Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 1923

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THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER, 1923.

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

CITY OF BRISBANE BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*), (who on rising was received with "Hear, hears!"), said: It does not often fall to the lot of an Assistant Minister to have the opportunity of introducing a Bill of this importance. Notwithstanding that on two previous occasions attempts have been made to formulate a Bill to provide for an amalgamation of the local authorities operating for the welfare of the city and metropolitan areas, so far they have been practically failures. This Bill has been drafted after very mature consideration, and not, as the newspapers would have the public to believe, drawn in a hurry just to meet the requests of a certain section of the community. This Bill has been formulated after seven or eight years of organising to bring about something that will be of benefit to Brisbane. In my remarks this morning I intend to place before the people of the

metropolitan area the whole situation showing the liabilities, assets, and the complications which make it necessary that such a Bill should be put into operation.

The Bill is simple in its interpretation and can be easily understood by any layman who desires to peruse it, and I am sure that for that reason it will be welcomed by this House. I have had prepared a number of tables which will be of interest to hon. members, but as they are too lengthy to read I desire, before proceeding further, to obtain permission to have them inserted in "Hansard" without reading them.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Give us some idea of what they are.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has consulted me in regard to the tables, and I am satisfied that they will be of interest to the House.

Mr. MOORE: I do not object to their being printed in "Hansard," but I want to know what they are about.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the tables be taken as read?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: The city of Brisbane was established under the Constitution of 1859, and included South Brisbane and Kangaroo Point. At that time there were four wards. At a later date, Mr Pugh, who was an alderman for Kangaroo Point, brought in a Bill for redistribution and further representation, and six wards were created. Later, there was a dispute regarding South Brisbane, and South Brisbane refused to remain within the city of Brisbane. There was an Act passed in 1878 by Sir Samuel Griffith. The object of the measure was, firstly, to provide power to compel the institution of local government by localities which had refrained from adopting it, preferring to let the State pay for their services; and, secondly, to extend compulsorily the municipality of Brisbane. It is very important that we should appreciate the fact that this Bill of 1878 made it compulsory to extend the municipality of Brisbane, but in 1879 Sir Thomas McIlwraith passed the Divisional Boards Act. A number of small local authorities were established under the Divisional Boards Act in the metropolitan area in contravention to the Act of 1878, and thereby created inconveniences of which there is such a multiplicity in connection with the metropolitan area to-day. Instead of Brisbane developing under a uniform system, it has developed with all sorts of prejudices and inconveniences, and little parochial jealousies have crept in, making Brisbane the irregular city which it is to-day. There is nothing completed in any of the localities—we can see drainage work here and there not completed and improvements only half done. That is the result of the chaotic state which exists through a number of different local authorities operating in the metropolitan area of Brisbane. The tables I have prepared show the number of people on the rolls and the number of people living in the metropolitan area. No. 1 sets forth the various city electorates, and shows that there are 149,593 persons entitled to vote as at 12th May, 1923, in the proposed new area, or a quota of 7,479 for each electorate—

STATE ELECTORATES TO BE COMPRISED IN THE SCHEME.

Electorate.	No. on roll, 12th May, 1923.
Brisbane	7,079
Bulimba	8,297
Buranda	7,276
Enoggera	7,971
Fortitude Valley ..	7,081
Ithaca	7,337
Kelvin Grove	6,916
Kurilpa	6,915
Logan	8,089
Maree	7,368
Merthyr	7,701
Nundah	7,429
Oxley	7,956
Paddington	7,025
Sandgate	7,699
South Brisbane ..	7,199
Toombul	7,559
Toowong	8,029
Windsor	7,667
Wynnum (Wynnum Division only, say)	7,000
	149,593
Quota	7,479

No. 2 sets forth the population of the proposed Greater Brisbane area according to the statistics of the various local authorities, which is computed to be 220,451—

POPULATION OF PROPOSED GREATER BRISBANE AREA.

Local Authority.		Population.
Cities of—		
Brisbane	42,636	
South Brisbane ..	37,172	
		79,808
Towns of—		
Hamilton	8,874	
Ithaca	20,919	
Sandgate	6,277	
Toowong	10,008	
Windsor	18,262	
Wynnum	8,357	
		72,697
Shires of—		
Balmoral	9,030	
Belmont	1,361	
Coorparoo	6,632	
Enoggera	3,985	
Kedron	5,843	
Moggill	1,097	
Sherwood	6,612	
Stephens	11,506	
Taringa	5,050	
Toombul	13,568	
Yeerongpilly	3,262	
		67,946
Total		220,451

That shows that this Greater Brisbane scheme is gigantic in its proportions, because it deals with really a fourth of the population of the State, and proves how important the Bill is.

We then have to consider the question of the finances. That was the greatest obstacle we met with in arriving at a solution with regard to the Bill. At the present time the

local authorities involved have very great financial obligations. Some ratepayers are handicapped and others are really groaning under the financial burdens which exist to-day. We think that relief can be given by centralisation of administration and unification of work, and in this respect I think the Bill will be for the benefit of the whole of the metropolitan area. Of course, it is not to be expected that this Bill will bring about all that is desired by each local authority. Like many other innovations it will be attended with a considerable amount of inconvenience to the people who will have to come under its operation.

A further table which I wish to include shows the indebtedness of the local authorities to the Queensland Government. The city of Brisbane has not borrowed money from the Government, but most of the other municipalities involved in this Bill have done so. The total borrowing from the Treasury, however, does not exceed £750,000, which is a very small amount—I think the exact amount is somewhere in the vicinity of £691,000. That is owing to the Treasurer by the different local authorities, with varying rates of interest and periods of repayment; but I will deal with that matter later. I wish to have that table also included in "Hansard"—

STATEMENT SHOWING THE LOAN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNCILS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

Purpose of Loan.	Rate of Interest.	Present Indebtedness.	Amount Approved but not yet Advanced.	Total.	Annual Payment.
	%	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
CITIES.					
SOUTH BRISBANE—					
Reserve at West End ..	4	1,780 8 0	..	1,780 8 0	146 11 6
Rat-proofing certain wharves	5½	1,500 0 0	3,722 0 0	5,222 0 0	520 4 10
		3,280 8 0	3,722 0 0	7,002 8 0	666 16 4
TOWNS.					
HAMILTON—					
Forming and metalling streets, small drainage works, and concrete channelling	5½	8,813 12 10	..	8,813 12 10	1,326 13 4
Repairing road	4	592 13 6	..	592 13 6	1,232 18 4
Water channelling and footpath works	5½	9,800 0 0	200 0 0	10,000 0 0	996 5 0
Extensions to electric light scheme	5½	6,000 0 0	..	6,000 0 0	488 15 0
Electric light and power scheme	5½	14,184 8 4	..	14,184 8 4	1,221 17 6
Drainage, Oriel road ..	5½	..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	206 7 6
Drainage and concrete channelling	5½	25,063 11 0	..	25,063 11 0	1,788 11 8
		64,454 5 8	3,200 0 0	67,654 5 8	7,261 8 4
ITHACA—					
Street channelling works	4	1,494 11 11	..	1,494 11 11	369 17 6
Metalling main roads ..	5½	4,523 14 2	..	4,523 14 2	796 0 0
Improvements to parks	5½	1,500 0 0	500 0 0	2,000 0 0	162 18 4
Purchase of park land ..	4	1,584 17 8	..	1,584 17 8	142 11 8
Reconstructing culverts, Baroona road	4	311 9 0	..	311 9 0	26 14 8
Purchase of land for parks	5½	900 12 10	..	900 12 10	81 9 2
Part cost of concrete bridge over Enoggera Creek	4	2,629 0 9	..	2,629 0 9	203 17 10
Ditto	5½	1,175 16 6	..	1,175 16 6	103 2 4
Ditto	4	194 0 9	..	194 0 9	14 15 6
Drainage works ..	4	11,646 2 6	..	11,646 2 6	754 12 2
Ditto	4	1,052 18 8	..	1,052 18 8	64 9 8
Ditto	5½	5,000 0 0	..	5,000 0 0	343 19 2
		32,013 4 9	500 0 0	32,513 4 9	3,064 8 0
SANDGATE—					
Roadmaking machinery	5½	2,592 10 0	..	2,592 10 0	343 18 9
Road improvements ..	5½	2,445 13 2	4,554 6 10	7,000 0 0	928 13 4
Road works	4	1,750 5 4	..	1,750 5 4	333 18 4
Sanitary depôt and working plant	5½	1,992 18 8	..	1,992 18 8	331 13 4
Erecting town hall ..	4	2,404 12 1	..	2,404 12 1	285 3 4
Protection of foreshore	4	612 13 6	..	612 13 6	50 7 6
Drainage work	5½	512 0 1	..	512 0 1	44 16 0
Construction of sea-wall at Brighton	5½	3,920 19 8	..	3,920 19 8	273 10 0
Protection of foreshore	4	2,183 10 10	..	2,183 10 10	126 7 2
		18,415 3 4	4,554 6 10	22,969 10 2	2,718 7 9

