumers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you propose that the consumers should have representation on the Board?

Mr. SIZER: I would have moved an amendment to give the consumers a reasonable opportunity of expressing their views to the Board, but my difficulty is how are we going to provide for the election to the Board of representatives of the consumers.

If I were able, I would certainly [12.30 p.m.] move in that direction, as I think we ought to make provision somewhere whereby the consumers' views could be heard by the Board and their interests considered, seeing that they will foot the bill in connection with any increase in the cost of commodities. I am not concerned in a parochial sense, because city dwellers should be prepared to pay a somewhat higher price in order to give the producers the reasonable return which the city dwellers themselves ask for. At the same time, we must protect the consumers against extremism which might creep into this system, and which, if it did, would become an economic danger and make confusion worse confounded.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The hon. member for Nundah is quite right in bringing up the question of the protection of the consumer. In all secondary industries artificial conditions are created, providing protection for the workers so that they may be able to receive a living wage; and the only people who have not been assured of a living wage are the primary producers. We all agree that something has to be done to place the primary producers on the same plane as men engaged in industry, but at the same time I want to look a little further and see where we are going to end—to see whether it is not going to be a question of the dog chasing his own tail. It appears to me that something like that is going to eventuate. The object of the formation of a pool is to see that the primary producer gets more for his products. That means that the primary producer himself will, in consequence, have to pay something more for the things that he requires, and it means, too, that wages and other overhead charges must increase. If the producers can get a greater price for their products without compelling consumers to pay any more, then no harm will be done. But I cannot see how that is going to come about. Every member of the Country party has stated that it would be impossible to carry out this Bill—that the same means of distribution as at present in existence will have to be resorted to. It was stated that even under the Wheat Board the same agents in Brisbane were handling the wheat, and under these Boards the same thing will happen; and, if these Boards do come into existence, it seems to me that it will mean only another man whom the

farmers will have to pay. Let me take as an illustration the insurance of the wheat stack. Who is going to pay the piper in regard to that? We know that two rates of insurance were quoted.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the clause; I fail to see the connection.

Mr. KERR: The connection is there, and I am quoting this as an instance of where the Board is going to make the cost of living higher, and is not going to give the producer the same return for his produce. Instead of going direct to the insurance companies the Board paid a higher rate, and the result was that the farmer had to pay one shilling per cent. more for his insurance. There should be some means provided whereby the consumers, who constitute a big proportion of the population, should receive protection, and at the same time give the primary producers control of their own products and give them sufficient to enable them to live in comfort. They deserve more than that, but trouble is going to creep in so far as the consumer is concerned, and the Minister should make some provision in the Bill to try and bring the consumer and the producer together. I am not going to make a second reading speech at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be allowed to do so.

Mr. KERR: If it is possible to give representation to the consumers without doing any injury to the primary producers, then it should be provided for. It is not the function of the Government to look after one section only. They should protect the interests of every section in the community, and I should like to see some provision in the Bill to protect the consumers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): The consumer is always represented by the Government and by the Commissioner of Prices. He is well provided for at present.

Mr. COLLINS: We want to be a nation of producers, and not a nation of consumers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is no use being a nation of producers if you have no markets for what you produce. There is no limit to what we can produce in Queensland if we can get a market for it. I want to indicate what I consider to be a very wrong principle in connection with our wages system. At the present time the Arbitration Court regulates wages to a large extent according to the price of foodstuffs. In that respect you have every employer of labour and every consumer as well right up against the primary producer. Everyone wants cheap food so that they can keep wages down, and that is how it is that the primary producer is being driven off the land into the city to share in the good things that are being handed round there. He would be very foolish if it were not so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How do you connect that with clause 4?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I do. These pools are not being created to increase the price of products, but to see that a reasonably payable price is obtained and to eliminate waste. We know that the waste in our products today, while they are waiting to be shipped and marketed, absorbs almost 20 per cent. of the profit. When the Cheese Manufacturers' Association, which was the first pool

[Mr. Sizer.

established in Queensland, came into operation fourteen or fifteen years ago, there was as much as 30 tons or 40 tons of cheese in our factory stores which was not fit for market, having deteriorated by practically 50 per cent. The association took control of the shipment of the cheese, and allowed no surplus stock to accumulate, and that waste was stopped, and we have had very little waste ever since. The Queensland Cheese Manufacturers' Association has been the means of putting hundreds of thousands of pounds into the pockets of the producers by preventing waste.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I move the insertion, after the word "Act," in subclause (4), on line 5, page 4, of the words—

"All general meetings of the Board shall be open to the public."

I think the meetings should be open to the public.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Suppose they are dealing with prices.

Mr. DEACON: Anything in that connection should be dealt with at the first meeting. I quite understand that there may be business which the board could not publish at the time it is dealt with, but at the same time these boards should not degenerate into secret societies. The object of the Bill is to improve conditions, and it would be an improvement if the public and the growers knew just what business was being done.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why do you hold your caucus meetings in secret?

Mr. DEACON: As I explained to the Minister, there are matters which must be kept secret. I do not know why he holds the meetings of the Council of Agriculture in private. They should be made public.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member to discuss the amendment.

Mr. DEACON: I contend that the general meetings of the Board should be open to the public.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): Mr. Kirwan—

Mr. MORGAN: Why not let it go?

Mr. GLEDSON: We do not want to make ourselves ridiculous in connection with this matter. The hon. member for Cunningham wants to make the meetings of the Board open to the public. Surely the farmers are not so suspicious of the men they elect as members of the Board that they cannot allow them to carry on the business. There may be important business transactions in connection with these commodities which must not be made public at the time. These are not meetings of electors or shareholders, but of directors who are dealing with commodities. The Opposition should not make us look ridiculous by trying to cause suspicion in the minds of the producers that the men they elect are not capable of carrying on the business.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I think that, on further reflection, the hon. member for Cunningham, who is a practical man, will realise that the work of the Board in the interests of the farmers necessarily involves secrecy at times. Arrangements have to be made for shipping and for getting the best quotations for insurance. There are a thousand and one things which will be dealt with by the members of the Board which should not be open to the general public. I am

satisfied that, if the members of the Board understand their duties, and wish to retain the confidence of farmers who elect them, they will certainly not object to any supplier who is interested in the pool being present at the meetings, so long as he does not interfere with their business. I cannot accept the amendment, because, as the hon. member for Ipswich has pointed out, it is ridiculous to suggest that all meetings should be open to the general public.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I have a suggestion to make to the Minister. I understood him to say that, while he objected to the public being present, he was willing that the growers should be able to attend, and I will alter my amendment in that direction.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not say that. I said that if the members of the Board understood their duties they would not object to any grower in the industry being present at the meetings, if he wished.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) negatived.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): I wish to suggest the insertion, after subclause (7) of something to this effect—

"That the Board shall receive and consider any petitions from any bona fide bodies of consumers."

I think that would be a fair provision.

Mr. MORGAN: They can do it now.

Mr. SIZER: If they can do it now, then the amendment is unnecessary.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There is nothing to prevent them.

Mr. SIZER: There is nothing to prevent the Board from receiving such a petition, but they can ignore it if they like.

Mr. VOWLES: You can bring the matter up on clause 5.

Mr. SIZER: I make the suggestion, and probably the Minister will think it over in the meantime.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I have an amendment which I have had circulated, to insert a new subclause on page 3, but I think it will be better, as it deals with the Board only, to insert it after subclause (7). The amendment provides that once an Order in Council has been granted for a pool to be formed in connection with a particular commodity, fifty persons or more who are interested in the commodity shall have the right to ask for a poll. Power is given to the Minister under subclause (5) of clause 3 by which an Order in Council may be rescinded or amended by a subsequent Order in Council. The position may arise that the growers themselves, after having had a pool constituted, may want to have the pool dissolved, but there is no machinery for dealing with that position. The Minister has that power, but I do not see any authority to enable the growers to have the pool dissolved. If the growers have the right by petition to have a vote to constitute a pool, they should have a corresponding right to dissolve the pool and annul the Order in Council. I, therefore, move the insertion of the following new subclause to follow subclause (7)—

"(8) If fifty or more growers of the commodity residing in the district or locality to which the Order in Council

Mr. Vowles.]

applies petition the Minister that a poll be taken on the question of the dissolution of the Board, the Minister shall take a vote of the growers of the commodity residing in such district or locality; and, if a majority of the votes polled are in favour of dissolving the Board, the same shall thereupon become dissolved, and the Order in Council declaring the Act to apply to the commodity in question shall be deemed to be rescinded."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I might point out to the leader of the Opposition that subclause (5) of clause 3 provides that any Order in Council may be rescinded or amended by a subsequent Order in Council. I think that enables the right to have a pool terminated.

Mr. VOWLES: Not by the producers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Certainly a request that came from the producers with regard to the duration of a pool would be fully considered. I might point out that the taking of ballots is an expensive matter.

Mr. VOWLES: You allow a pool to be formed on the representations of the growers, and you should also allow a pool to be dissolved on the representation of the growers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the growers in their petition ask that the pool be limited to six months, twelve months, or three years, then consideration will be given to their wishes. Provision is made in clause 3 for an Order in Council to be rescinded. It naturally follows that, if the Minister receives representations from the growers concerned, he will take notice of them, but I do not think it is desirable to put it into the Bill.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I certainly think that the amendment is a reasonable one. We have made provision for forming a pool, and we lay it down that certain things shall be done; but there is no machinery whatever for dissolving a pool.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Order in Council may limit the duration of the pool.

Mr. TAYLOR: I think that something in the nature of the amendment proposed is required in the Bill. At present the Minister can dissolve a pool without consulting anyone.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If I would do that, why would I bring in the Bill at all?

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not see any danger in providing the necessary machinery for the dissolution or non-continuance of the pool. The continuance of the pool might not meet with the approval of the growers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then they can write to me, or send a deputation.

Mr. TAYLOR: Some growers might be satisfied with the pool, and others might be dissatisfied with it. You can only get the opinion of the majority by allowing them to make representations.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You can limit the period.

Mr. TAYLOR: Then it might be too long. The growers might want a shorter period.

[*Mr. Vowles.*

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I agree with the Minister that there is no necessity for the amendment. The Minister has power now, at the request of the producers who are in the pool, to cancel the Order in Council.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Where does it say that?

Mr. GLEDSON: In clause 3. The clause provides that an Order in Council may be rescinded or amended. The pool is under the control of the producers themselves. It is controlled by the Board elected by the growers.

Mr. VOWLES: If they want to destroy the pool, they should be allowed to do so.

Mr. GLEDSON: After the Board has been appointed the position might arise that, through competition with the outside market and with men opposed to the pool, certain men outside the pool would get an advantage. That occurred in connection with the Kingston Butter Factory. Those who stopped outside were able to reap the benefit at the expense of the other producers. A certain number of producers might want to have the pool wiped out, but that might be directly opposed to the interests of the producers themselves. We do not want to allow anyone to work against the interests of the producers. This is their Bill, and the Board that they elect should be under their own control. If the pool does not suit them, then it is for their representatives to take action and have the pool cancelled. It would, however, be unwise to put such an amendment in here.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I can see that there is going to be a danger in regard to the pools. What is going to happen in the event of a pool having a large quantity of stuff on its hands when some producers will come along and ask that it be wiped out of existence? I would like the Minister to give us some light on this.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will do it.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Suppose a pool is caught with a large quantity of stuff on hand and that stuff has to go through the market within twenty-four hours, then the people who have their stuff in the pool will lose a big sum of money, because the outside stuff will come into competition with it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is one possibility if we accept the amendment.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I hope the Minister will use good sense and judgment in this matter. We might be able to pool cereals which are grown at a certain period and harvested at a certain period. But other crops may be grown at various times, and the pool may not be able to dispose of them. That happened in regard to canary seed. There will be outside competition, which will come into direct competition with the stuff in the pool. Suppose that a pool is formed and it takes possession of 100,000 bags of maize and sells 50,000 bags within three or four months, it may then be
[2 p.m.] decided that the pool should be dissolved, although it still holds 50,000 bags. I do not think it would be a wise thing by any means to dissolve that pool in a week, or a month, or six weeks, or even two months. It has to be remembered that a period has to elapse sufficiently long to enable the pool to clear its holdings,

because, if the people who buy maize know that the pool is likely to be dissolved soon and they are going to have a free market, it is only natural that they should buy from hand to mouth, believing that they will be able to purchase to better advantage when the pool is wiped out. I think the Minister will be well advised to give the matter very serious consideration and recommit the Bill, if necessary, in order to insert a clause dealing particularly with the dissolution of a pool. The Minister, I think, looks upon the wheat pool as the model on which to fashion all his pools.

Hon. W. MORGAN SMITH: It is the most successful pool in Australia.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In Queensland we have a population of 760,000 people, and every man, woman, and child is a user of wheat in some shape or form every day of the year; but, when it comes to a question of a barley or oats pool, we are not going to have anything like the same number of users, nor are we going to have so ready a market. In the formation of a pool we may be doing the right thing, but the danger does not lie in the formation, but in the dissolution of a pool.

Mr. GLEDSON: You hope that the amendment will not be accepted?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I hope that, if the amendment is not accepted, provision will be made—if necessary, by recommitting the Bill and inserting a clause or two—to meet that particular phase of the question, otherwise the Bill is going to be a very grave danger. I regard it, as the Minister does, as being more or less experimental legislation. We have to look to the future, and realise that, while it may be safe to pool in one instance, it may be very unsafe to pool in another instance. Any pool should be formed for a certain period, and provision should be made that, when the pool is dissolved, the Board shall not have a large quantity of stuff on hand. It has been stated that, when it comes to be a question of dissolving the pool, the Board will not take possession of the commodity after a certain period. The very fact that we are going to have a certain amount of stuff in the pool and a certain amount out of the pool is going to be an exceedingly great menace. I ask the Minister to realise the danger there will be in dissolving these pools, and to try and safeguard the men who will be elected. The Government will not take any responsibility in regard to any failure of a pool. Blame for any failure will be laid on those who are elected by the growers, and, unless we give them every opportunity to carry the thing through successfully, they are going to be called upon to shoulder very grave responsibilities, and the result may be disastrous to those who put into the pool the commodity they have grown in the belief that they are going to get a little better price.

Mr. GLEDSON: Are you not courting disaster with this amendment?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: We are not. I am not going to ask the Minister to accept this or any other amendment; all I ask is that he realise that in this particular phase of the question there is a serious menace. He knows it, probably, better than I do. Consequently, I want him to take the necessary precautions to safeguard the pool when the question of dissolution arises. I believe

the amendment will be the basis upon which the Minister will act.

Mr. GLEDSON: It dissolves without any asking.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If so, it is going to be a greater menace than the hon. member realises. I make excuses for him, because he knows very little about pooling, and still less about agriculture.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am not in accord with the arguments of the hon. member for Ipswich. While the amendment may not be all that is desired, I certainly am of opinion that the Minister should have the right, if requested by the growers, to say for what term a pool shall be in existence. The wheat pool was something new, and was formed for only one year, the question of continuation being left for decision after the growers had been consulted. What is wrong with such a system in respect of other pools? It is absolutely wrong that farmers should be enticed into a pool and, when they find that it is not bringing about beneficial results, not be allowed to terminate its existence. If a man after twelve months finds that his business is a failure he has the right to close up that business. If the Board or the Government desire to continue the pool in existence, there is no power in the Bill whereby the growers will have the opportunity of getting away from the pool. If you are going to impose hard-and-fast rules upon the farmers, it will be impossible to create a pool under this measure. Just as the banana-growers turned down the proposition for the creation of a pool to control bananas, so also should the farmers who are responsible for bringing a pool into existence have the power to say that the pool shall not be continued for all time. The wheatgrowers were not afraid to establish a pool for twelve months, because they knew it would only affect the one year's crop. Although it was not altogether satisfactory, it was better than the old conditions under which the farmers sold their wheat, and the farmers, recognising that it worked so well, like sensible men, agreed to extend the period. Why should there not be similar power in the Bill?

Mr. GLEDSON: It is there.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not. The Governor in Council can, by an Order in Council, determine that a pool shall be created, but the Governor in Council should not be the body to terminate the pool. They do not create it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, we do.

Mr. MORGAN: No; the people create the pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The producers ask for a pool, and the Government create it.

Mr. MORGAN: Exactly. Before a pool can be created the people have the right to say "Yes" or "No." The Minister should provide in the Bill that pools in the first instance be created for twelve months, and, if the farmers so desire, that term can be extended in the same way as was done with the wheat pool. Why should we not have the same principle contained in this Bill as is contained in the Wheat Pool Act?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The wheat pool was only for one year.

Mr. Morgan.]

Mr. MORGAN: We desire a provision setting out the period for which a pool shall be created.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This is a Bill dealing with pooling generally.

Mr. MORGAN: The Minister is asking the growers to come into the pool for all time. While the growers have power to prevent the pool being formed, they have no power to say when the pool is to be dissolved.

Mr. GLEDSON: Clause 3 gives full power. It states the terms and the duration of the pool.

Mr. MORGAN: The growers will probably become discontented and will want to dissolve the pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When the growers ask for a pool and say that it shall be for six or twelve months, that will be the condition upon which the pool will be created.

Mr. MORGAN: Supposing the Minister decides to create a pool, and he submits the question to the growers to enable a vote to be taken, will he ask them if they are in favour of a pool for twelve months, or will he simply ask them are they in favour of a pool?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We generally ask two or three questions. In connection with the wheat pool, it was asked if the growers were in favour of a pool for one year, two years, or three years.

Mr. MORGAN: That is a sensible idea; but there is nothing in the Bill to provide for that. We have to trust the Minister entirely.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no provision to that effect in the Wheat Pool Act either.

Mr. MORGAN: The Minister may be a reasonable man and may be prepared to do what is just for the farmers, but he may not occupy his present position next year. Probably his successor will not be so reasonable.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Minister for the time being will have to take the responsibility for doing the right thing.

Mr. MORGAN: When hon. members opposite were on this side of the House, and certain legislation was introduced by the Government at that time affecting the welfare of the workers, the Opposition members were not prepared to trust the Government in the drafting of regulations under that legislation. I remember that they were continually fighting against that sort of thing. They said, "We are full up of government by regulation. We want to have it in the Bill." And quite right, too. Labour members were justified when they were in opposition in not leaving these matters wholly and solely to the Minister. They wanted provision made in the Bill, and that is the attitude we take up as the representatives of the primary producers. I do not want this Bill to be passed as it is, and then, when we go amongst the farmers to induce them to form a pool, to be told, "We do not know where we are." They will say, "The whole thing is left entirely in the hands of the Governor in Council. If the Act said that a pool would only continue for twelve months and then we would be consulted again, it would be all right." Those who are the enemies of this legisla-

tion want everything hidden away. I am not an enemy of the Bill, and I want to see everything disclosed. When we are dealing with the farming class, we should endeavour to make things so plain that he who runs may read, but that is not so in connection with this Bill. If I were assisting in the formation of a pool and I was asked by the farmers, "Have we power to abolish the pool?" I should have to say, "No, you have no power. It rests entirely with the Governor in Council," who is practically the Minister. After the formation of a pool the primary producer has no power to say that the pool shall cease after a certain period. There may be something in the argument of the hon. member for Pittsworth that, if a pool were abolished while it had certain commodities in store, it would be disastrous, but no set of producers are likely to ask that that be done, and, if they did ask for it to be done, it would not be granted, until the commodities which have been stored were disposed of.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If this amendment were carried, they would have power to abolish a pool.

Mr. MORGAN: The fact that they had power to ask for its abolition would not give them power to abolish the pool. The amendment provides that, if a certain number so desire, they can ask to have the pool abolished; but the abolition of the pool would not take place until any produce that might be stored had been disposed of. The Minister will have the right to say when the pool shall be taken, and he will regulate it so that the pool in question will have a fair run. While the produce is stored by the pool, it is stored in the name of the grower. It is not the people who run the pool who own the stuff, but the growers, and they would not be so foolish as to ask that the pool be dissolved when only part of their stuff has been paid for. They would not be so senseless as to ask that the pool be dissolved and risk their stuff being sold at a loss. I hope that the Minister will give the growers credit for having some common sense. If the Minister will not accept the amendment of the hon. member for Dalby, he should suggest something else in its place. The farmer has the right under the Bill to create a pool, and he should have the right to dissolve a pool. The hon. member for Toowoomba will admit that. He is a reasonable man, who does not want to be too hard and fast, and he believes in the democratic principle of consulting the people. The Bill is democratic in regard to consulting the people as to the formation of a pool, but it is not democratic in regard to dissolving the pool. I expect the hon. member for Toowoomba to support the amendment.

Mr. BRENNAN: You must expect nothing from me.

Mr. MORGAN: The Minister has shown that he is willing to accept reasonable amendments, and the hon. member for Toowoomba might make some suggestion whereby some provision may be made to enable the farmers, if the pool is a failure, to bring about its dissolution.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I do not think the amendment of the hon. member for Dalby is practicable. The Bill contains power to enable a pool to be dissolved.

Mr. MORGAN: Not by the farmers.

[*Mr. Morgan.*]

Mr. BRENNAN: I do not think the Government, if a pool is not successful, will insist on the farmers carrying it on. The Government have set the ball rolling in the interests of the farmers. The pool is for the purpose of getting rid of the surplus produce that is not required for home consumption. The Government want it to be recognised that they have done something for the producer. They want the buyers outside to realise, when they come to buy, that they are not dealing with a middleman, but with one central authority.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Are they doing it in connection with the cheese pool?

