

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST 1923**

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WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1923.

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

QUESTIONS.

PASTORAL RENTS AND RETROSPECTIVE COLLECTIONS.

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

“1. What was the amount collected in rents from pastoral lessees under the retrospective provisions of the 1920 amending Land Act?”

“2. What is the highest amount in rent per acre charged by the Crown to any of its tenants at the present time?”

“3. Under what form of tenure is such rent charged?”

“4. What is the highest rent per acre charged for pastoral holdings at the present time?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

“1. £613,289 up to 31st December, 1922.

“2. £350 per acre.

“3. Special lease.

“4. 4d. per acre.”

MUNDUBBERA-MONTO RAILWAY—SECOND SECTION.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Have working plans been prepared for the second section of the Mundubbera-Monto Railway?”

“2. When will work on this section from the south bank of the Burnett and north to Monto be commenced?”

“3. Are plans completed for the railway bridge to cross the Burnett at the commencing point of this section?”

“4. Is it the intention of the Department to put in hand the early construction of this railway bridge, so as to prevent unnecessary delay in work on the section to Monto, along which a great part of the earliest settlement of the Upper Burnett will take place?”

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

“1. Working plans are now being prepared.

“2. On completion of the first section.

“3. Yes.

“4. It is not anticipated that this bridge (which is to be of timber) will delay work on the next section.”

BEERBURRUM SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. KING (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. How many men were in occupation on Beerburrum Soldier Settlement on 30th June last?”

“2. How many settlers left during the six months ended 30th June last?”

“3. How many vacant farms were there on that date?”

“4. What is the total expenditure on the settlement to 30th June last?”

“5. Of this sum, what amount has been expended on the State farm?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS replied—

“1. 293 settlers and 12 informal lessees.

“2. 42.

“3. 117.

“4. £359,245 3s. 7d.

“5. £16,000, approximately, to October, 1921. Since that date the area comprised in the State farm, which has been made available for selection by discharged soldiers, has been kept under cultivation at a cost of £1,743 8s. 8d. to 30th June, 1923.”

STALLIONS REGISTRATION BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eucham*): 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 improve the breed of horses, and for other incidental purposes.”

Question put and passed.

NERANG RIVER BRIDGE AND SOUTH-PORT-BURLEIGH ROAD BILL.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That the Bill be now read a third time.”

Question put and passed.

MAIN ROADS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Main Roads Acts in certain particulars.”

The object of the proposed Bill is to amend the Main Roads Acts to provide for a system of developmental roads as contrasted with main roads. It has been found under the principal Act that the Main Roads Board are entirely engaged on what are main roads, and we find that throughout the State there are centres where it is desirable that we should have power to make what may be termed developmental roads as well as main roads.

Mr. TAYLOR: You mean new roads?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, roads which cannot be classified as main roads, but roads which may be required to serve group settlements or productive centres by connecting them with rail centres. Such a road cannot be described as a main road, and the shire council, perhaps, is not financially able to build the road itself, so that the people are deprived of the benefit of an up-to-date road. We are placing £40,000 on the Estimates this year for roads of this character, but the

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councils concerned will have to carry their share of the cost. After the road has been built to such a centre from the railway for purely developmental purposes, the obligation of upkeep will be thrown entirely on the council concerned.

Mr. COSTELLO: Whether they approve or not?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The same form will be gone through as in the case of a main road now. The Main Roads Board are not going to force on to councils either main road construction or developmental road construction. We have had many applications from councils requesting that certain roads be declared main roads. Those roads are not main roads as defined in the present Main Roads Act. The difference between a main road and a developmental road will be that the councils will have to undertake the upkeep of the latter. We believe that once a developmental road is built it should be a charge on the people in the vicinity, because it is not a main road. Power is also sought under the Bill to allow an entry to be made upon private land for the purpose of getting material. In certain districts roads have been surveyed and pegs placed in the ground. It is proposed under the Bill to make the removal of survey pegs in connection with main roads an offence.

Mr. TAYLOR: Does that provision not exist under the present Act?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, but we are tightening it up. There is also provision in the Bill for dealing with the stealing of the use of motor cars.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The idea of placing that provision in an amending Main Roads Bill is to prevent the manufacture of criminals. It may be argued that we should amend the Criminal Code and deal with this offence under section 445 of that Code; but it is not a desirable thing to do so. No country in the world has so far made the stealing of the use of chattel a criminal offence. In other States they have special Acts of Parliament dealing with this particular matter. We can meet the situation, as has been done in Victoria, by making the taking of the use of a motor car belonging to any other individual an offence under the Main Roads Act. Hon. members will remember that recently a man was arrested for using a motor car when he took it and went for a "joy ride" and then abandoned it. The Chief Justice held that there was no provision for making the stealing of the use of a motor car an offence. The police then charged the man with stealing the petrol in the car, but the jury would not convict, because they did not regard the offence really as a criminal offence. I agree that it is not a good thing to create criminals. The penalty provided for the offence in the Bill is a fine of £20 or six months' imprisonment, according to the circumstances governing the case. The provision in this Bill gets over the difficulty, and gives the protection needed. It is not like amending the Criminal Code, where we would have to make the stealing of the use of a motor car a criminal offence.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I understand that one of the real causes for the introduction of this Bill is to make provision for

the opening of the land in the Upper Burnett district which is not adjacent to a railway.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Oh, no.

Mr. CORSER: I think the Minister is introducing the Bill to enable him to put it into force in the Upper Burnett district.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No. It can be operated in the Upper Burnett district, but there is a number of other districts where it can also operate.

Mr. CORSER: I think it is essential from the Minister's point of view that power should be given to allow it to operate in the Upper Burnett district, although the Bill does not specifically say so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is quite a number of districts in which it could operate. The chairman of the Main Roads Board first brought it under my notice.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister claims that land 20 to 30 miles away from the railway in the Upper Burnett district will be made available by these developmental roads, but they can only be constructed under the provisions of the Bill which is foreshadowed.

Mr. KELSO: It applies to all Queensland.

Mr. CORSER: Yes, it does apply to all Queensland. It strikes me as not being an altogether fair proposition to ask the settlers who are going upon the land which is to be opened up by road and railway to pay the whole cost of the upkeep and half the cost of the road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will not apply in those areas. We are already doing that under another Act.

Mr. CORSER: Certainly, but not in the Upper Burnett. The Country party believe that all main roads should be a charge on the State, and that half the cost of upkeep should be borne by the local authorities. This Bill provides, as in the past, that the local authority shall eventually be charged with half the cost of the construction of the road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are carrying the whole burden at present.

Mr. CORSER: It is a plank in our platform that roads should open up settlement areas, even if they are not main roads.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Whose platform?

Mr. CORSER: The Country party's platform in the first place—the party that the hon. gentleman feared so much that he assisted in wiping out four of their seats. I agree with the general principle of the Bill, but I wish that the policy of the Minister in regard to main roads was in keeping with our own, and that he would make the cost of main roads a charge on the State and not force settlers to pay half the cost and the whole upkeep.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You were here for years and made the local authorities carry the whole of the burden.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister and his party were also here for years and kept the Denham Government in power by supporting them in connection with the Railways (Guarantee) Act. They could have put the Denham Government out of office in 1913 if they had supported my motion to abolish the guarantee; but they supported that Government in preference and kept them in power, and now they say we were responsible for the railway

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guarantee. The guarantee principle contained in this Bill is a continuance of the same principle and puts a further burden on the settler, which is far heavier because he has to pay half the cost of construction. We hope that the guarantee principle, even in connection with our main roads, will be abolished, and that the cost will be made a charge on the State, especially as commerce is so much benefited by them.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I really cannot see any necessity for the Bill. I understood the Minister to say that he was placing the sum of £40,000 on the Estimates this year for developmental roads. That will only build 2 or 3 miles of road, and it will take such a long time to do even that that the proposal will not be of much assistance to the settlers. A metalled road is a very good thing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are getting one built in your electorate, and the people have not offered any objection.

Mr. DEACON: It is much more expensive than a railway. If you are going to open up a new settlement, the best road and the cheapest is a railroad, and it is much more enduring and returns more revenue. Any man would prefer a railroad to a metalled main road, and it is a bad principle to extend such a scheme to a new settlement. This road will be of no assistance.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Would you have a railroad wherever you have a road?

Mr. DEACON: If the building of a road is going to cost more than the building of a railroad, it would be better to have the latter. You are going the most expensive way about the business, and if the Minister will make inquiries and compare the cost of the road, he will find that I am right.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): There is a good deal in what the hon. member for Cunningham has said. We have reached the stage when we have to consider whether our main road principle is as good as we expected it to be. If we are going to make a first-class road for carrying fairly heavy traffic, it will cost us considerably more than would a railroad.

Mr. DUNSTAN: What about the running costs and maintenance?

Mr. WARREN: I think that the maintenance of the suggested main road is going to be more than that of a railroad. We should consider whether these main roads are going to be as beneficial as we thought they would be when the Act was passed. Take the Redcliffe road. There is no question that that main road will never satisfy the Redcliffe people. It will never be as beneficial to the Peninsula as a railroad would be. Further, a railroad there would feed the railroads already laid down, and which are not paying interest on the capital invested. With these roads we are preparing for motor traffic which is going to compete with our railroads. As a matter of fact, there is a motor lorry competing with the railroad to Petrie at the present time.

Mr. HARTLEY: Good luck to them.

Mr. WARREN: I say good luck to them too.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is a complete reply to the hon. member for Cunningham.

Mr. WARREN: I do not agree with that. This is on bad roads at the present time—roads that are not all they should be. If you are going to build main roads you must take into consideration the £50,000,000 or £60,000,000 indebtedness for our railways. I think there is much truth in the statement that the cost of roads is altogether too much and that they are too big a burden on the settler. I do not apply that in the case of Redcliffe, where a big subscription was collected, but roads generally are altogether too expensive. Even in the towns we are building roads with initial costs too great for those roads to be profitable. It would be advisable to have a railway service over the Blackall Range—either a railroad or a mountain tramway—as it would be of greater benefit than a main road.

I think the hon. member for Cunningham has thrown out a good suggestion, and the Government would be very wise to take into consideration whether or not the main roads are a good proposition—particularly where they run practically parallel with a railway. I think it will be a good thing to build roads to agricultural centres. Any system that will provide for the construction of roads to open up land for settlement where rails cannot be laid down should have the support of this Committee, but I do not see that there is any necessity for this Bill to carry out such a system. As to the stealing of motor cars, the Minister has made a very fine distinction in regard to the making of a criminal. I do not know that a man who gets six months is not a criminal, no matter what he may be found guilty of. If anything can be done to stop the stealing of motor cars, it will be a good thing. I do not understand the necessity for the Bill, but if it is going to improve the chances of settlement in any district, it deserves the support of this Committee.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

#### FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) presented the Bill, and moved—

“That the Bill be now read a first time.”

Question put and passed.

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

### PALMERSTON LAND SETTLEMENT BILL.

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to make better provision for the land settlement and development of the Palmerston area, in North Queensland.”

This Bill is somewhat on the lines of the Burnett and Callide settlement scheme, except

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that in certain particulars the circumstances governing settlement in North Queensland as compared with the Burnett are different. The object is to open up a very valuable piece of land situated between

[4 p.m.] the head of the Innisfail-Nerada tramline and the Beatrice River close to Millaa Millaa. It is a very valuable piece of land, along what is known as Oswald's Track. The land is equal or similar to the land on the Atherton Tableland. At the present moment it is not available for settlement because there are no means of communication; but it is intended to extend the 2-ft. tramway from Nerada, or east of Nerada, up to this valuable area of land.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Crown land?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Crown land. There is a lot of first-class jungle land.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: More or less.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I think more. A good deal of land in the vicinity is almost unexplored. Quite recently we had a surveyor investigating the tableland at the head of the Tully River. That is one of the finest pieces of country in North Queensland, which was previously almost unknown. It was known to the local people as jungle, but we have now some idea of the extensive strip of country which exists there, and it is country of a similar class to that on the Atherton Tableland. It is land that we shall have no difficulty in getting settlers upon as soon as we provide means of communication. The Palmerston land will be connected with the Innisfail railway system by means of a 2-ft. gauge tramway. The system of group selection will be adopted. There is a rainfall of 90 inches a year. It is not proposed to hand over the timber to the settler. The Forestry Department will market the timber on this particular area, after supplying the settlement.

Mr. VOWLES: At a loss. The tramway will be run at a loss, according to this report.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not think so; that is only the opinion of some individual. There is no timber being marketed on the Atherton Tableland to-day at a loss. The people who are marketing the timber that is coming off the Atherton Tableland—either the Forestry Department or private owners—are not doing it at a loss.

Mr. COSTELLO: The Forestry Department are tough with their royalty.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If the royalty is the cause of the high price of timber, then the hon. member opposite, as a supporter of a previous Government, is in a very unfortunate situation. The Forestry Department are using some of the profits from the sale of timber for reforestation, and the private individual who got concessions from the hon. member's Government previously is getting that in addition to his profit, which is pure profiteering.

Mr. COSTELLO: We do not take any responsibility for that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; but you are the lineal descendants of that Government. (Laughter.) The Forestry Department are making a profit; but they are, at least, using some of the money they get from stumpage or royalties in replanting trees, which the private individual is not

doing. In ten or twelve years there will be no forests in Queensland unless we conserve our timber.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: In how many years?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: In a very short time the timber reserves will be almost exhausted; and how shall we get on then? However, that is another matter. I may have the opportunity of placing before the House a Forestry Bill which will in some directions go towards conserving our forests and replanting forests.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The idea under this Bill is to cut up the land into 160-acre portions.

Mr. TAYLOR: How far is it from Innisfail?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Some of it adjoins Millaa Millaa. It is a continuation of the tableland on the eastern slope of the coast range coming down from Millaa Millaa. The land is first-class dairying land. A good deal of it is, of course, scrub country like Millaa Millaa. Millaa Millaa is beautiful grazing country. This scrub is very rough country, and better for stock than level country. We hope to place dairy farmers on most of this area. Provision is made for the establishment of dairy factories, and later on for the acquirement of the factories by the producers of cream in the areas.

It is proposed to make a departure in regard to finance in this particular instance. We are establishing a fund to be known as the "Palmerston Fund." Money appropriated by Parliament from time to time will be placed to the credit of the fund, and the Lands Department, in conjunction with the State Advances Corporation, will advance money to the individual selectors. We hope to get over some of the delay which now takes place in connection with advances, and we wish to be able to stipulate that certain work shall be done by the selectors. One of the stipulations will be that a selector has to clear and graze not less than 50 acres of land. It is admitted that in that district 50 acres will run sufficient stock or milking cows to enable a selector to earn a livelihood. We are making it compulsory that one of the first undertakings of the selector shall be the clearing and grazing of land and the building of a house. I do not want to go any further into the matter now—I am sorry to have been drawn away on the question of forests. The second reading stage will give hon. members an opportunity of getting more information.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I have gone very carefully through the report with regard to the construction of this tramway, and, after reading the report and the various evidence placed before the Public Works Commission, it appears to me to be a most undesirable proposition until we get further evidence.

Mr. COLLINS: You would say anything against North Queensland. You have never been there in your life.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member was one of the members of the Commission and had the opportunity of listening to the evidence. I have read the evidence, and, if the hon. member can show me that it is sufficient to warrant us in spending a large amount of

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money in opening up an area in which settlement is going to be somewhat problematical, it will be a different matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is as good as the Darling Downs.

Mr. MOORE: I am not going to be drawn off the track by the hon. gentleman. We are dealing with the opening up of a big area in North Queensland. I do not think we have sufficient evidence before us to show that this is going to be a payable and successful proposition. The evidence is perfectly clear.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Look at the map.

Mr. MOORE: I am not bothering about the map. That is what they do in the Lands Department. They say, "Look at the map, which shows there are about 80,000 acres of land indicated by a coloured portion on the map." Nobody had been over it, and they opened it up for soldier settlement. That is what they did in the Lands Department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where?

Mr. MOORE: In the Palmerston area.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is not yet designed.

Mr. MOORE: I shall give the evidence of the Under Secretary for Lands himself to show whether it is opened or not. If he gives wrong evidence, it is not my fault. First of all we come to the point as to the area of land which is available. Various persons who have lived in the district—some dairy farmers, one or two land agents, and one hotel-keeper—suggested that there were between 150,000 and 200,000 acres, on which from 1,000 to 2,000 families could be settled. Then Mr. Swain, Director of Forests, was asked—

"By Mr. Collins: You have an idea of the area of the country we are inquiring into?—Yes.

"What is the acreage?—Between the two rivers about 40,000 acres.

"By the Chairman: Would that include the Palmerston area?—That is the Palmerston area as I understand it.

"By Mr. Collins: You base your calculations on a 40,000-acre area?—Yes.

"We have been led to believe that we are inquiring into an area of 186,000 acres. One estimate was that there were 156,000 acres?—I am taking the benefited area between the two rivers. The tramline would only benefit the timber proposition between the two rivers."

Mr. HARTLEY: It is only the benefited area that he is talking about.

Mr. MOORE: The benefited area is the area from which the people can get their produce on to the railway line. Now I come to what Mr. Melville, the Under Secretary for Lands, said, in answer to Mr. Collins—

"The country between the Maalan River and the Walter Hill Range is practically unexplored territory. Are officers from your department carrying out that exploration?—No. We are only inquiring definitely into the country between the two rivers—about 50,000 acres. I take it that later on, if anything is done, they will have to ascertain whether the tramway could be extended

or whether you will have to tap the unexplored country from Liverpool Creek."

"By Mr. Payne: The most important thing to me is: How much of this land will be made available by the building of a tramway or a railway?—The figures I have given are what we estimate. The map shows about 3 miles between the two Johnstones at the nearest point, and at the widest part it is about 6 miles."

There is the evidence as to the area that will be available if this tramway is extended.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you mean to say that you do not believe the evidence given before the Public Works Commission?