STATEMENT SHOWING THE LOAN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNCILS TO THE GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Purpose of Loan.	Rate of Interest.	Present Indebtedness.	Amount Approved but not yet Advanced.	Total.	Annual Payment.
	%	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
TOOWONG—					
Stone-crushing machinery	5½	..	2,250 0 0	2,250 0 0	298 10 0
Concrete channelling ..	4	22 12 6	..	22 12 6	9 14 2
Metalling roads ..	4	862 0 2	..	862 0 2	369 17 6
Ditto	4	1,195 13 5	..	1,195 13 5	295 18 0
Alterations and repairs to roads	4	278 4 7	..	278 4 7	196 1 0
Brick and concrete drains	4	946 13 5	..	946 13 5	116 15 4
Purchases of park land	4	3,006 16 0	..	3,006 16 0	301 4 2
Ditto	4	3,995 8 1	..	3,995 8 1	388 19 8
Ditto	4	258 13 2	..	258 13 2	22 14 6
Reconstructing culverts, Baroona road	4	311 9 0	..	311 9 0	26 14 8
Concrete drain, Milton road	5½	18,690 14 7	..	18,690 14 7	1,303 15 0
Sewers and concrete channelling	4	4,170 6 1	..	4,170 6 1	284 12 4
		33,738 11 0	2,250 0 0	35,988 11 0	3,614 16 4
WINDSOR—					
Water channelling ..	5½	1,944 13 9	..	1,944 13 9	855 17 6
Metalling roads ..	5½	1,882 9 8	..	1,882 9 8	297 3 6
Water channelling ..	5½	7,539 10 0	..	7,539 10 0	1,326 13 4
Bridge over Breakfast Creek, Bowen Bridge road	4	2,846 13 10	..	2,846 13 10	285 3 4
Ditto	4	483 6 5	..	483 6 5	47 1 0
Purchase of park land ..	4	3,322 1 2	..	3,322 1 2	285 3 4
Concrete bridge over Breakfast Creek	4	2,376 13 8	..	2,376 13 8	199 12 4
Ditto	5½	868 14 5	..	868 14 5	81 9 2
Ditto	5½	301 7 11	..	301 7 11	25 18 8
Drainage works ..	4	5,738 16 7	..	5,738 16 7	376 8 4
Branch drains, Albion ..	4	261 19 1	..	261 19 1	16 7 10
Wooloowin drainage ..	5½	30,488 6 0	..	30,488 6 0	2,111 18 0
Wooloowin drainage—Extension	5½	993 2 1	..	993 2 1	68 15 10
Swan Hill drainage ..	5½	300 0 0	..	300 0 0	20 12 9
Ditto	5½	9,502 2 4	..	9,502 2 4	662 16 2
Branch drainage, Albion	5½	3,796 1 4	..	3,796 1 4	270 11 2
Drainage works, West Ward	5½	9,931 0 10	..	9,931 0 10	687 18 4
Ditto	5½	10,090 0 0	7,950 0 0	18,040 0 0	1,241 0 0
Electric light	5½	16,500 0 0	8,500 0 0	25,000 0 0	2,036 9 2
Drainage scheme, Bowen street	5½	..	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	412 15 0
Continuation of drains..	5½	..	400 0 0	400 0 0	27 10 4
		109,166 19 1	22,850 0 0	132,016 19 1	11,337 5 1
WYNNUM—					
Road works	5½	750 0 0	3,100 0 0	3,850 0 0	510 15 4
Metalling Tingal road ..	5½	1,350 0 0	100 0 0	1,450 0 0	192 7 4
Road metal crushing plant	5½	1,000 0 0	..	1,000 0 0	132 13 4
Road works, No. 2 Ward	4	342 2 6	..	342 2 6	123 5 10
Improvements to Jetty at Manly, &c.	4	947 12 0	..	947 12 0	295 18 0
Road filling	4	388 9 10	..	388 9 10	87 5 6
Electric light	5½	16,500 0 0	4,500 0 0	21,000 0 0	1,710 12 6
Sewer, retaining wall, and sea wall	5½	2,150 0 0	..	2,150 0 0	175 2 8
Sea walls, Wynnum South	4	560 1 6	..	560 1 6	56 2 2
Drainage works ..	4	1,379 9 11	..	1,379 9 11	121 4 0
Sea wall and drainage works	4	1,073 2 4	..	1,073 2 4	92 2 6
Drainage works ..	4	830 10 2	..	830 10 2	71 5 10
Ditto	4	950 13 4	..	950 13 4	79 17 0
Ditto	5½	4,840 14 0	..	4,840 14 0	423 11 8
Concrete latrines ..	5½	940 2 2	..	940 2 2	68 15 10
Concrete bridge at Fox street	5½	2,877 9 10	..	2,877 9 10	205 6 10
Retaining walls, Wynnum Creek	5½	5,621 7 10	..	5,621 7 10	392 2 2
Sea wall, culverts, &c. ..	4	4,120 6 0	..	4,120 6 0	242 12 0
Road works	5½	..	16,150 0 0	16,150 0 0	2,142 11 4
		46,622 1 5	23,850 0 0	70,472 1 5	7,123 11 10

STATEMENT SHOWING THE LOAN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNCILS TO THE GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Purpose of Loan.	Rate of Interest.	Present Indebtedness.	Amount Approved but not yet Advanced.	Total.	Annual Payment.
	%	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
BALMORAL—					
Erection of bridges, &c.	5½	200 0 0	3,650 0 0	3,850 0 0	510 15 4
Electric light	5½	2,000 0 0	..	2,000 0 0	162 18 4
Bridge over Norman Creek	4	67 15 10	..	67 15 10	142 11 8
Electric light	5½	17,128 11 9	..	17,128 11 9	1,454 0 8
Purchase and alteration of steamer "Hetherington"	5½	7,000 0 0	2,200 0 0	9,200 0 0	769 14 8
Drainage works ..	5½	13,050 0 0	3,750 0 0	16,800 0 0	1,155 14 0
Ditto	5½	..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	206 7 6
Drainage and road works	5½	..	4,350 0 0	4,350 0 0	577 2 0
		39,446 7 7	16,950 0 0	56,396 7 7	4,979 4 2
BELMONT—					
Construction of tramway	4	18,724 14 2	..	18,724 14 2	1,089 11 8
COORPAROO—					
Purchase of recreation reserve	4	440 16 10	..	440 16 10	44 3 0
Electric light	5½	14,184 8 4	..	14,184 8 4	1,221 17 6
Extensions, electric light	5½	3,100 0 0	..	3,100 0 0	252 10 6
Drainage works ..	5½	5,858 13 7	..	5,858 13 7	490 4 2
Water channelling ..	5½	..	20,000 0 0	20,000 0 0	1,375 16 8
Drainage works ..	4	9,580 16 4	..	9,580 16 4	884 0 4
Concrete bridge, Logan road	5½	973 10 10	..	973 10 10	81 9 2
Drainage scheme ..	5½	2,171 7 9	..	2,171 7 9	157 10 8
Drainage works, Eastleigh estate	5½	9,000 0 0	..	9,000 0 0	619 2 6
Drainage scheme, Pembroke road	5½	10,000 0 0	..	10,000 0 0	687 18 4
Extension, electric light	5½	..	1,900 0 0	1,900 0 0	154 15 6
		55,309 13 8	21,900 0 0	77,209 13 8	5,969 18 4
ENOGGERA—					
Road works	5½	3,750 0 0	250 0 0	4,000 0 0	330 13 4
Road-making machinery	5½	1,850 0 0	..	1,850 0 0	245 8 8
Purchase of park land ..	4	1,314 8 4	..	1,314 8 4	110 7 6
Concrete bridge over Breakfast Creek	4	2,629 0 9	..	2,629 0 9	203 17 10
Ditto	5½	1,175 16 6	..	1,175 16 6	103 2 4
Bridge, Enoggera Creek	4	665 0 6	..	665 0 6	75 16 3
Street works	5½	..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	398 0 0
		11,384 6 1	3,250 0 0	14,634 6 1	1,667 5 11
KEDRON—					
Purchase of gravel pit ..	5½	110 19 3	..	110 19 3	93 13 4
Metalling Gympie road	5½	1,055 10 6	..	1,055 10 6	185 14 8
Bridge over Downfall Creek, &c.	4	210 12 9	..	210 12 9	147 19 0
Concrete and timber bridge over Downfall Creek	5½	596 9 6	..	596 9 6	119 8 0
Bridge over creek at Gallagher's tannery	5½	986 14 11	..	986 14 11	86 7 0
Purchase of park land ..	5½	959 11 8	..	959 11 8	81 9 2
Bridge over Downfall Creek, Virginia	5½	493 7 8	..	493 7 8	40 14 8
Road and street works ..	5½	..	2,250 0 0	2,250 0 0	298 10 0
		4,413 6 3	2,250 0 0	6,663 6 3	1,053 15 10
MOGGILL—					
Concrete bridge over Cubberla Creek	4	581 6 8	..	581 6 8	49 18 2
SHERWOOD—					
Purchase of park land ..	5½	..	1,700 0 0	1,700 0 0	138 9 8
Electric light	5½	9,456 5 8	..	9,456 5 8	814 11 8
Completion of electric light	5½	7,301 11 4	..	7,301 11 4	610 18 8
		16,757 17 0	1,700 0 0	18,457 17 0	1,564 0 0