Mr. BRENNAN: They should do it; that is the object. The object of the Bill is to constitute a central authority in the shape of the Board, to which purchasers will submit their requirements, and arrangements for sale will then be made.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: The Bill provides that sales can be made through one channel.

Mr. BRENNAN: Under the Bill one central authority will be recognised as the vendors on behalf of the growers. In Siberia, the farmers' associations have intangible assets to the value of £300,000,000, and the farmers' produce there is exported through one central authority.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Where is this—Russia?

Mr. BRENNAN: Yes. Last year they exported £4,000,000 worth of linseed. That is the practice in the most advanced portion of the farming world, they have the best organisation in the world there. Every farmer there is bound by the law of the land to sell his produce through a central pool, which is controlled by the farmers of Siberia. (Opposition laughter.) You can take Manchuria—they are operating a pool there.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Who?

Mr. BRENNAN: Your countrymen. (Laughter.) They are exporting the whole of their produce there through one central authority. The idea of this Bill is to have one central authority dealing with the export of surplus products. The Minister should not accept the amendment, because, if a pool is not successful, it may be discontinued at any time.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba bring me to my feet, because I am more convinced now of the necessity for the amendment. We have heard from the hon. member that the principles of this Bill are similar to those appertaining to-day in Russia and China—particularly in Mongolia. If that is the system that the Minister is going to put into this Bill, you will see the reason why we should get away from the Russian idea altogether. It has been admitted by the hon. member for Toowoomba that we are going to have the Soviet system, and that the Government will take the farmers' produce and use it as they like.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Don't be silly.

Mr. CORSER: There is no silliness about it. We do not want the farmers' products controlled in the interests of the Government, but in the interests of the producers themselves. If you serve the producer well, you will serve the State well; but, if you are going to look after a particular section only, then you are not doing something

in the interests of the producer. We want to cut out the powers of the Government and the powers of the Minister. We want to place the whole thing in the hands of the producers concerned, and that is the object of the amendment. The producer votes himself into the pool, so what is wrong with him voting himself out of the pool if he wants to do so? Circumstances alter cases, and conditions change. If conditions alter, and the farmers want to get out of a pool, why should they not be allowed to do so if they can find better markets outside the pool than they can by remaining in? We do not want the Government to seize all the farmers' produce in a time of strike. I hope the Minister will accept the amendment, and leave the control in the hands of the producers. The Minister accepted an amendment this morning allowing the producer to make representations, but he will not do it in this instance. Had pressure been brought to bear to prevent the hon. gentleman from broadening the measure?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What pressure do you suggest? What you do not know about the Bill would fill a volume.

Mr. CORSER: I hope the Minister will broaden the measure by accepting the amendment.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I do not want the Opposition to make wild statements about matters mentioned in this Committee. It is already recognised by the greatest authorities in the world that the All-Russian Farmers' Union is not controlled by the Government. It is purely a matter of the farmers' own concern. They pool all their produce, including wheat, rye, and everything else.

Mr. SIZER: They pool themselves, too.

Mr. BRENNAN: The All-Russian Farmers' Union has nothing to do with the State. This Bill excludes the Government. The farmers have full power to deal with their produce and sell through a central authority. Hon. members opposite appreciate that when they talk communism. The great big Farmers' Union in Queensland is communistic, because the farmers control their own industry; the State has nothing to do with it. The State is expressly excluded by a clause in this Bill. As the farmers control their own affairs, that is communism, and they are getting the full reward of their labours.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): It is generally understood that the aim of this Bill is to serve the man on the land. If that is so, the Minister should have no hesitation whatsoever in accepting the amendment. Already there is abundant evidence that such a provision is essential in the [2.30 p.m.] working of pools of this kind.

At any rate, such evidence is very commonly known in districts other than mine, and certainly in my own district. The right of the producers to express themselves regarding the formation of a pool is undeniable, and surely they should be at liberty to express themselves regarding the dissolution of a pool, or the breaking away from conditions as they exist. It is all very well for some of us to imagine that this is in the interests of the grower. I calculate that, when we get to the next clause, we shall see that the producer is the man who is going to be sacrificed—in fact, crucified. If the Minister believes what he and other people have said,

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he will accept the amendment. We are meeting with the need for some such provision in the case of the wheat pool and the proposed maize pool, and it is seen that the men opposed to them are utterly helpless. Already in this House I have referred to a meeting of farmers in Warwick, reported in the local paper of 3rd August last, which came to a unanimous decision against the formation of a maize pool. The newspaper report says—

“Mr. T. J. Brennan moved—‘That this meeting of maizegrowers enters an emphatic protest against the formation of a pool, and that, if carried, the resolution be forwarded to the Council of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture.’”

“He described the pool as the most disastrous proposition that had ever been placed before the maizegrowers, and thought there was something fishy in connection with the issue of the ballot-papers. The pool might be a good thing for the North, with its torrid climate, but it would be useless for the Downs, which produced the best class of maize. He was right up against the wheat pool, and a pool for maize would be far worse.”

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He must have been one of your agents.

MR. G. P. BARNES:—

“Mr. W. Erlandson seconded the motion. He said he did not think sentiment should enter into the matter. The North could look after itself, but the people here should attend to their own interests. He was dead against a maize pool, as he could see no benefit in it. The expenses would be heavy, and, as the farmers would have to thresh their crop at the one time, the grain would deteriorate.”

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like to point out to the hon. member that the amendment deals with the dissolution of pools.

MR. G. P. BARNES: I thought I was producing the exact evidence that the Committee wants.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is discussing the formation of a pool.

MR. G. P. BARNES: I am quoting that as an argument why a provision should be inserted in the Bill to allow the growers to express their opinions. I can go one step further, and show how these resolutions are pigeon-holed when they are passed on, and that, unless there is some authority to deal with such an expression of opinion, we are going to come to nought. Before the pool is even formed men are anticipating difficulties. If the Government are not ready to make the provisions which the people require, what is the good of introducing legislation at all? In the Warwick newspaper of 11th June I find the following:—

“RECENT PROTEST AGAINST MAIZE POOL.

“It will be remembered that at a public meeting of maizegrowers a protest was lodged against the formation of a compulsory maize pool. This was sent to the Department of Agriculture and Stock, and the Under Secretary replied as follows, under date 10th August:—‘I desire, by direction, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, addressed to my Minister, advising that

the following resolution was carried unanimously at your meeting on the 3rd idem:—‘That this meeting of maizegrowers representative of Warwick and all surrounding districts hereby enter an emphatic protest against the formation of a compulsory maize pool.’” On 16th August the following letter was received from the Council of Agriculture:—“In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, I am desired to state that the particulars furnished therein will be referred for consideration to the Council. Doubtless you will be further advised at an early date.” Mr. George J. Smith, secretary of the Southern Downs Wheatgrowers’ Association, informs us that this is all the information he has had to date.”

That is how the matter stands, and very likely it will remain in that position evermore. If there were a power such as the hon. member for Dalby seeks to have included in the Bill, those people would have their remedy. What can be the objection to it? The real objection must be that we are directly on the way to do what the hon. member for Toowoomba referred to, and what the Government or some of their followers have in mind—the establishment of one central place to which everybody is bound by the law of the land to send his produce. That is the end to which we are being led step by step, and that is the very thing to which members on this side object. I have given direct evidence of the need of an amendment such as has been proposed, and, if the Minister is really in sympathy with the men whom he says he is trying to serve, he will without further delay accept it.

MR. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I fail to see how the Minister can say that the amendment can do any harm. The Bill has really been introduced at the instigation of the Southern Fruitgrowers’ Association of Queensland for the purpose of establishing a banana pool; but this Chamber should be above that association—it should be able to think for itself. A few months ago an election of directors of that association was held, and every man returned was pledged to a banana pool. Yet the growers in less than six months have turned a banana pool down.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know why?

MR. WARREN: I do not.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will tell you why later on.

MR. WARREN: To my mind, it was turned down because they were afraid to put their fruit in the hands of two men, and did not see sufficiently far into the future to be willing to undertake the scheme. Right throughout the banana districts, meetings have been called at which different bodies of growers have unanimously agreed to go into the pool. But the sentiment has changed, and there must be some reason which has turned the people from the acceptance of the pool. Supposing the pool were in operation and some disaster were brought on by the Board, would it not be right that the growers should have the power immediately to petition the Minister to give them a chance of taking a vote on whether the scheme should go forward? We are not in the position of the dairymen. Are we prepared to say that we can find men of sufficient business capacity to take control of this perishable commodity?

[*Mr. G. P. Barnes.*

While I know and appreciate the wonderful work which has been done, there is a capacity which can be bought only with experience and education. Can we say that we can produce men capable of handling this big proposition? It is the tallest proposition any man could take on. It is altogether different to wheat and that sort of thing. We have not perfected any scheme for transporting sub-tropical fruits to cold storage. It is reasonable to ask the Minister to put something in the Bill. I cannot understand why it was not in the original draft. It will not make for friction or trouble for the Minister or the Board. The Minister would be wise if he inserted this amendment. Not only would he make the Bill better, but there would be a greater chance of people coming into the pool. A great many people think that pooling is going to solve the problem that the farmer is up against. If they knew that there was a chance of getting out should things not go right, it is more than likely that those people would give the scheme a trial.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I do not know whether hon. members of the Opposition have given the matter very much thought. I want to call attention to some of the weaknesses of the proposal. First of all, I want to call attention to the proviso to clause 3, which reads—

“Provided that in declaring the constitution of the Board and the number of representatives to be chosen the Governor in Council shall have due regard to any representations by the growers made in any petition or memorial to the Minister by them.”

In sending out ballot-papers, if the Council of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture thought that six months or twelve months would be the right thing, we would consult the growers who voted at the ballot as to how long the pool should be constituted for, suggesting six months, one year, two years, and so on. That is a safeguard. I want to show the possibilities of danger should this amendment be put into the Bill. We all know that after the Wheat Pool Act was passed there were whisperers and propagandists, probably well paid by those interested, who tried to discredit and injure the wheat pool. We know that all over the Downs efforts were made by interested people, who desired to get cheap wheat, to discredit and have the pool abolished, if possible. The hon. member for Warwick called on me in my capacity as Acting Premier and actually urged me to do something to enable him to get cheaper wheat.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I gave good evidence for it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member told me that his mill was closed down and it would continue to be closed, his men would be unemployed, and an important industry would be strangled unless I induced the Wheat Board to give cheaper wheat. To a question I put to him, he had to admit that other mills which were competing with him were able to carry on. I pointed out to the hon. member that the one duty of the Wheat Board was to get the very best price they could for the producers of wheat. Of course, we know that the hon. member for Warwick is opposed to pools, and that quite a number of other hon. mem-

bers are opposed to the principle, because it interferes with their business and enables the farmer to get the full result of his industry by presenting a united front to the buyers of his product, such as flourmillers and others.

With regard to the recent vote on the question of a formation of a banana pool, the hon. member for Murrumba says that he does not know why that proposal was defeated. He should know. The Council of Agriculture advised me that it was absolutely necessary, in view of the record crop of bananas which was promising, that a pool should be created. I pointed out at a meeting of the Council what conditions would be laid down, and that it would be necessary to pass an Act of Parliament. It was pointed out to me by the representatives of the banana industry at that meeting that, unless the vote was taken forthwith and completed before the end of August, it would be of no use. I immediately gave instructions, without waiting for the letter from the Council of Agriculture, to proceed forthwith to take the poll. In less than a week the ballot-papers were sent out, the names being taken from a list supplied by the Government Statistician. Later on we found that there was quite a number of growers who had come into existence who had not registered themselves as growers and had not received ballot-papers. That was rectified. Before the poll was counted, the secretary (Mr. Ellison) called on me and said: “We want you to postpone that poll because we want to counteract the influence of agents from the South, newspapers, and interested people generally, who are opposed to the pooling system, who are opposed to the co-operative movement, and who realise that the only way to handle the farmer is to keep him divided. Newspaper articles were written. Indeed, one paper which circulates very largely amongst the fruitgrowers of this State—“*Nicko*”—came out with a cartoon showing an octopus with the name Banana Pool across the top, and explaining that the banana pool meant high salaries, and generally was not in the interests of the grower. The executive of the Southern Queensland Fruit Growers' Association asked me to postpone the poll to enable their members to get round amongst the banana-growers and explain the exact position. I said, “I cannot do that; the ballot-papers have gone out, and you will have to abide by the result.” After all, if the farmers are so indifferent or so ignorant of their own wellbeing that they are going to allow themselves to be gulled by interested agents or newspaper propaganda, and vote against the creation of a pool, the best thing that can happen is that the pool should be defeated. Interested agents from the South came here and offered ready cash to the banana-growers. It is always tempting to a farmer to have ready cash offered. That is the reason that the pool was turned down. The people who have criticised and condemned the pooling system because, in some cases, their own interests were at stake are largely responsible for the defeat of that poll. The voting was 654 against the creation of a pool, and 433 in favour.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: How much did it cost to take that poll?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It cost the department £75. The hon. member for Warwick made some reference

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to what he was pleased to call a maize pool. No maize pool has been sanctioned, no vote has been taken on that specific question.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are fearful that a maize pool will be formed, and they have notified the hon. gentleman of their objection.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are not all fearful of the creation of a pool, because 1,589 voted in favour of the creation of a pool. There were many other questions asked besides whether they were in favour of the creation of a pool. They were asked to supply the name of the grower, the name of the railway station, postal address, the crop for 1921-22, the yield per acre, the quantity still on hand, the varieties grown, the present condition of the quantity on hand, and other questions. In the last question they were asked, "Do you consider that the present state of matters in the industry warrants the establishment of a compulsory maize pool controlled by a board elected by the growers?" That vote has not yet been finalised, but so far 1,589 growers have voted "Yes" and 1,326 have voted "No" on that last question. According to the provisions of the Bill, as that vote does not give a three-fourths majority in favour, there will be no pool at present.

Mr. SIZER: The prospects, amongst the growers, of a maize pool do not look too good.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Those particular sections of growers are not too favourable. Propaganda does not cease when a pool is created. It should be obvious to any intelligent farmer, at least, that when a pool is created and a commodity is taken charge of provision will have to be made for the storage of that produce. The pooling system will not be workable without some comprehensive system of storage. After that has been arranged, and the whole marketing business has been practically arranged, is it a reasonable thing, because fifty farmers are deceived, or the position is misrepresented to them, that they can approach the Government and demand to have that pool dissolved?

Mr. VOWLES: To have a ballot.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What will it cost? The inquiry we have conducted with regard to the maize business, where we asked for certain figures in addition to asking whether the growers were in favour of a maize pool or not, has cost the Department of Agriculture so far £350. Would it be a reasonable thing to return members to this Chamber for three years and then give fifty electors power to come along and say, "We are not satisfied; we want a further poll taken"?

Mr. VOWLES: It would be a very good thing if we could have the power of recall.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I want to point out the danger there would be if a provision to that effect were inserted in the Bill. I emphasise again that the growers will have the right to say whether the pool shall be for twelve months, two years, or three years. When once a pool is sanctioned and the machinery for pooling, marketing, and financing has been created, is it fair that fifty disgruntled growers, who might be hoodwinked by interested people, as has been attempted in connection with the

wheat pool, should be able to ask for a further ballot, which probably would cost £300 or £400? What is the object of bringing in this Bill? Is it to cause friction between myself and the farmers? It is to assist them, and to meet their wishes. I think I can safely say that, if the Bill proves to be so objectionable that fifty or even a dozen farmers make representations to me, I will inquire fully into the matter with a view to exercising my powers under the Bill, which I can do at the present time. I think the amendment is unreasonable, because it will allow fifty growers the right to demand a poll, and the majority of them can upset the pooling system. The Bill provides that a three-fourths majority is necessary to create a pool. In face of all the circumstances, there is no necessity for the amendment.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I feel quite sure the Minister is sincere in his statement that the people suffered because of the newspaper propaganda.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said that the newspapers assisted. The interested agents were responsible for most of the trouble.

Mr. WARREN: I do not think many of the Southern people interested themselves in the matter. I wanted to get the views of other people, and I spoke to several Brisbane agents on the matter, and they seemed to be very indifferent. The first thing they asked me was, would the vote for the banana pool be carried. At first I thought that it would be. When the Southern Queensland Fruitgrowers' Association sent me to Melbourne to investigate their business there, I came to the conclusion that something would have to be done in the way of having a more uniform sample of fruit, so that it would be more attractive in the Victorian market. The Southern growers, particularly the Tasmanian growers, have a fruit standard controlled by the big co-operative companies. It was an absolute disgrace to see the fruit from my electorate on the Southern markets. I took the trouble to get the names from some of the cases, and I found that people in my electorate of long standing were sending their fruit to Melbourne in a disgraceful condition. I think it was because of my visit to Melbourne that the pooling scheme originated. I believe that pooling is only a temporary arrangement, and I have done nothing in my electorate, either publicly or privately, to encourage such a system, or to assist Mr. Nicklin. There is only one centre in the Murrumba electorate where there is any organisation against this system, and that is at Palmwoods. If the Primary Producers' Organisation Act had been in operation, the formation of a banana pool would have been carried by a majority of 85 per cent. There is need for some further provision in the Bill, and I am sorry that the Minister does not see his way clear to accept the amendment. I can assure [3 p.m.] the hon. gentleman, from my knowledge of the growers, that they would be more inclined to go into a pool if they knew there was a way out than they would if their hands were tied.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): We should go very carefully in connection with these matters. Had it not been for the attitude that the Country party took up in connection with the Cheese Pool Bill we would

probably have had a state of things which would have resulted in the loss of thousands of pounds to the producers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Was the Cheese Pool a success?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Not altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Whose fault was that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am not going to say whose fault it was, but the Cheese Manufacturers' Association managed the business better than the Cheese Pool is managing it to-day. If the Cheese Pool Bill had been passed as the Minister introduced it into this Chamber, we would have had one of the greatest calamities that ever befell the cheese industry. If that clause had been retained which compelled every factory to send its cheese to the pool and the pool could not sell it, what would have happened? They could not sell it. I ask the Minister what would have happened if he had a compulsory fruit pool, and every grower was compelled to send his fruit into the pool, and the managers of the pool knew nothing about selling it? What would they do with it? How would they pay the growers if they could not sell the fruit? That is the difficulty. The big difficulty is to get business men who can manage the business.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I agree with you there.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If we are compelled to send everything into the pool, then it will be a very serious menace. If there is to be a way in, there should certainly be a way out. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee says that he is quite certain of a pool being formed if the producers could see a way out, but, if they have to go into a pool and can see no way out, they are not going to join the pool, especially if they have to send their produce to be handled by men who know nothing about the business. There is always the risk of electing men to the board who do not understand the business. These things have to be handled very carefully, and I would advise the Minister to make provision for a way out.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): It is absolutely essential that the people who go into a pool without fully understanding it beforehand should have a method of getting out, and I cannot understand the attitude of the Minister on this matter. We know that the Labour party during the first two or three years they were in power introduced on several occasions a Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill, but the Upper House threw it out. Now, on a question of vital importance, the hon. gentleman will not agree to give the growers who go into a pool an opportunity of getting out. If a pool is found to be unsatisfactory, the growers should have the right to take a vote as to whether the pool should be continued or not.

Mr. GLEDSON: They have the right to say whether the pool shall continue for three months, six months, or twelve months.

Mr. MOORE: If they decide that it shall continue for twelve months, and after six months they find that it is unsatisfactory, why should they not have the right to abolish it? Why should they be compelled to continue it longer than is necessary? The

loss is going to be their own; it is not going to be a Government loss. The Minister is acting as though it was going to be a Government loss.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We are the trustees of the people.

Mr. MOORE: If a pool is unsatisfactory, the growers should have the opportunity of selling their produce outside the pool. It should be for the people who own the produce to say whether they will accept the loss in the first place, or whether they will continue the pool and incur a greater loss in the future. There is no liability on the Government.

Mr. GLEDSON: There is a liability on the Government to pass a workable Bill.

Mr. MOORE: There is a liability on the Government to give the producers freedom of action; and, if they find the pool is unsatisfactory and they are losing money over it, it is the duty of the Government to make provision for them to sell outside the pool if they so wish. We want to give them an opportunity to protect themselves, and, if they find themselves in a position that is intolerable, I do not see any reason why they should not be given that opportunity.

Mr. SIZER (*Vundah*): I cannot understand the Minister's position in regard to this amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then it is due to dullness on your part, because I made my position very clear.

Mr. SIZER: It is the viewpoint of the Minister that I cannot understand. The principle of the Bill is that it should be purely farmers' control. The Bill provides that, if fifty growers send in a petition asking for a pool, a ballot will be taken, and, if a majority of the growers desire it, a pool will be created. If they afterwards find that their scheme has gone astray, there should be some means whereby they can wind up the business. Everyone enters a concern full of hope and confidence, but things go wrong, and the object of everyone, immediately they cannot see daylight ahead, is to stop the loss. That is exactly the position we want to put the primary producers in under this Bill. They will go into the pool with every belief that it will be of benefit to them; but experience has taught us that some of these pools go astray—that is, they do not come up to the ideals of those who formed them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What pools do you refer to?