Mr. MOORE: I believe the expert evidence that there are about 50,000 acres available, but I say that we should try to get more evidence before we agree to the desirableness of introducing this Bill. The Commission, in their report, say—

"The only thing lacking at present is a means of access to a market, and, although the land in question is exceptionally fertile, there is no possibility of it being selected unless access to a market is made available."

Mr. Witham, teamster and assistant surveyor, was asked by Mr. Cooper—

"Do you think a tramline is the best method of assisting in the rapid settlement of that district?—I think it is the only way to settle it."

Mr. A. J. Crowther, General Manager and Deputy Commissioner of the Northern Railways, was asked by the chairman—

"We have been told that there are about ninety-nine curves on that line. Is that so?—I could not answer that."

"By Mr. Collins: Is the present tramway from Innisfail to Nerada a profitable undertaking?—No."

Mr. R. D. Macgregor, the officer in charge of railways at Innisfail, was asked—

"By the Chairman: Have you anything further to add for or against the proposal to extend the 2-ft. tramway from Nerada to the Little Beatrice River?—I have been connected with the tramways here since 1914, and the business has so increased in that time that I find that the utility of the 2-ft. gauge is exhausted."

The utility of the tramway is exhausted by the traffic up to the present terminus, and now there is a proposal to extend it another 23 miles. It is certainly a most extraordinary proposition.

At 4.15 p.m.,

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

Mr. CONROY: More rolling-stock!

Mr. MOORE: I do not think the hon. member has read the report. Later on Mr. Crowther was asked by the chairman—

"You really do not know much about that country?—No. I can only give evidence as to an extension of the line from Nerada in one regard. The maximum load I can hold with a 2-ft. engine

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is 35 tons, as the grades are too steep, and with an increase of traffic I will not be able to hold greater loads. I want a better line so far as grades are concerned. The present line is far too costly to work."

Then, Mr. Melville was asked—

"By Mr. Collins: Into what areas is it proposed to divide this land?—Possibly 160 acres; 160 acres of good scrub land are quite sufficient for anyone to make a living on.

"Have you any idea of the value to be placed on this land?—It would be loaded for road construction, and, making a guess at it, I should say from £3 to £4 an acre. We have opened up land in the parish of Dirran at £4 an acre."

Mr. Page, a commission agent, was asked by Mr. Payne—

"What do you consider the unimproved value of the land within a radius of 3 miles on each side of the present tramway?—It is not worth £1 an acre, because of the lack of facilities."

Another question put to Mr. Melville was the following by Mr. Collins:—

"It will depend solely on the construction of a tramway or a railway?—It is no use considering that land for selection unless there is access by a tramway or railway. We designed certain areas, and the Public Estate Improvement Branch completed that track and did a little bit of formation. We opened the blocks for about 7 miles fronting the road in question, with the idea of getting these blocks selected in order to keep that road open. There was not a block selected for some considerable time. Then it was set apart for soldier settlement, but nothing was done in regard to soldier settlement. Then it was released from soldier settlement. It was decided, however, to proceed only with the opening of the portions adjacent to the cleared road of 7 miles in length, and on 8th August, 1921, thirty-seven portions, were opened for perpetual lease selection at the Lands Office, Innisfail, for landless men, under personal residence conditions, with priority for discharged soldiers. The portions ranged from 67 to 160 acres in area, the maximum area that a person could select being 165 acres. Two portions were selected, but have since been surrendered. That is the result of our endeavour to settle that land without railway communication."

Mr. Collins also asked Mr. Melville—

"Do I understand you to say that you opened for selection land for a distance of 7 miles from the present terminus at Nerada, and that only two blocks were taken up, and those were subsequently surrendered?—Yes.

"Considering that the land thrown open for selection was within easy access of the present tramway, does that not go to prove that under existing conditions, even with a tramline, there is no demand for land in that locality?—You have to take into consideration that the 7 miles was just a cleared track with very little road formation on it, and there was no dairy or butter factory anywhere in the locality."

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Then Mr. Davies, cane farmer and commission agent, was asked by Mr. Collins—

"How do you account for the low value of the privately owned lands alongside the present tramway to Nerada?—There are no pursuits in which those holding the land can engage through lack of transport and lack of a factory. I speak particularly as to dairying. There is some cane grown along the line, but it is subject to grubs, which detracts from the value of that land as compared to the river flats.

"The means of transport are already there in the shape of a 2-ft. tramway. How is it the land is not put to some use?—There is no industry in which they can engage.

"Is there sufficient land available to warrant the creation of a butter factory?—Yes."

There you have a commission agent saying that the land is worth only £1 an acre alongside the present tramway, although it is of similar quality, and it seems extraordinary that we should be asked to go in for the expenditure of a large sum of money without sufficient information to warrant us in voting for it. Now we come to the question of the timber, as to which the Commission say—

"It is estimated that the area carries about 4,000 superficial feet of timber per acre, including silky oak, maple, and other valuable scrub timbers. Mr. Witham, teamster and assistant surveyor, who stated that he had been over the greater portion of the Palmerston lands, estimated that the profit from the timber would be nearly sufficient to pay for the construction of the tramway."

Mr. Witham was asked by Mr. Collins—

"Would that be so if the Government took the timber off?—It would be a paying proposition for them. I would certainly like to have the proposition. If you gave me all the timber at its commercial value I could remove it, and I think I could nearly pay for the tramline and the construction of a road out of the profit.

"Do I understand you to say that the value of the timber on the Palmerston area would pay for the construction of a tramline?—It is only a rough estimate of mine, but I should say it would.

"By Mr. Cooper: By that you mean the profit after expenses were paid?—Yes. Of course that is a matter that wants going into properly. It is only a rough estimate."

On the same point Mr. Swain, Director of Forests, was asked by the chairman—

"Have you got any statement prepared showing the timber resources?—I would like to explain that the ordinary procedure in timber estimating by the Forestry Department is to establish a series of survey camps over the area and actually make a local estimate. That estimate is now in the course of preparation, and the evidence that I can give on the timber resources is only approximate. The area affected by the tramway, so far as the timber resources are concerned, is between the North and South Johnstone Rivers. That is an area of

jungle country which was more or less knocked about by the 1918 cyclone."

Mr. Swain, continuing his evidence, says—

"There is on that land maple, silky oak, white beach, black bean, red bean, walnut, brown oak, silver beech, water gum, and many other odds and ends of so-called scrub timbers, some of which may or may not have a marketable value. The proportion of maple and silky oak is rather low in relation to the ordinary jungle country of the North, and consequently from a timber point of view it has a lower value than most other areas. So far as we can estimate there are probably 4,000 superficial feet of timber per acre and probably 160,000,000 superficial feet on the whole area between the two rivers. The value of the timber or the possibility of marketing it depends on the price obtainable in the market as against the cost of cutting, hauling, loading, and freighting. So far as I can calculate there are only three kinds that we can market profitably—maple, silky oak, and white beech. At present the entire quantity of 160,000,000 superficial feet is utterly valueless because it has no market value.

"What class of timber is at present of no value?—I have with me some samples of timber to illustrate the class of timber that is growing in that area. They will convey a better impression to the Commission than mere names. The first sample is walnut or black mahogany, which is one of the most abundant timbers on that area. We estimate that there are about 30,000,000 superficial feet of walnut. With a 2-foot tramway the cost of marketing per 100 superficial feet f.o.b. would be approximately 17s. 2d., and the estimated market value per 100 superficial feet f.o.b. is 16s., showing a loss of 1s. 2d. by marketing."

There was evidence given that the value of the timber was going to pay for the cost of construction of the tram line, and here we have Mr. Swain saying that he is going to lose 1s. 2d. per 100 superficial feet when marketing.

Mr. COLLINS: Not on all of it.

Mr. MOORE: No.

The PREMIER: We are going to make it marketable. Unless we attempt to market it, it will never have any marketable value.

Mr. MOORE: Mr. Swain continues—

"How much maple?—Two hundred superficial feet per acre over the whole area."

We have evidence from Mr. Witham, teamster and assistant surveyor, who has been all over the area. He says in his statement:—

"The Palmerston area is well timbered with maple, about 1,000 superficial feet per acre; bull oak, 2,000 superficial feet per acre; Putt's pine, water gum, ash, black and yellow walnut, quandong, gitto, kauri pine, black bean, and crowfoot elm. It is a very hard matter to estimate timber apart from maple and bull oak as they mostly grow in patches."

Apparently he classes silky oak as bull oak.

Mr. McGregor, the officer in charge of railways at Innisfail, gave this evidence—

"116. By Mr. Collins: Do you have any

difficulty on the present 2-foot gauge in hauling log timber?—Timber traffic is a very dangerous traffic on a 2-foot gauge system. We have to take these logs on bogies which have no continuous draw gear. These bogies are set to take timber of various lengths—8 feet to 10 feet. On the present tramway there are ninety-nine 3-chain curves between Currajah and Nerada, a distance of 16 miles 67 chains. A number of these curves could be eliminated and haulage made much easier, and we could do some regrading, which would simplify the hauling of logs.

"117. Even if an extension were made from Nerada to the Little Beatrice River you would not be able to bring very big loads from the present terminus into Innisfail?—Thirty-five tons is the heaviest load we can carry on that line at the present time.

"118. That would be a very serious handicap in the hauling of these 100,000,000 super. feet of timber?—Yes."

I should think that it would be a very serious handicap when you are only able to take 35 tons at a time. Then we come to the question of the quality of the soil, and whether it is suitable for settlement. Mr. Wirth, licensed waterman at Innisfail, said that the soil was rich red volcanic soil, extending right to the top of the hills. He further said that there was no place in Australia that would carry so many stock per acre. His evidence went to show that that country, when put under exotic grasses, would carry at least one beast to the acre all the year round. Mr. J. L. Callaghan, an official of the Lands Department, said that the country was essentially suitable for dairying. He continues—

"313. By the Chairman: Dairying only?—He just mentioned dairying. Speaking personally, it seems to me to be suitable for any class of agriculture.

"314. Have you any knowledge as to how the country is watered?—The country is watered by the Johnstone River and innumerable creeks and streams.

"315. By Mr. Collins: Have you any record of the rainfall in that particular belt of country that you have described?—No. I do not think so. It is always understood that that country has a very heavy rainfall."

Mr. McHugh, farmer and hotel proprietor, residing at Millaa Millaa, was asked—

"Do you know what is the average rainfall for that district?—The rainfall is about 80 to 90 inches a year."

The PREMIER: They have no correct record, because the gauge always overflows.

Mr. MOORE: Mr. McHugh said that there was no record of the rainfall in those parts available, but he would say that the yearly average was about 150 inches. What I am complaining of is the lack of correct information. When we are asked to vote a good deal of money towards a land settlement scheme, which to my mind is going to be of problematical benefit, we should have absolutely correct information. I want to know whether the rainfall is 80 inches, 90 inches, or 150 inches. There seems to be nothing accurate.

The PREMIER: It is the wettest part of Australia.

Mr. Moore.]



Mr. MOORE: Mr. Worth, licensed waterman at Innisfail, in further evidence, was asked—

“99. By Mr. Ryan: Do you know the nature of the country on either side of the track we traversed?—Yes. It is very undulating, but it is not inaccessible. It is suitable for grazing purposes, as it is similar to the country around Millaa Millaa and Malanda, where the settlers are engaged in dairying chiefly. There are flats along the watercourses which are eminently suitable for agricultural purposes, but in this tropical climate, where the rainfall is so heavy, it is a waste of time to attempt to cultivate the sloping land, because if you did so the heavy rain would wash the soil all away. The proper place for cultivation is on the flats. As regard the undulating land, there is none better in any part of the world for grazing purposes. There is no place in Australia that will carry so many stock per acre. The authorities here seriously state that that country will carry two and a-half beasts to the acre all the year round, or ten sheep to the acre. That is heavy grazing.”

I could tell him that is heavy grazing.

Mr. HARTLEY: You have not been anywhere but on the Darling Downs.

Mr. MOORE: Mr. Page, a member of the Johnstone Shire Council, commission agent, and secretary to the Butter Factory Company, gave this evidence—

“Would it be necessary to sow grass here?—Yes, I think it will be necessary to have permanent pastures. There is sufficient land available, which at present is only growing seed grass, to warrant the erection of a butter factory at Wangan straight away, and it would help to settle the lands beyond Nerada. Whereas, if a butter factory were erected in the Palmerston, it would be four or five years before you would get any return. If erected at Wangan you would get an immediate return. The farmers on the Tableland are unloading a certain number of culls, and there would be no difficulty in the whole of that area being converted into a closer settlement area if we had communication. At the present time you can only see sugar, but to settle that land properly you must also have dairying, pig-raising, and maize-growing.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is provision in the Bill to prevent them from unloading their culls.

Mr. MOORE: I am only quoting the evidence that was given before this Commission. Mr. Callaghan gives this further evidence—

“323. The fact that there is a party investigating as to what is a living area, presupposes the fact that the department is satisfied that the land is suitable for the purpose indicated?—It is suitable for opening up for selection and possibly dairying. The department has information that it is suitable for dairying. The height of the country makes it suitable for dairying. Several reports indicate that the country is very similar to the Beatrice River country, where the dairying industry is at present established.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He is a Brisbane official.

[Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE: They were all stationed in the North at one time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What about the Premier and myself, who have been over this land?

Mr. MOORE: Why did you not give evidence?

The PREMIER: We shall give evidence here.

Mr. MOORE: Crown Lands Ranger Arnold in his report said—

“In character, this land is all dense scrub with some very nice flats and widespread mounds, from which it changes into undulating and very steep country, with occasional patches of stony land. The soil chiefly is red and chocolate with fairly large tracts of clayish nature, and also granite outcrops with but shallow soil.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What is wrong with that country? It is the same as the Millaa Millaa country.

Mr. MOORE: There is nothing very much wrong with it. If you are going to clear the timber off the land and grow grasses, the first heavy rain that comes along on the top of the granite will wash that off the soil.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you think it is all like that?

Mr. MOORE: No. Ranger Arnold reports—

“The soil chiefly is red and chocolate, with fairly large tracts of clayish nature, and also granite outcrops, with but shallow soil.”

That is the report of your own ranger, and that is the report we have to go on. Mr. Callaghan gives this further evidence—

“We propose to open it up under a special land settlement scheme. The country is dense jungle, and cyclone devastated. Special conditions will be required to settle that country. The department has been considering that scheme for some time. One of the vital points in connection with the matter is the communication with the port—Innisfail.”

The PREMIER: It was devastated in the 1918 cyclone.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Would you abandon Cairns and Innisfail altogether?

Mr. MOORE: I am not talking about that. I am talking about this evidence, and whether this land should be opened up for settlement. Mr. Page gives this further evidence—

“Would there be any loss from ticks?—I do not think the ticks would do any harm at all. If the cows are kept washed they would be free. The danger would be from straying cattle, which are of no value.”

Mr. Callaghan said that the flats were very rich and the hills were fit for grazing. I want to know whether it will be possible for the people to get their produce from the flats to the tramline when it is constructed? Mr. Callaghan was asked that question, and he said he had no information whatever and could not say until the report came in from the surveyor. He said he did not know where the tramline was to go. Surely, when we are considering the question of land settlement, we ought to have information as to whether it is possible, when the people take up the rich lands on the flats, that they will be able to get their produce to the tramline when it

is built. The evidence, so far as I can see in the report, goes to show that a 2-foot tramline in this area is unsuitable and will not carry the traffic. We have no information to show whether the people will be able to get to it when it is built. We know that the tramline at present extends to Nerada, and there is land on both sides of that line equal in quality to the land which is proposed to be settled, which is to-day being offered at 15s. and 30s. an acre, and is not being taken.

At 4.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MOORE: We also have evidence to show that the Government opened the land to selection within 7 miles of the terminus after making a road from the Public Service Improvement Fund, and that even then only two blocks were taken up, to be subsequently forfeited. Is it any use building a tramway to open up lands for settlement when the people who are already settled there cannot dispose of their produce? What is wanted is the establishment of a butter factory at Malanda first to see if they can make a success of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are making a success of it at Millaa Millaa, where they are producing for a butter factory.

Mr. MOORE: I am not talking about that. Why not build a butter factory at the centre where the people are settled now? The evidence shows that the land is available there at 15s. or £1 an acre, and even then the settlers cannot make a living. It is on that evidence that the House is asked to pass this resolution to make provision for the extension of the tramline.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Public Works Commission has been over it.

Mr. COLLINS: That is the evidence. Read the report.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where was that evidence taken—in the Lands Office, Brisbane.

Mr. MOORE: No; a great deal of it was taken up in the district.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A great deal of that evidence you were reading was given by officers in Brisbane.

Mr. MOORE: No; I think the evidence was taken from two officers in that district, and the people in that district. Mr. McHugh and Mr. Worth were living in that district.

The PREMIER: No; not one person whose evidence you have read lived in that area.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Mr. McHugh lives at Millaa Millaa, and Mr. Worth at Innisfail.

Mr. MOORE: Mr. Davis and Mr. Jurd live just on the edge of it. You went up to take evidence from them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Their evidence is worthless.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman is trying to make out that the evidence of these people is absolutely worthless, yet it is on their evidence that the Commission recommended that the tramline be extended beyond Nerada.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The evidence of Mr. Jurd and Mr. Davis is favourable; so is Mr. McHugh's.

Mr. MOORE: Their evidence naturally is favourable to getting the line built in the district, because they want to get a lot of

people to go up there. The business people naturally gave their evidence freely and favourably. I believe the evidence was given in good faith, but it is on their evidence that the Commission is making the report. We should have more evidence before us of the suitability of this land for the purposes intended. No one can point out to me that there is any evidence of this suitability. On the contrary, everything points the other way. We should have some evidence to show that the people can get to the tramline when it is built. We happen to have a report submitted by the Public Works Commission, whose duty it is to sift the evidence and say whether it is suitable or not, and apparently the Minister regards it as unsuitable, for he says it is worthless. That is all the House has to go on. Probably the Minister, from his own experience, may know that country, but very few people have gone over it. Its use is all a matter of conjecture, and it is such a dense jungle that the surveyor says it takes three good brush men and himself a day to clear 15 chains.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Five or 6 miles on the Beatrice River side you get the finest dairying land in Australia.