STATEMENT SHOWING THE LOAN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNCILS TO THE GOVERNMENT—*continued.*

Purpose of Loan.	Rate of Interest.	Present Indebtedness.	Amount Approved but not yet Advanced.	Total.	Annual Payment.
	%	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
STEPHENS—					
Alterations Junction Area, drainage	5½	..	500 0 0	500 0 0	40 14 8
Sewerage scheme on Ekibin road to Cracknell road	5½	2,249 14 4	..	2,249 14 4	193 16 0
Concrete bridge on Logan road	4	276 17 11	..	276 17 11	35 13 0
Pipe drain, Dudley street	4	275 5 10	..	275 5 10	31 8 10
Sewers through St. Kilda street and Thompson Estate	4	1,277 19 4	..	1,277 19 4	131 19 8
Concrete sewer from Dudley street	4	836 9 4	..	836 9 4	83 16 0
Sewers, Thompson Estate	4	1,001 12 3	..	1,001 12 3	90 2 2
Marquis street drainage	5½	1,557 13 4	..	1,557 13 4	130 6 8
Sewerage	5½	6,216 13 1	..	6,216 13 1	513 3 10
Purchase of recreation reserve	4	355 0 3	..	355 0 3	31 3 8
Electric light	5½	14,184 8 6	..	14,184 8 6	1,221 17 6
Extension electric light	5½	2,960 6 3	..	2,960 6 3	244 7 6
Concrete bridge, Logan road	5½	1,460 6 4	..	1,460 6 4	122 3 8
Concrete bridge, Juliette street	5½	3,600 0 0	250 0 0	3,850 0 0	313 12 4
Water channelling ..	5½	..	10,000 0 0	10,000 0 0	1,326 13 4
Storm water drain ..	5½	..	500 0 0	500 0 0	40 14 8
Sectional sewers ..	5½	..	490 0 0	490 0 0	39 18 4
		36,252 6 9	11,740 0 0	47,992 6 9	4,591 11 10
TARINGA—					
Purchase of park land ..	4	365 3 0	..	365 3 0	32 1 8
TOOMBUL—					
Improvements, Nudgee Waterhole	5½	212 10 1	..	212 10 1	39 16 0
Water channels, Kalinga Division	5½	7,563 11 0	..	7,563 11 0	1,194 0 0
Ditto	5½	2,304 19 3	195 0 9	2,500 0 0	331 13 4
Electric light, Kalinga and Nundah	5½	14,100 0 0	11,900 0 0	26,000 0 0	2,117 18 4
Concrete drains ..	5½	6,801 6 1	..	6,801 6 1	481 10 10
Concrete drains (No. 1 Division)	4	9,499 15 8	..	9,499 15 8	575 18 2
Barrel drain, Nundah ..	5½	4,399 0 4	..	4,399 0 4	316 8 10
Drainage works—					
Nundah	5½	1,338 16 6	..	1,338 16 6	96 6 2
Kalinga	5½	6,788 17 11	..	6,788 17 11	484 8 6
Nundah	5½	493 2 2	..	493 2 2	34 7 10
Kalinga	5½	872 8 3	127 11 9	1,000 0 0	68 15 10
Purchase of recreation reserve	4	607 7 7	..	607 7 7	47 3 1
Water channelling—					
Kalinga	5½	..	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	796 0 0
Nundah	5½	..	5,000 0 0	5,000 0 0	663 6 8
Baths	5½	..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	244 7 6
		54,981 14 10	26,222 12 6	81,204 7 4	7,492 1 1
YEERONGPILLY	..	..	..	Nil	..
METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD	..	3,407,476 9 3	187,885 3 4	3,595,361 12 7	196,507 11 0
TOTAL	..	3,953,383 18 6	332,824 2 8	4,286,208 1 2	260,783 13 4

These include liabilities of the various shires, ranging from Taringa, £365, with an annual repayment of £32 1s. 8d., to the town of Windsor, which owes the Government at present £109,166, and a further amount of £22,850 which the Government have agreed to advance, makes a total of about £132,000, with an annual repayment by that council to the Government of £11,337. The next highest is Toombul. Then follow Coorparoo, Hamilton, Wynnum, and others in diminishing amounts. This table applies only to liabilities by various local authorities

to the Government, other than the Victoria Bridge Board:—

LIABILITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1922.

Local Authority.	LIABILITIES.														
	Sundry Creditors.			Fixed Loans.			Temporary Loans.			Other Liabilities.			Total Liabilities.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Brisbane ..	8,680	16	2	849,633	3	7	*111,730	0	11	40,567	9	1	1,010,611	9	9
South Brisbane ..	250	0	0	302,341	5	0	28,968	12	11	8,617	17	7	340,177	15	6
Hamilton ..	4,633	9	3	62,291	14	0	7,316	0	9	3,796	1	1	78,037	5	1
Ithaca	..			30,373	0	7	11,970	5	1	100	0	0	42,443	5	8
Sandgate ..	..			13,889	16	6	3,991	9	11	70	7	0	17,951	13	5
Toowong ..	..			34,558	3	0	3,341	11	10	102	7	6	38,002	2	4
Windsor ..	3,452	1	11	86,278	17	10	14,696	2	4	2,985	2	0	107,412	4	1
Wynnum ..	..			31,869	0	10	7,224	17	10	2,208	5	4	41,302	4	0
Balmoral ..	..			22,514	1	6	6,710	16	7	449	1	0	29,673	19	1
Belmont ..	..			19,052	4	0	337	15	3	25	0	0	19,414	19	3
Coorparoo ..	..			42,406	6	6	1,731	9	4	2,275	3	8	46,412	19	6
Enoggera ..	..			9,652	15	7	2,905	11	11	1,079	8	3	13,637	15	9
Kedron	..			4,660	19	0	4,503	7	4	1,239	14	2	10,404	0	6
Moggill	..			594	3	0	765	19	5	..			1,360	2	5
Sherwood ..	..			16,996	12	8	506	7	6	517	14	2	18,020	14	4
Stephens ..	653	10	0	39,405	0	1	3,406	16	8	3,043	19	7	46,509	6	4
Taringa	267	4	6	373	14	4	2,496	17	1	191	11	9	3,328	17	8
Toombul ..	..			41,525	17	1	5,311	18	0	2,388	1	6	49,225	16	7
Yeerongpilly ..	..			..			678	3	3	..			678	3	3
Total 1922 ..	£17,937	1	10	1,608,416	15	1	218,594	3	11	69,656	13	8	1,914,604	14	6
Total 1918 ..	7,125	13	8	1,155,425	1	6	100,570	2	4	15,547	8	10	1,278,668	6	4
Increase 1922..	10,811	8	2	452,991	13	7	118,024	1	7	54,109	4	10	635,936	8	2

* Including £53,861 14s. spent on Loan Works to be refunded to General Account.

I would like hon. members to analyse very closely the statement of liabilities by the various local bodies. There are other liabilities by way of debentures amounting to £1,591,359, with annual repayments of £121,854. Of that amount the city of Brisbane owes £1,211,959, the city of South Brisbane £339,400, Taringa £20,000, Hamilton £10,000, and the shire of Stephens £10,000.

DEBENTURES.

Local Authority.	Interest.	Amount Issued.	Annual Payment.
		£	£ s. d.
Brisbane	3½ per cent.	30,500	
	4 per cent.	193,200	
	4½ per cent.	166,618	
	5 per cent.	419,250	
	5½ per cent.	394,391	
	6½ per cent.	8,000	
		£1,211,959	89,509 12 11
South Brisbane	4 per cent. Debentures	184,400	15,534 0 11
	5 per cent. Commonwealth Bank	145,000	12,208 12 8
		339,400	27,742 13 7
Taringa	5½ per cent. Commonwealth Bank	20,000 (15 years)	1,975 7 8
Hamilton	5½ per cent. Commonwealth Bank	10,000 (10 years)	1,313 8 10
Stephens	5½ per cent. Commonwealth Bank	10,000 (10 years)	1,313 8 10
		£1,591,359	£121,854 10 10

The next schedule will show the debt of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, which is very extensive. Its growth has been very rapid, and to-day we find that its liability to the Government amounts to £3,595,361. Further amounts are owing on debentures.

TOTAL INDEBTEDNESS OF WATER AND SEWERAGE BOARD AS ON 30TH JUNE, 1923.