Mr. SIZER: The cheese pool has not been the success which was anticipated. I am given to understand that a large sum of money has been lost by the farmers in connection with that pool. Is it not reasonable to infer that, if the farmers are suffering a loss in connection with a pool, they may wish to end it, and they should be able to decide the question by a ballot.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Cannot they do that now under the Bill?

Mr. SIZER: I do not know; but, if they can do it now, there is no harm in the Minister accepting the amendment. No doubt the Minister has the power, if the farmers go to him and ask him to terminate

Mr. Sizer.]

the pool, to take that action; but it is entirely in his discretion. Although the Minister is sympathetic at the present time, there may be an occasion when he will not see eye to eye with the growers. He will not be suffering any financial loss by the continuation of the pool; and, looking at the matter from an academical point of view, he may want to see it continued; but the men who are suffering a loss will desire to see the pool ended as soon as possible. Is it not reasonable that provision should be made so that the primary producers interested may be able to terminate the pool if they so desire? We are only asking for what anybody in any other concern would ask for under similar circumstances. I cannot understand what the Minister's objection to the amendment can be, as there is nothing to be lost by his accepting it. If a pool is a success, no one will want to discontinue it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I explained to you that it would cause those who are injured—the middlemen—to be always up against it.

Mr. SIZER: I do not think the Minister is serious in that statement.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am.

Mr. SIZER: No one will say that the farmers of Queensland can be easily taken down.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you know anything about the farmers?

Mr. SIZER: My experience is that they are as cute as other people. They may appear to be simple, but they generally get there in the end, and those who try to trick them fall in.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Government are going to fall in, too.

Mr. SIZER: The farmers are not so easily led now, after the experience in connection with the banana pool and the maize pool. The Minister will not seriously suggest that someone who happened to be interested would go around and get the consent of the primary producers to do away with the pool in the interests of that individual and against their own interests.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Have you ever had anything to do with the formation of a co-operative company where there was undue influence used?

Mr. SIZER: No one will say that the farmers would be foolish enough to allow any individual to do that against their interests. If the pool was a success they will wish to continue it; but, if it is a failure, they should have the power to dissolve it. These loopholes in the measure arouse a certain amount of suspicion in the minds of the farmers. The farmers will not take too kindly to some of the remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba, particularly when he referred to the fact that this is a communistic move. The farming community is up against communism. Personally, I do not think very much good will come out of the Bill, but we are here to make the best we possibly can of the measure.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are here to obstruct. You want to keep on talking all the afternoon.

[Mr. Sizer.

Mr. SIZER: I am prepared to give these pools a trial; but, if the Minister will not allow the farmers to terminate the pools when they are a failure, it will create a suspicion in their minds, especially when we have the hon. member for Toowoomba saying that this is a communistic move. I hope that the Minister will see his way clear to accept the amendment.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I am not satisfied with the reasons given by the Minister for his refusal to accept the amendment. We claim that, if men are forced into a pool against their inclinations by the votes of others in the same industry, they should at any subsequent time have the right to have a ballot taken to enable them, if possible, to be relieved from the responsibility, or for the purpose of ending the pool that has been entered into. The Minister told us that all the power which is necessary is in the Bill already, as subclause (5) of clause 3 provides that—

“Any such Order in Council may be rescinded or amended by a subsequent Order in Council.”

He has told us that, if the occasion arose, he could slip into the breach and put an end to a pool, if it was undesirable to continue it. His argument was that it might be impossible, where a pool had been entered into for a definite term, to clear it up and get rid of the stocks on hand at once. If a pool was badly handled and became a losing concern, and it was desirable that it should be dissolved, the Minister says that he can step in under those conditions and dissolve it; but he would have to face all the inconvenience he spoke about in connection with getting rid of a pool. I see no difference between the voice of the persons primarily interested and the voice of the Minister.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They have to bear the loss.

Mr. VOWLES: They have to bear the loss in any case. There is a suggestion that, if this power were given, as soon as a pool was entered into members of the Opposition and other individuals would go round the country whispering and trying to undo the pool. Why should we try to undo a pool?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not suggest your party would do it.

Mr. VOWLES: The vested interests, I think the hon. gentleman said. Why should vested interests influence the producer? The farmer will take everything into consideration before he enters into a pool. Does the Minister mean to tell me that outside interests which he is trying to blame are the enemies of the farmer, and that millers and others are going to do something to induce him to go against his own interests? The position is rather remarkable. As the Bill has been introduced in the interests of the primary producer, the Minister should take him into his confidence.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If three-fourths of the primary producers agree to enter into a contract by their votes, why should they repudiate their contract?

Mr. VOWLES: The majority are binding the minority; but the minority may become the majority, and they should have an opportunity of making representations later on.

Question—That the words proposed to be added to clause 4 (*Mr. Voules's amendment*) be so added—put; and the Committee divided—

In division,

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I declare that, in addition to voting in my own right, I vote for the "Noes," as proxy for Messrs. Coyne, Gilday, and McCormack.

AYES, 33.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Kerr
" Barnes, G. P.	" King
" Barnes, W. H.	" Macgregor
" Bebbington	" Maxwell
" Bell	" Moore
" Brand	" Morgan
" Cattermull	" Nott
" Clayton	" Peterson
" Corser	" Petrie
" Costello	" Roberts, J. H. C.
" Deacon	" Roberts, T. R.
" Edwards	" Sizer
" Elphinstone	" Swayne
" Fletcher	" Taylor
" Fry	" Vowles
" Green	" Warren
" Jones, J.	

Tellers: Mr. Brand and Mr. Deacon.

NOES, 36.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Huxham
" Bertram	" Jones, A. J.
" Brennan	" Land
" Bulcock	" Lareombe
" Collins	" McCormack (Proxy)
" Conroy	" Mullan
" Cooper, F. A.	" Payne
" Cooper, W.	" Pease
" Coyne (Proxy)	" Pollock
" Dash	" Riordan
" Dunstan	" Ryan
" Ferricks	" Smith
" Foley	" Stopford
" Forde	" Theodore
" Gilday (Proxy)	" Weir
" Gillies	" Wellington
" Gledson	" Wilson
" Hartley	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Brennan and Mr. Ryan.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 4 put and passed.

Clause 5—"Powers of Board"—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I take exception to subclause (iii.), which reads—

"The Board may—

As far as practicable, provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced."

I also draw attention to subclause (4) of clause 3, which reads—

"Any such Order in Council may be of limited duration or may be made with respect only to certain specified localities or districts of Queensland."

I draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that a commodity may be grown in a particular district for which a pool is formed, but there may be another part of Queensland where there is no pool. Are the producers in the districts where there is no pool to be allowed to send their commodity out of the State in order to get a better market? It seems to me that this clause is ill-conceived and unwise. In my opinion the producer is going to be sacrificed if we allow this clause to stand as it is. It is quite possible

for a butter pool to be formed between Brisbane and the Darling Downs without including the Darling Downs. There may not be a pool for butter on the Darling Downs at the time, and it is possible for those below the Range to be subject to this clause, which states that their first duty is to supply the requirements of the consumers in Queensland, if there is any shortage.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where do you find the words "first duty."

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The clause says, "As far as practicable."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a very different thing.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The fact remains that in years gone by this Government refused to allow the producers to send their meat and butter out of the State, and what happened previously might possibly happen again. I do not want to be antagonistic to the Minister, and I do not want

the Minister to be antagonistic [3.30 p.m.] to me; but I want the hon. gentleman to realise that this requires consideration, especially if he reads the two subclauses which I have just quoted. I take it that the subclause that I am discussing is more or less safeguarded by subclause (3) of clause 11—

"Nothing in this section shall apply to a commodity the subject of an interstate contract."

Suppose that a pool has been formed to control butter, and a company on the Downs has entered into a contract to supply butter to a firm in New South Wales for twelve months at a price which the directors considered eminently fair at the time, I take it that, if that contract has been duly signed and sealed, the company cannot be called upon to place its product within the jurisdiction of the pool.

It appears to me that this clause is ill-conceived. Sectional organisations can have pools formed. There may be a maize pool on the Downs, but no maize pool in the Burnett. There may be a butter pool on the Downs, but none below the range. Under certain conditions one section will be allowed to send its butter outside Queensland, whereas under the pool it will be the duty of the producers to supply the consumers of Queensland with all the butter they require at a price which I presume will be fixed by the Commissioner of Prices. Either the Minister will have to allow those producers who have not asked for a pool to send their produce out of the State, or else commandeer it, because the Bill does not allow him to bring them compulsorily under its provisions. Under those conditions one section will get better prices than the other section under the pooling system. I am not going to move an amendment, but I suggest that the Minister should delete the clause and substitute something which will not cause hardship or ask the farmers to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of somebody else. No hon. member on the other side will deny that in years gone by primary producers have been called upon to make great sacrifices for the people of the State, and it appears to me that we are still going to be asked to make as great sacrifices in the future. We believe that we should have a free opportunity to market our stuff within the Commonwealth without any hampering regulations, because, after all, the wage of the man who produces butter is the

Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

price he gets for it; the wage of the man who produces wheat or maize is the price he gets for it; and why should he not be allowed to get as much for his time and labour as anybody else in the State? Why should he be called upon to sell his product at a price below Australian parity when it is found that there is a shortage?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That is, give him the full result of his labour?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I think the hon. member for Bremer will agree that we should give him the full result of his labour.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: For all men?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The difference between the men I represent and those the hon. member represents is that the farmer has to give of his very best all the day, whilst the men the hon. member represents will not give the very best that is in them, because their efficiency is regulated by that of the worst man in the gang. (Government dissent.)

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not true.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is true, and you know it. The slowest man in the gang is the man who sets the pace.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Rot!

Mr. HARTLEY: How is it you do not set the pace here?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Minister knows as well as I do that the farmer is the one man in Australia to-day who cannot afford to have any "go slow" in him. He has got to keep on working all the time. Only the other day we heard the hon. member for Fitzroy giving a dissertation on the text that the "cow cucky" required to have a school right at the gate of his cowyard, because he finds that under Labour rule it is so difficult for him to make a living that very often he has to keep going for twenty-four hours a day. (Government interruption.) I sincerely hope that the Minister will realise before it is too late that under this subclause of clause 5 it is possible that great injustice may be done to the producers of foodstuffs in this State. I think I am right in presuming that the principal pooling will be done in connection with foodstuffs.

Mr. HARTLEY: You were most interested in canary seed.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If you wore to pool a crowd like the hon. member for Fitzroy—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Well, let him stop talking about canary seed. I am on this job.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I hope the hon. member will resume his seat when the Chairman calls "Order!" May I respectfully point out to the hon. member that he will get on better if he ignores interjections.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is difficult to do so if there are canaries chirping all round the Chamber. (Laughter.) To get right back to solid fact, I want the Minister to realise that the Government are going to have no control over the man who does not pool his stuff, except per medium of the Commissioner of Prices, unless they commandeer the product outside the pool under the Sugar Acqui-

sition Act; and, if that is done, the necessity for this Bill ceases to exist.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to discuss clause 5.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I am discussing clause 5. It is the desire of every hon. member on this side to see that clause 5 is so worded that it will be a fair law for all sections of the community. Subclause (iii.) of the clause, compared with subclause (iv.), appears to be contradictory. We find later on that subclause (iii.) of clause 11 provides—

"Nothing in this section shall apply to a commodity the subject of an interstate contract."

What does "an interstate contract" mean?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where do you find any reference to interstate contracts in clause 5?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Minister has repeatedly told us that we could not prevent Southern wheat coming into Queensland, because it would be a restraint of trade.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do you propose to do?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do not propose to do anything. It is up to the Minister to say what should be done.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Should I repeal the Commonwealth Constitution?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I am not asking that at all. It seems to me that the Minister has got himself into a position out of which he does not know how to get.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't you believe it.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do believe it. The Minister has either to commandeer under the Sugar Acquisition Act the butter, cheese, or any other commodity which remains outside the pool, and prevent its export outside Queensland, or set the Commissioner of Prices to work to fix the prices of the commodity outside the pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Which course do you recommend?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I recommend that the Minister withdraw this clause and go more fully into the matter. We should realise the danger there is in it. It would pay the men who have made a profession of growing lucerne below the Range at Harrisville—where they produce probably the best lucerne in Queensland—to ask for a lucerne pool. It would not be so on the Downs; we would never dream of asking for a lucerne pool. Supposing we had a pool below the Range and none above the Range, we on the Downs could send our lucerne into New South Wales if there was a shortage of lucerne there, and ask the Minister to see that the lucerne grown below the Range was retained in Queensland and sold to us at a price which would enable us to feed our stock on it. The whole clause leads me to believe that this is nothing more or less than a direct threat—that even under the pooling system we are not to be allowed to get for ourselves all that there is in the commodity which we are producing. It seems to me to be contradictory in every way. I hope that the Minister will withdraw the clause and recommit it a little later on.

[Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I have an amendment circulated for the deletion of this clause. I cannot understand the necessity for it. The Board is to have certain powers. It may sell, or arrange for the sale of, a commodity, and do certain other actions; and in particular, without limiting the generality of their powers, they may do specific things, one of which is—

“(iii.) As far as practicable, provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced.”

There is no question that the Bill is full of contradictions. We are told in one portion that local pools may be created. It is quite possible for one section of the producers to have their commodities controlled by a pool, and exactly the same class of commodity grown in other places not to be controlled.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not likely to take place; the pool will apply to the whole State.

Mr. VOWLES: It is all right so long as we understand that the pools will be general; but the Bill makes provision for local pools.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't you think it is wise to have that provision?

Mr. VOWLES: Consider the areas below the Range referred to by the hon. member for Pittsworth. At pretty well any time they could have a pool. I understand that lucerne was fetching something like £12 a ton in Brisbane up to a few days ago before the rain. All that was coming from one luckily situated district, which has been fortunate so far as rain is concerned. Up in my district, where there is a big shortage, you would not expect the Bill to apply. It must be realised that the Bill is slightly different to what it was when we first got it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Subclause (iv.), read in conjunction with subclause (iii.), makes a big difference.

Mr. VOWLES: We are in the position now that the Bill provides that the Board shall be elected, and therefore the men on the Board will be direct representatives of the industry, and we can expect better consideration and more business ability in the management of the pool. But under this clause it seems to me that if a pool is in existence and the Board takes advantage of the power given there, they may not be acting in the best interests of the producers who are interested in that pool, because they will be simply getting a minimum price throughout the whole area for the commodity in question. I understand that it is customary in some commodities to store up during the plentiful portion of the year so as to have stocks on hand for local consumption, when, in the ordinary course, there will be a shortage. That is ordinary business; it is done for the purpose of getting a good, not a low, price. You are not going to flood the market with your commodity when it is in abundance; you are going to put it in storage, so that, when there is a shortage, you are going to get a reasonable price for it so as to give you a decent average for your commodity throughout the whole year.

Mr. BRENNAN: How many farmers can afford to hang on until the high price comes?

Mr. VOWLES: If we are going to have storage throughout Queensland for all the

produce in order to look for high prices only, we will be going back to the times when everything was carried over from year to year.

Mr. BRENNAN: If the farmers could do as you say they can, there would be no necessity for a pool.

Mr. VOWLES: I sincerely trust that the hon. member will not be made one of the directors of one of these pools. He has given us so much information about silos that we have come to the conclusion that his opinion is not of much value.

I would like to know from the Minister what is the object of that subclause. It is not a mandatory provision. Certainly the Board must have statutory powers, but what is the object of giving them statutory powers such as are contained here? Subclause (iii.) reads—

“As far as practicable provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland”

Mr. G. P. BARNES: At a minimum price?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, it is going to be at a minimum price all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where is there any reference to a minimum price?

Mr. VOWLES: That is what the effect will be.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Does the hon. gentleman not think that it is a reasonable thing that Queenslanders should have some of their own produce at the same price?

Mr. VOWLES: Of course, they should get some of it; but we have also got to deal with the question of contracts for supplies to the South. What is the effect going to be when in many cases a large proportion of the produce is subject to interstate contracts? It is all very well to say that Queenslanders should have a proportion of the produce grown in Queensland; but I certainly think that, if they are going to have it, they should pay a reasonable price for it. Now that the management of the Board is to be different from what was originally intended I am much more contented, because the people will be controlling the produce, and it will be their function to say whether these powers shall be exercised. They will be the directly elected representatives of the growers, and therefore we can trust them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): Both the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Pittsworth assume that the policy will be that district boards will be created in different parts of the State, and that one board will supply commodities to another part of the State. The leader of the Opposition went so far as to suggest a minimum price. Subclauses (iii.) and (iv.) are very clear and really need no explanation. They state—

“The Board may . . . —

(iii.) As far as practicable provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced; and

(iv.) Make such arrangements as they deem necessary with regard to sales of the commodity for export or for con-

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shipment to other countries or States: for the purposes of this provision a sale of the commodity for oversea ships' stores shall be deemed to be a sale for export."

There is no suggestion that the price for the commodity controlled by a Board should be less than what the Board can get in the world's market. Several hon. members opposite, particularly members of the Nationalist party, have condemned this Bill, because the Board might be so constituted that it would send practically all the produce that it controlled out of the State, to the detriment of Queensland. The hon. member for Nundah suggested that the consumers should, by a petition, be able to have their rights preserved and conserved. The Bill only makes a suggestion, which, I think, is a very wise one. The hon. member for Pittsworth, whom the "Daily Standard" refers to as suffering from verbal diarrhoea, pointed out all the possibilities that may occur if the subclauses (iii.) and (iv.) are left in the Bill. It would probably be better for the people in his electorate if he paid more attention to the clauses in the Bill. He certainly will not have any electorate after the next election, because of the way he behaves in this Chamber. It behoves every new member to pay great attention to any Bill, perhaps going so far as to consult the Parliamentary Draftsman to find out what it really means before getting up and talking all round the compass about possible dangers. This same provision is contained in the Cheese Pool Act, and there has been no injury to the primary producers of this State because of that. There is no compulsion; it is only a suggestion to the Board, and in my opinion it is a very patriotic suggestion that the people of Queensland should be considered before produce is exported.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): Notwithstanding what the Minister has said, I agree with the leader of the Opposition that this clause is more or less ambiguous. It is hard to ascertain what is the real meaning of the subclause. Subclauses (iii.) and (iv.) should be read in conjunction. Subclause (iii.) deals with commodities for local consumption and subclause (iv.) with commodities for export overseas. I think it would be better if subclause (iii.) were deleted and subclause (iv.) amended by inserting, on line 39, after the word "commodity," the words "for local consumption in Queensland."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: All those powers are contained in the first subclause.

Mr. FLETCHER: Then delete subclause (iv.) also.

Mr. BRENNAN: Cut the Bill out altogether!

Mr. FLETCHER: There is no need to do that. The powers are very wide. The two subclauses are really superfluous. I defy anyone to understand the meaning of subclause (iii.) I do not know whether it is intended that fodder shall come under the operations of the Bill. The Bill certainly gives power to deal with fodder. Subclause (iii.) makes it possible to store fodder for use during drought periods. If you are going to conserve fodder during good seasons for use during bad seasons, you will require to have a special Bill altogether, and I believe power is given under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act to set up machinery to deal with the conservation of fodder. Possibly it is intended that the provisions of this Bill will be utilised to effect a drought-resisting

scheme, and if that is done, there is surely going to be trouble. I hope the Minister will delete the two subclauses, or delete (iii.) and amend (iv.) to give the Board power to deal with commodities for local consumption. I defy the Minister to explain the real meaning of subclause (iii.) He got up to explain it, but hon. members were just as wise when he sat down as when he rose. It is not right that the Bill should be pushed through in this way. From my study of the Bill I say there are sufficient powers in the Bill without these two subclauses.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The leader of the Opposition has referred to the fact that the farmers who are in a position to store their produce may, in a time of shortage, be compelled to send their produce to the pool. If any farmer was in a position to store his produce

[4 p.m.] until there was a shortage and he could get a high price for it, he would be very well off. The farmer who is able to store his produce till he can get a good price does not want assistance. He is a successful farmer. But the unfortunate man who is in the hands of the bank or in the hands of the storekeeper and middleman, does want assistance, because, as soon as there is a good market, these people go to him and he is compelled to unload and sell at any price at all. This Bill is intended to protect him. When the new crop is coming in, maize is very low in price; but in the middle of the year, when there is a shortage, maize increases in price. Somebody has to store that maize until there is a demand for it. We know very well that the merchants store it. They buy the maize at from 1s. 9d. per bushel when the season is good, and then later on they get as high as 5s. 6d. per bushel for it. They have the banks behind them, and they can afford to buy when maize is low in price and store it for six or eight months when they know that, in the ordinary course of events, the price will increase by 2s. or 3s. per bushel. They make that 2s. or 3s. per bushel, and pay a few pence to the bank by way of interest. Why should not the farmers have power to form a pool and store the maize so that the profits will go back to the producers? The hon. member for Port Curtis is a keen business man and he knows that what I say is correct. With regard to subclause (iii.), it is the duty of every Government to see that home consumption is first provided for. We must keep produce for our own consumption first, and then any surplus can be exported. Why should we allow our produce to be exported and then have to buy it back at a big price? Last year the farmers sold their wheat to the Wheat Board. The Wheat Board is becoming so reckless that its wings will have to be clipped. It was so reckless that it was prepared to export all our wheat. The millers were to blame to a certain extent, because they would not take it into stock. What happened? The Board sold the wheat to the millers, and then had not sufficient seed wheat to supply the requirements of the farmers. The millers bought wheat at 6s. per bushel from the Wheat Board, and sold it back to the farmers as seed wheat at 8s. 6d. We should not allow produce to be exported at a low price and then compel the consumers to bring it back at a high price. It will be the duty of the pool to hold that produce until it is required for home consumption.