Mr. MOORE: You must remember the broken country that has to be travelled over to reach the 2-foot tramway, and the evidence of the Railway Commissioner, who says the usefulness of the existing tramline is exhausted, because it cannot cope with the traffic. You have also evidence that land of similar quality is offering at 15s. to £1 per acre, and is not taken up.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The 2-foot tramline will serve the richest district in the North.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister is talking of country on one side of the line, which is suitable for sugar-growing, whereas this land is not.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): The hon. member for Aubigny, in criticising the proposal, is apparently quite unfamiliar with the conditions of the North. I do not know whether the hon. member has been in this district, or whether he has been in North Queensland at all. If he has not, it places him at a serious disadvantage in considering a proposal of this kind. I am satisfied that any hon. member of this House who knows the district will have no hesitation whatever in believing that such a settlement scheme will be a success.

Mr. MOORE: No one seems to know; that is what I am complaining of.

The PREMIER: The hon. member does not seem to know. If the hon. member, or any hon. members of the Opposition, are willing to go to North Queensland, I am willing to put facilities at their disposal to take them through this area.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Every hon. member on this side of the House who represents a constituency north of Townsville knows this area, and has been through it. This country is a continuation of the same class of country as you pass through from Malanda to Millaa Millaa, and then goes down undulating country to the coast at Innisfail. The character of the country changes as it gets

*Hon. E. G. Theodore.]*

nearer the coast. The reason why the country in the vicinity of Innisfail has not been taken up for dairying is because everyone around Innisfail goes in for sugar-growing. There is no butter factory at Innisfail. It was absurd for the Lands Department to open the seven blocks near Nerada as suitable for dairying when no butter factory existed. There has been agitation proceeding for the last two or three years around Innisfail to get a butter factory, but the promoters cannot get support because everyone there grows cane. At Millaa Millaa, where there is a similar class of country—broken country—men are carrying on dairying under the most favourable conditions in Queensland, and are supplying the Atherton butter factory. The present dairying land settled around Millaa Millaa goes to the Beatrice River area, extends to 6 miles beyond the existing rail head at Millaa Millaa, and every block has been taken up. Across the Beatrice we come to this country known as the Palmerston area, similar in respect of natural water, the undulating nature of the country, heavy jungle, and other conditions as the country around Millaa Millaa. It has not been taken up as, because of the dense jungle, it has not been surveyed. This land is too far away from Millaa Millaa for the department to think of throwing it open for selection, and expect selectors to take produce to Millaa Millaa, because the nature of the country would add to the cost of transport. It would be unreasonable to place settlers there without giving them access to the land. The hon. member for Aubigny criticised this proposal to open up this area, extensive as it is, so highly productive, and containing so much timber, mainly on the ground that it ought to be served with a tramline of 3 feet 6 inches gauge. That argument might be raised, but the objection is that, if that is done, it will defer the opening of the land for years because of the enormous expense involved in building such a railway. The line from Malanda to Millaa Millaa cost over £15,000 a mile for a 3 feet 6 inches gauge. This 2-foot line will follow the spurs from Nerada toward the Beatrice River, and the survey of the Railway Department shows that the cost will not be more than one-fourth as much as a 3 feet 6 inches railway from Millaa Millaa—probably less than that—and a 2-foot line will serve the necessities of the district for twenty years or more. Later, when that district is fully settled and highly producing, whatever Government is then in office will eventually have to consider the construction of a 3 feet 6 inches line from Millaa Millaa to Mourilyan Harbour, a distance of a little over 40 miles. It would be absurd to consider the extension of the Millaa Millaa line down through that area and compel all the produce to go through Millaa Millaa to Tolga and then on to Cairns, over 100 miles away. There will be a tremendously heavy timber traffic from that area, and the line will also serve the interests of 800 or perhaps more settlers when they are fully producing. Everyone must recognise the futility of postponing the construction of the line for twenty years, and then starting a broader gauge line, allowing the land to lie idle all that time.

The hon. member for Aubigny says that we have not sufficient information and that there is a certain vagueness about the proposal. We have ten times more information

[*Hon. E. G. Theodore.*]

in regard to this Palmerston area than the Denham Government had in connection with a similar proposal. At the time when the Denham Administration proposed to build a line from Tolga towards Malanda, the country was all jungle, and you could not get through except by pack track to Boar Pocket—now Yungaburra. However, the Government took the chance and risk, and authorised the construction of the railway from Tolga to Malanda. The same thing applied when they extended the line to Millaa Millaa.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It is quite evident that they did some very good things.

The PREMIER: Yes; a few good things, and some queer ones. Before they got approval to construct the railway from Tolga they actually opened up land for settlement at Millaa Millaa, 23 miles away from Tolga, and Harvey Jurd was one of the settlers who went there thirteen years ago on the definite promise that the Government would complete the railway; he was left there in the heart of the jungle waiting for it to come.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He was not the only one.

The PREMIER: No, there were many more. The Denham Administration went on with the extension of the line from Malanda to Millaa Millaa with no more information as to the land or the cost of the line, or anything else than we have in regard to the Palmerston lands. It is absurd to say that no such development should take place until surveyed roads are made. If we proceeded on those lines, we should have no development in North Queensland. Although it is not possible for anyone to go over the whole of that area because the jungle is so dense, it is not necessary to go over the whole area to appreciate its immense extent, its great richness, fertility, and suitability for dairying. The idea that because a tract of the land around Nerada cannot be used for cane-growing, it should condemn the Palmerston area, is due to a lack of knowledge of local conditions. You will find areas of red soil right along in the vicinity of Nerada and along the South Johnstone tramlines—land that is not suitable for cane-growing and is not being used for dairying because the holders of land, wherever suitable, cultivate cane and do not trouble about dairying.

This Palmerston area is not suitable for cane; it is on rising country, 600 feet and upwards above sea level. It is red soil and subject to grubs and so unsuitable for cane-growing. However, it is eminently suitable for dairying. Some of the evidence said that the country would carry at least a beast to the acre, and that is what exactly similar country around Malanda is carrying to-day.

I can assure hon. members that the Government are not taking any risk whatever in going on with this land settlement scheme in North Queensland. It is only by adopting a bold land policy of this kind that the land will be settled reasonably and give the settler a chance. It is no use opening the land and allowing settlers to struggle along and lead a miserable existence for twenty years, as was done in the old days. We want to deal with the whole scheme as a comprehensive land settlement proposition.

There is no one who knows the district who can doubt that the scheme will be a success, and I think the Government are well justified in going ahead with it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I think the object in circulating reports and attaching to them evidence which is given before a Commission is to give hon. members on both sides of the House an opportunity of being in the same position as those hon. members who belong to the Commission, that is, to give them first-hand evidence. Possibly, had the evidence just given by the Premier appeared in print, we might have put a different construction on the report than we have done to-day.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows that the Commission went and personally saw the land.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not see how the Commission could have seen it. The evidence is that the country is unexplored.

The PREMIER: You can make a pretty good guess as to the quality of the soil. There is a road through the country from Nerada to Millaa Millaa. I have ridden over it myself.

Mr. VOWLES: I am not disputing the quality of the soil. There is a large sum of money being invested in railway construction, and we want to see the best results got out of the expenditure of public money. I am at a loss to know how the Commission could come to a conclusion such as they have here on the evidence that is attached to their report.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The railway proposal is not involved in this Bill.

Mr. VOWLES: I know it is not. The evidence contained in this report is most unsatisfactory, and evidently the Minister in charge of the Bill is of that opinion because, replying to the hon. member for Aubigny, he said that some statement he made was not in keeping with the evidence given. I know that on occasions of this kind you get a man of the very best character, who has a knowledge of the locality, to come before the Commission and give first-hand evidence of what he himself knows. The most remarkable thing in connection with the evidence is that the first witness is a publican. No doubt he has interests which he desires to see advanced. When you examine his evidence you will see that it is all hearsay. All he says is that he believes the country to be so and so because someone told him. Then we have the evidence of two commission agents, who may have a personal interest in the district.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why involve the land settlement scheme with the railway proposal? The report of the Public Works Commission is not a report on my scheme at all.

Mr. VOWLES: It is pretty much the same thing; the justification for the one is the justification for the other. We are told that the land is of no value without the railway.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Would you have us open up the land without a railway? Do you know that the Country party advocated the same scheme in North Queensland?

Mr. VOWLES: I am not dealing with the merits of the scheme at all, but I strongly object to the Commission bringing forward evidence such as is contained here in justification of their action when the evidence is contrary to their finding.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member is not going to start a discussion on the

merits or demerits of the proposed railway. He would be in order in referring to it in passing, but not in discussing it at length.

Mr. VOWLES: I say that the land settlement scheme is dependent on the railway, because the land without railway communication is useless. If you look at the evidence of the whole of these experts, you will find it is contradictory. In many cases they are speaking from hearsay or departmental reports, and the whole thing is very unsatisfactory. If we are going to be asked to consent to the desirableness of certain legislation, we should be given all the first-hand evidence available. Even in this report you will find that Mr. Sexton is asked about certain evidence that is not in his possession, and he says it is not to be got. We have not got the benefit of that report. All I can assume is that, if these reports are circulated they are being circulated for a purpose. If the findings of the Commission are against the weight of evidence contained in this report, then we should get the benefit of their evidence, and more particularly the evidence of men like the Premier and of the Minister in charge of this Bill, who say they have a personal knowledge of the area, and being members of the Cabinet, they possibly had a good deal to do with deciding on the introduction of this legislation. Their evidence should be on record. They should give us the benefit of their information, and not give information here in Parliament after a discussion has been started which should have been given before the Public Works Commission.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): As one of the members of the Commission who went through this country, I have no hesitation in saying, as a native of Australia, that I have never seen a richer area of country in any part of Australia. The hon. member for Aubigny tried to make a point because the land alongside the existing tramway can be bought for £1 an acre. We were told—he will find it in evidence, too—that, if the owners of that land could get a contract from the sugar-mills to grow cane, which can be grown successfully on these areas, the price would immediately jump up to £8 or £10 an acre. The trouble is that, with a lot of the land along the existing tramway—some of it is very good and some not so good—nothing can be done with the product that can be grown on it. A considerable portion of it will grow cane, but the mills already established in the district have sufficient cane to crush and are not able to take any more; that is the whole trouble. A lot of the land is first-class dairying land; but there is no butter factory in the district, and there are no means to enable the selector or farmer to dispose of his produce. It is perfectly true, from all the evidence we could obtain, that every inch of this area has not been explored or has not been gone over.

Mr. VOWLES: You do not know whether there are 100,000 acres or 200,000 acres.

Mr. PAYNE: Yes, we do. If the hon. member will go to the trouble of looking at the map attached to the report he will find that this area of country lies between the North and South Johnstone rivers. The evidence went to show that on each side of the Johnstone River there are known to be first-class scrub flats. He will find, too, that the evidence taken at Jordan Creek, some 16 miles from Nerada, proves beyond all

*Mr. Payne.]*

doubt that there are at least 180,000 acres of land situated between those two rivers that will be served by the building of this tramway. It is perfectly true that the whole area has not been fully explored; but I have no hesitation in saying—I have no axe to grind one way or the other—that it is the most fertile area I have ever seen in Australia. There is a tropical scrub running from Innisfail right away through Nerada, Jordan Creek, on to Millaa Millaa, and on to Tolga and Atherton. The Government have nothing at all to lose in opening up this country so long as they do it in the right way. It is not a bit of good the Government building a tramline and settling the people on the land unless they also erect a butter factory in the district. The whole trouble is that there are no means of dealing with the product that can be grown. If there was an assurance that a butter factory would be erected in Innisfail to-morrow, I guarantee that that land, which the hon. member for Aubigny said could be obtained for £1 an acre, would immediately increase in price by several pounds per acre. The land has been lying there for years and years. People will not go on it to cultivate it or produce butter because they cannot get rid of their product. That is the whole trouble.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): It seems a great pity, after the evidence that we have had from the Premier and a member of the Commission, that the Committee has not been favoured with further information. The hon. member for Mitchell has stated that it is the most fertile area of country he has ever seen. Yet we find Crown Lands Ranger Arnold, in reporting on it, says—

“In character this land is all dense scrub, with some very nice flats and wide-spread mounds, from which it changes into undulating and very steep country, with occasional patches of stony land. The soil is chiefly red and chocolate, with fairly large tracts of a clayish nature, and also granite outcrops with but shallow soil.”

If that is so, it can hardly be said to be the finest country in the world.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: All country has patches of stony ground.

Mr. CORSER: I am not going to say that it is not all fertile, but we have not got the evidence of it, nor did the Commission secure such evidence.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Did you ever see tropical jungle that is not fertile?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman has heard what the Crown lands ranger reported—

“There is a considerable area of clayish soil.”

While the Opposition desire the opening up of our best land for settlement, they do not want to find afterwards that the settlers are in a bad position owing to land being made available that is not fit for settlement. That is the position we, as an Opposition, have to consider, and it is our duty to ascertain from the evidence if the land is what it is claimed to be by the Minister introducing this Bill. We have a Public Works Commission. They made their inquiries, which do not bear out those things which are claimed to be the fact. That is what we disagree with. The hon. member

[*Mr. Payne.*

for Mitchell referred to the statements of the leader of the Country party. The statements of the leader of the Country party were taken from the report.

Mr. PAYNE: I pointed out why that land could be bought so cheaply.

Mr. CORSER: If that land is so cheap, how are the Government going to get £4 an acre for the land above it? It is claimed that no member of the Opposition has seen this area of land. I cannot claim to have seen it, but I have seen the Atherton Tableland, and if it is as good as the Atherton Tableland, why does not the evidence say so? It would be very easy to bring in a good report of the Atherton Tableland.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The scrub is cleared on the Atherton Tableland.

Mr. CORSER: The whole of the Atherton Tableland is not cleared. We know, when the railway to Atherton was being brought forward, that the report did not leave in the minds of the Opposition any doubts as to the fertility of the soil.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Didn't it? There is plenty of bad land there, too.

Mr. CORSER: Not in the scrub; and there was very valuable timber on the land. We heard of some trees being of a very high value, and that one selector secured £300 for one tree. That is the most valuable tree I ever heard of there.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We are not promising any more for the trees on the Palmerston area.

Mr. CORSER: However, the royalty is so high that I do not know that the selector got such a good thing out of it. The Minister claims that the railway proposal is not involved in this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I did not claim that. I said that this railway proposal ought to be discussed when it is before the House. It is not in this Bill.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister said, “It is not involved in this Bill.” Those were his words, and I wrote them down.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Because you wrote them down, I said it. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: Yes; you will find that that is correct. I claim that the railway proposal is involved in this Bill, because we are not going to open up land there if we are not going to look ahead. We know that the railway is involved if we open up [5 p.m.] these lands. While I quite agree that it is possible that these lands may be better than they are claimed to be by the Premier and others, we are sorry that the evidence does not show it, and that the experts of the department have not been able to gather information which would enable the Opposition to give a unanimous support to the Bill without first having to drag information from Ministers.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have listened very attentively to the criticism of the Opposition in reference to this motion for leave to introduce a Bill with a view to opening up the Palmerston lands. I claim with other hon. members of the Public Works Commission to have gained a fairly wide experience of Queensland during the last five years. We have visited portions of Queensland, and have had an opportunity of seeing how people there lived. We have had an oppor-

tunity of seeing the land on which they get their livelihood. I have been over a great part of the Commonwealth, and I have no hesitation in saying that there is no richer part in the whole of the Commonwealth than the land from Innisfail to Tolga, which covers a distance of 100 miles. While the opinion of some witnesses may be contrary to the decision arrived at by the Public Works Commission, it is the duty of the Commission to examine witnesses and try to get at the truth, and we have done that. We journeyed over a large extent of the jungle to Jordan Creek, and in order to get further information we went round by way of Cairns to Millaa Millaa, so that we might have an opportunity of seeing what the country was like when it was clear of the jungle. We were perfectly satisfied after we had seen Millaa Millaa that the country we had passed over, which was clothed with jungle, was similar country to that around Millaa Millaa. There is no doubt that the Country party know very little indeed about the country lands in Queensland. We were told at Millaa Millaa that out of 400 selections there 393 had permanent water. How many places in Queensland are there where you could survey land into 160-acre blocks, and out of 400 blocks only have two without permanent water? There are very few parts in the civilised world, in my opinion, that are so rich as the land we are now dealing with. The Public Works Commission were quite justified in the report which they brought in. I have not heard an hon. member quote a single word from the report, but they have quoted from the evidence. We realise that without the railways, and without the Government doing something to create markets for the products which would be raised on that land, it would be no use opening it up. Therefore, the Government are going in the right direction in opening up one of the most fertile tracts of land in Queensland, or in the whole of the Commonwealth, and in outlining a scheme of settlement which is going to be of benefit, not only to North Queensland but to the whole of the State. We hear from time to time about the wonderful success of the Italians in North Queensland. The reason why they are successful is because they are in one of the most fertile places on God's earth. If they were in places where the hon. member for Cunningham comes from—where they have a scanty rainfall and have to contend with the elements all the time—they would not be so successful. This is the place where settlement ought to take place. It is a pity that, when settlement first took place, it was not begun in that portion of the State where Nature has been so kind, where there is splendid soil and a good rainfall, and where you are within reach of tidal waters. The land at Millaa Millaa attains an elevation of 2,700 feet above sea-level, and you have all kinds of climate in that region, and can grow all kinds of crops. It is a land such as is described by Prescott in his histories of Mexico and Peru. It is one of the most fertile parts of Queensland or of the Commonwealth, and the Government are doing the right thing in introducing this measure.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) presented the Bill, and moved—

“That the Bill be now read a first time.”