	£	s.	d.
Balance of Government loans	3,407,476	9	3
Other loan indebtedness—			
London Loan	1,000,000	0	0
London Loan	500,000	0	0
	£4,907,476	0	0

The total liabilities of the local authorities to the Government, including the liability of the Water and Sewerage Board and of the Victoria Bridge Board (£43,285 12s.), amount to £4,286,208, and the total liabilities from all sources of the city of Brisbane and the various local authorities intended to be brought under the Act amount to £5,920,852. I am not dealing with the Tramway Trust because I take it that, although it has liabilities by way of debentures or loans—whichever method is adopted in the payment of the purchase money—it has also assets to correspond and is revenue producing, and there will be no claim for assistance in finance from that undertaking in the elaboration of the scheme.

The rates of the local authorities proposed to be included under the Act comprise a very important matter. I have a table showing the rates imposed by the several municipalities, which I would also like included in "Hansard":—

Local Authority.	No. of Wards.	Rates Levied, 1923.		
		General.	Separate or Special.	Cleansing.
		s. d.		£ *s. d.*
CITIES.				
Brisbane (all Wards)	7	0 7½	..	1 18 0
South Brisbane (all Wards)	4	1 0	..	2 2 0
TOWNS.				
Hamilton	1	0 6	3½d. Loan ½d. Lighting 1d. Parks ½d. Health	2 7 6
Ithaca (all Wards)	3	0 6	1d. Lighting 1½d. Loan 1d. Water channelling ½d. Health	2 2 0
Sandgate	1	0 9	2d. Loan	1 18 0
Toowong	3	0 7	2½d. Loan ½d. Parks and Health ½d. Lighting	1 17 6
Windsor	4	..	..	
North Ward	..	0 7½	1½d. Loan 2½d. Loan (drainage)	1 17 0
South Ward	..	0 7¾	1½d. Loan 2d. Loan (drainage) 1d. (Benefited area)	1 17 0
Central Ward	..	0 7¾	1½d. Loan 5¾d. (Swan Hill)	1 17 0
West Ward	..	0 9½	1½d. Loan 2½d. (Drainage)	1 17 0
Wynnum, Ward No. 1	4	0 7½	3½d. Loan 1½d. Lighting	1 17 6
Wynnum, Ward No. 2	..	0 7½	3½d. Loan ½d. Lighting	1 17 6
Wynnum, Ward No. 3	..	0 8	2½d. Loan 1½d. Lighting	1 17 6
Wynnum, Ward No. 4	..	0 8	..	1 17 6
SHIRES.				
Balmoral, Division 1	3	0 8¼	2½d. Loan ½d. Lighting ½d. Health	2 0 0
Balmoral, Division 2	..	0 8	1½d. Loan ¾d. Lighting ½d. Health ½d. Park 1d. Ferry	2 0 0
Balmoral, Division 3	..	0 8	½d. Loan ½d. Health 1d. Ferry	2 0 0
Belmont	..	0 4	1s. Tramway	
Coorparoo, Divisions 1, 2, and 3	3	0 7½	2d. Loan	2 3 6
Enoggera, Division 1	3	0 8	2d. Loan 1½d Light ½d. Health	2 3 4
Enoggera, Division 2	..	0 10	1½d. Loan ¼d. Health	..
Enoggera, Division 3	..	0 6¼	¾d. Loan ¼d. Health	2 3 4
Kedron, Division 1	3	0 5¾	½d. Loan	1 12 6
Kedron, Division 2	..	0 4¾	½d. Loan	1 12 6
Kedron, Division 3	..	0 4¾	½d. Loan	1 12 6
Moggill, Divisions 1, 2, and 3	3	0 6	..	..
Sherwood, Division 1	3	0 6½	2d. Loan (Darra Benefited area) 1d. Electric light (Benefited area) ½d. Health	2 0 0
Sherwood, Division 2	..	0 5½	1d. Loan (Oxley Benefited area) 1d. Electric light (Benefited area) ½d. Health ½d. Park	2 0 0
Sherwood, Division 3	..	0 6½	1d. Electric light (Benefited area) ½d. Health ½d. Park	2 0 0

Local Authority.	No. of Wards.	Rates Levied, 1923.		
		General.	Separate or Special.	Cleansing.
		s. d.		£ s. d.
Stephens, Division 1	3	0 7½	1d. Electric light	..
			½d. Loan, Bridge (Benefited area)	
			2½d. Junction drainage (Benefited area)	
			¼d. Special (drainage)	
			½d. Health	
			1d. Drainage (Benefited area)	
			1½d. Drainage (Benefited area)	
			⅛d. Recreation Reserve (Benefited area)	
			1d. Drainage ..	
			½d. Logan Road Bridge (Benefited area)	
			⅜d. Juliette Street Bridge (Benefited area)	
Stephens, Division 2	..	0 7½	⅛d. Loan (Bridge) (Benefited area)	1 13 0
			1d. Electric Light	
			½d. Health	
			7d. Drainage (Benefited area)	
Stephens, Division 3	..	0 7½	1d. Electric light	1 13 0
			½d. Health	
			⅜d. Moorooka water extension (Benefited area)	
			¼d. Fairfield water extension (Benefited area)	
Taringa, Divisions 1, 2, and 3 ..	3	0 8	2d. Street lighting	2 0 0
Toombul	4			
Kalinga Division	..	0 6	1d. Lighting	1 17 6
			1½d. Loan	
			3½d. Separate loan	
Nundah Division	..	0 6	¾d. Lighting	1 17 6
			1½d. Loan	
Nudgee Division	..	0 4½	½d. Loan	1 17 0
Port Brisbane Division ..	..	0 4½	..	1 17 0
Yeerongpilly, Division 1	..	0 6	4d. Water (Rocklea Benefited area)	
Division 2	..	0 7		
Division 3	..	0 6		

I have here also a table showing the water and sewerage rates payable on land of different values:—

Valuation.	Improved Land.	Unimproved Land.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£20	1 6 6	0 17 8
£100	4 11 8	3 1 0
£200	6 11 4	4 7 6
£300	8 3 2	5 8 8
£400	10 13 2	7 2 0

The Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board rate is a heavy burden, but it is necessary, because we must appreciate that the health of the community is more to us than the inconvenience imposed in paying that rate—even if it may be inflicting a hardship for the time being on the people getting the benefit of a healthy community by such a system.

The next table I desire to include shows the receipts and expenditure of the various local authorities.

GREATER BRISBANE, 1922.

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE.

Local Authority.	Rates.	Cleansing.	Other.	Total Receipts.	Expenditure.
	£	£	£	£	£
Brisbane	227,808	38,978	49,708	316,494	525,990
South Brisbane	68,917	19,292	33,435	121,644	102,795
Hamilton	28,347	5,143	2,814	36,304	37,170
Ithaca	25,801	9,369	4,907	40,077	44,535
Sandgate	11,087	2,955	3,630	17,672	15,740
Toowong	16,486	4,292	2,293	23,071	28,169
Windsor	24,621	8,213	3,411	36,245	56,898
Wynnum	13,129	3,683	1,860	18,672	23,411
Balmoral	12,252	3,354	8,602	24,208	26,948
Belmont	1,538	..	6	1,598	1,401
Coorparoo	9,229	3,793	1,556	14,578	23,745
Enoggera	7,978	1,203	56	9,237	10,334
Kedron	7,005	1,305	170	8,480	9,817
Moggill	1,732	..	96	1,828	1,556
Sherwood	8,129	2,616	3,265	14,010	13,942
Stephens	13,478	4,533	7,796	25,807	30,777
Taringa	6,244	2,050	820	9,114	9,198
Toombul	19,632	6,174	2,627	28,433	30,650
Yeerongpilly	4,566	..	792	5,358	4,604
	£507,979	£116,958	£127,898	£752,830	£997,680

I also desire to include a table showing the administrative expenses of the various local authorities, which amount to £55,618, including £21,593 for the city of Brisbane, down to the Shire of Moggill with £283.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES—METROPOLITAN AREA, 1922.

	£
City of—	
Brisbane	21,593
South Brisbane	9,465
Town of—	
Hamilton	2,615
Ithaca	3,136
Sandgate	986
Toowong	1,859
Windsor	1,973
Wynnum	1,625
Shire of—	
Balmoral	1,982
Belmont	385
Coorparoo	983
Enoggera	886
Kedron	1,096
Moggill	288
Sherwood	1,481
Stephens	1,680
Taringa	1,116
Toombul	1,602
Yeerongpilly	867
	£55,618

That is a very interesting table, and will allow the metropolitan residents to appreciate what the overhead expenses and the multiplicity of control mean to the ratepayers generally.

The next table I intend to include deals with the ratable value of the land.

GREATER BRISBANE.