[*Hon. W. N. Gillies.*]

At 4.5 p.m.,

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): No hon. member on this side of the Chamber has condemned the Wheat Board in the way the hon. member for Toowoomba has done; yet, because we on this side dare to offer a little criticism at times, hon. members on the other side have said that we are against the pooling system. With regard to subclauses (iii.) and (iv.), I think the whole difficulty arises owing to the provision for district pools. If it was meant that the pools would be for the whole of Queensland, there would be no difficulty.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is what is meant.

Mr. MOORE: I take it that the idea is that the pool shall provide a certain amount of produce for use during the winter time. So far as I can see, the contention of the hon. member for Toowoomba about storing maize is all piffle. If there is going to be a pool at all in connection with the maize industry, naturally that pool will do as the hon. member for Toowoomba suggested. But it is a question of a district pool, and not a pool for the whole of Queensland; and it is very possible that it may work out in a way that no one anticipates it will work out. If we are going to have pools for small local districts, which will store the products of those districts, and afterwards the products stored in those districts are going to be sold at a low price to other districts which did not establish pools, although those other districts could get a far better price in the other States, it is not fair.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no suggestion that they should supply at a lower price.

Mr. MOORE: If these people are to be compelled to sell their commodities in Queensland when they can get a better price in the other States, an injustice will be done. I cannot see that the deletion of subclause (iii.) will hurt the Bill in any way. Any pool formed for the whole State would have to be in a position to store up foodstuffs, if necessary, and it is only a question as to whether this would operate in connection with district pools. If it would operate in connection with district pools, there would be great objection to it on the part of the people in those districts. I hope that the Minister will accept the deletion of subclause (iii.).

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*): I want to point out that the amendment is really meaningless. This clause deals with the powers of the Board and says—

“The Board may sell or arrange for the sale of the commodity, and do all acts, matters, and things necessary or expedient in that behalf accordingly;”

That is an all-embracing power. Even if you delete subclause (iii.) you will not limit the powers of the Board.

Mr. MOORE: The Bill limits the powers of the Board.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am dealing with the merits of the amendment. If you delete subclause (iii.), you

still leave all-embracing and comprehensive powers within the ambit of the Board.

Mr. SIZER: Then it is superfluous.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The amendment is superfluous. The various subclauses are a guide as to what the Board “may”—not “shall”—do. They may do these things as well as other things. The leader of the Opposition knows that if subclause (iii.) is deleted, it will still leave unlimited power in the clause.

Mr. VOWLES: Why not cut out the superfluous subclauses?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If you cut out all those subclauses, you still leave the power in the clause.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: But you may leave the power in. The Minister says it is only a suggestion to do these things.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Subclause (iii.) provides that, where a shortage is being experienced, the Board may—

“As far as practicable, provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced.”

Therefore, they may adjust and distribute.

Mr. VOWLES: Read the first part of the clause—

“The Board may sell or arrange for the sale of the commodity, and do all acts, matters, and things necessary or expedient in that behalf accordingly.”

That is selling and arranging for sale, and nothing more. They have special powers to purchase.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. The words read by the hon. member confer upon the Board the power to sell outside or inside the State if they so desire.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, but you are giving the power to purchase here.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Under the clause the Board has power to sell—

“and to do all acts, matters, and things necessary or expedient in that behalf accordingly.”

Then comes the specialisation; but it does not limit the generality of the foregoing. You may do the following things, but the power is contained in the first clause. Subclause (iii.) gives power to the Board to take over an industry and supply the commodity to other places where there is a shortage in Queensland, to distribute from one town to another where it can be done. Then subclause (iv.) gives them power to—

“Make such arrangements as they may deem necessary with regard to sales of the commodity for export or for consignment to other countries or States;”

There is no limitation there on the power of the Board. They may supply a shortage at one point, and at the same time may contract for sale beyond the State and overseas. If you cut out subclause (iii.), the power that resides in the first part of the clause to which I have referred will still remain. I submit that the amendment is meaningless and valueless.

Hon. J. Larcombe.]

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): The Minister did not adduce any argument as to why subclause (iii.) should be retained.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes he did, but you did not understand it.

Mr. FLETCHER: I understand it quite well. The Bill gives ample power to the Board without that subclause. Subclause (iii.) deals with consumption in Queensland and subclause (iv.) deals with the export of commodities.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If you cut those subclauses out, you still have the power in the clause.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Secretary for Agriculture said that these were suggestions.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is there anything wrong with those suggestions?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes. In the first place, they are very hard to follow. It is suggested that the Board should store up products in times of plenty for distribution when there is a shortage. You may have a high price ruling for butter in the South, and, instead of the farmers being allowed the opportunity to secure that high price, the Board may say that it will store the butter for use in Queensland. That may be quite against the best interests of the farmers. The matter should be left in the discretion of the farmers, without any suggestion or advice from the Government as to what they should do. I cannot see the need for subclause (iii.). I suggest that the Minister should delete it, and allow an amendment to be made in subclause (iv.), which reads—

“Make such arrangements as they deem necessary with regard to sales of the commodity”—

I suggest the addition of the words—

“for local consumption in Queensland or”—

The subclause then goes on—

“for export or for consignment to other countries or States.”

That will give power to the Board to control the commodity for consumption in Queensland or for export overseas. Subclause (iii.) is absolutely superfluous and dangerous, and nothing has been said by the Minister to show why it should be retained.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): If the clause were merely superfluous it would not matter; but, as far as I can understand from the Minister and other hon. members opposite, it is intended that the Board shall, in times of shortage, provide any place in Queensland with fodder or grain. I want to point out that it is not the business of any Board to provide anyone with such commodities in times of shortage; it is the duty of the people to provide themselves with these things. Why should we be under the obligation of providing these commodities for people in the cities and other parts of the State? There is a suggestion that the Board may be under the obligation of storing maize, lucerne, or any commodity it may be dealing with in times of drought, but that is not part of its duty at all. I quite agree that, in connection with butter, we should consider the home market as the best market.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If that is so, there is no danger from subclause (iii.).

[*Mr. Fletcher.*

Mr. DEACON: The danger is that there may be an obligation on the part of the Board to hold the butter, but it is no part of its duty to do so. People should not depend on the Board for the supply of commodities in times of drought; they should provide themselves with those commodities in a good season. You might require the Board to provide people in the whole of the State with butter or any other commodity under the subclause. I think it would be just as well to cut it out, as it is not necessary. At any rate, it would be quite clear then that the Board would not have the duty imposed upon it of providing for people who do not look after themselves.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I will read clause 5 and the subclause with which we have been dealing—

“The Board may sell or arrange for the sale of the commodity, and do all acts, matters, and things necessary or expedient in that behalf accordingly; and in particular, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing powers, may—

(iii.) As far as practicable provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced.”

It states there distinctly that the Board will have to comply with a demand that is going to place the producer in a very unfair position. The producer will see that the Board will not enable him to realise as much for his produce as he could get for himself. The Board will have power to equalise the value of certain commodities. They will have power, as the hon. member for Toowoomba put it—he appealed rather to the patriotism of people in this direction—to preserve for the people of Queensland commodities at a low price. I have had a lot of experience of farmers in Queensland, and I know that many of them hold their produce. They study the market just the same as the merchants do. There are heaps of farmers who know as much about the market in Queensland and the markets down South as we do.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They make a close study of the market, and are not ignorant regarding these things. Many of them send their products direct to the South, because they know that the market there is more favourable than here. Instead of being compelled to send their products to the pool, they should be allowed to place them in the best market to be found in Australia. They will be prevented from doing that by this clause, and they will not get as much for their produce as if they had it in their own hands for sale. Clause 5 is going to prevent the farmer from being able to seize the best market open to him at the time. He is going to be kept down to the minimum price. He is not going to be allowed to avail himself of the fluctuations of the market. The law of supply and demand is going to be put out of it. When there is a rising market he will not get the advantage of it, and frequently he will have to sell his produce below its value—sometimes below the cost of production. When the time comes for him

to equalise things, he will be prevented from achieving that purpose. Clause 5, in so far as it relates to these things, should be amended, because it is going to flog the farmer and keep him down all the time. The Government are doing this under the guise of doing something for the man on the land. We well remember the action of Mr. Lennon when he was Secretary for Agriculture. The hon. member for Drayton will remember what was done on that occasion.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I do.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That is going to apply under this clause. The dairyman and the agriculturist will not be able to obtain the highest value for their products. This kind of thing is going to injure the farmer. If we want to encourage men to go on the land, we must make them successful, but a clause like this will be a barrier. It will give the farmer the minimum price, and I say it is distinctly unfair. We have no right to pass legislation to prevent men from getting the highest value for their commodities. We know that the primary producer has his nose everlastingly to the grindstone. If the Minister is concerned about the man on the land and is willing to assist him, then he will see that this clause is detrimental to him.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I regard you as a hostile witness all the time, because you are against the Bill.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is allowing his prejudice to overcome his judgment. Just because I happen to be a Nationalist, and because I happen to have said certain things, the hon. gentleman does not want to hear anything from me at all. I do not know anything more unstatesman-like than an assertion of that kind. We have no right to allow this clause to be placed on the statute-book.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): Whether the Minister is aware of it or not, this clause is a copy of a clause in the old Federal Butter Pool Act.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why didn't you object to it when the Cheese Pool Bill was going through?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We get a little more experience as we go on. It was all right to pass this clause in war time; but, so far as the cheese pool is concerned, it is not a success. During war time a certain amount of butter had to be placed in cold storage in order to carry Australia over the winter, irrespective of the fact that there was a large sale for butter in London at the time. I can tell the Minister that in Queensland even in the winter time—which is our period of shortage—we produce more butter than we require for our own consumption.

INTERRUPTION OF BUSINESS.

At 4.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) resumed the chair, and said: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, and of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 30th August, I shall now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the sitting.

QUESTIONS.

ALLEGED UNSUITABILITY OF BARALABA COAL FOR RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Is he aware that the late running of trains from Bundaberg to Cordalba is attributed to the use of Baralaba coal?”

“2. Does he know that the enginemmen are complaining bitterly of having to use this coal?”

“3. Is he aware that Baralaba coal is not a suitable coal for locomotive purposes? If not, will he peruse the letter contained in the ‘Brisbane Courier’ of 30th September, 1921, written by Messrs. A. W. Smith and R. P. Macoun, president and secretary, respectively, of the Enginemmen’s Association in the Central Division, in which the writers state, inter alia, as follows:—

Mr. Larcombe’s statement can be accepted, as it is probably correct that he has not been advised to the contrary, but we can assure you that complaints have been and are still being repeatedly made to the heads of the Railway Department, particularly as to the broken-up condition in which this coal is being supplied to locomotives, its tendency to form a clinker, and its closing up the tubes at the end of the firebox, resulting in the late running of trains. Then there are reports, etc., not to mention an excessive and unreasonable amount of work entailed on the firemen, and a lot of unparliamentary, though pardonable, language on its qualities, all in an attempt to prove its unsuitability generally for locomotive purposes in train working.

“4. Is he aware that the supplying of the Bundaberg depôt with Baralaba coal will have a serious effect upon the Burrum coalminers, who are now finding it difficult to obtain sufficient work to provide them with a living wage?”

“5. Does he consider that in having Baralaba coal supplied to the Bundaberg depôt he is upholding the principle of decentralisation, which, on several occasions, has received his approval in this House?”

“6. What is his reason for having the Bundaberg depôt supplied with Baralaba coal, hauled a distance of 269 miles, when a better coal can be obtained from the Burrum coal area, distant about 40 miles?”

“7. Does he consider it to be economically sound from the point of view of the Railway Department?”

“8. Was his decision to use Baralaba coal as against local coal influenced by a desire to assist State enterprises as against private enterprise, irrespective of economic considerations?”

“9. Is he prepared to have a ballot taken of the enginemmen in the Bundaberg district on the question of which coal they consider the better for locomotive purposes—Burrum coal or Baralaba coal?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

“1. No. Trains on the Isis Branch are running fairly punctually, considering the busy sugar season and number of special trains.

"2 and 3. No. In addition to some Burrum coal, a mixture of Styx and Baralaba coal, which gives good results, is now being used at Bundaberg.

"4 to 9. The cost of Baralaba and Styx coal, including the cost of railage, is less at Bundaberg than the cost of Burrum coal."

REPAIRS TO COUNTRY SCHOOLS BY LOCAL CONTRACTORS.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"In view of the delay at the present time in the matter of repairs, etc., to schools, and the erection of new schools in country centres off the railway lines, will he consider the advisability in such cases of having the repairs, etc., effected, or new schools erected by local contractors?"

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

"When works are authorised by me they are carried out without undue delay. The policy of the Government was clearly defined during the debate on the Estimates of my department."

ALLOCATION OF COST OF OWEN'S CREEK RAILWAY.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is the Owen's Creek Railway completed?"

"2. If so, what has been its total cost, and what portion of the sum was spent on that part of the work carried out by the Construction Branch, and what has been the cost of the work recently done by the Maintenance Branch in completing the line?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. The total cost is, approximately, £51,844, but the accounts are not quite finalised. Of this amount the Construction Branch spent £50,344, and the Maintenance Branch £1,500, but the Construction Branch paid for all material to complete the work."

NUMBER OF PAYERS OF INCOME TAX.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Orley*) asked the Treasurer—

"In view of the fact that—(a) there are upon the State electoral rolls 229,184 males; (b) the basic wage operating from 1st July, 1920, to 30th June, 1921, was £4 5s. per week, or £221 per annum; (c) all incomes in excess of £200 per annum were taxable—will he state why only 37,376 persons paid State income tax during the last financial year on incomes earned during the year ended 30th June, 1921?"

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

"The reason is that, so far as the Commissioner of Taxes is aware, no other persons were liable for income tax. If the hon. member has any information which will lead to the collection of additional tax, I shall be pleased if he will pass it on to the Commissioner."

SUPPLY OF TIMBER BY STATE SAWMILLS TO BUILDING TRADES GUILD.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to a letter appearing in the 'Courier,' on 12th September, written by Mr. H. J. Foster, first secretary to the Building Trades Guild, wherein he states that, finding upon investigation that certain contracts which the guild had entered into could not be completed without a loss of £150 each, he so arranged matters with the manager of the State sawmills and Director of Forests to permit of closing the guild's account with small, if any, loss, but that in spite of this the Minister for Lands reversed the decision arrived at by the Government's officers, and directed the State sawmills to continue supplying the guild?"

"2. As his action has resulted in an apparent loss to the State of £1,189 without any tangible benefit, the guild now being in liquidation, will he lay upon the table of the House all papers referring thereto?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in the absence of the Secretary for Public Lands, replied—

"1. No.

"2. The Forestry Department took a business risk, which was regarded by the accountant who examined the guild's books as being a reasonably sound one. Owing, however, to unsatisfactory management and the payment in full of all debts owing to private firms, the State sawmills will have to suffer the bulk of the loss referred to in Question No. 2."

AMENDMENT OF INCOME TAX ACT.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*), without notice, asked the Premier—

"Is it the intention of the Government to introduce an amending Income Tax Bill this session?"

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

"Matters of that kind will be disclosed to the House in due course."
(Laughter.)

EXPENDITURE IN OPENING UP STATE COALMINES AT BOWEN, WARRA, STYX RIVER, AND BARALABA.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Mines—

"When will the information asked for on 7th September, 1922, in re expenditure in working the Bowen, Warra, Styx River, and Baralaba coalmines be given to the House?"

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

"A return is being prepared."

UNIVERSITY SITE BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*): I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to make provision for the Enlargement of the University Site, and for other consequential purposes."

Question put and passed.

BARALABA TO CASTLE CREEK RAILWAY.

APPROVAL OF PLAN, ETC.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*): I beg to move—

"That Mr. Speaker will this day leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution:—

That the House approves of plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension of the Mount Morgan Railway from Baralaba to Castle Creek, in length 52 miles 51 chains."

Question put and passed.

PRIMARY PRODUCTS POOLS BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 5—"Powers of board"—

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): If the Minister will go further into the matter of storing, which is provided for in this clause and which was adopted during the war by the Federal butter pool, he will see that there are very big risks. It is all very well for speculators to buy produce and store it up; but, if the primary producer is to be compelled to store produce to supply to citizens in a time of shortage, who is going to stand the loss, if there is any? I have seen hay bought at £14 per ton in a dry period and held; then heavy rain has fallen, and the same produce has been sold at £6 per ton. If under this clause the Board stores for three or four months produce for which it could probably get 1s. 9d. or 2s. per lb. in London, and during that time there is a change of seasons and probably a fall in prices of 30 per cent. to 40 per cent., who is going to stand the loss? It may have been necessary in war time, but I am against compulsory storage.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: All your arguments are against the system of pooling.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I believe the cheese pool has held back very big quantities of cheese in order to provide Queensland with a proper supply. Now the good seasons have come and it is not wanted here, it has to be sent to London and sold at less than could have been obtained there when it was held up by the pool.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you sure of that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is the complaint of the factories to me.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Did the Board tell you that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am not talking about the Board. Certainly very large stocks of cheese were held. If they have worked them off, I am not going to say anything about it. That was the case a month or two ago. The same thing will happen if we store up large quantities of produce.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You evidently are not concerned about how much you are injuring the reputation of the Board.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It can easily be ascertained whether it is correct. If the stocks have been disposed of, well and good. Three or four factories complained to me at that time that large stocks of cheese were held by the cheese pool, and they would have realised higher prices had they been sent to London at an earlier date. Who is going to stand that loss? I shall certainly support the proposal of the leader of the Opposition to cut out subclause (iii.).

Mr. EDWARDS (*Yanango*): I think the Minister was right when he said that this was a suggestion. It is going to lead to great trouble so far as the primary producers are concerned. It is a suggestion to the Board to create a similar position to that which was created when the Commissioner of Prices lowered the price of butter for consumption in Queensland. If the Bill is allowed to go through with these subclauses, it will create suspicion. I am sure the Minister will see that the subclause is unnecessary. It is a suggestion to the Board that they may buy any produce and store it in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no suggestion of buying.

Mr. EDWARDS: Will the Minister say that the holding of produce during a time of plenty until a time of shortage is not a suggestion of buying? How is any Board going to hold the produce of this State for one year or two years?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It might only be held for one month.

Mr. EDWARDS: It might be held for six months or twelve months. How will produce be stored in time of plenty until a time of shortage unless it is purchased? There must be some means of financing to the extent of the value of the produce.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Strictly speaking, the Board does not buy, but merely acts as agent for the producers to sell the produce to the best advantage.

Mr. EDWARDS: Surely, the Minister does not suggest that the produce should be held for speculative purposes? If it is held during times of plenty until times of shortage, it is following along the lines of nationalisation for the purpose of giving produce to the consumers of this State during times of shortage at the price ruling during times of plenty. Will the Minister say that that is an incentive to the producers of this State? I am sure he will see that the subclause is not only unnecessary, but that it is also dangerous.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said it is both a necessary and a patriotic proposal.

Mr. EDWARDS: Then the Minister possesses a peculiar kind of patriotism. Supposing the time arrived when the Board deemed it necessary to take over fodder and hold it for a time of shortage. Can the hon. gentleman not see that it would be necessary for the Board to become a speculator, and can he not see that it is unfair to ask producers to put their produce into a pool for the purposes of having it held over for a time of shortage? Can the hon. gentleman not see that, if that position is brought about, it will mean setting one class of producers against another class? I am out to bring about a true co-operative spirit in this State,

Mr. Edwards.]

if possible. If the Minister allows the Bill to go through with this subclause, it will create suspicion that the Government will act in a similar manner as they acted when they commandeered the butter of this State in order to give it to the consumers of Queensland at many pounds less per ton than could have been obtained in outside markets. We have a big trade with other States, and, if we are not allowed to take advantage of good markets in the other States, then the other States, which are not working under similar conditions, will benefit as a result of our disability. We have been wasting a good deal of capital by purchasing commodities from Southern States, which commodities should have been produced here. If we can get a better market for our produce outside of the State, it would be a ridiculous and bad business proposition to hold it here. It would be a bad thing not only to the producer but to the people of the State.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): The hon. member for Nanango has put his finger upon a very important subclause. I am surprised to hear the Minister say that it is a safeguard. If he wants to set one class against another, he can do it by that subclause. Unless you allow the man on the land to get the very best for his produce, you will be against every producing interest in the State. The people are very much linked up in the various industries in the State, both in the country and in the city, and it is a distinct advantage to a person to be able to get the very best he can for his labour. The Bill means that, when an acute stage is reached in connection with the affairs of Queensland, one class will be set against another. I have heard of cases where strong exception has been taken by men engaged in a certain industry—I will take the wharf lumpers—to stuff being sent out of the State. Any man who knows anything of Queensland will know that if it is to make good, not only must it provide for its own immediate necessities as far as possible, but its export trade must be one of the principal factors in connection with its progress. It

[5 p.m.] is a very nice theory to suppose that we can consume everything we produce. That would be all right if we had the population. Until very recently the Governments of Australia were faced with this phase of the business—that the imports were greater than the exports, and banking institutions asked importers to stay their hands, so as to adjust exchange, etc. This Bill provides for the Minister having extreme power, and he may step in and do certain things to the detriment of the State. The hon. gentleman talks about it being necessary and patriotic. What is there patriotic about it if you are going to prevent the man who is producing getting a fair return for his production?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where is that in the clause?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Someone has said that certain acts may be necessary and patriotic, but is it necessary and patriotic to try and block the man who is producing under great difficulties from getting a fair return?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no suggestion of that in the clause.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not saying there is. Has the action of the Government

[*Mr. Edwards.*]

in the past been patriotic so far as the producer is concerned? Let history speak for itself. Let what has happened in Queensland speak for itself. The patriotism of the hon. gentleman in this matter is just patriotism which springs from fear, and is an angling for votes. The most amazing part of this Bill is subclauses (iii.) and (iv.) of this clause, which read—

“(iii.) As far as practicable, provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced; and

“(iv.) Make such arrangements as they deem necessary with regard to sales of the commodity for export or for consignment to other countries or States.”