Question put and passed.

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

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER FOR THIRD READING.

On the Order of the Day being called for the 3rd reading of this Bill,

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*) said: I move—

“That this Order of the Day be discharged from the paper, and the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 6 and 7.”

Question put and passed.

RECOMMittal.

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

Clause 6—“*Amendment of section 8—Provisions as to awards*”—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move the insertion, after the word “calling” in line 48, page 2, of the words—

“in or in connection with any workshop, factory, or warehouse.”

I propose to make further amendments in this clause, which it will be remembered was the subject of a good deal of discussion when the Bill was in Committee. I proposed at that time to amend the subclause I am now referring to, but, owing to the fact that an amendment which had been moved to delete the whole of it had been defeated, it was impossible for me to make then the alterations which I desired. I then moved further amendments with a view to achieving my object, but on a full consideration of the clause I have decided to recommit it, with clause 7, with a view to altering it in such a way as to do away with the necessity for the amendments I made in Committee and to express better the desires of the Government. The clause as amended will read—

“Section eight of the principal Act is amended as follows:—

(a) After subsection (viii.) the following subsection is inserted:—

(viiiA.) Ordering that where an award has fixed a starting time and a ceasing time for employees engaged in any calling in or in connection with any workshop, factory, or warehouse, it shall not be lawful for any person to work at such calling outside of such fixed hours, subject, however, to such exemption as the court in such award may determine.”

It was pointed out on the previous occasion that the intention of this clause was to prevent what is known as unfair trading. It was held by some members of the Committee that the clause was framed in such a way as to prevent farmers and others from engaging in necessary enterprises in the conduct of their own businesses. I pointed out on that

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occasion that that was not so, but, with a view to allaying their fears on the matter, I made certain additions to the subclause. It will be seen that the clause, as redrafted in the way I have indicated, will dissipate all such fears from the minds of hon. members, whilst at the same time the purpose of the Government will be achieved—that is, the prevention of what is known as unfair competition.

Amendment (*Mr. Smith*) agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I now move the insertion, after the word "hours" in line 50, page 2, of the words:—

"or to engage or be engaged outside such hours in or in connection with the production for sale of any articles ordinarily produced in such calling."

This carries out the purpose I have already indicated, and the paragraph will then read—

"Ordering that where an award has fixed a starting time and a ceasing time for employees engaged in any calling in or in connection with any workshop, factory or warehouse, it shall not be lawful for any such person to work at such calling outside of such fixed hours or to engage or be engaged outside such hours in or in connection with the production for sale of any articles ordinarily produced in such calling, subject, however, to such exemption as the court in such award may determine."

Amendment (*Mr. Smith*) agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I move the omission of lines 53 to 55, inclusive, on page 2, and lines 1 to 6, inclusive, on page 3. The amendments already carried do away with the necessity for that proviso.

Mr. VOWLES (*Daiby*): I just rise to point out to the Minister the desirableness of circulating such amendments as he is moving. As a matter of fact, only one of two members on this side have any knowledge of them. I take it from his explanation that they merely put the clause in a different phraseology, and, so far as I can see, the clause as amended will make provision for the exclusion of work of any kind other than work in a workshop, factory, or warehouse from the provisions as to starting and ceasing time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is so, subject, however, to the provisions of the Act generally.

Mr. VOWLES: If that is so, I think there can be no objection.

Amendment (*Mr. Smith*) agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 7—"Amendment of section 10—Directions to be observed by court and by boards"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I move the omission, from line 20, page 3, of the words, "second paragraph of proviso," with a view to inserting the words, "first proviso to paragraph."

Amendment (*Mr. Smith*) agreed to.

Clause 7, as amended, put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with further amendments.

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

[*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*]

## LIQUOR ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

### COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"Short title and construction of Act"—put and passed.

Clause 2—"Amendment of section 44—Billiard and bagatelle licenses."

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I would like an expression of opinion from the Home Secretary as to whether it is possible to make some discrimination in the regulations affecting wine shops and hotel bars. I understand that clause 2 deals with the regulation of hours. We recognise that special regulations can be made with regard to billiard or bagatelle licenses. We know that wine shops also sell fruit and other things. From my experience, the wine shops have been growing up like mushrooms during the last few years in Queensland and have been appearing on every street corner. I want to know if the 8 o'clock closing will be applied to the wine shops as well as hotels.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. KERR: I think we might reasonably discriminate in the regulation of hours affecting wine shops and hotel premises. From my experience, the wine bars in Australia to-day are becoming a menace. From the result of my inquiries I am convinced that they have become the rendezvous of harlots, where appointments are made at various times. When one enters a wine saloon he finds small rooms enclosed, and the environment is against the best principles of public welfare.

The HOME SECRETARY: This clause only deals with billiard and bagatelle rooms.

Mr. KERR: It affects both licensed victuallers' premises and wine saloons.

The HOME SECRETARY: Having billiard or bagatelle licenses.

Mr. KERR: Yes, and also with regard to the hours prescribed. These wine saloons are an incentive in a certain direction to a certain class of people.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want to prevent the hon. gentleman from raising the question in which he is interested, but I think it can be dealt with on clause 6. I would like to point out to him that he cannot continue unless he indicates that he is going to move an amendment, and even then I do not think such an amendment will be in order.

The HOME SECRETARY: This clause deals with billiard and bagatelle licenses.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not wish to deprive the hon. member for Enoggera of the opportunity of discussing the matter in which he is interested.

Mr. KERR: I quite understand that. In Committee sometimes an explanation from the Minister in charge of the Bill saves a good deal of trouble, and I am asking for that information.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman will be quite in order in asking for the information.

Mr. KERR: I am asking the Home Secretary whether some discrimination cannot be made in the regulations affecting the hours in connection with wine shops and hotel premises where they both have billiard-rooms.

The wine shops are becoming a menace and the rendezvous of people of undesirable character. They are being utilised for that purpose in all parts of Australia. They cloak a good deal of wrongdoing in this city. I think the Home Secretary would be well advised to agree with my suggestion.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): There is one point I would like the Home Secretary to clear up. This clause says that the persons who are to be protected are those who go to the rooms for the purpose of playing billiards or bagatelle. If I had no intention of playing and I went with a friend to watch him playing, according to the reading of this clause I would be unlawfully on licensed premises.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. You are there to take part in a game later on. You are awaiting your turn.

Mr. VOWLES: But supposing I have no intention of playing—that I am a non-player and I merely go to watch my friend play—I could, strictly speaking, be prosecuted for being unlawfully in that licensed billiard-room which is attached to the hotel premises.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Act will be reasonably administered.

Mr. VOWLES: I know that it would be stretching the law; but still I have seen the law stretched on many matters and on many occasions. When the Liquor Act of 1912 first came into force there was a great desire on the part of country policemen to make things as uncomfortable as they could for the public. I remember an instance of a man coming in 17 miles on a pumper for the purpose of going to the hospital to see his wife. He was not allowed to go to the hotel for the purpose of having his dinner because, according to the reading of the law by the policeman, he would be unlawfully on licensed premises. There was another case where a man kept his racehorse in a stall on licensed premises. He had to feed that horse every morning, and for that purpose he had to go into the hotel yard. He was stopped by the policeman and told that he could not go in and feed his horse because he would be unlawfully on licensed premises. I remember a case in which I was personally interested, where I helped a friend to push a vehicle into a hotel yard opposite a blacksmith's premises. The policeman came along and ordered the blacksmith off the premises because it was Sunday afternoon. Sometimes you will find policemen who will come into a billiard-room and make the public carry out the strict letter of the law. I would like, for the benefit of the future, to let the public know that, if a man is not going to play billiards and only goes for the purpose of watching the game or being with a friend and watching him play, and is there for no other purpose, he will not come within the pale of the law and will not be liable to prosecution.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Clause 3—"Amendment of section 58—Fees payable for yearly licenses"—put and passed.

Clause 4—"Amendment of section 81—Hours of sale of liquor."

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): This clause deals with one of the main features of the Bill—the fixation of the hours of trading between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. I think that this is the time to test the Committee as to whether or not the hours of trading should be the same as in connection with other busi-

nesses. I am taking full responsibility for my own utterances in connection with this clause. I think that now is the time to test the feeling of the Committee with regard to 6 o'clock closing. I would like, first of all, to have an expression of opinion from the Home Secretary as to whether the Government are prepared voluntarily to insert 6 o'clock p.m. in this Bill instead of 8 o'clock p.m. as the closing time.

The HOME SECRETARY: What starting time does the hon. gentleman suggest?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I take it that the hours of trading will be between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. I cannot see why there should be any objection to that.

Mr. HYNES: Those are not the hours you can be served at the refreshment rooms.

HON. W. H. BARNES: There are other things which may be said; but, if an amendment to close at 6 o'clock was carried, that hour should apply to clubs just as much as to hotels.

The HOME SECRETARY: Whatever hours are fixed for hotels will apply to clubs.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I agree with the Minister that clubs should be put on the same footing as hotels. Protection to clubs, so far as getting drink is concerned, is very much greater than to hotels. Therefore, if you are going to have an amendment, it should apply to clubs as well as to hotels in common fairness to the people who pay license fees.

I would like to ask the Minister if [5.30 p.m.] he is prepared to accept an amendment, or move an amendment, in the direction of making the trading hours from 8 o'clock in the morning till 6 o'clock at night?

The HOME SECRETARY: No. In my second reading speech I indicated that the question of hours was a most important one. I also recognise that it is a very important step in regard to legislation to interfere with what a man eats or drinks. No legislation is resented more quickly than legislation of that description. Legislation to be effective must have at least the moral support of a fairly large section of the community, and reform, to be of a permanent nature, must be carried out by an evolutionary process. The 8 to 8 closing and opening hours contained in the Bill will meet with more moral support from the general community than the hours suggested by the hon. member for Wynnum. I have approached the question from every viewpoint. I have also had the assistance of every enthusiast throughout Queensland; and they have besieged me by wire, letter, and personal interview to give effect to the hours their particular bent suggests. Personally, I believe that, with the stringent regulations contained in the Liquor Act of this State, the department is proceeding on the right lines in progressing step by step and fixing the closing hour at 8 p.m. I believe it will be a reform, not merely registered on paper, but one that I, as head of the department for the time being, can approach the administrative head with a degree of confidence, believing that I am putting forward something which will get the support of the better class members of the community.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Why not submit 6 o'clock closing to the people?

The HOME SECRETARY: Why submit 6 o'clock closing to any man? We are sent

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here by the people to legislate and administer for the mass of the people.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is not what you and your party said when the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill was before the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: The people will have a very important matter in connection with the liquor problem upon which to give their verdict in a month or two. Therefore, I do not feel disposed to accept the suggestion that I should move the amendment suggested, nor can I accept it if moved by the hon. member for Wynnum.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Neither will the licensed victuallers agree to it. They are the bosses of the situation.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The amendment we are dealing with now alters the hours for the sale of liquor from 6 o'clock in the morning till 11 o'clock at night to 8 o'clock in the morning till 8 o'clock in the evening, or for twelve hours. I do not know who was responsible for the suggestion that the hours should be from 8 o'clock to 3 o'clock.

Mr. CORSER: The Emu Park Convention.

Mr. VOWLES: I understand that that is so, but I want to know what persons were behind the suggestion, and whether they took into consideration the interests of the country as well as those of the city? I have had requests from many persons, more particularly travellers in the country, to make the twelve hours' service from 9 o'clock to 9 o'clock. Reform should not be for the benefit of the trade or of any section of the people. The people we should take into consideration are those to whom legislation was directed in the first place. Those are the travelling public. From my experience, if 8 o'clock is suitable for the city, 9 o'clock is more suited for the country. Just look at it from the point of light and time. There is a difference of 15 degrees of longitude between Brisbane and Camooweal—a matter of 60 minutes of daylight. I do not say that work ceases any earlier in the West, but you must recognise they are on that time. The heat of the sun in the western parts of Queensland does not diminish as rapidly as here. I have known it to be 100 degrees at 9 o'clock at night and 97 degrees at 7 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. HARTLEY: I have known it to be 116 degrees at 12 o'clock at night. (Laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: I would like to bring before the Home Secretary the different conditions which obtain in Queensland as compared with New South Wales, the adjoining State, so far as the liquor laws are concerned. There is one argument which should appeal to many members sitting on the Government side representing constituencies in the West, and that is that in most western towns a large number of persons have their permanent homes in hotels. I speak of single men, public servants, and married people. Many married people have to live in hotels because they cannot get houses. Should not the Government, when they are amending the Act, take into consideration the interests of those persons and their comfort? Why should a man whose home, through force of circumstances, is in an hotel be placed in a different position as regards his habits and requirements than the man who is living in his private residence? Under section 81 of the Liquor Act of 1912, which is being continued in this Bill with the consequential alteration

as to hours, no person to-day living in an hotel is entitled to have a drink of his own private liquor in his own private room during certain hours, because that Act prohibits him from consuming liquor on licensed premises.

The PREMIER: That is another difficulty which cannot be overcome.

Mr. VOWLES: You are going to place restrictions on those men who have to travel in the hot western sun in the summer time, and refuse to extend to them, when they return to their hotel in the evening, those liberties which they would have if they lived in private dwellings. In New South Wales, although there is a provision as to 6 o'clock closing, there are certain provisions entitling men who live in hotels to have a drink.

The HOME SECRETARY: It defeats the object of the Act every time.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not see how it does, and I have been there many a time. (Laughter.) The law should be enforced. I know it is honoured in the breach and taken advantage of so that those persons who are not entitled to liquor receive it; but, if the police look after their duties, they will see that it is not taken advantage of.

The PREMIER: Have you had a drink after 6 o'clock in New South Wales?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, and so has the hon. gentleman. (Laughter.) In New South Wales provision is made for the bona fide traveller. In Queensland we have nothing like that. In New South Wales after 6 o'clock a man, if he has travelled 10 miles, is entitled to take reasonable refreshment. A man in the city area has to travel, I think, 25 miles before he has that privilege. We had similar provisions under the previous Act, but they have been taken away. What I object to is that we are gradually taking away from the individual his liberty and rights.

Mr. COLLINS: You might as well say that we take away the liberties of the burglar.

Mr. VOWLES: It is not a question of preventing robbery. The next crusade will be against smoking, and we shall have such crusades going on continually. If the Minister is prepared to accept an amendment making special provision for districts outside the city, of course, presumably Brisbane—

The HOME SECRETARY: Where are you going to draw the line?

Mr. VOWLES: I know that it is a very hard thing to decide. I thought first of all that it might be done by giving certain licensing areas; but when I started to look into those licensing areas, I realised that it was impossible. I found, for instance, that Townsville included a lot of hinterland which would not be suitable. The same thing applied to Rockhampton; even Banana would be included. With Brisbane, Sandgate would possibly be included, and Belmont.

The HOME SECRETARY: I think Belmont would be excluded.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Where is Belmont? (Laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: I thought, first of all, it should be done in connection with the licensing areas, and it occurred to me that it might be possible by taking advantage of the provisions which are contained in another portion of the 1912 Act whereby persons and electors in the local option area have the power to call for polls for local option or otherwise.

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Seeing that it is generally recognised that the request for this 8 o'clock to 8 o'clock closing came from the city and from the forces which are centred in the liquor traffic, it occurred to me that it would be an acceptable and a reasonable thing to move an amendment by inserting after the words proposed to be added, "in the licensing district of Brisbane," and to add the words "between the hours of 8 o'clock in the morning and 9 o'clock at night in any other licensing area." That would shift the responsibility on to those who we understand are responsible for this twelve hours' day by agreement or in some form or other.

The PREMIER: You are under a misapprehension.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not quite understand that. It would, at any rate, shift the responsibility by making them abide by the terms which we understand they are agreeable to, and would make provision for the persons outside the city whereby their rights would be preserved.

The PREMIER interjected.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know what took place, but if it is a question of the trade being satisfied, I am not concerned about the trade—that is only a secondary consideration—I am concerned about the persons who utilise hotels. Before I was married, I lived in hotels for a good many years as a permanent boarder, and I have friends who for twenty years have made hotels their homes. They should be entitled in their hotels, which they are compelled to occupy for the time, to have the same privileges as I have in my home. We should not allow sentiment or any other reason to interfere with our liberty as we are doing now. I like to be consistent. I have always taken up an attitude, so far as the liquor trade is concerned, which is based on personal experience. If many people who go around talking about the evils of hotels lived in them as I have done, possibly their conclusions might be different to what they are to-day. There are hotels and hotels. (Hear, hear!) There are certain reforms required in the Liquor Act, and those reforms are required in connection with the administration. When you hear these woful tales about bad liquor, about murders, and fights, the Department should send an inspector to test the quality of the liquor supplied by the hotels where these things occur. The hotels would then, possibly, have a better name than they have to-day. I commend the amendment I have suggested to the Home Secretary, and would like to know whether there is any prospect of its being accepted, and a differentiation made between the town and the country. If so, I will move it; if not, I will not waste further time.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): The hon. member for Dalby confessed the difficulties which he encountered when he endeavoured to give effect to what he proposes. The licensing district of Brisbane runs right up to Nambour. Take any licensing area you like, and you have similar difficulties. I have approached the matter from every viewpoint, and at first I tried to differentiate between towns and cities. I discovered that a city had a shire within a stone's throw of it, so that, if 8 o'clock closing was in force in the city, if a person walked a mile, he would be in another licensing area. I came to the conclusion that, if the Bill was going to attain

its object, it would be impossible to have these differentiated hours fixed for certain areas.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I take it that the Home Secretary is not going to accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Dalby, and I certainly think he is wise. I recognise the difficulties in controlling the trade in this direction. The Bill is certainly a long way from what I should like to see it, but I welcome it, and I wish it had been introduced long ago. Personally I stand for the people themselves deciding whether they will continue the hotel traffic and the sale of wine and spirituous liquors, and I hold that they should have the right to say just what the control is to be. We used to hear a lot about 6 o'clock closing, and also something from the Government as to what they would do in a certain direction. They certainly have not kept faith in this regard. With respect to the question of shorter hours, we know that in New South Wales during the war they limited the hours of sale from 6 till 6. Later on those hours were made permanent, and there has been no demand for increasing the hours of sale. In Victoria they commenced by limiting the hours from 8 in the morning till 9.30 at night, but so successful was the shortening of the hours that they have followed the example of New South Wales and fixed the hours of sale from 8 till 6.