Local Authority.	Ratable Value.	Total.
Cities of—	£	£
Brisbane	7,959,669	
South Brisbane	1,404,497	
		9,364,166
Towns of—		
Hamilton	563,900	
Ithaca	569,237	
Sandgate	233,229	
Toowong	431,476	
Windsor	588,183	
Wynnum	321,764	
		2,707,789
Shires of—		
Balmoral	317,773	
Belmont	83,119	
Coorparoo	283,630	
Enoggera	212,746	
Kedron	338,218	
Moggill	78,862	
Sherwood	292,769	
Stephens	335,369	
Taringa	214,310	
Toombul	636,207	
Yeerongpilly	178,203	
		2,971,206
		£15,043,161

The ratable value I think in the metropolitan area in some instances must be low, because we have the example of the recent sale of the Centennial Hall land, which was sold for a very high price and was valued at a much lower price, and there were improvements in addition. The total value of the whole of the ratable land within the area is £15,043,161. The table sets forth the value of ratable land in each local authority. We are living under a central form of government, and the aim and ambition of each one should be to engender a moving spirit of advancement in a desire to place the civic government of the metropolitan area under one administration. Queensland has a population somewhere in the vicinity of 800,000, and the electoral divisions proposed to be included under the Bill have a population of at least 200,000 of that number. The area proposed to be included in the scheme has an area of something like 380 square miles, which is the largest area in any greater-city scheme in the world. That is not a serious matter, because the area is so geographically situated that we must include the various shires because in the different shires are people who earn their living in the city and reside more or less in the shires. The area certainly contains some farming land. We quite appreciate that. Take the position of Brisbane ten years ago and the position to-day. Brisbane is advancing faster in proportion than any city in Australia, and provision should have been made in 1878 to extend the boundaries compulsorily without allowing the small shires to grow up and create certain prejudices and certain obligations which have been unnecessarily incurred. To-day we are not tackling the business too soon; we are tackling it late, if anything; and it is better now to tackle this great problem and have a Greater Brisbane scheme than to allow the present state of things to continue. I think the Premier and the Government have been very considerate and have shown a marked spirit of toleration towards the Opposition. The Government appreciate the gigantic proportions to which this scheme is likely to develop, and have agreed merely to introduce the Bill and have my second reading speech delivered and have the policy of the Government on the matter set forth in "Hansard," allowing the people to see what are the ideals of the Government. If the people appreciate the scheme and think that it is workable, then they should throw themselves wholeheartedly into it notwithstanding that some of the shires may suffer a little inconvenience for the time. The smaller portion must give way to the benefits of the great community. As I said before, the Bill is simply worded and does not contain any clauses that cannot be easily understood by a layman. It is divided into two Parts, the first dealing with the preliminary definitions and the second Part dealing with the city charter, setting forth what areas are proposed to be included, what areas shall be abolished, the position of the Joint Boards, the position of the Victoria Bridge Board, and the Shires of Tingalpa and Yeerongpilly, the transfer of property, the position with regard to existing licenses, registrations, and permits, the existing pounds, electric light and power, tramways, the taking over of fire brigades, and the position with regard to cemeteries.

Provision is made whereby the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board will be brought under the jurisdiction of the Greater City Council. A similar provision is also contained in the Bill with respect to the Brisbane Tramway Trust. I notice that the "Courier" is rather favourably disposed to the Bill, but states that, if we impose all these obligations on a new council immediately, the scheme will be unworkable. I would like to point out that when federation was consummated it was not intended that everything intended to be administered by the Federal Parliament should be immediately brought under its jurisdiction. The operations of the Greater Brisbane Council for the first four or five years will be devoted to co-ordinating the various efforts of the municipality, and all the public utilities will be taken over later. It may be that ten or fifteen years will elapse before it is thought advisable to take over the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board and the Brisbane Tramway Trust. The principal function of the scheme is to secure the co-ordination of the whole of the works of the

various local authorities under one head, and, when they are in working order, the Greater Brisbane Council can see where it stands. I do not want the newspapers to mislead the people by saying that, if we bring all these utilities within the scheme immediately, there will be chaos. The idea is to get the scheme working smoothly and then assimilate all these great authorities like the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board and Brisbane Tramway Trust.

Mr. PETRIE: Gradually.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: Yes, gradually. The franchise will be on the adult basis, irrespective of the property qualification, and of course there will be certain disabilities, which are unfortunately necessitated in such cases. The election will be held every three years. The first election will be held in 1925. The Greater Brisbane Council will consist of a mayor and twenty aldermen. There is ample provision contained in the Bill to meet extraordinary vacancies. The payment of salaries to the mayor and aldermen is permitted, and rightly so. It is claimed that we shall not get much of an alderman for £200. Although that is the amount specified in the Bill, it is not a binding amount. After the discussion has taken place to-day and before the House meets again next year, there is no reason why if hon. members are of the opinion that it is desirable to increase that amount so as to secure a better class of man the amount should not be increased. The money will be well spent. The aldermen will not have to devote all their time to the affairs of the Council. As the meetings will be held once a fortnight, the aldermen will be able to pursue their ordinary avocations when the council is not sitting, and a salary of £200 per annum in such circumstances will be ample, as these men will be able to leave their work one day a fortnight to further the interests of the city, and will thereby be able to give their best services to it.

At the present time we find many conflicting authorities in the metropolitan area. That is an important reason why this Bill should be brought into operation as early as possible. We have to-day operating in the metropolitan area the Victoria Bridge Board, the Normanby Bridge Board, the Three-mile Scrub Road Bridge Board, the Metropolitan Electricity Board, the Metropolitan Joint Health Board, the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board, the Brisbane Tramway Trust, the Cemetery Trust, the Brisbane District Pest Destruction Board, the South Coast Crow and Flying Fox Pests Board, ferries and electrical authorities, in addition to the cities of Brisbane and South Brisbane, the towns of Hamilton, Ithaca, Sandgate, Toowong, Windsor, and Wynnum, and the shires of Balmoral, Belmont, Coorparoo, Enoggera, Kedron, Moggill, Sherwood, Stephens, Taringa, and Toombul, and parts of the shires of Tingalpa and Yeerongpilly. We have one authority bordering on another, with a joint road or bridge, contributed to by one and partially contributed to by another, and sometimes involving three or four local authorities. I have referred to this multiplicity of bodies to show that all the work is interwoven and that there is no reason to continue it any longer under the divided control that now exists. The ferries question seriously affects Brisbane. We are now having trouble with the Bulimba ferry. One division of the shire of Balmoral is expected to maintain that ferry. I think that is a mistake. The ferry is used by commercial people and by the public generally as a highway, and should be constituted similarly to our main roads, and should be a charge on the general community. We have the following ferries:—Hamilton, Bulimba, Hawthorn, New Farm, Custom House, Creek street, Edward street, the Gardens, North Quay, Park road, Toowong, St. Lucia, Indooroopilly, and Riverview. And we now have a request and scheme for another bridge across the river. All these matters demand single control so that the work may be done more efficiently.

The following table shows the various joint works in the metropolitan area:—

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE.

Work.	Component Local Authority.	Particulars.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
	BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL.		
ROADS—			
Leopard street	South Brisbane City Council	Not stated	Total maintenance, including lighting and drainage, equally borne by Brisbane and South Brisbane
Vulture street	ditto	ditto	ditto
Hale street	Ithaca Town Council	ditto	Maintenance equally borne by Brisbane and Ithaca, including lighting
Musgrave road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Victoria Park road	ditto	ditto	ditto
L'Estrange terrace	ditto	ditto	ditto
Biggs street	ditto	ditto	ditto
Clyde road	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Bowen Bridge	Windsor Town Council	Borne equally by Windsor and Brisbane City Council	Borne equally by Brisbane and Windsor
Breakfast Creek Bridge	Hamilton Town Council		Borne equally by Brisbane and Hamilton
FERRIES—			
Hawthorn Ferry	Balmoral Shire Council	Not stated	Brisbane City Council maintain landings on city side, otherwise totally maintained by Balmoral
Norman Park Ferry	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bulimba Ferry	ditto	ditto	ditto