As a labourite, Mr. Kirwan, are you not struck with a clause in this Bill which suggests consignments? You have listened to charges which have been made against honest men, yet this very Government, who at one stage, so they allege, are trying to save certain people from other people, now propose that these goods shall be sent on consignment. Apparently, the Government have not, if they are in earnest, read the clause at all. When they hold vital principles, which, they say, are important to them as a party, how can they prostitute those principles by suggesting that, while it may be wrong to do it within the State, it is right to do it outside the State? What principle can the Government have in that regard? Evidently the Government have forgotten those principles. We are told that this Bill is based very largely on the Wheat Pool Act. I am prepared to admit that, with careful storage, wheat will last for a considerable time, especially on the Downs. But even with the greatest care in storing it may become weevily. How many products in a climate like ours are there that will scarcely keep thirty-six hours? Yet the hon. member talks about pooling them. You want to get rid of them as quickly as possible, and not pool them. I yield to no man in my belief in this great State; but can this great State always keep itself in the necessary products? Very often it can, but to-day, if it were not for the other States of the Commonwealth, the supply of some products would be so short that we would be starving in those particular lines. If we had to rely for potatoes for the tables of Brisbane and Queensland generally on what are grown in Queensland, we should find ourselves absolutely stranded at the present time. They are coming from Tasmania and from Victoria. This Bill is the first step towards that new heaven and new earth which they have in Russia, when all things are to be common. I do not know whether brains and everything else will be held in common.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You make a statement of that kind, and say that you are a patriotic Queenslander. It is a deliberate misstatement.

HON. W. H. BARNES: In a gathering held in Brisbane the Premier said that the parties there were on the track of communism, and he did not believe in it. That has been the aim and object of the Labour party, and this is a step in that direction. It is a bait to Bolshevik Russia.

Mr. COLLINS: What is a Bolshevik?

HON. W. H. BARNES: He is a gentleman whom I would rather my friend should have communion with than I.

MR. COLLINS: You do not know what he is.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member evidently knows a good bit about him.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know a great deal more about selling land on the Coorparoo Racecourse.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I never sold any land on a racecourse.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a racecourse now.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Speaker the other night ruled that a certain statement was unparliamentary, and that another statement was not unparliamentary. I say that the hon. gentleman's statement is an absolute untruth. If I told the hon. gentleman that he knows very little other than that which belongs to his official position as Minister, and prior to that to his position as one of the leaders outside of the Labour party, that he knew little about farming and little about the practical things of life, I would not be far out, because if, behind this Bill, there is not the motive that I have mentioned, there is behind it at least ignorance of the affairs of Queensland, otherwise a Bill like this would never have been introduced containing a clause such as this. It is no use the Minister trying to sidetrack the position.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are only putting up "Aunt Sallies" to knock them down.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman has been an "Aunt Sally" all his life.

MR. MORGAN: What about knocking him down? (Laughter.)

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You had better have a try.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say the hon. gentleman is knocked down every day in connection with legislation. He does not know his own Bill. This clause, instead of helping the producer, is going to damage him and put a rope around his neck. It will prevent him from dealing with his products as he has a right to do, and will rob him of his manhood—all because the Government are out to try and bring about a new heaven and a new earth on the lines of what has been followed so disastrously in Russia.

MR. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am sorry the Minister has not accepted the amendment to omit subclause (iii.). I think the deletion of the subclause would not harm the measure.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that no amendment has been moved for the omission of subclause (iii.).

MR. VOWLES: I moved the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member for Mirani will bear me out in this. The hon. member came over to me with an amendment, and I told him that I had heard that an amendment was to be moved to omit subclause (iii.). I suggested that the hon. member should see who was going to move it, because, if it was moved and defeated, the hon. member for Mirani would be prevented from moving his amendment, and I did not want to be unfair to him.

MR. VOWLES: The first thing I did was to move the deletion of the subclause.

MR. COLLINS: The leader of the Opposition said that he had circulated an amendment to negative this clause, but he did not move the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will take the amendment now. It certainly was not moved. I would point out that amendments should be written out and given to the Chairman. I certainly did not receive it. Will the hon. member for Dalby move it now?

MR. VOWLES: I moved it an hour ago.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. member that he did not move it.

MR. VOWLES: All right; I ask you to look up "Hansard."

THE CHAIRMAN: When the hon. member for Mirani came to me, I said that I understood that such an amendment was going to be moved, and I asked him to watch, because, if it was moved, he would be prevented from moving his amendment. I will take the amendment of the hon. member for Dalby now.

MR. VOWLES: Very well; I now move the omission of subclause (iii).—

"As far as practicable provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland, and for its supply during any period of shortage to those places within Queensland wherein a shortage is experienced; and"

MR. MORGAN: I was under the impression that the leader of the Opposition had moved the amendment and that all the discussion had taken place upon it. I hope that, now the amendment is moved, the Minister will accept it, so that we may get on with the Bill. Hon. members on this side have given good reasons for the acceptance of the amendment, and the Minister will admit that it will not do any harm to the Bill. Then, why not agree to it and let us get on with the Bill?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No.

MR. MORGAN: We have endeavoured to meet the Minister fairly.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have endeavoured to meet you fairly.

MR. MORGAN: Yes. I think we have reciprocated more or less to-day. We are prepared to meet the Minister in connection with these matters, provided he is prepared to meet us. I hope that the hon. gentleman will accept the amendment. In my opinion, it is not worth bothering about; it will not hurt the Bill, but it will put some slight limitation on the power of the Board. Some hon. members on this side see a great deal of danger in subclause (iii.). If it is retained, the farmers may say, "The Bill provides that a certain amount of our produce must be retained in Queensland for the purpose of supplying the home market," and that may prejudice them against the measure. It will certainly do harm if it prevents the farmers from taking advantage of the Bill. I think they will take advantage of the Bill in order to ascertain from practical experience whether their condition will be improved under it. It is experimental legislation and may do good. If it does no good, we can repeal it. I appeal to the Minister to accept the amendment. The farmers will not then be able to say that there is a clause which provides for their produce being retained in Queensland when there are better markets in Australia.

Mr. Morgan.]

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I do not think it would be a wise thing for the Minister to accept the amendment. I represent as many farmers and primary producers as most members in the House, and I have no hesitation in telling those primary producers that there are other people in the community as well as primary producers. I stand for all producers. I am not merely concerned about people who class themselves as the only producers. Unless people are producers, I would like to know what they are on this planet for. You can be a primary producer or you may be a secondary producer. What I am opposed to is the man who does not produce at all—the man who lives upon the wealth that someone else produces, and sits back and is merely a consumer. I am not concerned about him at all. I am speaking not only to the primary producers in my electorate, but to the primary producers throughout Queensland. They know that they are in a minority, like primary producers in all the countries of the world; and, if they are going to take up a selfish attitude—that is to say, if they say that they are to have all the rights and privileges and other people are to have no rights and privileges—then, they will raise hostility to themselves.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: All they want are the same conditions as other people.

Mr. COLLINS: My constituents take a broader outlook than that. They recognise that other people who may not be upon the land, but who may be doing useful service for the community, have rights. The hon. member for Drayton knows that the man who gave him the cream separator was not a farmer, but he conferred as great a benefit on the dairying industry as the primary producer.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Why should the man who uses it not have as good conditions as the man who makes it?

Mr. COLLINS: I stand for those conditions, and the Bill is going to bring them about by stabilising industry. If you are going to cut out everything except what applies to primary producers, you are going to raise a storm later on. We should allow the clause to stand as it is.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): It seems to me that under this clause the Board may launch out into new theories and into something impossible.

Mr. COLLINS: There is nothing impossible.

Mr. WARREN: There might not be to the hon. member. My opinion is that those who ask for a pool ask for it to dispose of their produce and not to store it up. If there is to be any storing up of produce, it should be stored up by the Government and not by the producer. If this clause goes through, it is going to breed a natural suspicion. The Government launch out with a scheme to help the farmers. They propose to form a pool and to have a body of men who will do justice to the producers. The men who are elected on the Board will have quite enough to do looking after the interests of the producers without taking on such a big contract as the storing of produce. The hon. member for Bowen touched it on the raw when he admitted that the Board has to do it for somebody else. He said that the primary producer should not be too selfish. I think the primary producer does want to be selfish. It is time he started to

{Mr. Collins.

look after himself. Anyone who thinks that the primary producer wants to make wealth is making a great mistake. All he wants to do is to come into his own. The matter of storing foodstuffs is not a problem for the Board at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where do you find the storing of foodstuffs mentioned in the clause?

Mr. WARREN: There is room for it—there is too much room for it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: How are you going to do without storing?

Mr. WARREN: We cannot approach the question without suspicion, and that is why we have to scrutinise the clause closely from beginning to end.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, vote against it.

Mr. WARREN: I will vote against it, if necessary. The clause proposes to give the primary producers something with one hand and take it away with the other.

Amendment (*Mr. Fowles*) negatived.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I move the insertion of the following words, after the word "and," on line 36:—

"Provided that in no case shall the commodity retained for consumption in Queensland be sold so as to return to the grower a lesser amount than that which, in the judgment of the Board, could be obtained by exporting it to any place outside Queensland; and provided further, that the Commissioner of Prices shall not have the power, under the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1920, to fix a maximum price for the commodity less than the net price which, in the judgment of the Board, could be realised by exporting the commodity to any place outside Queensland."

I regret that the Minister did not see his way clear to accept the amendment moved by the leader of the Opposition, as it would have rendered my amendment unnecessary. It must be evident to anyone listening to the various points that have been raised that the clause as it now stands is of the utmost danger to the producer. I can recognise that it is desirable that produce should be stored in good seasons for times of scarcity; but it is not right to store it in such a way that all the cost will fall on the shoulders of the producers. We were under the impression that the Bill was introduced solely in the interests of the farmer; but, after the speech of the hon. member for Bowen, we find that it is in the interests of everybody. We understood that it was part of the agricultural programme with which the Premier hopes to capture the country seats, but the hon. member for Bowen has disillusioned us.

Mr. MORGAN: He does some good sometimes.

Mr. SWAYNE: It seems that it is simply a Bill for the whole community, or, rather, I should say, for the whole community excepting the farmers.

Mr. COLLINS: Nothing of the kind. Don't twist what I said.

Mr. SWAYNE: Subclause (iii.) states that the Board may—

"as far as practicable provide the commodity for consumption in Queensland and for its supply during any period of shortage."

It is desirable that it should be stored in the time of shortage, but another body should be formed to deal with the general shortage in the interests of the consumers in times of scarcity. The way in which this should be done is a matter to be considered. I object to its being done at the farmers' expense. It cannot be wondered that we are suspicious of these matters, because in the past the primary producers have had little consideration given to them. We know that at one time our butter would have realised 200s. per cwt. if it had been sold in Melbourne, but we were compelled to sell it here at 140s. per cwt., or a loss of 60s. per cwt. I read the balance-sheet of one co-operative company, and it stated that this arrangement made a difference to that company of £30,000. The hon. member for Murilla reminds me that that transaction cost the producers of Queensland £250,000. But what indignation there would be if we asked the wage earner to sell his labour here for less than it was worth elsewhere. When we have that experience before us, it is not to be wondered at that we take every precaution to see that the same thing shall not happen again. It is only right, if it is required in the interests of the community, that the community should pay for storing produce in times of scarcity. I regard the amendment as necessary to prevent this being done at the expense of one section of the community. The Minister may say that he has accepted one amendment moved from this side, and that should be sufficient, but I think this amendment is absolutely necessary. It provides what the Board shall do and what it shall not do; and it also exempts the Board from the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Prices. The farmers generally will recognise that some safeguard is necessary in their interests. I ask the Minister to give favourable consideration to my amendment.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): This Bill is introduced in the interests of the producers; but, if you are going to compel a man, by reason of the fact that he goes into a pool, to sell his produce at less than the export price, you are going to do him an injustice. We should make provision that the [5.30 p.m.] pool shall not accept for his commodity less than he can get for export. If we do that, we know exactly where we are. I am very pleased that the hon. member for Mirani has moved this amendment. The Government say that they are doing certain things for the benefit of the producer; but, on the other hand, we have to remember the words of the hon. member for Bowen—that the object of the Government is to protect the consumer and not the producer. If the producer bears those remarks in mind, he will know exactly where he is.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment. The primary producer has been defined as "a tax-paying animal," and in the future, apparently, he is to be also a provider of a certain amount of produce for the benefit of people in the cities who produce nothing.

Mr. WARREN: A big storehouse.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes. Every worker has a right to get the most he can for his labour. The primary producers provide the people of Queensland with the best butter, cheese, and everything else to be obtained in any part of the world. Those things repre-

sent their labour equally as much as the wages of the city workers at the end of the week represent their labour. Why, then, should we compel them to put a certain amount of their labour away to oblige the people in the city and supply them at a time when there is going to be a shortage with foodstuffs at lower prices than they can get them for elsewhere? The amendment merely says that, if the Government or any person buys produce for storage, they shall pay the market value and take the risk. I have no objection to the storage of foodstuffs for our own people.

Mr. COLLINS: You know as well as I do that the history of the combines in the United States proves that they already do that.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Trusts and combines may store up produce, and the hon. member has just as much right to buy up produce and store it as the combines. Any man who does that should be prepared to bear the loss as well as pocket the profits; but to compel the primary producer to do the storing and bear the loss without getting the profit in order to provide the people of the city with cheap food in a time of shortage is not only making the primary producer a "tax-paying animal," but is adding insult to injury.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eaoham*): I do not propose to accept the amendment. I would like to know what the hon. member for Nundah and the hon. member for Enoggera have to say about this amendment. The first point I have to make is that the Board are the agents of the farmers and are appointed by them. The object of a pool is to get the very best price possible, and the people who are to do that are the farmers or the representatives of the farmers, elected by them, so that it is an insult to tie them down in this way, because it presupposes that they would do something inconsistent with their duty to obtain the best price possible. There is therefore no need to put the amendment in the Bill.

Some hon. members of the Nationalist party have called attention to the dangers of giving power to any section of the community to exploit another section, and that there is danger of retaliation. That should be kept in mind by anyone who aspires to guide the destinies of this country. When we are organising the primary producers or anybody else, we do not leave any section of the community open to retaliation by another section. No doubt, the primary producers are very much in the minority, and I do not think they seek, by means of a pool or otherwise, to exploit the rest of the people. If they do, it will, as I said in my second reading speech, react against themselves.

I think the clause as it stands is a common-sense one. It sets out suggestions to the Board, which will consist of farmers. It says that they shall recognise certain requirements. There is no suggestion that they shall supply any section of the community at a lower price than they can get otherwise, and I see no justification for putting this somewhat foreign matter into the Bill.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): The Minister seemed to be rather uncertain as to where I stand in reference to this amendment. Let me tell him that I intend to support it.

Mr. Sizer.]

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That shows your inconsistency.

Mr. SIZER: It does not. I said that, as a city man, I did not expect the producers to sell their commodities at less than export value. So long as they get export value, that is all they want, and that is all they are entitled to; and, so long as they are getting it, there is no reason why anyone should complain. All my concern is that they do not go to some ridiculous extent and fictitiously force up prices beyond export values.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would you fight against that?

Mr. SIZER: I am prepared to say that the farmers are entitled to world's parity when there is an exportable surplus. If the export value of wheat is 6s. a bushel, I do not see why they should charge 7s. in Brisbane. On the other hand, if the export value is 6s. a bushel, I do not see why they should have to accept 5s. through some contrivance of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a "Yes-No" answer.

Mr. SIZER: It is not. If the hon. gentleman was only as sound and clear, and knew as well where he stood as I know where I stand, he would not be far wrong. The object is to safeguard the primary producers by giving them a minimum equal to the export price when there is an exportable surplus. They are entitled to that. I do not think that anyone will gainsay them that. If the Government are sincere and honest, why do they not put it in the Bill? I can speak without any consultation with my colleagues, but it will be found that their views are the same as mine. We are anxious to do the best we can for the country, for the primary producers, and for all sections of the community. Hon. members opposite do not know where they are, and they are always liable to be in the wrong—in fact, they always are in the wrong. What is the Minister's objection to this?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is an insult to the Board, for a start.

Mr. SIZER: Did anyone ever conceive that the Sugar Acquisition Act would be used in respect of meat, ships, and anything else?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you object to that Act?

Mr. SIZER: I certainly object to the way in which it was used. Had it been confined to sugar, it would have been all right. No one ever expected that it would be used to deal with ships, meat, barbed wire, and other things.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: To secure barbed wire at a reasonable price for the farmers?

Mr. SIZER: If it is possible to make the thing doubly clear, let us do so. I cannot understand why the Government are not prepared to accept this amendment. The only reason for their refusal that I can see is that they are trying to serve two masters.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No.
Mr. SIZER: They have gone back on everything which they promised industrially. They have no industrial policy to-day; they have left the industrialists high and dry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the hon. member will discuss the amendment.

Mr. SIZER: They have left the industrialists high and dry with no policy. They are now looking to the farmers. Some of

[Mr. Sizer.

their industrialist members are afraid of the measures which they are putting through. The Government are adopting a "Yes-No" attitude, so that their industrialist members will go to the industrialists and say that the legislation means one thing, and the country members will go to their constituents and say it means another thing. Between the two they hope to be able to fool a sufficient number of people to enable them to get back to power. This amendment makes it perfectly clear that we on this side want to secure to the farmers the export value of their products when there is an exportable surplus. If there is anything sincere in the Government's agricultural policy, they will accept it. If they vote against it, it will prove the truth of what we have said—that all their talk of love for the farmers is nothing but "words, words, words."

Question—That the words proposed to be added (*Mr. Swayne's amendment*) be so added—put; and the Committee divided:—

In division,

The PREMIER: I declare that, in addition to voting in my own right, I vote for the "Noes" as proxy for Messrs. Coyne, Gilday, and McCormack.

AYES, 32.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Jones, J.
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Kerr
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ King
„ Bebbington	„ Macgregor
„ Bell	„ Maxwell
„ Brand	„ Moore
„ Cattermull	„ Morgan
„ Clayton	„ Nott
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Costello	„ Roberts, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Warren

Tellers: Mr. Bell and Mr. Brand.

NOES, 36.

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

Tellers: Mr. Hartley and Mr. Weir.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): I have a further amendment to move on clause 5. I move the insertion of the following new subclause, to follow line 43:—

“(v.) And receive and consider any petition signed by not less than 100 consumers of any commodity so declared by the Act in the district or locality to which the Order in Council shall apply.”

That is simply for the purpose of enabling the consumers, if they feel that a hardship is being inflicted upon them, to petition the Board. Probably they would have that right under any circumstances, but the amendment

will enable the consumers to have some status. It will enable them to ask the Board to consider their views in connection with the matter. It will give a certain amount of protection, without altering the purposes of the Bill. It will not act detrimentally towards the farmers.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is inconsistent with the hon. member's attitude on a previous amendment.

MR. SIZER: It is not inconsistent. If I were to say to the consumers, "The export value is 5s.; you go and get it for 1s.," I would be inconsistent.

MR. GLEDSON: If the export value is 5s., should they get it for 10s. here?

MR. SIZER: If that was the case, there would be good argument for the presentation of a petition to the Board on the ground of overcharging the consumers.

MR. GLEDSON: Does the hon. member want a provision that they shall only get export value?

MR. SIZER: There should be some provision whereby the consumers can present a petition if they are being overcharged. I do not think the amendment will give offence to the Country party. I think the Minister should accept it, and thereby safeguard the interests of the public generally.

MR. BEBBINGTON: Will the Minister accept the amendment?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will hear argument first. I want to know where the hon. member stands.

MR. FRY (*Kurilpa*): The majority of the Government members must support this amendment if they hope to retain the confidence of the consumers of Queensland. Many of them represent city constituencies and represent the consuming population. We admit that the farmer has to face floods, droughts, and pests, and that he is entitled to a fair return for anything that he produces, and that we should give him every benefit that we possibly can; but the consumer has some right to be heard when prices are being fixed. This amendment enables the consumers to approach the Board to put their case before it. Many hon. members opposite represent the consumers who live in the cities and who consume the stuff that is produced in the country, and those consumers have a right to be considered. It is not a question of argument; it is a question of the Government doing their duty to the people of the State.