The HOME SECRETARY: It shows the value of evolutionary thought.

Mr. ROBERTS: Seeing that the result has been so satisfactory in Victoria, I think the Government here might have followed their example.

The HOME SECRETARY: So we have.

Mr. ROBERTS: No; they have limited the hours of sale from 8 till 6. Hon. members opposite tell us at times that they are prepared to follow the example of other States where things have worked satisfactorily. Victoria has shown that it is to the interests of that State to shorten the hours of trade so far as the liquor traffic is concerned, and why do they not follow that example? I assume that the Government will keep to the decision arrived at at the Eimu Park Convention, but, if any amendment is moved fixing the closing hour at 6 o'clock, I am certainly prepared to support it. In this connection I would like to support the remarks of the hon. member for Enoggera in regard to the wine business. There should be a lessening of the hours in that particular trade as well. We have to recognise that it is not altogether what is happening in Queensland. The evil is only commencing in Queensland so far as wine selling is concerned, but we have heard of the evils in New South Wales.

The PREMIER: You cannot get an additional wine license without a ballot.

Mr. ROBERTS: I want a lessening of the hours of trading. If there is any argument for closing the hotels—and there are quite a number of arguments for reducing the hours in connection with hotels—then there are many more arguments for reducing the hours so far as wine selling is concerned. I would like to see the Committee fix the hours for wine shops from 10 o'clock in the morning to not later than 6 o'clock at night—earlier if you like. I do not think there can be any argument in favour of wine shops being allowed to sell wine after 6 o'clock in the evening.

*Mr. T. R. Roberts.]*

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): The hon. member for East Toowoomba touched on a very important matter when he made reference to the closing of wine shops at a certain hour. I am convinced that, if the Home Secretary makes inquiry, he will find there are more women who are going down as a result of the wine shops in Brisbane—I cannot speak of Queensland generally, because I know nothing of the wine shops outside of Brisbane—than are going down as the result of drinking in hotels. I am prepared to admit, as every man must admit who has travelled, that there are hotels and hotels, just as there are other businesses, some of which are run well and some which are not run well. There are some hotels which are run in a way which is a credit to the people who have to do with them. We all know them.

MR. HARTLEY: You can get just as drunk in such a hotel as in any other.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I quite admit that you can get drunk in any hotel, and, as I indicated when I spoke previously, my view is we should put into this measure an opportunity to vote for 6 o'clock. I want to say to the hon. member for Fitzroy that, if he will propose an amendment to close the hotels at 6 o'clock I shall be very pleased to support it.

MR. HARTLEY: I won't.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member is not game, because he knows that an arrangement has been made fixing 8 o'clock as the closing time.

MR. HARTLEY: You move from 10.55 till 6 o'clock in the morning, and I will support you.

HON. W. H. BARNES: When an hon. member makes a suggestion to fix the hours from 10.55 till 6 o'clock in the morning, you will at once see that there is no business in the offer. The hon. member knows as well as I do that any action he may take for early closing has been nipped in the bud by the majority on his side. He knows that, and he is going to bury his temperance principles to-night simply because of that. He is not game to come out.

THE PREMIER: Will you move for 6 o'clock on that side?

HON. W. H. BARNES: What is the good of the Premier asking us to move amendments when we know that an arrangement has been come to, and that we shall be defeated? Hon. members opposite are not allowed to vote according to their consciences. I have no hesitation in saying where I am in connection with this business. I will vote for prohibition; but, as we are dealing with this Bill, we have a right to put the winesellers on exactly the same footing as other trading people.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Why not refreshment-rooms, too?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Let us show how earnest we are by starting at Parliament House. When I say that, I do not want the public outside to think that Parliament is a place where there is a lot of drinking. So far as I know, there is not. I wish to be candid in that regard; but, if we believe in 6 o'clock closing, let Parliament House set the example. Hon. members on the other side are afraid to get up and move an amendment in the direction of 6 o'clock closing

because an arrangement has been made. What earthly use is there in hon. members on this side moving an amendment when hon. members opposite apparently are going to sink their convictions in this regard?

MR. COLLINS: Test your own party.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I was very glad to hear the Home Secretary say that, in view of the conflicting opinions with regard to the country and the city, he was going to adhere to the Bill. I prefer supporting the Bill even as it is, as being half a loaf, rather than do anything which will go in the direction of killing the Bill. I recognise that, when the Minister says he is going to be absolutely firm in regard to 8 o'clock, that 8 o'clock is going to be the hour fixed upon by the Committee. That being so, I for one will do nothing in the way of moving an amendment which might play into the hands of those who might want 9 o'clock.

MR. CONSER (*Burnett*): I appreciate the statement by the Minister of his desire for reform in our liquor laws, and for the more stringent administration of the law in order to bring about the desired reform. I am

not one who believes in going to [7 p.m.] extremes in any way, and I think that by a measure of compromise

we might arrive at a very happy conclusion in regard to the administration of our liquor laws. Representing a country constituency, I desire to do the fair thing in regard to those areas. We must realise that a great many residents in country districts live outside the township areas and far from any centre. They may come in once or twice a week, and they do not get in from their work till half-past 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening. Under this measure, they will be deprived of the opportunity of getting any refreshments. Whilst there may be people in the city areas who claim that the best thing is to have the hours of trading in hotels from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., I look at the matter from the country point of view. I would like the Minister, if it is possible, to arrange that the hours shall be from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., or at least to make it possible to keep open till 9 p.m. I make the suggestion in the interests of the country dwellers. In country places the trains often arrive late at their destination, and the only places where one can get boarding accommodation are the public houses; and it is only possible for the hotels to provide that accommodation, and make it pay, under the present conditions with regard to licenses. Then there are occupations carried on in country districts, such as droving and other work, which necessitate business being done in the towns in the evening. Without wishing to extend the hours at all, I think that it would be a good proposition to make them from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Even 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., which is a still further reduction of hours, would be more convenient to country dwellers than 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. There has been some suggestion in favour of 6 o'clock closing, and some suggestion in favour of total abolition by those who favour it. I do not advocate prohibition, but I certainly welcome any reform suggested by practical experience. I think that the fixing of the closing hour at 6 o'clock might bring about quite an amount of trouble. There may be advantages in earlier closing, but let us take advantage of the reform now offered. If there is anything in the idea of the desirableness of taking away dangers, the fixing of the

[*Hon. W. H. Barnes.*]

closing hour at 9 o'clock will remove that temptation, and there will be no necessity for a man to wait about after his work till the hotels close. On the other hand, fixing the opening hour at 9 o'clock in the morning will remove the temptation to a man who may be tempted to have a drink before he goes to work. Some mention has been made of the desirableness of closing wine shops earlier than hotels. From my point of view that is going to extremes. Possibly wine shops may lead to temptations that the hotels do not offer; but, if they closed at 6 o'clock and the hotels were open until 8 o'clock, women might do worse by getting whisky at hotels instead of wine at wine shops.

Mr. COSTELLO: They could get wine at the hotels.

Mr. CORSER: They could, but they could not get whisky at the wine shops; and there would be a temptation for them to get it at the hotels.

Mr. COLLINS: There is temptation in the wine shops.

Mr. CORSER: There is temptation in Parliament House.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on Parliament. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: There is temptation in an eating-house to eat too much. My experience does not tell me whether there is temptation in wine shops, and, although it might be said that a person with no experience of a matter should not speak upon it, it seems to me that, if you close the wine shops earlier than the hotels, there might be a temptation for people to go to the hotels. At any rate, wine shops do not affect the country, because we have none of them. There are also very few hotels in country districts, and those we have are scattered over a large area. The Minister cannot at present see how it is possible to fix the hours at 9 o'clock in the morning to 9 o'clock at night in our country districts, but the country people think that it should be attempted. I told them that it would be difficult, but they said the Government could do anything—they could, by introducing a proxy voting system, for instance, give themselves a majority in the House when they only had a minority. I do not wish to wreck the Bill, because I think it contains some measure of reform.

Most of us will agree that, if we can bring about reform gradually, we are accomplishing what most people desire, whilst we still might have extremists on both sides. If the Minister can give some facilities to the country people in the direction in which I have indicated, I hope that he will at a later hour use that discretion which he desires to exercise in connection with this Bill, and grant the facilities in that direction.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The clause we are now dealing with is the principal one contained in this Bill. The Government claim that this Bill is one step in the direction of reform. It has taken this Government, irrespective of what is contained in their platform, a good many years to follow the example set in the other States of Australia. In New South Wales, on 17th February, 1916, there was a proclamation issued under the War Precautions Act dealing with military camps. There was a vote taken in that

year under the Liquor Reform Act as to what hour between 6 o'clock and 11 o'clock should be the closing hour of licensed premises. The big majority voted for 6 o'clock closing, and that came into force on 21st July, 1916—six years before this Government have attempted in any way to reform the liquor trade in Queensland.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. In 1921 we allowed the people one of the broadest polls possible.

Mr. KERR: Not in regard to closing hours. The poll that was given by the Government meant nothing. The people could either vote for prohibition, "boot-legging" from across the border, State control, or continuance; but they have not had the opportunity of voting on the question of hours. The Government call this Bill one of reform.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not discuss the Bill generally.

Mr. KERR: I am not discussing the Bill generally; I am discussing this clause, which deals with the hours of closing. It is quite right that I should point out the defects of the Government in connection with this matter. I want to quote Victoria to show that Queensland is very far behind. There was an Act passed on 6th July, 1915, in Victoria restricting the hours of trade between 9 a.m. and 9.30 p.m., and on 25th October, 1915, 6 o'clock closing came into force in that State, and has been in force ever since, and I think was confirmed by an Act in 1919. Here we have Labour reformers to-day bringing in 8 o'clock closing when they have 6 o'clock closing in practically every other State in Australia, and have had it for the last five, six, or seven years.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you stand for 6 o'clock closing?

Mr. KERR: I have not said anything about that.

The HOME SECRETARY: I want to know.

Mr. KERR: The stand I take is that the people should be able to decide whether there should be 6 o'clock closing or not.

Mr. HYNES: Where is your leader's amendment for 6 o'clock closing?

Mr. KERR: My position is very definite. I say that the people should have an opportunity of saying whether there shall be 6 o'clock closing or not. The Labour party are dominated by the liquor interests, and they cannot bring forward 6 o'clock closing.

Mr. HYNES: You are sitting on the fence.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. KERR: I am not. I say that an agreement was reached with the liquor interests of Queensland. I am hitting right out from the shoulder, and I am correct in regard to this clause.

Mr. CARTER: You know that is not true.

Mr. KERR: This Government have been bought up neck and crop in connection with this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not justified in saying that this Government have been bought up, and I ask him to withdraw that statement.

Mr. KERR: In obedience to your order, Mr. Kirwan, I will withdraw that exact

*Mr. Kerr.]*

statement, and say that the people of Queensland in this connection have been sold.

The HOME SECRETARY: In what way?

Mr. KERR: They have been sold out of their right to exercise a vote as to whether 6 o'clock closing is desired or not. That is where the Government stand to-day. They have sold the rights of the people in this connection. Let us have a look in connection with this question of the closing hours in this Bill to the replies made by members of the Government party to certain questions submitted by the Prohibition League, and see where some of these gentlemen stand on this question. Can they stand up in this House now for the principles that they professed to believe in? I am going to move an amendment directly to put these gentlemen exactly where they should stand, judging by the replies they gave when they were before the electors.

Mr. HYNES: Tell us where you stand.

Mr. KERR: I stand to give the people the option of saying whether the hours shall be 6 o'clock or 8 o'clock.

Mr. HYNES: You are standing on a fence.

Mr. KERR: There is no fence there. I would like to see where the hon. member for Fitzroy and other members of his party stand now.

Mr. HYNES: They will tell you where they stand.

Mr. KERR: Let us have a look at the position of a prominent member of the Prohibition League—the hon. member for Bremer, Mr. Frank Cooper.

The HOME SECRETARY: What has that to do with the question?

Mr. KERR: It has everything to do with the question, and I have a right to discuss this matter.

Mr. HYNES: You should state where you stand.

Mr. KERR: The "Prohibitionist" published this statement—

"Mr. Frank Cooper is a member of the State Council of the Prohibition League, and a consistent friend of prohibition."

Where now are his principles, and the platform he has to work under? He is dodging this particular question, and is sacrificing the interests of his people and the Labour party. What for? For the simple purpose of carrying out the dictates of the liquor trade of Queensland. Let us have a look at the position of the Labour member for Bulimba, Mr. Wright—

"Mr. Wright is a well-known prohibition worker in his district."

Why does he not work in Parliament, where he can do some good by attempting to carry those principles into effect?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KERR: Let us have a look at another member of the Government party, the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. George Barber—

"Mr. George Barber is an enthusiastic supporter of the league at all times. He did yeoman service during the 1920 campaign."

Mr. HYNES: What are you quoting from?

[*Mr. Kerr.*]

Mr. KERR: I am quoting from letters from the hon. gentlemen on this question, published in the Queensland "Prohibitionist." Let me go a little further—

"Mr. Harold Hartley answers every question satisfactorily. He is a keen supporter of the league, and has rendered good service in his party and in Parliament."

"Mr. D. Gledson has always supported the league in its efforts for advanced legislation."

Let us go a little further, and have a look at the Secretary for Public Works, the Hon. W. Forgan Smith, and see what he says—

"It is contrary to practice for individual members of Cabinet to make any promises in respect to matters of vital importance, other than those outlined in the Premier's policy speech."

"It is only fair to add, though, that Mr. Forgan Smith's speech at the Labour Convention helped considerably in saving the October poll."

What does that indicate? That his speech at the Emu Park Convention overrides Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I would like to point out that the hon. member is not in order in discussing prohibition on this question of hours. The question is whether the hours shall be from 8 to 8 o'clock. The hon. gentleman is quite in order in discussing any hours, but not prohibition.

Mr. KERR: I will not indicate at this moment the information before the electors as expressed by the Labour Convention, but I am discussing the question of hours, and pointing out that Queensland in the matter of liquor reform is behind every other State in Australia as regards hours.

Mr. HYNES: What hours do you suggest?

Mr. KERR: I have stated my position. I quoted the opinion of these gentlemen; and now what is their stand in Parliament, where they can possibly carry out these things? They have not yet stood up and said where they stand. It is an error to say that this is a step in a certain direction. It is more than a step.

I do not wish to quote the hon. member for Quenton, Mr. Winstanley. The hon. gentleman gives lectures to the Young Men's Christian Association on prohibition and other questions. When he has a chance of voting on this question, will he vote? No, not he; he is not game to stand up and speak on this question. Liquor reform is not a party question, and the interests of party could well be sacrificed in the interests of the community. Instead, we find the party opposite standing shoulder to shoulder for the liquor interests. There is no question of party contained in this amendment for a reduction of hours.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Where do you stand?

Mr. HYNES: You are all "fifty-fifty" on it.

Mr. KERR: I have told the hon. member opposite exactly where I stand. If they want 6 o'clock closing and to follow in the footsteps of the other States, who have had it for five or six years, they will have the opportunity of placing it before the people, and they will have to trust the people in preference to sub-

mitting to dictation from other interests. I say that Parliament is coming down desperately low.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like to point out to the hon. gentleman that, according to "May's Parliamentary Practice," any reflection on Parliament is most unwarranted; I would also point out that he cannot reflect on Parliament without reflecting on himself. (Laughter.)

Mr. KERR: When I mentioned Parliament I meant the Labour Administration. (Laughter.) I used the word incorrectly, and now substitute the words "Labour Administration."

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in making that statement, and I ask him to withdraw that, too.

Mr. KERR: In deference to your wishes, Mr. Kirwan, I will withdraw the words "Labour Administration," and substitute the words "Labour party."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will not be allowed to show disrespect to the Chair in that manner. If he attempts to do it again, I will deal with him.

Mr. KERR: Naturally, I must obey you, and I do it with a great deal of pleasure. (Laughter.) I have dealt with the question, and I think I have shown exactly where the Government stand.

Mr. HYNES: What hours do you suggest?

Mr. KERR: You will have the opportunity directly of showing where you stand. I want to deal with a part of liquor reform, and specifically deal with wine bars. Wine bars have only recently been established in this city, but in a few years it will be necessary to bring in some reform.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: How do you know anything about them?

Mr. KERR: I do not go about the world with my eyes closed. Perhaps the Minister does not see these things. I have seen women coming out of bars in the main street of Brisbane in an intoxicated condition—not out of hotels, but out of wine bars. In a couple of years this will require some reform, and it is better to tackle the question now. It is undoubtedly within the knowledge of most thinking people that these wine bars are frequented by undesirable people. They are easy of access, and the environments are suitable and everything is against these bars remaining open after 6 p.m. What might apply to hotels does not apply to these wine bars. The argument of the working man's beer is very often used in connection with hotels, and about the working man not being able to get a drink after 6 o'clock. Even if that argument is sound, it does not apply to wine bars. There is no occasion for wine bars to be open after 6 o'clock in the evening, which is the usual trading hour. I am going to move an amendment in regard to wine bars. It is something which is just coming into our midst, although it is not as bad as in other parts of the Commonwealth. On the Continent they have wide open windows with seats and tables under the awnings, where people sit and drink wine; but we have in our city wine saloons which have easy chairs, couches, and all sorts of things.

Mr. HYNES: You must have been there.

Mr. KERR: I may be giving hon. members information, and perhaps they will

accept my amendment. The position is quite clear in this connection. These things are starting to creep in, and we shall require liquor reform in connection with wine bars at a very early date. In Queensland we have been fortunate in regard to our wine bars, but in New South Wales and Victoria—I do not like to mention the Gun Alley tragedy, but the details of that are very applicable to wine bars.