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE—*continued.*

Work.	Component Local Authority.	PARTICULARS.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
SOUTH BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Leopard street	Brisbane City Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Brisbane and South Brisbane
Vulture street	ditto	ditto	ditto
Wellington road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Portion of Cornwall street	Stephens Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Stephens and South Brisbane
BRIDGES—			
Norman Creek Bridge	Balmoral Shire Council ..	Cost equally borne by South Brisbane and Balmoral	Maintained equally by Balmoral and South Brisbane. Tramway Co. maintains its roadway
Stanley Bridge	Coorparoo Shire Council ..	Erected by Coorparoo and South Brisbane	Maintained equally by Coorparoo and South Brisbane
Burnett Swamp Bridge	ditto	ditto	Maintained equally by Coorparoo and South Brisbane. Tramway Co. maintains its roadway
Bridge over railway at Dutton Park Station	Stephens Shire Council ..	Erected by Railway Department	Tramway Co. maintains portion of roadway. Remainder equally maintained by Stephens and South Brisbane
Footbridge over Norman Ck., near railway line	Coorparoo Shire Council ..	Carried out by Coorparoo and South Brisbane	Equally borne by Coorparoo and South Brisbane
FERRIES—			
West End and Milton Ferry	Toowong Town Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Toowong and South Brisbane
West End and Toowong Ferry	ditto	ditto	ditto
West End and St. Lucia Ferry	Taringa Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Taringa and South Brisbane
HAMILTON TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Sandgate road (por.)	Windsor Town Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Hamilton and Windsor
Old Sandgate road (por.)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bellevue terrace (por.)	Toombul Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Toombul and Hamilton
Hill street ..	ditto	ditto	ditto
Kitchener road (por.)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Manson rd. (por.)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Schneider road (por.)	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Breakfast Creek Bridge	Brisbane City Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Hamilton and Windsor
ITHACA TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Baroona road ..	Toowong Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Ithaca and Toowong
Boundary road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Hale street ..	Brisbane City Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Brisbane and Ithaca
Victoria Park road	ditto	ditto	ditto
L'Estrange terrace	ditto	ditto	ditto
Waterworks road	Enoggera Shire Council ..	ditto	Former maintained by Enoggera and latter by Ithaca
Simpson's road	ditto	ditto	
BRIDGES—			
Fraser's road Bridge	Enoggera Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained jointly by Ithaca and Enoggera
Normanby Bridge	Windsor and Enoggera Shire Councils	Borne equally by Windsor, Enoggera, and Ithaca	Cost borne equally by Windsor, Enoggera, and Ithaca

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE—*continued.*

Work.	Component Local Authority.	PARTICULARS.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
TOOWONG TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Boomerang street	Brisbane City Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Brisbane and Toowong
Baroona road ..	Ithaca Town Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Ithaca and Toowong
Boundary road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Stanley terrace	Taringa Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Taringa and Toowong
Alpha street ..	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Gailey Road Bridge	Taringa Shire Council ..	ditto	Taringa pays three-fifths and Toowong two-fifths
FERRIES—			
West End and Milton Ferry	South Brisbane City Council	ditto	Maintained equally by South Brisbane and Toowong
West End and Toowong Ferry	ditto	ditto	ditto
WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Kelvin Grove road (por.)	Ithaca Town Council ..	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Ithaca and Windsor
Ditto ..	Enoggera Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained jointly by Windsor and Enoggera
Sandgate road (por.)	Hamilton Town Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Hamilton and Windsor
Bertha street ..	Toombul Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Toombul and Windsor
BRIDGES—			
Bowen Bridge..	Brisbane City Council ..	Cost borne equally by Brisbane and Windsor	Maintained equally by Brisbane and Windsor
Normanby Bridge	Ithaca and Enoggera Shire Councils	Cost borne equally by Ithaca, Enoggera, and Windsor	Maintained equally by Ithaca, Enoggera, and Windsor
Kedron Bridge	Kedron Shire Council ..	Windsor paid two-fifths; Kedron, three-fifths	Maintained equally by Kedron and Windsor
Thistle Bridge	ditto	ditto	ditto
Shaw Bridge ..	ditto	ditto	ditto
Timber bridge at tram terminus	ditto	ditto	ditto
SANDGATE TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Bald Hills ..	Kedron Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Kedron and Sandgate	Maintained equally by Sandgate and Kedron
Sandgate road (20 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
McPherson road (112 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bald Hills Creek road (60 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Bridge over Cabbage-tree Ck. on Brisbane-Sandgate road	Kedron Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Sandgate and Kedron	Maintained equally by Sandgate and Kedron
Bridge over Cabbage-tree Ck. on Sandgate-Zillmere road	ditto	ditto	ditto
WYNNUM TOWN COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Certain boundary roads	Not stated	No particulars furnished	

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE—*continued.*

Work.	Component Local Authority.	PARTICULARS.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
BALMORAL SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Bennett's road (52 chains)	Belmont Shire Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Belmont and Balmoral
Creek road (por.)	ditto	ditto	Agreement between Belmont and Balmoral under consideration (renewal)
BRIDGE—			
Norman Creek Bridge	South Brisbane City Council	Cost equally borne by South Brisbane and Balmoral	Maintained equally by South Brisbane and Balmoral
FERRIES—			
Bulimba Ferry	Brisbane City Council ..	Not stated	Maintained solely by Balmoral except landings on North Brisbane side
Hawthorn Ferry	ditto	ditto	ditto
Norman Park Ferry	Brisbane City Council ..	ditto	Landings on north side are maintained by Brisbane City Council; landings on south side by Balmoral. Ferry is leased.
BELMONT SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Bennett's road (52 chains)	Balmoral Shire Council ..	Not stated	Maintained equally by Balmoral and Belmont
Creek road (por.)	ditto	ditto	Agreement under consideration
Old Ipswich road	Tingalpa Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained jointly by Tingalpa and Belmont
Logan road (por.)	Stephens Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained jointly by Stephens and Belmont
Ditto ..	Stephens and Coorparoo Shire Councils	ditto	Maintained jointly by Stephens, Coorparoo, and Belmont
Ditto ..	Yeerongpilly Shire Council	ditto	Maintained jointly by Yeerongpilly and Belmont
BRIDGES—			
Capalaba Bridge	Tingalpa and Cleveland Shire Councils	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Tingalpa, Belmont, and Cleveland
COORPAROO SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Logan road (por.)	Stephens Shire Council ..	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Coorparoo and Stephens
Ditto ..	Stephens and Belmont Shire Councils	ditto	Maintained jointly by Stephens, Coorparoo, and Belmont
BRIDGES—			
Stanley Bridge	South Brisbane City Council	Erected jointly by South Brisbane and Coorparoo	Maintained equally by Balmoral and South Brisbane
Burnett Swamp Bridge	ditto	ditto	ditto
Concrete bridge on Logan road	Stephens Shire Council ..	Erected jointly by Councils. Coorparoo paid two-fifths, Stephens three-fifths	Totally maintained by Stephens
ENOGGERA SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Waterworks rd.	Ithaca Town Council ..	Not stated	Former road maintained by Enoggera and latter by Ithaca
Simpson's road	ditto	ditto	
Kelvin Grove road	Windsor Town Council ..	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Enoggera and Windsor
Lizzie Lee road	Toowong Town Council ..	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Enoggera and Windsor
BRIDGES—			
McDowall Brge. over Kedron Brook at Sth. Pine road	Kedron Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Enoggera and Kedron	Maintained equally by Enoggera and Kedron
Dawson's parade crossing and bridge over Kedron Brook	Pine Shire Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Pine and Enoggera

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE—*continued.*

Work.	Component Local Authority.	PARTICULARS.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
MOGGILL SHIRE COUNCIL.			
FERRIES—			
Moggill Ferry at Riverview	Moreton Shire Council ..	Not stated	Landings and equipment maintained jointly by Moggill and Moreton. Ferry leased
KEDRON SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
South Pine road (20 chains)	Pine Shire Council	Equally borne by Pine and Kedron	Maintained equally by Pine and Kedron
Cash's Crossing road (56 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bilson road (58 chains)	Toombul Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Kedron and Toombul	..
Bald Hills-Sandgate road (20 chains)	Sandgate Town Council ..	Equally borne by Sandgate and Kedron	Maintained equally by Sandgate and Kedron
McPherson road (112 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bald Hills Ck. road (60 chains)	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Kedron Bridge	Windsor Town Council ..	Windsor paid two-fifths; Kedron, three-fifths	Maintained equally by Windsor and Kedron
Thistle Bridge	ditto	ditto	ditto
Shaw Bridge ..	ditto	ditto	ditto
Timber bridge at tram terminus	ditto	ditto	ditto
McDowall Bridge at South Pine road	Enoggera Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Enoggera and Kedron	Maintained equally by Enoggera and Kedron
Bridge over Pine River at Gympie road	Pine Shire Council	Equally borne by Pine and Kedron	Maintained equally by Pine and Kedron
Bridge over Albany Creek at Cash's Crossing road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bridge over Cabbage-tree Ck. on Brisbane-Sandgate road	Sandgate Town Council ..	Equally borne by Sandgate and Kedron	Maintained equally by Kedron and Sandgate
Bridge over Cabbage-tree Ck. on Sandgate-Zillmere road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Humpybong Bridge on Sandgate-Brisbane road	Toombul Shire Council ..	Equally borne by Kedron and Toombul	Maintained equally by Kedron and Toombul
Brickyard Brge. on Sandgate-Brisbane road	ditto	ditto	ditto
SHERWOOD SHIRE COUNCIL.			
ROADS—			
Road from Oxley Creek to Por. 175, Parish of Oxley	Yeerongpilly Shire Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Sherwood and Yeerongpilly
Main Ipswich road	Moreton Shire Council ..	ditto	Maintained equally by Sherwood and Moreton. (Now proclaimed a Main Road)
BRIDGES—			
Bridge over Oxley Creek on Sherwood road	Yeerongpilly Shire Council	ditto	Maintained equally by Sherwood and Yeerongpilly
FERRIES—			
Chelmer-Yeerongpilly Ferry and Cottage	Taringa Shire Council ..	ditto	Landings, &c., maintained by Taringa and Sherwood. Ferry leased.