MR. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Minister is not asked to do anything extraordinary; he is being asked to make provision to enable the Board, which consists of primary producers, to receive a petition. Surely we can place on the statutes any suggestion to the Board? I am using the Minister's own words. The petition may be of benefit to the primary producer or to the consumer or both. It really means that 100 people can sign a petition which can be sent to the Board. It is not desired that those representatives of the growers shall entertain the petition; they may merely file it and reply in the usual way. Surely the Minister will not hesitate to accept the amendment? The whole of the pooling arrangements are in the hands of the Board, and it can come to its own decision on the petition.

MR. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): If the primary producers can elect their own repre-

sentatives to the Board, I do not think they will have any objection to the amendment. They only want a fair thing. The primary producer has no objection whatever to a

provision being inserted in the [7 p.m.] Bill to secure justice to the consumer, because all he wants is fair consideration and the same conditions of living as those enjoyed by the consumer at the present time. If the producer received the same treatment as is meted out to the worker, the price of his produce would be fixed, not on the cost of production here, but on what it would cost to produce it in other countries and bring it here. In the engineering trade the price of a drill or a plough or a harvester is not fixed on what it costs to manufacture those articles in Queensland, but on what it costs to import them from other countries. That is the basis on which the worker's wages are fixed, and if the primary producers asked for the same principle to be applied in fixing the price of their products, we would have a rise in foodstuffs of about 50 per cent. straightaway. I remember the time when most of our dairy produce came from New Zealand, and at that time cheese was always about 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. per lb.; and if you run out the primary producer, you will certainly have to pay the cost of bringing produce from other countries. But we do not ask for that. All we ask is that we shall receive a fair price; that we shall not be regarded merely as a taxpaying animal, but that we shall have the same rights and privileges as those enjoyed by other citizens.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you in favour of the amendment?

MR. BEBBINGTON: Certainly I am in favour of it. Do you object to it?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you think there is any business in it?

MR. BEBBINGTON: Certainly there is business in it. I am not afraid of allowing the consumer to know as much as possible about the cost of production and about the prices we charge. Before the Minister ever knew that there was such a thing as the dairying industry—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that the amendment under discussion provides for the Board receiving petitions from consumers. I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to the amendment.

MR. BEBBINGTON: We have no objection to the consumer knowing the cost of production, and what we are getting for our products. When we formed the Cheese Manufacturers' Association, and a price was fixed, we advertised the information in the daily papers, so that the consumer might know what the farmer was getting for his product. That was a very good arrangement, and the merchant was able to see what price he would have to pay for the cheese.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you in favour of this amendment?

MR. BEBBINGTON: Yes.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are your party in favour of it?

MR. BEBBINGTON: Yes.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then, let us get on with business.

MR. BEBBINGTON: Certainly; I will make way for the Minister.

Mr. Bebbington.]

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): There is nothing in the amendment. There is an inherent right in every section of the community to petition the Board without placing it in this Bill. The amendment, which comes from the National party, and is, I understand, supported by the Country party, indicates the inconsistency of some hon. members opposite. There is really nothing in the amendment; but it does not get the petitioners anywhere. It only gets them as far as the sugar-growers growing cane for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company got before the regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Boards legislation was introduced. As I say, the consumers have the privilege of doing this without having the amendment put in the Bill. There is nothing in the amendment; it will not benefit either the consumers or the producers in any way.

Mr. VOWLES: Absolutely nothing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the leader of the Opposition wishes me to accept the amendment, I will agree to it.

Amendment (*Mr. Sizer*) agreed to.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I move the insertion, after the word "commodity," on line 45, of the words—

"except such portion thereof as the grower may require for his own use, or for the use of his stock, or for sale as seed to other growers."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I am not prepared to accept the amendment as it is worded. I think there is some justification for the grower retaining so much of the commodity as he requires for food for himself and family, and also as feed for his stock, but to allow each individual member of the pool to become a seller of seed or anything else will possibly defeat the object of the Bill. I suggest that the amendment be amended to read like this—

"such portion of the commodity as the grower may require for food for his own family or for his stock."

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Will you allow a man to retain sufficient seed for his own planting?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes; he has the power to do that now. The clause makes provision for exempting from the operation of the section—

"(a) Such small growers of the commodity as the Board think fit;

"(b) Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors; and

"(c) Such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed."

We know that no Board would take away seed that a farmer required for himself.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We do not want the provision that the farmers may keep the seed for himself only. We want the farmer to have the right to sell seed to anyone else.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot agree to that. He has no right to become a shareholder in a pool and then be allowed to sell seed without the sanction of the Board. He has an inherent right to keep his product to feed himself and his family, and also his stock.

[*Hon. W. N. Gillies.*]

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Board should allow a farmer to retain sufficient seed for himself.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He will certainly get that right in practice. There is no need to put it into the Bill.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I thank the Minister for accepting so much of my amendment as he has indicated; but this is not the first time that this party has advocated the amendment which I just moved. We advocated it once before, and the Minister refused to accept the very thing that he is prepared to accept now. When we were dealing with the Profiteering Prevention Bill, in 1919, I moved the following amendment:—

"Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, nothing in this Act shall be construed to apply to farm or other agricultural produce grown on the farm or premises of the producer thereof while being held there, whether for seed purposes or for sale."

The Minister refused to accept that amendment.

Mr. BRENNAN: Amend it in the way the Minister suggests.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I will not. He cannot take away from a man the seed that he requires for his own use. Are you going to make a slave of a man by deciding that he shall not keep the seed which he has grown himself? Surely we are not going to make producers bow down to slavery like that! There are paddocks of lucerne all over my electorate, and dealers often go to look at that lucerne while it is growing and make an offer for it. Mr. Peak, of Toowoomba, has ridden miles and miles to see a paddock of lucerne. I have ridden miles and miles myself to see the lucerne growing in order to observe if it was free from noxious weeds.

Mr. BRENNAN: The Pure Seeds Act gives all the protection you want.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It does not. I have known paddocks all over the place to be ruined by noxious weeds. I have known farmers to have to wait two or three weeks before they could get any seed. I have had to wait a fortnight myself for seed. Suppose a farmer has a neighbour who wants to buy some of his seed. Why should he have to send it miles and miles away to the Wheat Board to be sent back by the Board to a neighbour for seed? At the present time the Wheat Board refuses to allow any farmer to sell seed to a neighbour. We want to give the farmer that power. I do not want to accept the Minister's suggestion, but my party are inclined to accept it. If a farmer has a nice clean paddock of wheat, and the farmers want that for seed purposes, where is the sense in making him send that down to the pool, miles and miles away? When the Denham Government were in power I made a similar appeal to Mr. Denham on the Co-operative Agricultural Production Bill of 1914, and he said, "You do not want it with this Government in power." He took up exactly the same position which the Minister is taking up now—that he was going to be there always, and the very same thing that happened to Mr. Denham is going to happen to the present Minister. He is not going to come back next time. (Laughter.) We do not want to rely

on Ministers. We want to have the provision in the Act, so that the farmer can claim what he wants.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why do you accuse us of things like that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We do not want to have to bow down to a Minister. Why do the Government want to introduce their Soviet system here? The farmers would not benefit under it at all. The hon. member for Toowoomba admitted this afternoon that the Bill was intended to bring about the same state of things that exists in Russia.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The hon. member still seems to have a bee in his bonnet. He talks about the Soviet system. On the one hand, he wants to get the best reward he can for the exertions of the farmers in the production of their commodities (he is always asking for that) and we say that they can get it by controlling their own industries. On the other hand, we hear all this talk about a communistic system. The hon. member does not want the farmers to get that reward at all. He is playing right into the hands of the Nationalist party. He wants every farmer to become a seed merchant and a middleman. He is not playing the game of the farmer at all, although he is sent here to assist the farmer. The Minister has intimated that he will accept an amendment to allow each farmer to keep sufficient wheat for next year's seed.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Because he cannot help it.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is all the farmer asks. The pool must be protected, but the hon. member wants every farmer to become a seedsman or an agent for the seedsmen living in the towns. His Government supplied wheat to farmers on the Downs for seed purposes, and some of them sold it again.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Give us a case.

Mr. BRENNAN: I can mention a case in the hon. member's own electorate.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Who was it? You know very well that they had to pay for it afterwards.

Mr. BRENNAN: They bought it on terms, and they sold it for cash. If we allow the amendment to go through, and the farmers are allowed to sell their own seed wheat, it will defeat the whole object of the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to provisions in the Wheat Pool Act, which gives the Wheat Board certain powers with respect to seed wheat. Subsection (4) of section 6 of the Wheat Pool Act provides—

"The Board may, in such cases, and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section—

(a) Sales or purchases of seed wheat by growers of wheat to or from growers of wheat for bona fide use by the purchasers in their farming operations."

That has not been put into effect. I do not see why the Board should not allow it. It is not a question of the interpretation of the statute by the Board; the powers have been given by this Chamber, and this Chamber has said that the Board may do these things. That is a direction to the Board to put it into effect. Subclause (4) of clause 6 of this Bill provides—

"The Board may, in such cases, and on

such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section—"

That is exactly a copy of the first portion of section 6 of the Wheat Pool Act. The Bill then goes on to say that the exemption shall apply to—

"(a) Such small growers of the commodity as the Board think fit;

"(b) Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors; and

"(c) Such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed."

Is not the power of the Board in relation to exemptions wrapped up in those words, "as may be prescribed"? If the power is given to the Board directly under the legislation to refuse to exempt even the seed required for a man's own purposes, what right has he to retain it from the pool except permission is granted him as a matter of courtesy by the Board? We take it that no Board would suggest that a man is not entitled to retain what he requires for his own purposes. This Bill, which is a copy of the Wheat Pool Act of 1920 to a great extent, for some reason omits this power. Why? The reason is because it has been a dead letter with the Wheat Board. If we allow it to remain a dead letter and do not protest, by implication we shall be sanctioning the actions of the Wheat Board, which is defying the wishes of this Legislature. We are told that that Board has adopted a new practice.

Honourable members conversing in loud tones,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I again appeal to hon. members, on behalf of "Hansard" staff, to conduct their conversations in a lower tone.

Mr. VOWLES: If the Legislature decides to give to these people the privilege, not only of using what they require for their own purposes, but of selling to their neighbours, they should be allowed to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This Bill does not apply to wheat.

Mr. VOWLES: I know it does not; but the Wheat Pool Act has been practically copied. It will be found that practically every clause on pages 4 and 5 of the Bill, with the exception of subclause (3) of clause 5, to which we objected, is contained in the Wheat Pool Act. That provision, to which we objected, is an innovation. Now the Government are leaving out of this Bill this power of exemption, which is contained in the Wheat Pool Act, and I want to know why. The practice has been that the Board has insisted on the sale being made through the Board instead of through the individual. Why? So that the proceeds of the sale will go into their fund, instead of the producer getting what he should get for his seed wheat. The wheat which is not to be for commercial use but for his own seeding has to be put into a common fund, and he gets the average price. Instead of getting, say, 9s. or 10s. a bushel for high-class seed, he has to take the average price for commercial wheat. I think this is a sensible and reasonable amendment. The Minister has agreed to accept that portion of the amendment which states—

"Such portion thereof as the grower may require for his own use or for the use of his stock."

Mr. Vowles.]

Is it the intention to commandeer during a dry spell all the fodder in Queensland which provident persons have been wise enough to conserve?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why use the word "commandeer"?

Mr. VOWLES: Pooling is commandeering.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The farmers are going to control it.

Mr. VOWLES: The farmers are going to control the assets of a provident individual who requires the fodder he has saved for his own purposes. This fodder that has been conserved is to be distributed amongst improvident farmers, probably not in the same locality. Probably it will be utilised to feed racehorses. That will be a very great injustice. A farmer might conserve fodder for the purpose of feeding his cows to produce milk or cream, if he is a dairyman. If you take that fodder from him, you are going to depreciate his earning power. He might have some chance of being granted an exemption under the Bill, although it does not say so. Exemptions can only be granted to small growers. Presumably they are producers of produce in negligible quantities, and they are not worth while worrying about. Exemption can also be granted for sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors. The man who conserves his fodder would not come under that portion. Nor would he come under the portion which provides that "such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed" may be exempted. There is nothing in the Bill to protect the man who has been provident enough to conserve fodder for his own use in a dry time. The Minister has stated that he will accept that portion of the amendment which relates to what is required for the farmer's own use and for the use of his stock. Instead of accepting the amendment moved by the hon. member for Drayton, why not insert the words of subsection (4) of section 6 of the Wheat Pool Act of 1920, which says—

"Or for sale as seed for bona fide use by purchasers in farming operations"?

If the hon. gentleman will do that, he will be proceeding along the lines of the Wheat Pool Act.

Mr. W. COOPER: If the amendment was accepted by the Minister, the whole Bill would be destroyed.

Mr. VOWLES: Why did the hon. member agree in 1920 to those words being inserted in the Wheat Pool Act? They have not acted disastrously in that Act. The section has not been put into effect in accordance with the wishes of this Assembly. There evidently have been instructions that it is to remain a dead letter, and I am confirmed in that opinion when I find that the principle is left out of this Bill.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I suggest that the Minister should accept the amendment. Anybody interested in farming operations will know that in many districts very keen interest is taken in procuring decent seed. Many men will go to a considerable amount of trouble to select certain corn out of a maize crop before they take off the whole crop. They take those cobs, cure them, top and tail them, and use the seed for seed purposes, and sell it to their

[*Mr. Vowles.*]

neighbours, and their neighbours know that they are buying seed of excellent worth—probably better seed than they can buy from any produce man in the State. The Secretary for Agriculture, no doubt, will remember a recent report in the daily papers of several fatalities among cattle which were poisoned by Soudan grass, and [7.30 p.m.] it is generally thought that the Soudan grass which was responsible for the poisoning of those cattle had been considerably inoculated with one of the sorghums, and consequently contained a good deal of the poison found in sorghum at certain periods of its growth. The Minister must know, from the experiments being carried out at the Roma Experimental Farm in regard to crossbred Soudan grass, that these grasses vary in different districts, and, therefore, they are trying to find out at the Experimental Farm at Roma the reason why we find in some of these crossbreds there is a greater percentage of poison than there is in other crossbreds. The general opinion on the Downs is that pure Soudan grass is not poisonous to cattle at any period of its growth.

Mr. GLEDSON: Do you think it likely that there will be a pool in connection with Soudan grass?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: This is too serious a matter for one to take any notice of the hon. member for Ipswich. He probably knows about as much about Soudan grass as Soudan grass knows about him, and that is nothing. If there are farmers who take the trouble, as they are doing, to secure seed that is as pure as you can buy it, we have a right under this Bill to protect them, as far as we possibly can. I think the hon. member for Drayton mentioned that there were certain men who prided themselves on the lucerne seed they sold, and that farmers travelled long distances to paddocks of lucerne before they purchased the seed to see that the lucerne was free from that great curse, dodder. If a man has 100 acres of lucerne free from dodder, which he is growing for seed purposes, why should that man not be allowed to supply the growers in the immediate neighbourhood with lucerne seed which they know is absolutely free from dodder? Why should that man be expected to send that seed in to a Board in Toowoomba, or Brisbane, or somewhere else while the men in close proximity to him, when they want lucerne seed, are compelled to go to some firm and take their word that it is free from dodder? I cannot see why the Minister should object to the amendment, and I would ask the hon. gentleman, before he says that he is only going to allow a man to keep sufficient seed for his own use, to look at it from the broad point—the practical point of view. Those of us who have been farming, and who know the difference between good seed and bad seed, and between pure seed and impure seed, would sooner go to a man who has a reputation as a grower of seed, and who takes some trouble to secure good seed, and pay him 1s. or 2s. a bushel more, because we know we are getting the article that we require, rather than go to a produce merchant and buy seed which he says is pure, but which is afterwards found to be impure. The hon. member for Toowoomba mentioned the fact that we have a Pure Seeds Act. Quite so. After all, who are the people who advocated a Pure Seeds Act? The people who advocated a Pure Seeds Act were the

Farmers' Union years ago. Long before the hon. member for Toowoomba entered this august Chamber we were talking of a Pure Seeds Act. We repeatedly made requests that a Pure Seeds Bill should be introduced. Why did we do it? Because we know how important it is that we should have the very best seed. We have heard many people say that pure seed does not count for very much. Pure seeds count for just as much on the farm as pure bred cattle. We asked for a Pure Seeds Act, and, after a good deal of trouble, we got it. This amendment is going to have a far-reaching effect, and, as the leader of the Opposition has pointed out, a similar provision is already contained in the Wheat Pool Act. What do we see in the Wheat Pool Act? We see that the farmer has the right to keep back sufficient seed for his own use, and he has also the power to retain a certain amount of seed in case there is a failure. When you put seed into the ground it does not always germinate and grow. You have to get the weather conditions suitable to enable that seed to germinate, and to enable it to become a strong, healthy plant; and, in some instances, we find it is advisable to replant a paddock in order to take advantage of favourable weather at a certain period of the year. Consequently, I would ask the Minister to reconsider his decision, as I am perfectly certain that, if he will accept the amendment in toto, he will never regret it. I trust he will not be influenced by outside opinion, but will be influenced by the practical opinions expressed by hon. members on this side of the House.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I support the amendment, and I hope the Minister is going to place it in the Bill. I understand the Minister is prepared to accept the first portion of the amendment, but he thinks it is unnecessary to place it in the Bill as he considers there will be sufficient discretion in the hands of the Board to carry it out without inserting it in the Bill. But we know from the experience of the administration of Acts of Parliament that those administering the Acts take notice only of these things that are specified therein, and if we do not set out what is the intention of Parliament, we are not going to have the Act administered as we desire. The Minister has indicated that he is prepared to accept an amendment to enable the grower to keep sufficient seed for his own use and for his own household requirements; but he does not seem prepared to place it in the Bill. That is most essential, and I am going to press for the right of the producer to sell seed to other producers.

Mr. BRENNAN: Subclause (iv.) gives greater powers than subsection (iv.) of the Wheat Pool Act.

Mr. CORSER: No.

Mr. BRENNAN: If they exempt the small producer, they can do as they like.

Mr. CORSER: But they do not do it. The Board "may" do so, but the same provision is made in the Wheat Pool Act.

Mr. BRENNAN: You are arguing that there is not as much power in this Bill as is contained in the Wheat Pool Act.

Mr. CORSER: We want more power. We want to improve it as we go on. We are dealing with a wide range of commodities here. A pool may be asked for in connection with any product. From the experi-

ence we have had of the Wheat Pool Act, although we know that the Board may allow a grower to sell to another grower wheat for seed purposes, we find it is not giving that permission.

Mr. W. COOPER: Has it refused?

Mr. CORSER: It has never given such permission. We do not want to cry the farmer down and bring in a Bill like this to penalise him. The farmers will not be able to carry on their operations under the clause as it stands.

Mr. BRENNAN: It says the farmer shall have the right to do it.

Mr. CORSER: If you put it in that the farmer "may" do it, and allow him to do it, it would be all right.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He might defy the Board then.

Mr. CORSER: It is a power which the farmer enjoys to-day, and we have no right to take it away from him. We agree that the farmer may do it, but we do not say that the Board "may" do it, because we have found that Boards in the past have not done it. We should not tie the primary producer down by an Act which will work to his disadvantage. It has been explained that neighbours are prepared to take seed grown locally by a reliable farmer rather than to buy it from seedgrowers whom they do not know. The hon. member for Pittsworth referred to the fact that Soudan grass became inoculated with sorghum, imphee, or other grass seed grown in close proximity, and that cattle were poisoned with hydrocyanic gas through eating it. When a farmer grows pure Soudan grass, and the local people know that cattle are not likely to be poisoned from it, why should we prevent the local men taking seed from him.

Reference has been made to maize. One farmer may grow good maize, which has become acclimatised and produces beautiful seed. Why should that maize be pooled when it can be of such value to those in the neighbourhood who wish to buy it? Why should the grower be compelled to put that maize into the pool when he could use it to such great advantage and get an increased reward for raising such good seed? A man might buy maize seed from anyone outside, which, while true to type and acclimatised, may have been inoculated by being grown in close proximity to some other kind of maize. We know that very careful growers will only grow a certain class of maize within a safe distance from other maize, and then it remains true to type. Farmers know where they can get maize true to type from local growers, and we should not introduce any legislation to prevent them from enjoying that advantage. Good maize seed is worth about 4s. per bushel more than ordinary maize, and why should men who are improving the varieties of seed be deprived of that advantage? We find that shipping companies are prepared to carry stud stock from Great Britain to New Zealand free of charge, so as to improve the stock in New Zealand. Surely we are not going to do anything to hamper the production of stud seed in this State. The amendment is quite reasonable, and I cannot understand why the Minister will not accept it, and exempt from the pool not only such portions of the crop as are required for the use of a man's family and stock or for seed to be sown in his own

Mr. Corser.]

place, but to enable the producer, after raising a good class of seed, to sell it to other producers in the State.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I am very much surprised at the attitude which the Opposition are taking up in connection with the Bill. We have been for nearly two sittings dealing with five clauses of the Bill, which was brought in at the request of hon. members opposite, and the operations under which are to be controlled by a Board appointed by the primary producers. The hon. member for Drayton moved this amendment, and then the leader of the Opposition got up and said that it was moved in the wrong place.