Mr. COLLINS: All controlled by Tory Governments.

Mr. KERR: I ask the Labour Government now to have these wine bars closed at 6 o'clock. The chance is here. I am not going to say anything more about the matter, but I appeal to those hon. members I have mentioned who are staunch advocates of prohibition—who go the whole hog, as it were—not to go step by step in this way—which is only a cloak, but to support the amendment. Let us see that this is done now. It is not hotels we are dealing with. It is purely a question of drinking wine. In many cases a man and woman together would never dream of going into an hotel but they think nothing of going into a wine bar. Many women alone would never think of going into an hotel, but some of them go into a wine saloon and become intoxicated. They can go in and buy fruit in some of these places, and at the same time have two or three glasses of wine. The facilities that are being provided in that regard can very well be done away with now that we have this matter before Parliament. To meet the position I move the addition, after line 32, page 2, clause 4, of the following sub-clause:—

"Providing that the trading hours for wine shops shall be between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. for the sale of wine."

Those are the usual trading hours of other businesses. There is no question of the working man's beer; it is purely a question of selling wine, and every member of the House can very well support the amendment.

Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*): When the Home Secretary introduced this Bill the leader of the United party stated that he would later on move an amendment providing that the hours of sale be from 8 a.m. till 6 p.m. It is a strange coincidence that the leader of the United party is not here to-night, and that that amendment has not been moved. I am going to read an extract from the Townsville "Bulletin," which will probably explain the absence of the leader of the United party, as well as the fact that this amendment has not been moved. The Townsville "Bulletin" says—

"A meeting of the Northern Divisional Council of the United party was held on Friday evening last, when matters arising out of the recent polls were fully reviewed. Business dealing with the holding of the annual conference was dealt with, and discussion on the future lines to be taken by the organisation was fully considered. In reviewing the recent legislation before Parliament, the council resolved that it was not in accord with the amendment moved by the leader of the party to alter the proposed Liquor Bill, which provides that the hours of trading be 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., by the substitution of the hours 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., it being held by the council that the platform of the party or the manifesto of

*Mr. Bruce.]*

the leader at the recent election did not provide for such, and that, moreover, in the opinion of the council, the most suitable hours in which trading was to be confined, so far as North Queensland was concerned, at all events, would be between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. It was accordingly resolved that the following wire be sent the acting secretary of the United party (Mr. J. C. Peterson, M.L.A.):—'J. C. Peterson, M.L.A., acting secretary, United party, Brisbane—Adverting leader's amendment limiting hours trading Liquor Act between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., I am instructed to advise the Northern organisation is not in accord, as in the opinion of our council no such alteration was embodied in the party's platform or the leader's manifesto. The council, after full inquiry, respectfully advise the hours most suitable for trading in North Queensland are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and trust the party will use its influence to have the Bill amended accordingly.'

We have heard quite a lot about the Labour party being governed by outside influences. There have been many references made to Emu Park—the place where the Labour party's convention was held, and where quite a lot of wise and sane things [7.30 p.m.] were put in the platform of the Labour party. From the words of the last speaker, one would certainly think that the policy he advocates was brought forward at Callan Park. (Laughter.) The words he used led to that conclusion. I am a member of the Labour party, and I support Bills as they are brought forward in this House. The hon. member for Fitzroy omitted to mention it, but I will say it for him—I am personally a believer in prohibition, and, as a member of the Labour party, I am going to support the hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. We have now a chance of reform of the liquor traffic which vitally affects the interests of thousands of people at the present time and tens of thousands of people in the future—the future generations who will come after we have gone. There is no question that this reduction of hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. will be of tremendous benefit. It will, to some extent, protect the people from the ravages of the drink traffic. I do not care who the man is in this House, if he studies the question with an open mind and sees the ravages which are apparent in our everyday life, he has not to be very wide awake to see the effect of the drink traffic, and will heartily support any amendment which will protect the people from drink. There have been many things said about this party being instructed by the liquor trade. I have no knowledge whatever of such being the case. The support I received in the Kennedy electorate to fight the election was that given me by the workers there, who put in their few shillings. The hon. member for Dalby suggested that the hours should be from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the country districts, and that the hotel boarder should be allowed to have drink in his room. We might say that for every shilling the members of the Labour party got, who were doing work according to their pay, the hon. member was getting a good deal more when he put his suggestion before the Committee to-night. The amendment to make the hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. has not been moved, but the hon. member for Enoggera has moved an

[*Mr. Bruce.*

amendment to make the hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with regard to wine bars. The hon. member for Dalby moved the amendment that the National party sent down through their organiser, Mr. Bradley, to the United party, to make the hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. There does not appear to be any consistency in regard to the policy of hon. members opposite. When I came into the Chamber the hon. member for Enoggera was speaking in the most dramatic manner about the members of this party who had expressed their opinion in regard to the liquor trade. We have made our position clear, but it would require a very large microscope to find out whether hon. members opposite have any definite opinions on the question at all.

Mr. KERR: You know that you just lost 6 o'clock closing in your party by one or two votes.

Mr. BRUCE: I am prepared to admit that the hon. member believes what he says, but I did not see him under the table or in the waste-paper basket when we held our meeting.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Did you notice him behind the screen?

Mr. BRUCE: No, I did not; and I say that the action taken by the Premier in the past may have the effect of preventing some of the Opposition from getting behind screens in the future.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRUCE: It is an excellent thing to restrain people of dishonest intentions from getting behind screens by exposing them to the general public. It has a tendency to prevent that kind of thing. That being so, as the hon. member for Enoggera was not behind the screen, his interjection about 6 o'clock closing is merely hearsay. There is no necessity for me to say whether his statement is right or wrong, because he made the definite statement, and I would not discredit the hon. member's honesty. I appeal to those hon. members who believe in reform. We can support the hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. now, and I, as well as anyone else who is honest on the question, can always endeavour to bring about greater reforms in the future. Through the whole of the years that the anti-Labour people had control of the Treasury benches there was practically no liquor reform whatever.

Mr. MORGAN: Why did the liquor party vote against Mr. Denham and support the Labour party?

Mr. BRUCE: I do not know that they did so. The hon. member asks a supposititious question which I am not prepared to answer.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He asked why they took their money from behind the Denham party and put it behind the Labour party.

Mr. BRUCE: The hon. member can answer for the Denham party. I suppose that he is sore because they took their money from that party.

Mr. MORGAN: We had proof from the late Mr. John Adamson to that effect.

Mr. CARTER: You had proof that your party took it.

Mr. BRUCE: We will accept the statement of the hon. member for Murilla that the money of the liquor party was taken

from the Denham party. Perhaps the statement he has made is the reason why we never had any reform in regard to the liquor question through all the years that the Denham party was in power. The reform now brought forward by the Labour party has met with criticism, which would lead these who do not know the position to think that the members of the Opposition have always been very keen about the reform of the liquor traffic.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I should like to explain that the absence of the leader of the Opposition from his place this evening has nothing whatever to do with his statement that he intended to move for an amendment in the direction of 6 o'clock closing. His absence is purely fortuitous. It is quite true that the leader of the Opposition did forecast that he would move a reduction of the hours to 6 o'clock at night. Since then—there is no secret whatever about it—we have considered this matter in all its details, and we intend to adhere rigidly to the policy of the United party on the question. Hon. members will see that an amendment has been circulated in the name of the hon. member for Logan which is an exact replica of the policy of the United party on the question. We do not intend to depart from it. We have divergent views on this matter, as hon. members opposite have, and whilst they have decided to compromise upon 8 o'clock, we have determined that this is a matter for the people themselves to decide by referendum.

One or two remarks of the hon. member for Kennedy seem to require comment, particularly his statement that those of them who believed in prohibition would prefer to take half a loaf rather than have no bread. It is a pity he was not in the House when the Liquor Act Amendment Bill was before it some three years ago. He would then have listened to the arguments of the Opposition that some opportunity should be given to the people at that time or at the prohibition poll which was to follow, to declare themselves on the question of early closing. We urged that a fourth issue should be placed before them—that is, the early closing of liquor bars, and the arguments which the Home Secretary used the other day and the arguments of the hon. member for Kennedy to-night might well have been used in support of the proposal we made then. That proposal was turned down. It was said that early closing was no cure of the liquor problem—that it was simply a palliative. It is gratifying to find that common sense has prevailed, and that we are getting to the desired goal by degrees. Personally, I agree with the remarks of the Home Secretary that we can only approach these great reforms by stages. To go from one extreme to the other is undesirable, and therefore by curtailing the hours bit by bit I believe that we shall prepare for the complete reform. On that basis I do not object to the hours which are proposed. I hope that hon. members will realise that the absence of the leader of the Opposition is purely fortuitous and has nothing to do with the fact that this measure was coming before the Chamber.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I congratulate the deputy leader of the Opposition on the rather weak apology he has made for the absence of his leader. If ever I heard a man state definitely that he would move for 6 o'clock closing, that man was the leader

of the Opposition in his speech the other night, but evidently another whip has cracked besides the caucus whip. I do not know whether hon. members opposite have heard the cracking of the "Bulletin" whip at Townsville, or whether whips have been cracking in Brisbane; but their attitude to-night is a very big reversal of their attitude on this question from 1918 onwards. Whatever position this party may find itself in, it is not a retrograde position. In 1920 they did not bother twopence about it. They let it stand. They said there was a bigger question in the air—the question of prohibition. They provided in the Act then passed methods for testing the feelings of the people on prohibition, and now, finding that that has failed, they have certainly taken a step forward in the direction of shortening the hours. It may be the initial step in liquor reform. Personally, I stand for the whole hog—for prohibition right or wrong. It does not matter whether the hours are from 6 o'clock in the morning to 11 o'clock at night, or any other hours; but I am not going to jeopardise the possibility of a reform by dodging about from hour to hour.

The hon. member for Wynnum is in a position similar to that of his leader. He is in favour of 6 o'clock closing. Then why not move it? Any hon. member opposite who is in favour of 6 o'clock closing, and who believes that it is a bigger step in the direction of liquor reform than this, has the opportunity of moving for it.

Mr. COSTELLO: Will you support it?

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member for Wynnum will not move it for the simple reason that he knows that, when the division bells rang, he would look about as lonely as a pelican on a dried-out swamp.

Mr. SIZER: I will move it if you will support it.

Mr. HARTLEY: I have told the hon. member that I will not support it. I have told him that I do not care what the hours are. I want to shut the hotels up altogether and that is what I am going for direct. It is no use for the deputy leader of the Opposition to try to excuse their attitude by saying that the hon. member for Logan is going to move an amendment which will meet the position. It will not. They have said that the referendum method is a cowardly method—that it removes from the shoulders of the legislator the responsibility for his acts. Yet they want to remove the responsibility for attempting to reduce the hours to 6 o'clock in the evening by submitting it to a referendum. That is side-stepping the question.

Mr. SIZER: You would do the self-same thing with prohibition.

Mr. HARTLEY: Because we have stood for the initiative and referendum, by which all these questions could have been put before the people if hon. members opposite had not blocked it. I do not think there is need to speak further. I just rose to expose the flimsy excuse of the deputy leader of the Opposition.

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

Clause 4 put and passed.

Clauses 5 and 6 put and passed.

Clause 7—"Alicn labour on licensed premises"—

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): I propose to negative

*Hon. J. Stopford.]*



this clause. I have gone very carefully into the question, and I find that it will not accomplish what I want. But there is another aspect of the question—that of agreeing to the employment of races we should have nothing to do with. Under it I would have to provide for certain certificates for employees who would be engaged in the trade under certain circumstances, and I have no desire to issue those certificates to a class of people whom I do not want to see recognised in any employment in Australia.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 8—“*Amendment of section 14—Hours of supply in clubs*”—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the insertion, after line 20, page 3, of the words—

“After the word ‘club,’ where it first occurs in the said subsection, the following words are inserted:—‘or in the Parliamentary Refreshment-room.’”

Mr. HYNES: Are you not strong enough to resist the temptation? (Laughter.)

Mr. KELSO: On the second reading of this Bill I pointed out that we had no right to ask the public to do something which we were not prepared to do ourselves. The Home Secretary in his speech said, “Surely Parliament has the right to control its own actions?” I admit that Parliament has that right.

Mr. WEIR: Can you not control yours?

Mr. KELSO: I ask whether a majority of hon. members opposite could agree to the parliamentary refreshment bar being closed at 8 o'clock. I very much doubt it. The closing of the bar should not be left in doubt, because it will make us appear very foolish in the eyes of the public if we say that Parliament in its wisdom has not seen fit to close the parliamentary refreshment bar according to the law of the land, and yet deny to the people of the State the right to have a drink after 8 o'clock at night. We are not prepared to take the medicine ourselves that we make for those outside. I think we should be consistent. We shall be inconsistent in our attitude if we allow the parliamentary refreshment bar to remain open at any time during the sittings of the House. If that was allowed, the most popular men in Brisbane after 8 o'clock would be members of Parliament. We would have half the Police Force up here keeping back the people who desired to see members of Parliament. The business of this House would be delayed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do not exaggerate.

Mr. KELSO: I am not exaggerating.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are a very moderate man.

Mr. KELSO: I am. I am putting the matter in just the ordinary light. The business of this House would be disturbed by hon. members being called down to receive this visitor and that visitor, and of course the natural thing would be “Come and have a drink.”

Mr. WEIR: What about your “boozezy” constituents now?

Mr. KELSO: I have yet to learn that I have any “boozezy” constituents. If the hon. member has been to my electorate and knows of “boozezy” constituents, he knows more than I do.

Mr. WEIR: I do not anticipate this trouble. What are you afraid of?

[*Hon. J. Stopford.*]

Mr. KELSO: I am sure hon. gentlemen will be pestered out of their lives.

Mr. HYNES: You are insulting your constituents.

Mr. CARTER: We are not afraid of our constituents.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Cannot we carry out our own laws?

Mr. KELSO: I ask the hon. gentleman what is going to be the decision if we take a vote on this matter?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am going to vote against it. I speak for myself.

Mr. KELSO: I dare say that the majority of hon. members in this House will vote against it.

Mr. COSTELLO: No, no!

Mr. KELSO: If it should happen that the majority of hon. members vote against it, and the parliamentary refreshment bar is open after 8 o'clock, what will the public think of us?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: They could not think worse than they do now.

Mr. KELSO: The Government are not prepared to take the medicine that they are making for the public outside. I hope the Home Secretary will accept this amendment.

Mr. HYNES: You would not be making any sacrifice, because you never go there.

Mr. KELSO: How do you know?

Mr. HYNES: Because I go there. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY (*Hon. J. Stopford, Mount Morgan*): I think in my second reading speech, in reply to an interjection, I said that it was not necessary for this Chamber to legislate to govern its own actions.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is necessary to legislate in order to set an example.

The HOME SECRETARY: You can set an example without accepting this amendment at all. As a matter of fact, the amendment is not in order, because the parliamentary refreshment room is not a licensed club, and this clause deals with licensed places. We are not subject to the Liquor Act at all. The hon. member for Nundah is, perhaps, the youngest member, politically, on the other side, and has no doubt been selected for that reason.

Mr. KELSO: No.

The HOME SECRETARY: What the hon. gentleman desires by his amendment can be obtained by a simple resolution, and then we shall see how many of his own party will support it. The amendment, as it stands now, reads, “or parliamentary refreshment rooms,” and not parliamentary bar at all. It refers to the whole of the refreshment rooms.

Mr. KELSO: It is dealing with liquor.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is an amendment of a clause dealing with licensed clubs. The hon. gentleman proposes to close the whole of the refreshment rooms. I know it is only a pious amendment.

Mr. KING: Was it not passed before?

The HOME SECRETARY: I am not sure. I know that Parliament has control of everything within Parliament House. Parliament House is not a licensed premises. Parliament can, through a simple vote, decide the matter without bringing it in in a Liquor Bill of this description.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I rise to support the amendment. One hon. member interjected that the amendment meant no self-denial on the part of the hon. member for Nundah. I stand in the same position. I have never had a drink at the parliamentary bar. If it is good enough for the workers of Queensland to be restricted in the manner proposed, then it should be good enough for the law-makers of Queensland. The Government are only shuffling and humbugging on this question. It is all very well to say that Parliament has control of its own affairs, but that is pure humbug. We want to do something here and now, and not put it off for some other day. Any hon. member who wants to put the matter off only wants to do so because he desires to keep the place open.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like to point out to the hon. member that the amendment does not say "parliamentary refreshment bar," but reads "parliamentary refreshment room." That is the refreshment rooms, including the bar.

Mr. WARREN: Is the Home Secretary prepared to accept an amendment to close the parliamentary bar?

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not propose to deal with it here at all.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. gentleman is not prepared to deal with it, because he has not got the backing of his own party. If there is any place in Queensland where it is absolutely essential that there should be no excessive drinking, it is the Queensland Parliament. I am not here to say that there is too much drinking or anything of the sort here; but, if there is a chance of the workers getting too much liquor, then there is a chance of too much liquor being obtained here also. I am not a temperance reformer, nor do I belong to any temperance society. I take no drink, and I believe there is any amount of room for liquor reform.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you drink anything?

Mr. WARREN: Yes; I drink tea. (Laughter.) If hon. members opposite are conscientious and earnest in regard to liquor reform, let them start on themselves. There is no reform better than reform in your own place. What will the people outside think of hon. members if they apply restrictions outside and not inside this House? Here is an opportunity of saying whether excessive drinking is wrong. If excessive drinking is a curse, we can start in this building, and set an example to Queensland. If the liquor reformers opposite want to do something in that direction, let them support the amendment to-night.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I am astonished at the amendment moved by the hon. member for Nundah, inasmuch as that the Minister has told him quite plainly that we are masters of our own actions and that a simple resolution will do away with the Parliamentary bar. When I came into this House first in 1909, it was not the sober House it is to-day. In fact, this House is what might be called a real "wowsy" House—(Laughter)—if you apply the term "wowsy" to men who do not drink. I am not speaking here this evening as a teetotaler, as I am not one. From time to time we have all night sittings, and on such occasions, when I feel I want to be

propped up, I go down to the Parliamentary bar and have a fairly stiff nip of brandy. (Laughter.)