STATEMENT OF JOINT WORKS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BRISBANE—*continued.*

Work.	Component Local Authority.	PARTICULARS.	
		Construction Cost.	Maintenance.
	STEPHENS SHIRE COUNCIL.		
ROADS—			
Cornwall street (por.)	South Brisbane City Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Stephens and South Brisbane
Logan road (por.)	Coorparoo Shire Council	ditto	Maintained jointly by Coorparoo and Stephens
Ditto	Belmont Shire Council	ditto	Maintained jointly by Belmont and Stephens
Ditto	Belmont and Coorparoo Shire Councils	ditto	Maintained jointly by Belmont, Coorparoo, and Stephens
Beaudesert and Hamilton roads	Yeerongpilly Shire Council	ditto	Maintained jointly by Yeerongpilly and Stephens
BRIDGES—			
Concrete bridge over Logan road	Coorparoo Shire Council	Erected jointly, Coorparoo paying two-fifths and Stephens three-fifths	Totally maintained by Stephens
	TARINGA SHIRE COUNCIL.		
ROADS—			
Stanley terrace	Toowong Town Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Toowong and Windsor
Alpha street	ditto	ditto	ditto
BRIDGES—			
Gailey Road Bridge	ditto	ditto	Toowong pays two-fifths; Taringa, three-fifths
FERRIES—			
West End - St. Lucia Ferry	South Brisbane City Council	ditto	Maintained equally by Taringa and South Brisbane
Chelmer - Indooroopilly Ferry and cottage	Sherwood Shire Council	ditto	Landings, equipment, &c., maintained equally by Taringa and Sherwood. Ferry leased
	TOOMBUL SHIRE COUNCIL.		
ROADS—			
Bellevue terrace	Hamilton Town Council	Not stated	Maintained equally by Hamilton and Toombul
Hill street	ditto	ditto	ditto
Kitchener road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Manson road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Schneider road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Zillman road	ditto	ditto	ditto
Old Sandgate road	Windsor Town Council	ditto	Maintained equally by Windsor and Toombul
Bertha street	ditto	ditto	ditto
Bilson road	Kedron Shire Council	Equally borne by Kedron and Toombul	Maintained equally by Kedron and Toombul
BRIDGES—			
Humpybong Bridge	ditto	ditto	ditto
Brickyard Bridge	ditto	ditto	ditto
	YEERONGPILLY SHIRE COUNCIL.		
ROADS—			
Beaudesert and Hamilton roads	Stephens Shire Council	Not stated	Maintained jointly by Stephens and Yeerongpilly
Logan road (por.)	Belmont Shire Council	ditto	Maintained jointly by Yeerongpilly and Belmont
Road from Oxley Creek to Por. 175, Parish of Oxley	Sherwood Shire Council	ditto	Maintained equally by Sherwood and Yeerongpilly
BRIDGES—			
Bridge over Oxley Creek on Sherwood road	ditto	ditto	ditto

At the present time we have six engineers operating in the different areas. Four of those engineers could be removed and two could carry out the work efficiently under the control of a single body.

We have no permanant medical officer. The councils retain medical officers at a fee of from £20 to £25 per annum and pay them for their services as required. In Glasgow there is a permanent medical officer and staff —nurses and everything—making for the general welfare and health of the community of a great city. That ought to be done here also.

Mr. KING: Look at the larger sources of revenue available in Glasgow.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: We know that Glasgow has a larger revenue, but we must make a start somewhere. Our revenue is sufficient for us to have a permanent medical officer. As a Government we have a Commissioner of Public Health who is supposed to operate throughout the whole of Queensland. What is he doing? All the time he is keeping the city council up to its obligations, and is not able to give the full attention in the country. Really, the city council has no responsibility, and it puts the responsibility back on to the Public Health Board, which in turn puts it back on the Commissioner; he puts it on to the staff and so on. and by the time a reply comes back from a notice regarding a nuisance that nuisance has probably disappeared by the waste of time. It is no wonder that the health of the community is imperilled. The wonder is that Brisbane is as healthy as it is, because very little consideration has been given in the past to the general health of the community.

We have been told that we cannot compare a young city like Brisbane with a city like Glasgow. That idea is held by the narrow-minded who will not anticipate the glorious future that is before this great State. There is nothing on God's earth to prevent Brisbane becoming great—even greater than Glasgow—and it is our duty to lay the foundations for a greater development in this city. Our friends opposite smile, and think that Brisbane will not become great—at any rate, not in our time. It is our duty to lay the foundations for the great city that Brisbane is destined to become. Owing to our geographical position we must of necessity provide for a large area. We cannot have a 30 square mile area like the city of Glasgow. The development in the past has been so spreadeagled that we must, to adjust the past mistakes, have a wide area for this scheme. I am sure that all the people living in the proposed Greater Brisbane area are keenly interested in its welfare—that they are just as interested and keen as are those living in the city of Glasgow. The greatest obstacle, according to the opponents of the scheme, will be the 380 square miles area. It is considered by many to be too extensive to be embraced in one scheme.

On the inauguration of the scheme the great council will be occupied for the first few years in making the system uniform. Uniformity must be brought about before the city of Brisbane can be placed on a basis that will ensure its future prosperity. At present some councils say that they must pay out of revenue for the erection of public works, while others are always running to the Government and saying that they must operate on a loan basis on short dated loans. Between the two methods we have some councils heavily burdened because they are paying for reproductive work out of revenue, and others are always on the rocks because of their necessity to renew heavy loans. Under the Greater Brisbane scheme these liabilities will be extended, and a reason-
[11.30 a.m.] able responsibility can be left to posterity, with the assets of development which will proceed along proper lines. I have a schedule here which shows that the London County Council, with a population of 4,500,000, has an area of 118 square miles.

Mr. KING: That is not the Greater London.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: They have a greater city within that area.

City.	Area in Square Miles.	Population	Average Density.		No. of L.A. in Area
			Per s mile	Per. acre	
London County Council ..	118	4,522,961	38,330	60	29
Birmingham ..	68	840,202	12,356	19	1
Nottingham ..	17	258,942	15,291	24	1
Toowoomba (Queensland)	17½	25,000	1,430	2	1
Chicago ..	184	2,393,325	13,001	20	22
Baltimore ..	30	579,590	19,320	30	1
Los Angeles ..	106	438,914	4,141	6	1
Brisbane (Greater) ..	say300	200,000	667	1	19
Adelaide (Greater) ..	280	217,571	777	1·2	24
Sydney (Greater) ..	284	819,080	2,884	4·5	54
Melbourne (Greater) ..	109	653,530	5,996	9	20
Wellington (Greater) N.Z.	36	95,208	2,645	4	10
Glasgow ..	29	1921— 1,034,069	34,496	953	9

These are the various cities which we are interested in and whose development we can follow. As the hon. member points out, they are not great cities; they have certain federations within those municipalities, and they control a number of public utilities. They control, for instance, trams, water, sewerage, and other matters the same as is provided for in this Bill. Glasgow is the outstanding example of what municipal control should be, as it has proved such a signal success. We are just at the stage when we can adopt a similar system to the satisfaction and progress of the City of Brisbane.

The rates are one of the troublesome things which will cause a certain amount of discussion on this Bill. In some of the cities the rates are based on the rental valuations, while in others, as in Queensland, the rates are based on the unimproved value of land. Section 232 of the Queensland Local Authorities Act provides that rates may be of two kinds—general and special. These rates are taxes levied on the value of ratable land—that is, what is deemed to be the unimproved value of land. All land is ratable except Crown lands. and lands used for certain purposes. The following are the rates:—

"1. General rate, limited to 1s. in the £1, intended for general purposes. This rate must be levied each year, unless the local authority is excused, and be not less than ½d. in the £1;

"2. Special rates for particular purposes—sewerage or drainage; light and

power; watering, cleansing, and lighting roads; parks, gardens, baths, washhouses, libraries, and recreation; noxious weeds; pests; alignment of roads; omnibus services (section 236);

"3. Separate special rate for work declared to be for the special benefit of a particular part of the area (section 237);

"4. Special health rate (section 240);

"5. Cleansing rate or charge (sections 241 and 242);

"6. Special water rate (section 244);

"7. Special loan rate (section 246);

"8. Special tramway rate in tramway area for payment of interest and redemption of loans (section 335);

"9. Special agricultural drainage loan rate (section 364);

"10. Charges, dues, tolls, fares, license fees, etc."

There are nine various special rates. Just imagine the various municipalities having a special loan rate, a special cleansing rate, and a special health rate. All these rates could be narrowed down to one special rate in a Greater Brisbane scheme.