Mr. VOWLES: No.

Mr. GLEDSON: The Bill provides for what hon. members opposite are trying to get in in another way, and they want to make a mess of the Bill altogether.

Mr. VOWLES: No.

Mr. GLEDSON: What good would it do the Government to bring in a Bill which did not give the primary producers the power to control their own industry?

Mr. VOWLES: Why did you allow it in the Wheat Pool Act?

Mr. GLEDSON: Let us see what the clause contains. Subclause (4) reads—

“The Board may, in such cases and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, except (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section—

(a) Such small growers of the commodity as the Board think fit;

(b) Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors.”

What is a local consumer but a man who buys for the purposes of seed from his neighbour? The thing hon. members opposite are talking about all the time is already in the Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: It is not in the Bill.

Mr. GLEDSON: Anyone with ordinary intelligence can see that the Bill gives the power which hon. members opposite are asking for. The members of the Board are elected by the primary producers themselves. The Bill gives the Board power to exempt a grower from putting a certain quantity of, say, lucerne seed into the pool if he wants to sell it to his neighbour for seed purposes; it also provides that the Board can exempt a certain amount of maize or other product which is required for seed purposes.

Mr. CORSER: What about what he requires for his own use? Where is the power in regard to that?

Mr. GLEDSON: The power is here. This is an attempt on the part of the Opposition to wreck the Bill. Why? In the interests of the big financial institutions, who are behind them. (Opposition laughter.) It is the voice of Jacob, but the hand of Esau. Hon. members opposite say: “Yes, we are going to have a pool. We are looking after the primary producers. We are going to look after this pool, which is going to be of benefit to the primary producer.” Then they come here and obstruct the Bill. This Bill provides for the co-operative marketing of the produce of the farmers, yet hon. members opposite want to wreck it. When the hon. member for Drayton was first elected to this House, he was a farmers’ representative, and

[Mr. Corser.

he came here with big ideals, and was imbued with the idea of doing something for the poor farmer. He came here prepared to uplift the poor settler and make his life worth living. Now he sits behind the hon. member for Port Curtis, who represents the big trusts; he sits behind the hon. member for Albert. The hon. member for Dalby is leader of the Country party, and he is not a farmer at all; he is a solicitor. The hon. member for Drayton sits behind all these people to-day, and they are all out to wreck this Bill. The hon. member brings in an amendment in the endeavour to defeat the whole Bill. We know the difficulties that those engaged in the co-operative movement have to contend with. Take the Co-operative Farmers’ Bacon Factory at Murarrie. Whom did they have to fight?

Mr. CORSER: They had to fight Fihelly last year. (Laughter.)

Mr. GLEDSON: They had to come to the Government to assist them to get out of their difficulties. The same thing applies to the farmer. The co-operative companies had a big struggle before they got a footing. This Bill provides for assisting the farmer to market his goods co-operatively, but the whole Opposition, including the Country party and the Nationalists, who are composed of middlemen, are bound together to wreck the measure. This measure is solely for the benefit of the primary producer, yet hon. members opposite are trying to wreck it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I would like to know if the Minister and the hon. member for Ipswich know the difference between common stock and purebred stock. If we had a pool for purebred cattle, would hon. members opposite compel the breeder of the purebred stock to put his stock in with the common herd?

Mr. WARREN: Certainly they would. They do not know any better.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They would do it because they do not know the difference. It is the same with seed, whether it is the seed of cereals or anything else. If a man has purebred seed, why should he be compelled to put it into the pool with the ordinary common article? If a farmer goes to the trouble and expense of getting pure seed, just the same as the cattle-owners do to get purebred stock, he should not be asked to mix it with the common herd or the common seed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: After the speech of the hon. member for Ipswich, there is little left for me to say. The leader of the Opposition quoted a section of the Wheat Pool Act, and tried to lead the Committee to believe that there were greater privileges under that Act than under this Bill. The hon. gentleman is quite wrong. This clause reads—

“(4) The Board may, in such cases and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section—

(a) Such small growers of the commodity as the Board think fit.”

That exemption does not appear in the Wheat Pool Act. This Bill exempts the small growers of the commodity if the Board think fit, and it also exempts—

“(b) Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or retail vendors, and—

“(c) Such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed.”

We know the Wheat Board is dealing with wheat, and seed wheat is an important thing. Supposing a pool was formed amongst the Rhodes grass growers for the purpose of pooling the seed, or supposing there was a pool for paspalum seed. There is a lot of paspalum grown in North Queensland, and also in the Kingaroy district, and sent all over Australia. Assuming a pool is formed, what a ridiculous proposition it would be to allow each grower to sell his own paspalum seed wherever he liked. We must remember that three-fourths of the producers concerned have first to agree to form a pool. To listen to the one-eyed speeches that have been made by hon. members opposite, one would imagine that the Board was something hostile to the growers, or that it was a Government institution.

Mr. VOWLES: That is our experience in connection with the Wheat Board.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Wheat Board has not been interfered with in any way by the Government or by myself as Secretary for Agriculture. The Board was appointed by the growers to carry out its duties free and untrammelled. There is no suggestion that the Government or the Secretary for Agriculture should interfere with the farmers' business in any way. To listen to the speeches of hon. members opposite, one would imagine that the Board was going to try and injure the dairy farmers; but, as a matter of fact, it can exempt the small growers altogether. It can also exempt sales of the commodity to local consumers and retail vendors. If the amendment of the hon. member for Drayton were inserted in the form he suggested, it would defeat the object of the Bill. I am quite willing to allow the farmer to retain the product for his own food or as food for his family or his stock.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Why shouldn't you do so?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is wonderful to see the suspicion the hon. member for Drayton has of the dairy farmers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Suspicion of you.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What have I got to do with it? The Board will be elected by the votes of the growers, and naturally they will pick the best men out of their number to represent them. What a poor opinion the hon. member has of his fellow-farmers if he thinks that they would do anything unreasonable or anything that would inflict hardship on the

[8 p.m.] growers or suppliers. The whole thing is really a co-operative undertaking. All the growers become shareholders automatically by proclamation, after expressing their willingness to have a pool created, and they appoint their directors—that is, the Board—to carry out the pool in the interests of all the shareholders.

We have been six and a-half hours on five clauses of this Bill, and it really appears to me that hon. members, although they declare from time to time that they are not hostile to the measure and that they believe in the pooling system, are actually opposed to this proposal. Every time they get up they point out weaknesses of the Bill. I am aware of those weaknesses. They must exist in any scheme controlled by human beings; but the Bill itself gives the Board all the power they want. It was drafted with a great deal of care and consideration by myself, because I

recognised that, when it came into this Chamber, if it was possible to point out any flaws in it, they would undoubtedly be disclosed. As my friend the Secretary for Railways says, anyone can destroy a palace, but it takes a man with some constructive ability to build a fowlhouse. When the foundation was laid of this legislation we had nothing to guide us, because we are making history; we are passing legislation which has not been passed in any part of the Commonwealth or in any part of the world, so far as I know.

Mr. VOWLES: You had the Wheat Pool Act to guide you.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am speaking generally of the legislation of this Government. I say that in Queensland we are pioneering this legislation. The Bill has been framed with due regard to the requirements of the case, and gives to the Board elected by the farmers all the power necessary to make a success of the scheme.

Mr. CORSER: It does not give the producers power to sell seed to other producers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It gives the Board power to exempt small growers and such sales "as may be prescribed."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Wheat Board has not done that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It can do it, and I think that we can very well leave it as it is. I have no objection to allowing any producer to retain so much as he may require for himself, his family, and his stock, but to allow him to sell just as he liked would practically destroy the whole scheme.

Mr. VOWLES: The Wheat Pool Act exempts sales by growers to other growers for seed for use in farming operations. What does that mean?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say that the provision of this Bill giving power to exempt small growers gives a greater power than the Wheat Pool Act. I admit that the Wheat Pool Act does make exceptions in respect of seed, but that Bill dealt with a specific crop. In the case of bananas and pineapples there is no seed at all, and in the case of Rhodes grass and paspalum there is nothing else but seed. If you exempt the commodity for seed purposes, you exempt the whole commodity. I see no reason why I should give the shareholders—if I may put it in that way—power to sell unless the Board wish.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I again draw the attention of the Minister to subclause (4) of clause 3. Very few men know how to grow and save lucerne seed. Suppose such a man happens to be in an area where a pool has been declared, and another such man in an area in which there is no pool. The latter can sell lucerne seed untrammelled to any of his neighbours. He can even go and sell it in the area in which a pool has been declared. For the life of me I cannot understand why the Minister objects to the insertion of these words, because the subclause I have mentioned distinctly states that only certain specified localities or districts may be affected. If we did not want a pool for lucerne seed on the Downs, and they had one below the Range, what is to prevent a well-known lucerne-seed grower on the Downs from selling it below the Range?

Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A lucerne seed pool would not be very effective in Queensland.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is quite possible. Remember that the Wheat Board has power to take every bushel of wheat of a certain quality in Queensland; but in this Bill it is distinctly stated that certain localities may form pools, whilst others may not, so that there is no analogy between the two cases.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The wheat pool practically applies only to the Darling Downs. There is no wheat grown in North Queensland.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: There is a certain amount grown in the Burnett and Nanango districts. The Minister referred to paspalum; but paspalum seed is used for only one purpose—to propagate its kind.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is being sold in the Southern States.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Under those conditions, it would be quite safe to allow the growers to sell amongst themselves, provided that, for export purposes, it was pooled. The men who buy it for the export trade would be those who would make the big profits. It is not sold as a food commodity; nothing is made out of it; it is not even sold as bird seed. I ask the Minister to read subclause (4) of clause 3 before he definitely refuses to the grower the right to retain his seed, provided he is a man who has a name for taking a lot of trouble and saving only seed of excellent quality. Such a man has a right to be put on the same footing as another man in a district where there is no pool.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Doonomba*): In making such speeches as he has just made, the hon. member for Pittsworth underrates the intelligence of the farmers. Just imagine having a pool in regard to lucerne seed on the Downs and none for that grown below the Range, when the very men who grow the lucerne seed have the right to say whether they want it or not. Imagine the men in the Lockyer district saying they want a pool and those on the Downs saying they do not want one.

We have an example of the operation of the law in connection with the banana pool. The farmers did not want it, and that was the end of it. We do not say they must have pools, but this Bill gives them the power to have pools if they so desire. The leader of the Opposition was very unfair tonight. He either did not prepare his arguments, or he was trying to mislead the House. Subclause (4) of clause 6 is exactly the same as subsection (4) of section 6 of the Wheat Pool Act. It provides—

“The Board may, in such cases, and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section”—

The Wheat Pool Act says that the Board may exempt—

“Sales or purchases of seed wheat by growers of wheat to or from growers of wheat for bona fide use by the purchasers in their farming operations.”

Mr. VOWLES: That is what we ask for now.

[Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

Mr. BRENNAN: This Bill says that the Board may exempt—

“Such small growers of the commodity as the Board think fit.”

The small grower can do what he likes—sell, buy, exchange, barter. Without expressly stating what his powers are to be, he is given greater power. The hon. member says the power is stated in the Wheat Pool Act and not here. He must agree that the growers will have greater power once they get the exemption. The second paragraph is—

“Sales of the commodity direct to local consumers or to retail vendors.”

That covers the amendment of the hon. member for Drayton. If the Board will not grant exemptions, being the creation of the farmers themselves, it can be dealt with by the farmers.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What is to become of the pool if they can do that?

Mr. BRENNAN: If they can do it, what is there to worry about?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: As a matter of fact, it is not a pooling Bill at all.

Mr. BRENNAN: It need not be a pooling Bill. Then, the clause further provides for the exemption of—

“Such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed.”

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What is the good of the pool if the Board can exempt everybody?

Mr. BRENNAN: All these people on behalf of whom our opponents are complaining may get exemptions if the Board sees fit. The leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Drayton say that it is necessary that growers should have the right to sell. Just imagine allowing seed to be sold by any person at all!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Oh, no. You are misleading.

Mr. BRENNAN: By or to any grower. Who else wants seed but the grower? If everybody has the right to sell seed, it will defeat the object of the Bill. If these men have the right to retain such seed as they require for their own use, the rest should go into the pool. If one man grows a perfect article, superior to anybody else, as the hon. member for Pittsworth states, he has the power to get an exemption under the exemption of “such other sales and purchases as may be prescribed.”

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Exemption is granted only in the case of well-known growers of seed wheat.

Mr. BRENNAN: The farmers can put a new Board in if they are not satisfied with the actions of the men whom they have elected. I think the Minister should not accept the amendment.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I want to relate the actual experience under the Wheat Board in connection with seed wheat. I can say for certain that the only way in which the Board has been managed to deal with the farmers has been by simply ignoring all transactions in seed wheat. I have seen men dealing with wheat under the very nose of the Board's officer, who did not take any notice. They simply defy the Board. It

has been found so inconvenient to refer every transaction in seed wheat to the Board that it has been impossible to get men to comply with the Act.

Mr. W. COOPER: There will be no fear from this measure then.

Mr. DEACON: Some time somebody may be caught. Later on in the Bill provision is made for the imposition of a fine of £500 when anybody is found infringing the provision of the measure. The men are taking these risks at present. Why not legalise it, and allow it to be done? The Minister is out to get the experience of farmers. Why does he not take some notice of this?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I take a lot of notice of the farmers, but I do not take notice of men who say they represent the farmers.

Mr. DEACON: I am a farmer, and I have suffered this inconvenience. If the Minister asked the Wheat Board, he would be told that this is going on. He could see it for himself if he went up into the wheatgrowing districts.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The Minister has indicated that he is prepared to accept the first part of this amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the hon. member for Drayton withdraws his amendment, I will accept that portion.

Mr. CORSER: If the amendment is worthy of being put in, why should the Minister not accept it?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Let the hon. member for Drayton withdraw his amendment.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The hon. member for Drayton has already spoken on three occasions, and it is not competent for him to withdraw his amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to block him, so I will put the question to the Committee. Does the Committee approve of the hon. member for Drayton being allowed to withdraw his amendment?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is withdrawn.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eusham*): I beg to move the insertion, after line 8, page 5, of the word—

“Such portion of the commodity as the grower may require for his own use or as seed or for food for his family or his live stock.”

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): It is a case of having to accept three-fourths of that amendment. I am sorry that the Minister will not make the Bill in accordance with the Wheat Pool Act. If he is determined not to do that, we will accept what he has proposed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is more liberal than the Wheat Pool Act.

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to.

Mr. DEACON: I beg to move the omission, on line 55, page 4, of the word “five,” with a view to inserting the word “one.”

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment having been moved in a latter portion of the clause, I cannot accept the hon. member's amendment. He should have moved his amendment before the amendment was moved by the Secretary for Agriculture.

Clause 6, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 7—“*Delivery to be made in name of grower*”—put and passed.

Clause 8—“*Tender to be evidence of intention to deliver*”—put and passed.

Clause 9—“*Board's decision as to quality, etc., to be final*”—

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): Clause 6 provides—

“Save as hereinafter prescribed, all the commodities shall be delivered by the growers thereof to the Board . . .”

This clause provides—

“The Board shall not refuse to accept.”

I object to the phraseology. Why not say, “The Board shall accept”? This is the business clause of the Bill. It says—

“9. (1) The Board shall not refuse to accept from any grower any of the commodity which is of the prescribed quality, or which conforms to the prescribed standard, or when so prescribed for which a certificate of merchantable quality from a State grading officer or other officer appointed in that behalf has been obtained and tendered with the commodity, provided that the commodity is delivered in accordance with this Act within such reasonable times as shall be fixed by the Board; and, subject to this Act, the Board shall, out of the proceeds of the commodity disposed of by the Board under this Act, make payments to each grower of the commodity delivered to the Board in respect of the commodity delivered by him, on the basis of the net proceeds of the sale of all the commodity of the same quality or standard delivered to and sold by the Board and the proportion of such commodity so delivered by such grower.”

The whole of the commodity is commandeered or controlled under this Bill, yet it is only that portion that reaches the prescribed quality that is to be accepted. What is to become of that portion of the commodity which is not up to the prescribed quality? Presumably it is to remain the property of the grower. In an earlier part of the Bill it is to be controlled. The farmer has to send down samples and get a certificate of quality. He then has to supply the whole consignment in accordance with the sample. We all know that, so far as samples of grain are concerned, it is very easy to get the bulk very little above and very little below that sample. There is no such thing as an average sample. You will have many men sending down seed as they sent down their wheat to the pool, hoping against hope that they were going to get a certificate for f.a.q. or something approaching that quality. They will find that it will not approach the sample of the prescribed quality. A portion of it might, but the bulk of it will not. The grain will be forwarded to the receiving depôts, and,

Mr. Vowles.]

in many cases, it will not reach the prescribed quality.

Mr. GLEDSON: Who prescribes the quality?

Mr. VOWLES: I understand that there is a standard. There is an "f.a.q." standard for wheat. Many of the farmers on the Downs were very disappointed when they discovered that their produce, which they thought would be graded as first quality, was not regarded by the Board as such. The same position will arise here.

Mr. GLEDSON: They will be prescribing their own quality and dealing with their own stuff.

Mr. VOWLES: The standard, I take it, will be high. Under the Wheat Pool Act that wheat which did not reach the prescribed standard remained the property of the Board after it had taken control of it. The "f.a.q." wheat got the top prices, and the other wheat was controlled and eventually disposed of. Now, when this stuff is sent to the depôts, and it does not come up to the prescribed quality, that portion which does not come up to the required standard is going to be left on hand. What is going to become of it?

Mr. GLEDSON: The Board will determine that.

Mr. W. COOPER: What became of the wheat?

Mr. VOWLES: A lot of it was sold as chick wheat, and a lot of it was used as manure. In this case the growers will have stuff which belongs to them, and which the Board will not accept as of the prescribed quality. It will be landed in Brisbane and other depôts, and will be sacrificed. That is where speculation will take place. The produce which is not of high quality will be sent down by the consignor, who will have to pay railage on it, and which, unfortunately, he cannot get back. If the Board is to control the whole of the commodity, and only the prescribed quality commodity is to receive the top price and the rest is to be dealt with in some other way, then I can understand it. The position to-day seems impossible. There will be nothing but confusion and chaos, and many farmers will become hopelessly tangled over a Bill such as this.

[8.30 p.m.]

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I would like to point out that when the Wheat Pool Bill was going through I was one of those who urged that the pool should take charge of the whole of the wheat.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: And you opposed the Bill.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I did not oppose it. I was one of those who presented the first draft of the Bill to the Premier, and yet we have an hon. member who comes into this Chamber and lies like that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will withdraw that remark. He is not justified in accusing any hon. member in that way.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I withdraw it, but I was justified. A lie is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

[*Mr. Vowles.*]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I was justified in saying it. I was one of those who instituted that Wheat Pool Bill. If the wheat pool took only the first-class grain, and we estimated then that we were going to have 1,000,000 bushels of second-class grain out of 4,000,000 bushels—if that 1,000,000 bushels of second-class grain had been allowed to go on the market, the millers would have bought up that wheat which was not f.a.q. wheat at their own price, and that would have spoilt the market for the good wheat. The millers would have bought up that wheat cheap, and would have used a big proportion of it in making flour, and the consumer would have paid the same price for his flour made from second-class wheat, because the miller could mix it, and the latter would have got the extra profit.

You have barrow-men in the streets here every day selling second-class fruit, and, if you are only going to take into the pool the prime quality, you are going to have all the second-grade fruit sent down to the market here, which will be flooded with the second-class stuff. Then, where are you going to get a market for the prime stuff? If you are going to allow the market to be flooded with second-class goods, you are going to take away the market for the prime goods. That is one of the difficulties of a pool.

Mr. W. COOPER (*Rosewood*): I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Drayton try to tell this Chamber that primary products of first quality will not realise a first-class price. As a matter of fact, all first-class maize, wheat, fruit, chaff, or any other primary product sent into the market has to compete with the second-class stuff sent down at the same time, and the second-class stuff cannot alter the situation one bit. The hon. member for Drayton wants to convey to this Chamber that this Bill will be of no benefit unless the whole of the products are pooled and the Board takes charge of the lot. Just a few moments ago he endeavoured to get an amendment in, and said it was absolutely necessary to permit a grower to retain the whole of his grain if he required it for a specific purpose—that is, for seed. That amendment would have placed the Bill clean out of court. The Bill would not have been worth a snap of the fingers if that amendment had been passed. He now wants the Board to control the whole of the products. Members of the Opposition do not know where they are. I am of the opinion that they are endeavouring to kill this Bill in order to allow the old system to prevail that has prevailed so long—that is, to allow the produce merchants and their friends to conduct the business, and leave the farmer in the state of chaos he has always been in.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): It seems a strange thing to me that the hon. member for Drayton should oppose the Bill. Why the hon. member should introduce all this obstruction against a Bill which is for the benefit of the farmers is very hard to understand. Something has happened the last fortnight which has forced the hon. member for Drayton to alter his tactics. Let me read what he said about the cheese pool, as reported on page 1124 of "Hansard" for 1921—

"This really was a Bill to eliminate waste. He knew something of the waste that occurred in the industry before the Cheese Manufacturers' Association was formed. It amounted to fully 20 per cent. of the production. It was possible

to save that by the compulsory shipment of the surplus.