Mr. KELSO: To get up your Dutch courage?

Mr. COLLINS: I suppose I can be classed as a man who does not keep the bar going. During my ten years' experience in Parliament I have not met a more sober lot of members than those who constitute it now.

Mr. EDWARDS: What did you do in the Queensland Club?

Mr. COLLINS: Therefore, I am not going to allow any inference to pass out to the electors from the speeches delivered by the hon. members for Nundah and Murrumba on this question of shorter hours. I do not think that you will find seventy-two men in the whole of Queensland who drink less intoxicants than the present seventy-two members of Parliament. (Hear, hear!) We are well able to control the hours of that bar, and I am very pleased to see that the Minister is not going to include in a Liquor Reform Bill the amendment of the hon. member for Nundah. We have no need to apologise for our drinking habits, for, as I have said over and over again, we are the most sober lot of men I have ever met in the whole of my Parliamentary experience.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): This matter has been raised previously in this House, and we affirmed the principle in 1910. Some hon. members will remember on that and previous occasions Mr. George Ryland, the hon. member for Gympie, introduced a resolution for the purpose of closing the Parliamentary refreshment bar. I find that on 25th August, 1910, he moved to this effect—

"1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the 'sale' of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited within the precincts of this House, and that the said prohibition should take effect from the close of this present session of Parliament.

"2. That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message, requesting their concurrence therein—"

There was a considerable debate on that question, and on the 23rd December the same year we affirmed the motion together with this amendment, moved by the then Secretary for Railways, Mr. Paget—

"That the question be amended by the insertion, after the word 'sale,' of the words 'and consumption'—"

It will be remembered that Mr. Lesina, the then member for Clermont, took the point that, unless we inserted those words, it was possible that a member would bring into this House liquor for consumption. That was the opinion of the House unanimously on that occasion. Unfortunately, another place did not quite agree with that resolution. We have not that other place to contend with on this occasion, and whether we are in order or not, we should decide whether we should not close that particular part of the refreshment room at the time that we are going to prevent the members of clubs and the public generally obtaining liquor outside of the hours mentioned. It would, therefore, be most unbecoming for the State legislature of Queensland—or, in fact, any other Legislature—to sell liquor on their own premises to their own members when they would not give the general public the same consideration. I

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certainly will support the closing of the liquor bar in this House. I quite agree that there is no need to pass the resolution, for, if the Speaker wished, he could take the necessary action. I certainly will support any such action as is intended in the amendment.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 8 (*Mr. Kelso's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 17.

Mr. Appel	Mr. King
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Logan
„ Bell	„ Morgan
„ Brand	„ Nott
„ Clayton	„ Roberts
„ Costello	„ Sizer
„ Edwards	„ Walker
„ Elphinstone	„ Warren
„ Kelso	

Tellers: Mr. Clayton and Mr. Nott.

NOES, 40.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Land
„ Bertram	„ Larcombe
„ Brennan	„ Lloyd
„ Bruce	„ McCormack
„ Bulcock	„ McLachlan
„ Carter	„ Moore
„ Collins	„ Mullan
„ Conroy	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Pease
„ Dash	„ Pollock
„ Deacon	„ Riordan
„ Dunstan	„ Ryan
„ Farrell	„ Smith
„ Ferricks	„ Stoford
„ Foley	„ Theodore
„ Gillies	„ Weir
„ Hartley	„ Wellington
„ Huxham	„ Winstanley
„ Hynes	„ Wilson
„ Jones	„ Wright

Tellers: Mr. Hartley and Mr. Weir.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Petrie, No—Mr. Gilday.

Resolved in the negative.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): I beg to move the insertion, after line 20, of the following words:—

“ In the first paragraph of section one hundred and fifty-one of the principal Act, after the words ‘section one hundred and twenty-eight’ the following words are inserted:—

“ Section one hundred and forty-seven of this Act, as amended by the Liquor Acts Amendment Act of 1923, shall apply to every such club from and after the passing of the last-mentioned Act.”

This amendment deals with the matter that I mentioned in my second reading speech, when I foreshadowed the necessity of amending this clause so that certain exempted clubs would be brought in line with other clubs and hotels.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 9 and 10 put and passed.

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of the following new clause to follow clause 10:—

“ In paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section 187 of the principal Act, after the word ‘fuel,’ the words ‘or to prohibit the sale or supply of wine for sacramental purposes’ are inserted.”

No provision was made in the previous Act,

[*Mr. T. R. Roberts.*

in the case of prohibition being carried, either by the local option poll or by the special poll under section 191A for the use of sacramental wines. It was brought to my notice, and I agreed to insert an amendment so that, in the event of prohibition being carried by either of the polls, sacramental wines may be available for religious purposes.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I should like to know if this wine that is to be exempted is unfermented or fermented. I think that, if other people are going to do without fermented wine, it should not be used in any form at all, and I think this amendment unnecessary. If it is necessary to take fermented wine to be a Christian, it is poor Christianity.

The HOME SECRETARY: I take it this means ordinary fermented wine.

Mr. WARREN: Then I move as an amendment to insert the word “unfermented” before the word “wine” in the last line of the amendment.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no need for the amendment, as it is unnecessary to have a license to sell unfermented wine.

Mr. WARREN: In view of the explanation of the Home Secretary. I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

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

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I take it that what the Minister desires to deal with is the use of wine for sacramental purposes. I think if he took out the words “the sale or” it would be more suitable. I do not think there is any need to purchase wine for such purpose outside the hours allowed for the sale of liquor.

The HOME SECRETARY: This is only in the case of prohibition being carried; it is inserted at the express wish of the prohibition people.

New clause put and passed.

Clause 11—“*Repeal of section 191A after taking a poll thereunder in 1923*”—

The HOME SECRETARY: I move the insertion, before the word “after,” in line 36, of the words—

“ In paragraph (c) of subsection six of section 191A of the principal Act, after the word ‘fuel’ the words ‘or to prohibit the sale or supply of wine for sacramental purposes’ are inserted.”

I explained previously that the former amendment dealt with the possible success of prohibition under the ordinary liquor option polls. This amendment makes provision in case the poll is carried in October next under section 191A. It is merely on the same lines as the previous amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I beg to move the omission after the word “thereof” on line 39, of the words—

“ No further poll of electors shall be taken under that section, and section 191A of the principal Act, and in section 165 of the principal Act the words ‘except section 191A of this Act, and also sections 2, 8, and 9 of the Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1920, shall be repealed’—

with a view to adding the following words—

“ A poll shall be taken of the electors of every electoral district of the State

upon the following Resolutions A, B, and C, submitted upon a ballot-paper in the following form:—

Are you in favour of—

- (A) Reduction of hours for the sale of liquor.
- (B) Prohibition of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors, to take effect in July, 1926.
- (C) Continuance of the present system of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors."

I have a twofold reason for moving the amendment, the first being to give effect to the resolution if the prohibitionists succeed next October, and the second reason is to give effect to the policy of the party to which I belong. I am glad to see that the Minister recognises there is something in my first reason, that is to give effect to the result of the poll next October. On the second reading it was pointed out that, if this clause were carried as it stands at present, the result of the poll would be nullified, because the effect of the carrying of this clause is to wipe the succeeding clauses out of the Act of 1920, as section 8 of the Act of 1920 is now section 191A, and subsection (6) of section 191A provides the machinery for giving effect to the result of the poll. I am glad to see that the Minister has evidently accepted the position as pointed out by this side of the House, although the Premier at the time it was mentioned said the facts were not so. It might be a very good thing for the Premier that we have vigilant members on this side of the House to find out these things. On the first opportunity we had of getting the Bill and seeing this clause and finding out what it was we drafted an amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We found it out before your amendment was printed.

Mr. KING: We did not hesitate to point it out in the House at the time. The amendment is proposed for the purpose of giving effect to the resolution of the prohibitionists if they succeed in the poll next October. If this clause went through as printed, it would simply mean that, if the prohibitionists were successful next October, the result of their efforts would be nullified because there would be no machinery to give effect to the resolution.

Mr. HARTLEY: It does not want any machinery.

Mr. KING: Oh, yes, it does; and it is provided for in the 1920 Act.

Mr. HARTLEY: You have the power until the taking of the poll?

Mr. KING: After taking the poll the machinery clauses are wiped out, and no effect will be given to the resolution.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is quite so.

Mr. KING: I am glad to see that the Minister has made provision for that in his proposed amendment; but his proposal does not go as far as mine, because my amendment also proposes to continue the sections of the present Act so that further polls may be

taken after the October poll. That is the policy of our party. The party that I belong to believe in the principle of triennial polls, and we wish to conserve that right.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why did you oppose it when I introduced it?

Mr. KING: When was that?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: In 1920.

Mr. KING: I was not here then.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You were not here, but your party was.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Who opposed it?

Mr. KING: I do not know who opposed it. It is most amusing to hear members on the other side blaming members on this side for every sin in the world. We shall be blamed soon for the loss of Paradise.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You inherit all those sins.

Mr. KING: It is very easy to say that, but there is no justification for saying it. Members are only responsible for their actions while they are in the House.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): It is somewhat difficult to follow what the hon. member is trying to secure. Let me analyse the position. The clause reads—

"After the taking of the poll of the electors under section 191A of the principal Act in October, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three, and the publication of the results thereof"—

and then follows the amendment reading—

"a poll shall be taken of the electors of every electoral district of the State upon the following Resolutions A, B, C, submitted upon a ballot-paper in the following form."

When is the poll to be taken? The hon. gentleman does not say. Let us assume that the October poll is successful from the prohibitionists' point of view. Am I to understand that, so soon as the result thereof is made known, I must take another poll?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We will give you a few months' grace if you concede the point.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the way it reads.

Mr. KING: It has been inadvertently left out.

The HOME SECRETARY: The other night I quoted for the benefit of the House a rather lengthy list of polls, and no hon. member has been able to prove that I misstated the position regarding those polls.

Under this clause we are [8.30 p.m.] endeavouring, as I told the

House, to repeal the special polls under section 191A. Hon. members opposite state that there should be definite stages—that we should know where we were going, and that we should not be continually disturbed. While the hon. member for Logan did not altogether agree with my remarks, I took it that he was favourable to my amendment. His proposed amendment gives us still further polls without repealing any. Under section 168 of the Act we still have the poll which was held in May, and which can be held again in May; and under section 170, as the hon. member knows, a poll can be initiated in any district on resolution "D" for the first time in

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Queensland—that is, on the question of prohibition. You may also take a poll on resolution “E.”

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Is it not a fact that under this triennial poll a bare majority only is required, whereas under the sectional poll a much larger majority is required?

The HOME SECRETARY: It is not a much larger majority—it is a one-fifth majority.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is more.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is something more. It is an expression which, once you obtain it, fortifies you in the administration. I have explained that under section 170 there is a triennial poll. There is also the privilege that in any electorate which sends in a petition you may have a poll on two resolutions—“A” and “D”; in other words, under these sections, you may initiate a poll on a petition of 10 per cent. of the people to determine whether you shall have under resolution “A” a 25 per cent. reduction of licenses. The same people signing a petition of 10 per cent. of voters may have a poll on resolution “D.” We have therefore a number of polls, and the hon. member for Logan suggests by his amendment that we should add still further to the number of polls. There is only one difference in his proposal—that is, he knocks out of the existing polls the question of nationalisation, and substitutes in paragraph (A) the reduction of hours for the sale of liquor. Let us examine what that means. He instructs the Minister in charge of the Bill that at some time, which is not stipulated, he shall submit to the people resolution “A” in regard to reduction of hours for the sale of liquor, but he does not suggest what hours. What does the hon. member ask us to do? To get an expression of opinion from the people, which we obtained when we went before them at the election with regard to fixing the hours of sale, which we are doing under the Bill. The amendment will not stand examination, simply because, if the hon. member proposed to reduce the hours for the sale of liquor from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., he would have left to the people a definite hour that he and other hon. members were prepared as a party to stand on; but he asks the people to give him an instruction in a bald way to the effect that they want a reduction of hours, which shows that he does not realise his position in being sent here to interpret the wishes of the people. I have no intention of accepting the amendment. I think that the explanation I gave on the second reading is quite sufficient justification for the Committee determining to revert to the conditions after section 191A has been dealt with.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I am glad that the Minister has seen through the flimsy nature of this amendment, and does not intend to accept it. To my mind, the amendment would have two very bad effects. Firstly, it would introduce into the referendum the whole question of the hours of trading for liquor bars, not for the purpose of deciding, as is being done here to-night, that the hours shall be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., but it would put the whole question of hours of trading before the people in a long list of questions, probably running from half-past 6 in the morning to half-past 10 at night, and including every

hour of the day. That would be a bad thing. Secondly, the effect of the amendment would be the substitution of the question of nationalisation with a view to ultimate prohibition, by practically sanctioning the liquor traffic and providing for the regulation of hours. That, in my opinion, would have a very bad effect also. While, if this amendment were carried, it would do that, instead of strengthening the case for people who are looking for liquor reform by the abolition of liquor in one way, it would weaken it right along the line, because, if we carried prohibition in October this year, the question would be opened up again in another three years. We do not want it opened up in that way, because we have something better now under section 170 of the principal Act.

Mr. COSTELLO: They are pulling your leg.

Mr. HARTLEY: They are not pulling my leg. (Opposition laughter.) After this poll is passed—if the party of reform on the liquor question are successful in carrying prohibition—

Mr. KING: You know they will not be.

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not know that they will not be successful. If they are successful in carrying it, we shall have locked the door until somebody comes into the House with the key, and is game to unlock it again. We shall have carried a resolution in favour of State prohibition, which cannot be undone again until it is undone by the Legislature of the State. That is why I oppose this amendment. If we do not carry prohibition in October next, under section 170 of the principal Act, we have machinery for taking a poll in any electorate of the State on the request of 10 per cent. of the electors, and they can carry prohibition on a three-fifths majority. I congratulate the Minister on his refusal to accept the amendment, which is merely an attempt on the part of moderate drinking people still further to countenance the liquor traffic, under the guise of attempting to bring about a reform by the regulation of hours.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): It is wonderful how liquor reformers and others who are taking sides in this debate will shuffle on the question.

Mr. COLLINS: You have shuffled in three different parties in your time.

Mr. WARREN: Oh, no; I am still in the same party. This is the platform of our party on which we were returned, and it is a proper thing to bring it before this Chamber. I support the amendment for that reason.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What does the amendment mean?

Mr. WARREN: I confess that it requires amending, but the principle of the amendment is quite clear. (Government laughter.) The Minister was quite mystified as to what it meant. The object of the amendment is to retain the right of the people to speak on this question. Those gentlemen who talk about trusting the people stifle the voice of the people; but we in this amendment are trying to hand back to the people their right to express an opinion on the question of a reduction of hours. The whole object of this Bill is to stop the people from having a voice on the question. The hon. member must admit

that it was meant to stifle the voice of the people—to deprive them of the right every three years of speaking. Nearly every publican throughout my electorate told me that he was not supporting me, but that he was supporting the Labour party because they stood right behind the liquor question, and that they were going to do the very thing they are doing in this Chamber. They are carrying out their contract. If they carried out every contract into which they have entered as honestly as they are carrying out this contract, they would be a very fine, honest Government. I do not say that prohibition is the best thing for Queensland—it is the best thing for me—but I do say that I stand for the people and I trust the people. I trust my electors.

Mr. CARTER: You cannot trust yourself.

Mr. WARREN: Yes, I can trust myself to leave the enemy alone. I represent the most temperate electorate in Queensland.

Mr. COSTELLO: Question!

Mr. WARREN: There is no question about it. There are fewer public houses in Murrumbidgee and less drinking, but I must confess that I believe the people are behind the Government to a certain extent on this legislation. A lot of them in my electorate think that it is a certain amount of reform, but at the same time I do not know one person, unless he is in the trade, who thinks that the Government are honest and right in taking this stand and knocking out the voice of the people every three years. (Government dissent.) They are cutting it out, and the Minister can get up and talk until he is black in the face about the votes of the people and referenda, but he will not convince me. These things are mere subterfuges.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Your Government passed them.

Mr. WARREN: I do not care what Government passed them. They were not my Government. Because an ancient Government passed something, I do not necessarily stand for it. I stand for the people's decision on this question. If the people of America followed the course the Government in Queensland are taking, they would not be progressing as they are. If the people say they want prohibition, they should have prohibition. If they want 6 o'clock closing, we ought to give them the chance of getting 6 o'clock closing. I admit, as I said before, that the second question in the amendment requires to be put in order, but at the same time it is sufficiently clear that the object of the amendment is to take the voice of the people on this all-important question. The point in dispute is whether this is an evil or a good creature of God. I am prepared to say that this is one of the few questions—practically the only one I know—that should be sent to the people for their decision. Many other questions which have been referred to them should not have been dealt with in that way. The referendum on the abolition of the Upper House was absolutely farcical. It was wrong in principle. The Government should have had backbone enough to do it themselves if it were possible. Many other things which the Federal Government have submitted to referenda were absolute nonsense. But this is a question for the people to decide. If they are against the continuance of licenses, it is a proper thing to consult them. If they decide by their votes that it is time we had fewer hours for drinking, then I say—irre-

spective of our own views or whether we take liquor or not—it is time for that reform.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): It is rather remarkable that the hon. member who moved this amendment did so with the object of curing what he termed a defect in the original Bill, and it can be shown that the amendment itself not only does not provide for any period or hours for the reduction he proposed to put to the people, but also discloses a defect in the form of the question itself. His resolutions (B) and (C) are—

“(B) Prohibition of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors, to take effect in July, 1925.