"Mr. Hartley: Are you in favour of this Bill?"

"Mr. BEBBINGTON: Certainly."

Later on he said—

"There was not a single record to show that any measure had been brought in to assist the farmer to make one penny more in profits, except the Wheat Pool Bill. To a great extent that Bill was brought in merely to save the skins of the Government. There were practical men on the Opposition side who would give the Minister every assistance possible."

When that Bill was before the House he was right in favour of the pooling system; but now he is offering all the obstruction he can to this most important Bill to eliminate waste and to assist the farmer. The hon. member for Rosewood, who is a practical farmer, points out that the first-class produce—that is, produce of a merchantable quality—has to come down and compete with second-class produce in the Roma street market. What do the middlemen do? They set a standard of price on the middle quality, and they try to buy that middle quality and sell it as first quality. What will happen under this Bill? All stuff that is of merchantable quality will be pooled and sent for sale. There will be only one quality. The pool will send the first quality down to market for sale, and it will be sold, and the inferior quality stuff will be dealt with in such a way as to protect the farmer. If the stuff is not worth marketing, they should not be allowed to use it as seed. If any farmer has an inferior quality that is not fit for the market, he should feed it to his stock, and, if he has no stock, he should give it to his next-door neighbour.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I want to ask which is the best system—for the pool to control the whole of the product or only a part of it? If the Minister thinks it best to allow the pool to control only the prime stuff, and allow everything else to go on the market, I have no objection.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I object to that misrepresentation. If the hon. gentleman had taken the trouble to read clause 6, he would find that it provides that all the commodity shall be delivered to the Board; and then clause 9 reads—

"The Board shall not refuse to accept from any grower any of the commodity which is of the prescribed quality, or which conforms to the prescribed standard, or when so prescribed for which a certificate of merchantable quality from a State grading officer or other officer appointed in that behalf has been obtained."

There is no suggestion about accepting the best and leaving the worst. We prescribe by regulation the method to be followed. If the hon. member will turn to the regulation clause, he will find that regulations may be made, amongst other things, for—

"Ascertaining whether the commodity is of the required quality and prescribing a standard therefor, and for an increase or decrease in the price otherwise payable to any grower for any of the com-

modity delivered by him to the Board according to the quality or standard of the commodity."

There is no suggestion there about only accepting first-class produce and leaving second-class and inferior grade produce with the grower.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—"Issue of certificates and payment in connection with commodity delivered to Board"—put and passed.

Clause 11—"Contracts for sale of commodity"—

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): This clause reads—

"Every contract which is made in or outside of Queensland, whether before or after the extension of this Act to the commodity,"

and so on. I move the omission, on line 30, after the word "Queensland," of the words "whether before or," and later, on line 37, as a consequential amendment, I will move the omission, after the word "delivery," of the words "at the date of such notification." The effect of the amendment will be that any contract or sale made before the pool is formed will not come under the operation of the pool. I think that a wise provision, because, if we compel contracts and sales made before the formation of the pool to come under it, the operation of the pool is likely to have a prejudicial effect and to create a great amount of uncertainty.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It did not cause any hardship in regard to the Wheat Pool Act and the Cheese Pool Act.

Mr. FLETCHER: There is no analogy between the Wheat Pool Act passed two years ago and this Bill. In the Wheat Pool Bill we were dealing with the current season's wheat, and any sales that had been made were specific and were definitely known. We knew they had been made, but in this case we are dealing with something which is in the future. We are passing a measure which is going to remain in force until it is repealed. While there may never be a pool formed under the Bill, nevertheless, the fact that the Act exists will frighten people from operating, knowing that, if at any time a pool is formed, certain contracts which have been made will come under its operation. Under such a provision no buyer in this State or any other State is going to make purchases of commodities, because, if he makes a forward purchase on favourable terms, it is quite likely that a pool may be formed and the contract will then become null and void. That will be bad for the farmer, because there are many farmers who look ahead and make forward sales of a part of their produce so as to make their position safe, but under this provision there will be no buyers. I think that the Minister will, on reflection, see the wisdom of accepting the amendment. The clause in its present form will have the same effect as the "Repudiation Act," because it creates uncertainty, and no one will come forward and make purchases. It restricts enterprise. The latter part of the amendment is merely consequential to the first portion of it. The amendment will do away with a great deal of doubt and uncertainty which will prevail under the clause as it stands, and I hope that the Minister will accept it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (*Hon. W. N. Gillies, Eacham*): I think the

Hon. W. N. Gillies.]

hon. member for Port Curtis is unduly alarmed about the effect of this clause. A similar provision is made both in the Wheat Pool Act and the Cheese Pool Act.

Mr. FLETCHER: The position is not the same.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am prepared to admit that. We have had it stated several times to-night that it might be possible to form a pool under this Bill to which some of the provisions in the Wheat Pool Act and the Cheese Pool Act might not apply. But it has to be remembered that persons might take advantage under the amendment of entering into a contract and tying up the growers so as to make the pool ineffective.

Mr. FLETCHER: If there was a chance of their making sales ahead, there would be no need of a pool. The Bill is only necessary when there is a slump.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: One of the arguments advanced in connection with having a pool is that Southern buyers, particularly from South Australia, might come along and offer cash to the growers to induce them to make contracts. If the hon. member will read the clause carefully, he will find that, while power is given to terminate contracts, it says—

“when specified by the Board in a notification published in the ‘Gazette.’”

So that, if there is an existing contract which is not detrimental to the producers or to the pool, the Board, the members of which represent the farmers and are farmers themselves, will not seek to cancel that contract.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is obligatory; the Board must cancel it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The clause reads—

“so far as such contract has not been completed by delivery at the date of such notification.”

I think it would weaken the pooling system if the words suggested by the hon. member were deleted. I think the hon. member, after my explanation, will realise the necessity for the retention of the words, because the Board is not likely to impose any hardship on a bonâ fide trader who has made a contract.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (Warwick): I have very much pleasure in supporting the amendment. Anyone having a knowledge of business conditions, and also having a desire for the preservation of honour, will certainly support the amendment. I am not concerned just now regarding local contracts which may be made, because local men are conversant with what is likely to take place, and are not likely to enter into contracts; but I am very deeply concerned about contracts which may be made in connection with other States. I understand that if a contract is made with someone in another State, the pool will honour that contract; but innumerable contracts were made last year in connection with maize between merchants and farmers in Queensland, and the merchants in turn made contracts with merchants in the South. I do not see how the man who made contract No. 2 is going to be protected under this clause. I know firms who have contracted with farmers to do certain things, but they suddenly find, on account of this Bill, that they are unable to complete those contracts. Is that fair? Has the Minister considered the effect this

will have on trading conditions in Queensland? We will destroy the competition that is so helpful to us. Instead of the merchants in Queensland encouraging trade as they naturally would, this will prevent them from doing so. The Board will have a great deal to learn, and will not enter into contracts. As a consequence, a great deal of trade is going to be lost to Queensland. This Bill would be all right if the principle were general throughout the States, and if every other community were fettered. We are cribbed, cabined, and confined under this Bill. That does not apply to other States. No other British community indulges in such preposterous legislation as is put through in this State. They have freedom of action there. Here we do not hesitate to bring in a Bill which places no sacredness whatever on contracts which the citizens of Queensland have made with others. What kind of people are you going to breed under such conditions? I know what the effect of this Bill is going to be, as I know the conditions that will obtain. Very few contracts will be made under this Bill. Who is going to suffer in consequence? The farmers will suffer in many instances through missing their sales, and their produce will not find markets. They will lose their markets through the dilly-dallying interference of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in the Acts that it passes. I have no hesitation in saying that the extreme destructive principles introduced into this Bill are altogether against the interests of the man that the Government seemingly desires to serve. It is going to make sales made in Queensland void. Last year many farmers made forward sales in maize; but some Brisbane merchants lost heavily owing to the slump that took place in that commodity.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is gambling.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You can call it what you like. Forward sales were made, and they will go on. If Queensland is not prepared to make sales to-day with the South, then they will go to South Africa or somewhere else, and we shall be left high and dry with our fingers in our mouths instead of having money in our pockets. I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment, as I know from experience that it means a big thing to the producers of Queensland.

Mr. BRENNAN (Toowoomba): I agree with the Minister that, if he allowed the amendment to go in, it would destroy one of the main provisions in the Bill. With regard to forward sales, when the merchants made the contracts they knew the crop was growing, and they knew it was going to be a success. They knew the world's market prices before they purchased. Naturally they would purchase at the lowest possible price so that they would get the greatest possible advantage out of future markets. The odds are in favour of the middlemen.

Mr. EDWARDS: No.

Mr. BRENNAN: The hon. member represents a maizegrowing district. He knows that a company is negotiating for the purchase of maize in the Kingaroy district to carry out some process of manufacture in Melbourne.

Mr. EDWARDS: You know nothing about it—it is not in Melbourne at all.

Mr. BRENNAN: It is down South somewhere. At any rate, the Nanango district is the greatest maizegrowing district in

[Hon. W. N. Gillies.]

Queensland. The hon. member knows the benefit that this Bill will be to the farmers in his electorate. I remember that at one time maize was sold in Nanango for 1s. 9d. per bushel, and six months later the price of maize was as high as 5s. 3d. per bushel. Here is a Bill which will protect the farmers against forward buying, as it will enable the farmers to form a pool, but the hon. member for Nanango decries the idea. I do not know why they put "Bob" Hodge out for Nanango. If he had been here he would have stood loyally by us and would have protected the farmer. The hon. gentleman comes in here and decries the farmers. Sub-clause (3) reads—

"Nothing in this section shall apply to a commodity the subject of an interstate contract."

That shows that interstate contracts are fully protected. Yet hon. members opposite talk about loyalty to Queensland. They want to put the Union Jack over this Bill. Fancy talking about loyalty because we want the farmer to be protected! Cut out the loyalty and get down to honesty! All interstate contracts are protected. Any contracts made with New South Wales will not be interfered with. The Minister should not accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Fletcher*) negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 12 to 17, both inclusive, put and passed.

[9 p.m.]

Clause 18—"Accounts of receipts and disbursements to be kept"—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I move the insertion, after line 35, page 8, of the words—

"Statements of accounts shall be exhibited at such places and at such times as may be prescribed."

I think the Minister will agree that it is a fair thing that the men who pool their commodities shall, at least, have the right to see the balance-sheet of the operations of the pool. Rather than that they should have to travel long distances or expect the Board to send each individual grower a balance-sheet, which would add considerably to the expense, I suggest that these words be inserted.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course, all the accounts of the pools can be inspected and will be made public; but, if the hon. member wishes to have them published in certain places, I see no objection to it.

Amendment (*Mr. J. H. C. Roberts*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 19 to 21, both inclusive, put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 21st September.

REGULATION OF SUGAR CANE PRICES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (*Hon. W. N. Gillies, Bacham*): In moving

the second reading of this Bill it is not necessary to make a long speech. It is a short Bill of two clauses to legalise certain payments out of the Sugar Cane Prices Fund and to validate certain payments which have already been made. Clause 2 practically explains the Bill. The payments that have been made are largely in connection with conferences of representatives of the sugar industry which have been held from time to time. Then Mr. S. D. Walker was appointed for six months to act as publicity officer on behalf of the sugar industry in Melbourne at a salary of £1,000 a year. His term is just about expiring. There are other expenses in connection with legal proceedings, including the Kalamia case. The fund, of course, is subscribed by the growers and millers, and it is their opinion that these payments may be made out of it. The Bill gives power to validate payments already made and legalise such payments in future. I have pleasure in moving—

"That the Bill be read a second time."

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): As I understand that the fund under the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Acts is available for making these payments, and that the representatives of the growers have no objection, I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 21st September.

FRUIT CASES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"Short title and construction of Act"—

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I congratulate the Minister on having brought in this Bill. It is one of the very necessary things for the fruit industry, and the fruitgrowers appreciate its introduction. The fruit industry has been in a very unsatisfactory condition. This legislation will enable us to put a better quality of fruit on the market. All the other States have the grading system, and Queensland has now determined to fall into line. I hope that the Bill has a speedy passage, and I trust that it will do the good it is expected to do.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2—"Amendment of section 6a"—

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): I do not congratulate the Department of Agriculture. I congratulate the fruit section of the Council of Agriculture on the introduction of this measure. I hope that when the Bill becomes law the Department of Agriculture will not be in such a great hurry to force it on the growers that it will become a hardship. It will take five years to educate the farmers up to the present law. Already the people are erecting packing sheds in the granite belt.

Mr. Costello.]

Mr. VOWLES (*Dally*): On a previous occasion I think the Minister told us that he was going to tell us what "stacking" was.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I promised to tell the hon. member for Bulimba. (Laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman might tell us all; we are all very much interested.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): Clause 2 is most important. I thoroughly agree with the hon. member for Murrumba in his appreciation at the introduction of this measure. When the hon. member for Carnarvon says that it took five years for the farmers to appreciate a little clause like this, it condescends him in the eyes of his electors.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I would like the Minister to make this clause apply to the electorate I represent in regard to the shipment of fruit. Shipping companies have compelled the fruitgrowers in Bowen to harten together two quarter-cases, and when the fruit arrives in Sydney it is in a bad state. I do not know whether the Minister can deal with that under this clause. If he can, I would like him to deal with it, because it is doing an injury, not to the shipping companies—because they do not care how the fruit arrives in Sydney so long as they get their freight charges—that is all they are concerned about—but it is doing an injury to the tomato and fruit growers round about Bowen.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): This looks to me to be rather a dangerous clause, and I want to know how we stand. It says that no person shall—

"Sell any lot of fruit or vegetables if such fruit or vegetables is not or are not graded as prescribed by regulation."

Does that mean that if, say, an old-age pensioner has a little bit of garden in which he grows some lettuce, beetroot, and tomatoes, and his neighbour sees them growing nice and fresh, he cannot sell except they be graded? Where are we going to land ourselves in connection with this business? I would like the hon. member for Murrumba and the hon. member for Carnarvon to answer that, if they are so enamoured of the Bill. A number of returned soldiers who are drawing pensions have little garden plots. Some of their neighbours buy eggs from them. They also grow small lots of vegetables, and sell them to their neighbours round about. Is this Bill going to prevent them doing that? Will those sales have to go through the merchants? It looks to me as though it is going to be a hardship on certain people.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): First of all, I would like to assure the hon. member for Ipswich that I do not think any hardship will be imposed by gazetting the regulations. I will quote a specimen dealing with pineapples to indicate what is meant by setting up a standard. The Southern Queensland Fruit Growers' Association held meetings before the formation of the Council of Agriculture to discuss standards and grades, and, upon the establishment of the Council, remitted their views to that body, which has given support to the proposal to provide for standardisation and grading by regulation. That association represents, probably, 90 per cent. of the fruitgrowers of Southern Queens-

land. After a good deal of consideration at their conferences, they set up a standard. That standard can be varied from time to time; that is one of the advantages of doing it by regulation. If I were to provide standards by Act of Parliament, they could be altered only by altering the Act of Parliament. These regulations will be brought in only at the request of the fruitgrowers themselves. I will exercise a certain amount of discretion in regard to giving effect to regulations which would be likely to impose a hardship on any section of the community. With regard to pineapples, this is what they set up as a standard for the time being—

"Smooth leaf variety—

Large	8 to 12 to case
Choice	14 to 21 to case
First	24 to 26 to case
Seconds	27 to 36 to case

"Roughs—

Choice	Up to 24 to case
First	Up to 27 to case
Seconds	28 to 36 to case

"Ripley and similar varieties—

Choice	Up to 21 to case
First	24 to 27 to case
Seconds	28 to 36 to case"

With regard to citrus fruits, they set up a standard providing size, variety, and colour. It is very difficult with some fruits to set up a standard, but efforts will be made to set up a standard with regard to all our leading fruits. With regard to bananas, it is provided that they shall be packed—"cross-packed," in standard cases containing 3.564 cubic inches. The cavendish variety are to be graded in three qualities. Choice bananas are to be of a minimum length of 9 inches with a minimum circumference of 5 inches, the fruit to be free from blemish. First-grade bananas are to be of a minimum length of 7 inches with a minimum circumference of 4 inches, and so on. We have been able to profit by experience with regard to legislation in the South dealing with standardisation of fruit. I am sure the Bill will make for the benefit of the producers, and I think the consumers will also benefit, too. The leader of the Opposition wanted to know the meaning of the word "stacked." (Laughter.)

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Should the word not be "packed" instead of "stacked"?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No; "stacked" has a totally different meaning. According to Webster's Dictionary, "stack" means—

"A large pile of hay, grain, straw, or the like, usually of a nearly conical form, but sometimes rectangular or oblong, contracted at the top to a point or ridge, and sometimes covered with thatch."

In its application in this Bill, "stacked" would have the same meaning as used when referring to a stack of pineapples in the market. The object of the subclause is to prevent what is known as topping in the shops in connection with a stack of fruit, such as pineapples or water melons, which might come into the market and which might be stacked in such a way that the big ones are placed on top. The hon. member who raised the question knew exactly what it meant. I think this Bill will meet the case mentioned by the hon. member for Bowen.

Clause 2 put and passed.

[Mr. Vowles.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 21st September.

BRITISH IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY'S TRAMWAY AND WORKS BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): I would like to give the House reasons why it is necessary to introduce this Bill. The British Imperial Oil Company is an incorporated joint stock company, registered under the British Companies Act of 1886, carrying on business within the State for certain purposes that I have already stated. To carry on that work they hold freehold property, portion 95, as set out on the plan attached to the Bill. They also have leased from the Government six blocks, for which they pay an annual rental of £66. The properties are divided by two public roads. The Bill is introduced to enable them to construct two tramlines—one leading to the Brisbane River and the other to the Pinkenba Railway Station.

The PREMIER: Do they propose to erect works?

Mr. PETRIE: Yes; on the freehold property. They will construct wharves at a considerable expense, and will also lay a pipe-track. It is intended that tanks shall be constructed and oil will be brought out, not in cases and barrels as formerly, but in bulk, and will be put into the tanks and pumped up to the works. There it will be packed in cases and will be taken down by the tram to the Pinkenba Railway Station, to be brought up to the stores at Newstead.

The PREMIER: Will the tramway be built under the supervision of the Commissioner for Railways? (Laughter.)

Mr. PETRIE: I will explain that later. The preamble of the Bill sets out how the various properties are situated and the position of the various roads. The Council of the Shire of Toombul—the local authority charged with the care and control and management of the said public roads—has consented to the company constructing the tramlines along those roads. The objects of the Bill are clearly set out. There are only three clauses—the first being the short title, the second the interpretation clause, and the third embodying the powers sought by the company in order to construct the tramway.

Mr. CORSER: Will they be constructed by contract or day labour? (Laughter.)

Mr. PETRIE: If the hon. member will ask me that question on some future date, or give notice of it, I will answer him. This is a very serious matter, and I do not see why there should be so much levity. The company is going to spend a considerable amount of money in erecting works, but before they can do so it is necessary to put this Bill through. In clause 3 it is provided that—

“The work of construction of the tramways aforesaid in, along, and across the roads aforesaid shall be done by the company to the satisfaction of the State Commissioner for Railways, and no part of the tramway shall be constructed or

reconstructed in, along, or across any road until the plans and sections showing the tramlines and the levels thereof, and all working plans, sections, specifications, and drawings have been submitted to and approved of by the said Commissioner in writing.”

There is also a penal clause which provides that if, in the opinion of the Commissioner, there is any obstruction, the Commissioner may fine the company a sum of [9.30 p.m.] £100. Provision is also made

that the company will have to construct, at their own expense and to the satisfaction of the Water and Sewerage Board, shield pipes to protect the water-mains of the Water and Sewerage Board. It also provides that the traction may be by animal power, electrical power, or other power. As the Bill contains a plan showing the tram routes, it is unnecessary for me to dilate further on the matter, and I have much pleasure, therefore, in moving—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I am rather surprised at the Nationalist party supporting a Bill which contains a provision for “Under and over.” For a considerable time past they have been objecting to “Liberty Fairs” conducting “Under and over.”

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GLEDSON: A certain number of roads will be crossed by the proposed tramlines, and, while the Commissioner for Railways is given certain control, I cannot see that there is any provision in respect to control by the local authority. The local authority is responsible for the upkeep of the roads, and all the Bill says is that, as far as possible, the council is given authority. The roads are crossed five times, and, as the local authority is responsible for accidents occurring on those roads, the hon. member for Toombul ought to see whether some provision cannot be made to give the local authority power to see that the public are protected at these crossings. There is another matter I would like some information about. I understand from the hon. member that works are to be erected on the company's property, and that crude oil is to be brought here and refined and made into oils suitable for commercial purposes. I would like to ask the hon. member, if the Government agree to this Bill, whether the company, in the event of oil being obtained at Roma, will take the crude oil and refine it for the Government at a reasonable cost. If works are to be erected there, the company ought to meet the Government and the people of the country and refine some of the oil that we expect to find in our own State. If the Government are protected in that matter, I do not see any objection to the Bill.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 3 and the preamble put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

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

The House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

Mr. Gledson.]