“(C) Continuance of the present system of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors.”

Now, if the prohibition poll in October is carried, what will be the “present system” of manufacture, importation, and retail of fermented and spirituous liquors? By that time there could be no such system unless it was done illicitly. The object of the amendment is easily recognised—to secure what the hon. member says is the policy of his party—and it strikes at a vital principle of this Bill. The hon. member might have accomplished his purpose by voting against the whole of the clause and the elimination of the October polls. The policy of this party was drawn up at the Labour Party's Convention. It was clearly stated during the election, and plainly put by the Minister in charge of the Bill when it was introduced. The intention is not, as the hon. member for Murrumbidgee says, to prevent the people from expressing an opinion on this question, but to do away with the successive polls, which bear heavily financially on the State. The hon. member surely must have failed to remember that this Bill provides for a poll in October of this year. It does not provide for the taking away from the people of any power to give an expression of opinion in the most convincing manner.

Mr. KING: They can give an expression of opinion in October, certainly.

The PREMIER: And, if carried by a simple majority, prohibition comes into operation.

Mr. KING: How?

The PREMIER: The hon. member says that there is a defect in the clause, but the Minister has foreshadowed an amendment to correct the defect he was good enough to point out, and now I am speaking against the hon. member's amendment and in favour of the Bill, under which the people will have the opportunity of expressing their opinion on the questions of prohibition or continuance. Therefore there should be no charge laid at the door of this Government that we fear the division of the people on this question.

Mr. ELPINSTONE: Why did you introduce the Bill before the poll?

The PREMIER: What is the point? Why should it be deferred until after the poll? I will tell the hon. gentleman, who thinks that there is some sinister reason for bringing this Bill in at this stage, that there is none. During the elections the only questions that were asked of me—at any rate on several occasions—was whether the Government were

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honest in their desire to reduce the hours, because it had been stated that at the Labour Party Convention our policy was to reduce the hours and then eliminate the poll. The question that was asked of me by a great number of people, about which they had some doubt in their minds as to whether what had been said was a mere empty promise, was whether any legislation would be introduced during the coming session to reduce the hours of trading. Members of the Anglican Synod which sat in Brisbane a few weeks ago asked the same question, and indeed a delegation from the synod waited on me and asked me if I would give a definite undertaking that legislation would be placed before Parliament this session. I had not an opportunity of consulting my party, but I took it upon myself to give that promise, and we are now carrying it out. I do not know whether there is very much involved in the question of whether the Bill should have been introduced before the poll or after the poll. It was only a question of proving the bona fides of the Government in regard to reduction of hours. On the question of prohibition, what is the attitude of the Labour party and the Labour movement? The Labour movement gives the people an opportunity to express their policy through the triennial conventions that are held, to which representatives of the workers come from every part of Queensland. The decision of the Labour movement was not in favour of prohibition, and there are fairly obvious reasons for it. I spoke myself at our convention on this question, and I do not mind stating that I personally believe that the triennial polls should be eliminated. First of all, one who is familiar with social questions has to recognise that excessive drinking is a great evil in the community. No one will deny that statement for a moment. If by some magical means or other we could eliminate intoxicants entirely in the whole community, no doubt that would be a good thing for the race and for the nation. In my case against prohibition, I stated at the Labour Party Convention that legislative prohibition enacted through Parliament would not secure an extinction of the liquor trade, and would not abolish excessive drinking and the evils associated with the drinking of intoxicating liquors. If the mere passing of an Act of Parliament would do that, then I should be a prohibitionist. If we could accomplish the removal of all those evils by passing legislation through this Chamber, I should be in favour of passing that legislation; but I know that evils a hundred times worse than those which exist under the regulated trade would follow the carrying of prohibition in that way. I think that has been the experience in America and other places where prohibition, so-called, operates. It is prohibition that does not prohibit. Can anyone say that the passing of prohibition in America has eliminated drink from the community there? Far from it.

Mr. HARTLEY: It has been a revelation to a lot of them.

The PREMIER: In some quarters in America undoubtedly it has operated beneficially. I believe that in some of the industrial communities it has, but, taking it as a whole, it has by no means solved the problem. You can get a whole body of authoritative opinion which will say that prohibition has been effective in America, and you can get a whole body of opinion which is just as

authoritative against any such suggestion as that. There are competent investigators who will tell you that there are greater evils through the illicit trade, through the selling of liquor in sly-grog shops, through all those underhand and more or less illegal, criminal, and villainous methods used in the manufacture, distribution, and sale of illicit liquor in America, in spite of the attempts to enforce prohibition.

Mr. KELSO: Have they had sufficient time to try it out?

The PREMIER: The amendment of the Constitution was carried into effect on 16th January, 1920, when prohibition came into operation. Prohibition, as a war-time measure, was in force actually before that time. Since 1920 it has been in operation as a constitutional amendment, and there has been every endeavour—failing, in my opinion—to enforce prohibition since then. The position in Queensland would be infinitely worse than there. In the United States they have nation-wide prohibition, whilst here we would only have State-wide prohibition. What power on earth could there be in Queensland to enforce prohibition if we carried it? Our Police Force could not enforce it. You would need to have 10,000 special agents here to enforce it. How could you do it? I put it to hon. gentlemen as a serious argument. First of all, there is considerable trouble on the face of it as to whether it is constitutional for this State to exclude the importation of liquor even if prohibition were carried.

Mr. MOORE: You could stop the sale of it.

The PREMIER: I doubt very much whether the merchants in Brisbane, or on the border, or anywhere else, could be prevented from bringing liquor into this State.

Mr. MOORE: You could stop them from selling it.

The PREMIER: We might; but we could not stop them from bringing it in. That is the point. That is one of the weaknesses that they do not suffer from in the United States of America.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Would the same position not arise with regard to Canada and other border countries where there is no prohibition?

The PREMIER: No. The United States Government have the constitutional power to prevent the importation of liquor; we have not that power. We have not got the power to stop the importation, even if we had prohibition. That is a Commonwealth matter, because interstate trade or overseas trade is affected. In the United States they have power to prevent the importation of liquor or spirits. If they have power to prevent the importation, then prohibition may or may not be effective. My opinion of prohibition in this country is that it is fairly obvious that before we can get a solution of this drink problem there must be a better method of providing for that than by some legal prohibition which is advocated by prohibitionists in this State and other States. If we had Australian-wide prohibition there would be a far better chance of enforcing it. I believe it could be enforced so far as importation is concerned. But even that would not get over the difficulty. The experience in America is that there is distributed vile stuff which is causing no end of evil and disease, and other liquor is entering America through what is

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called "bootlegging" and "moonlighting." The Labour party have very carefully considered this matter. We have had a reference to liquor reform as a plank in our platform for twenty years past. I confess candidly that we have never yet arrived at a thoroughly satisfactory policy in regard to the drink evil. The main plank of the Labour party's platform is "State manufacture, importation, and sale of intoxicating liquors with an ultimate view to prohibition." The ultimate objective is the entire extinction of the drink evil. I believe that on those lines there is a fair chance of reform extending, perhaps, over a good many years. To initiate that reform it is necessary to get the State control of the trade. How can that be done? That is what is exercising my mind. What an enormous sum would be involved if you had to purchase out the existing trade. The purchasing of the existing trade and the paying of compensation to those who are financially interested at the present time not only presents a tremendous problem from a financial point of view, but it would transfer to the State a vast number of businesses that are not necessary.

Mr. MOORE: What has been the effect of State control?

The PREMIER: It has only been attempted in one centre. Before the Babinda Hotel was established there were innumerable sly-grog shops in that district. I think there were fifty prosecutions initiated by the police, and, indeed, I think there were about fifty convictions in the Babinda area. The action by the police was not successful in suppressing the illicit trade. The sly-grog shops still existed very numerous in the Babinda area. Since the establishment of the State hotel there, it has to a large extent suppressed the sly-grog trade in the area, and the hotel has effected this degree of reform—it has given good accommodation to the people who stay at the hotel, it does not dispense adulterated liquor, it does not serve drunken men so far as the manager is able to regulate it, and it has closed the liquor bar at 10 o'clock at night without being compelled to do so by any Act or special obligation.

That may not be considered to be very much in the direction of liquor reform, but it is something; and if the whole trade throughout Queensland were carried on on the same

basis as the trade is carried on in [9 p.m.] the State hotel at Babinda, it would mark a very considerable advance towards curing the drink habits of Queensland. I know the question of whether State control is the first step towards the ultimate extinction or ultimate regulation of the liquor trade or any trade is open to considerable contention. I have come to the opinion that it is the most effective way to get drastic control of the trade, and eliminate unnecessary drinking houses, to curtail the trade as far as practicable and to develop the hotels, not solely as places for drinking, but as places to provide accommodation for travellers, and look after the social life of the community and wean the people from drink habits.

Mr. KELSO: What would be your opinion if State control was carried in October?

The PREMIER: It is one of the most difficult problems that face the State because of the financial obligations involved. It is not suggested that, if State control is carried,

we shall have authority to confiscate all breweries and other buildings connected therewith. We shall have to make some arrangement, before assuming to take control, to compensate the existing interests. It is the huge sum involved that creates the difficulty.

Mr. KELSO: Would it not be wise, then, in view of your own statement, to delete that question from the October poll?

The PREMIER: No; the Act provides for it, and therefore it is not wise to delete it from the ballot. I believe some satisfactory scheme can be evolved for the payment of compensation over a period of time in order to get possession of the trade.

Mr. HARTLEY: Was there not an arrangement made with the Denham Government about compensation?

The PREMIER: No; that was only in regard to prohibition of licenses. I remember what took place very well in two successive sessions in 1911 and 1912. The Denham Government were urged to allow a prohibition poll to be taken forthwith. They realised, however, that vested interests in the trade had to some extent to be considered, because there were a lot of people who could ill afford to lose their all which they had invested in the trade, and the Denham Government said under the prohibition provisions that, if that question was carried, it would not come into operation until 1925. That was, the trade was allowed from 1912 to 1925 to prepare for it.

Mr. KELSO: They might prefer money compensation.

The PREMIER: I do not know that they would. In any case, that was a consideration by way of time compensation for the possible loss of licenses, not a compensation for the transfer of all hotel property to the State. The amendment that the hon. member for Logan has moved is not an amendment which is practicable, and I think he ought to withdraw it and allow the Minister to move the amendment he outlined, which will cure the obvious defect in the original clause. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I sincerely hope the hon. member for Logan will not withdraw the amendment—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Because that is one of the planks of the platform of this party on the liquor question, and we have deliberately put it forward to confirm our contention that the liquor question should be determined periodically by referendum of the people.

The PREMIER: It does not say periodically.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I quite admit that when you insert an amendment in a Bill of this nature which is really a negative of the whole principle contained in the Bill, you cannot in a few words provide all the necessary machinery which would be required if this amendment was given effect to. It stands to reason, though—as it is the determination of the Government to withdraw the triennial polls, and our amendment has for its object reinstating those triennial polls—that the amendment will not be carried, and that it was not necessary for us to furnish amendments to provide for the necessary machinery to give effect to it.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Let it remain as it is.

*Mr. Elphinstone.]*



Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No, because in the issue before the people in the poll in October they will only be asked to voice their opinion on three issues—State control, prohibition, and continuance. The difference between that and our amendment is that we substitute reduction of hours for State control.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You can do that after you defeat the Government proposal.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You could probably do it with the machinery referred to by the Home Secretary, with which I will deal directly. We have always argued that we do not see any cure for the trouble created by the liquor problem by instituting State control. State control has not been a success in any direction where it has been practised by the State. We cannot see that State control, where it would be subjected to the influence of vested interests, is likely to cause any permanent cure of this problem. We all admit that the wording of this amendment if carried, would have to be altered; but we know that the provision in the Bill is the policy of the Government, and that our amendment is therefore not likely to be adopted. Because of this we have not gone to the trouble to prepare a number of consequential amendments. The Home Secretary has carefully pointed out to us that, in spite of the withdrawal of the triennial polls, the machinery still exists for dealing with the liquor question; and the hon. member for Fitzroy has given expression to his belated satisfaction at the fact that he has still some means of disposing of the liquor question after the triennial polls have been disposed of. If that is so, why did the Government introduce the triennial poll Bill in 1920?

The HOME SECRETARY: Because the provisions I referred to do not come into force so far as these resolutions are concerned until 1925. The prohibition people could not otherwise have got an expression of opinion of the people until then.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If prohibition had been carried in 1920, it had to be affirmed in 1923, and not put into force till 1925.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; under the Act the people could not give an expression of opinion till 1925. By the 1920 Act we gave them the right to secure two expressions of opinion, while we gave till 1925 to mature.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The machinery which will exist after the passing of this Bill alters the majority, and before it can be put into operation it has first to be initiated by a 10 per cent. request of the people, all of which is going to entail circuitous machinery which is not going to be operative, and by reason of its troublesomeness is not going to be given effect to. Those who, therefore, look to a solution in the fact that machinery still exists will be very dissatisfied.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you think the people should be disturbed if they have not sufficient interest to initiate a poll?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There may be something in that argument, but the point I wish to stress is that the question of liquor reform is so much a social question—it affects every mother, husband, man, and woman—that opinions can be formed on it without outside influence. Every man has an opinion on this matter. It is so simple to come to a conclusion on it that it is one question above all

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others which the people should be allowed to decide.

The PREMIER: It is being entrusted to them in October.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The poll in October has been largely nullified by the introduction of this measure, which compromises it by provision for the early closing of hotels. I argued on the second reading that the mere fact of introducing this Bill before the poll in October is undoubtedly going to have a material effect on that poll. There were many people at the last poll who voted prohibition because they had no other alternative, and they would sooner see prohibition carried than a continuance of the present regime of the liquor interests.

At 9.10 p.m.,

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

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I argue that they are going to vote continuance, because they know quite well that this measure is going to give them the relief they wish for.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you think that they should be forced into prohibition?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No. I am one of those who voted for prohibition at the last poll, because I would sooner see prohibition carried than a continuance of the hours that exist to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why should you be forced into it? You have a mind of your own.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I have a mind of my own, and I am going to exercise it. There were many others similarly placed. I have already said that I agree with the Premier and the Home Secretary in regard to this question. I do not believe in jumping from one extreme to the other—that is, to jump from practically unbridled liberty to drink to the closing of all bars.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Will you vote for continuance this time?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I do not consider it is possible to expect people to accept prohibition at once without many endeavouring to circumvent it. The taking of liquor becomes a habit with some people. I agree, therefore, with the principle that, if we gradually introduce a reform of this nature, we are going to achieve something permanent. I have always argued that early closing is the proper method, and I think 8 o'clock is a reasonable hour. We shall probably find, as the people of Victoria did, that the people will become accustomed to 8 o'clock closing, and they will be glad enough to resort to an earlier hour later on. The prohibitionists in America have many arguments in their favour. To those who have studied the industrial side of affairs in America, there is no doubt that greater efficiency has been manifested in many of the industries.

The PREMIER: Those workers who have shown more efficiency are not getting higher wages as a result.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is quite another question. It would naturally follow, if they were paid by results—which is the doctrine I always stand for—that they would get greater pay. At the same time,

I do not think the Premier is correct in his statement. I read recently a statement by that famous automobile manufacturer, Mr. Ford, where he has stated that his works diagrams clearly show that, whereas he used to attain maximum efficiency on Tuesday morning—that was giving the workers Monday to overcome the effects of an orgy over the week-end—he now gets maximum efficiency within an hour and a-half of starting on Monday morning. Seeing that Mr. Ford's works are carried on on the system of payment by results, it must follow that his workers have achieved higher wages since prohibition was carried.

The PREMIER: Since 1920 there has been a great wage-slaughtering campaign in America.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I do not wish to introduce the wage question into the matter. It must be admitted that if prohibition were accepted by the people in a proper sense, if they were prepared to agree that it would eliminate many evils which attack humanity so much to-day, and for which liquor is so much responsible, no man could argue that the prohibition of liquor is anything but a desirable thing. But human nature is human nature, and I agree with the arguments that the best way to bring about reform is by a gradual restriction of the hours, teaching people by habit that they can do without liquor and its evil effects. I wish to conclude by pointing out that the reason why this amendment has been introduced by the hon. member for Logan is simply to place on record the method whereby we believe the question should be determined—not by the direction of any Government, but by the determination of the people. This is above all things a question which ought to be completely entrusted to the people.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I quite admit that the amendment appears to be somewhat crude, and that certain words have been left out which should have been in. Although I am half inclined to think that I drafted the amendment all right, still the words are not there, and I accept the responsibility. I would like to amend the amendment by inserting, after the words "a poll shall be taken," the words "in the month of October in every third year." That would make the amendment perfectly clear.

The HOME SECRETARY: That would give you two polls every third October. You are making no provision in the amendment for the repeal of the October poll as it exists to-day, and you propose to delete from my clause the power to repeal the triennial October poll.

Mr. KING: I do not see it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Let me explain it. In section 191A provision exists for taking a triennial poll every third October on three questions—nationalisation, prohibition, and continuance. In the clause under discussion, that poll is being repealed. Under the amendment the hon. member strikes out the repealing words, and he now suggests that in the same month every three years these other three questions are to be submitted to the people at the same time, the only difference being the reduction of hours. That would mean that we would have two polls in the same month in the same year.

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

The HOME SECRETARY: I move the insertion after the word "repealed," on line 45, of the words—

"Except for the purposes of giving effect to the provisions of the said section 191A, in the event of any of the resolutions therein mentioned being carried at the poll in October, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 12—"Amendment of section 204; Railway refreshment-rooms"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

#### REPORT STAGE.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): I beg to move—

"That the Bill, as amended, be now taken into consideration."

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oakey*): I would like to ask the Minister when it is intended to give effect to the Bill. At what date is early closing meant to apply?

The HOME SECRETARY: As soon as ever assent has been obtained to the Bill, it will automatically come into operation.

Question put and passed.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 23rd August.

The House adjourned at 9.23 p.m.