Mr. MOORE: They pay the same amount of money.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: They pay the same amount of money, but in striking all these special rates you are really burdening the people with the worry of different rates when there is no necessity for it. The next table I intend to quote is a table showing the areas, etc., of four Australian cities showing per capita liability—

TABLE OF AREAS, ETC., OF FOUR AUSTRALIAN CITIES SHOWING PER CAPITA LIABILITY.
Total Rates Received (Metropolitan Areas).

—	Year.	Area in square miles.	Population.	Amount.	Amount per head.
Sydney	1917	150	762,480	£1,124,590	£1 9 6
Melbourne ..	1919-20	109	693,670	£783,524	£1 2 7
Adelaide	1918-19	2·0	258,211	£230,797	£0 18 0
Brisbane	1920	400*	202,000	£489,402	£2 8 5

* Includes whole of Shires of Yeerongpilly and Moggill, in area 230 square miles.

Brisbane is much the highest of any of the capital cities mentioned, and the reason for that is simple—the multiplicity of authority and divided control, and also the method by which moneys were raised in the past, and also the fact that a number of reproductive works were paid for out of revenue instead of out of loan. That is why the Brisbane area is paying a higher per capita rate than any other city.

Some people say the valuations for rating purposes in the Greater Brisbane area will be insufficient to carry the burden and the poorer parts will be imposed upon by the portion of the area where land values, although high, should be made much higher in comparison. People on the farming lands outside say that, if they are included in the Greater Brisbane scheme, they are going to be rated out of existence. That is ridiculous on the face of it, as every area will have one member, and the Bill provides that the Council may impose differential rates. It can make the rates suit the locality, and there will be no inconvenience whatever attaching to those areas where farming lands exist, because the Council will not be a Queen-street Council; it will not be a South Brisbane City Council; it will be a Council representing the whole area. On the other hand they say the country area members may outvote the city members. We know very well that few people live in the city proper. Most of them reside in the suburbs and they will have a vote where they reside, so the protection will be there. The people have to be trusted in this matter, and I do not think that argument will cut any ice with the people concerned. We know very well that in the past roads have been sadly neglected. In the city of Brisbane I suppose we have worse roads than those of any other city of Australia because there has been no method of road building and no co-ordination. One council builds a road right up to the borders of another council and it is left there. You can travel through one council area and find very good roads, and in another area very inferior roads. After all, roads are the method of transit, and if you have a good method of transit you must have progress in the district. Roads are more essential in a Greater Brisbane area than railways, because with the motor traffic of the present day people will be using these roads and we shall bring more settlement by having good roads.

We find the overhead expenses involve great wastage, and also require small local authorities to seek assistance from the State not only in the matter of finance but in other ways. For instance, a small local authority is unable to employ engineers or surveyors to survey and locate roads, and has to seek the assistance of the State. The delays are almost interminable, and are a serious impediment to development. In the early days here the councillors who were in charge of the city of Brisbane never even troubled about keeping a survey of sewers. The result is that, when we had a campaign for the destruction of rats, in some of the city blocks we found that there were some sewers that were not registered in the Council's books. Even under King and King's building there is a sewer which we cannot get at. These things happened through the lack of organisation and because of the indifference of past administrations controlling these bodies. Mr. Gomme, an authority well recognised in England, says—

> "There is neither co-ordination nor sub-co-ordination among the numerous authorities which regulate our local affairs. Each authority appears to be unacquainted with the existence or, at least, with the work of others. Local government in this country may fitly be described as consisting of a chaos of

areas, a chaos of authorities, and a chaos of rates."

We do not wish to be governed by fanciful methods. We should be governed in these matters by principles of common sense. That is what this Bill stands for. Common sense should be the guiding factor in public administration. Mr. Gomme further says—

"The public good ought to be the object of the legislator. General utility ought to be the foundation of his reasonings. To know the true good of the community is what constitutes the science of legislation; the art consists in finding the means to realise that good."

These are some of the quotations from views expressed by Mr. Gomme, who is engineer to the City of London Council—a very able man in these matters—and he is advocating a Greater London Council and the amalgamation of all the public utilities there. He further says—

"The burden of taxation only arises when the amount paid as taxation is in excess of the amount of benefit conferred; the burden of taxation being the excess payment, not the total amount paid."

These are very important quotations. Taxation itself may be an inconvenience, but if the benefit conferred by that taxation is greater than the taxation, then, after all, the Greater Brisbane scheme is justified. United effort and a reduction of overhead charges will mean a uniform policy dealing with health, the construction of roads, electric lighting, and other things. In dealing with health matters in the past we do not seem to have considered very much the health of the community. People think that so long as they are healthy nothing is going to happen. When the plague was with us the people had the "wind up," but as soon as the plague left the people believed there would be no more plague—just like the farmer who in good seasons does not think about conserving fodder, but when a drought comes along says, "When the next good season comes I will take good care to prepare for a drought." But he never does it. It is the same with health. We know that when Brisbane is trading with the East an outbreak of plague is likely to take place at any time.

I say for that reason that, instead of having a Joint Health Board, we should have one council and one medical officer looking after the health affairs of the city of Brisbane. The Government did hand over to the City Council the work of rat destruction on one occasion, but the Council neglected the matter, with the result that the Joint Board was formed and the Commissioner for Public Health had to insist on the work being carried out. The work is well in hand, and I think it can well be taken over now by a health inspector under the Greater Brisbane scheme.

Then we talk about having breathing spaces—the lungs in the city. There are no vacant spaces here—no small-area playing grounds for children. People at one time never troubled about that; they reserved large sports grounds not suitable for the children.

Mr. MOORE: There was one reserve on which the Trades Hall has been erected.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: How much was that availed of? The grade of the land was 1 in 10. We do not find any parks provided for children in Brisbane. People were too anxious to get sites for big commercial undertakings, and never thought about the children. They were like the troglodytes we read about. They appeared to believe that children could live under the earth and did not want fresh air or free life. It is not too late in this Greater Brisbane scheme to make provision for small central parks in the future. In America they are spending something like 4,500,000 dollars a year in improving land for parks. Why should we not under this Greater Brisbane scheme provide parks and thereby beautify the city? There has been no effort to beautify the city. The best part of our river frontage has been acquired by commercial houses, but in the future we can do something to retain the beautiful heritage for the people to whom it belongs. There is any amount of room here. There have been no noxious trade areas declared in Brisbane, and there can be no noxious trade areas declared while we have divided control. If you want to put a factory or a wool store in a certain place, immediately there is a complaint raised because the local authorities will not agree. Under one control we can have municipal areas—a particular area for business purposes, a factories area, and also a noxious trades area. That is most essential for the development of Brisbane. The City Council has been discussing the question of abattoirs, but what has been done? We know that under the present Diseases in Stock Act cattle which are suffering from tuberculosis or cancer or anything of that kind must not be slaughtered, but we find them slaughtered every week and sold here. What kind of inspection have we got of butcher shops?

Mr. MOORE: Do you say the inspection is inefficient?

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: I say that the inspection according to the system is sufficient, but the system should be altered and one abattoir would be safer. We have not got sufficient inspectors to inspect slaughter-houses and examine the beasts. If we have an abattoir in which killing can be done under the supervision of the Greater Brisbane Council—some definite control—we are going to improve the health of the community. We have to-day various companies operating, any one of which would take over the killing of the cattle. The Brisbane City Council is talking about spending a huge amount on an abattoir, but they could have cattle killed under proper supervision if they would make arrangements with existing companies.

By the Greater Brisbane scheme we would immediately improve the health of the community by having a pure milk supply. That is one of the most important things we need. Milk is essential for little children who have to be built up on the pure product, yet we see two or three prosecutions every week of men who are supplying impure milk. I say that under the Greater Brisbane scheme that problem could be handled very easily. It is handled by the City Council in Glasgow in Scotland. In that city, if the mothers are sick, the Council sees that they are supplied with milk in a paper packet, so that, when the milk is used, the paper can be destroyed and there will not be any contamination. In the case of sickness the Council steps in, and the Health Department looks after these things.

Before quoting the City of Glasgow as the world's greatest example of what local government should be, I propose to discuss with this House other greater city schemes, and will first deal with the City of London. The population of what is known as Greater London is approximately 7,500,000, and the area 690 square miles. It is governed by counties, municipal boroughs, and the historic City Corporation of London. The Greater London County Council has an area of 118 square miles, which is the greatest local authority in the world, and a population of 4,500,000. This Greater London Council is a federation to which is assigned particular powers. Within the area of the county there are twenty-seven municipal boroughs, with independent boards, all of which are subject to the London County Council with regard to borrowing. The City Corporation of London is 1 square mile. It has a day population of 364,000, although it is said that over 1,000,000 persons enter it daily. After the great fire of London it was the City Corporation of London which established fire insurance as a municipal enterprise.

I cannot allow this important task to conclude without making special reference to the foresight and statesmanlike attitude of the Scotchmen, comprised mostly of the workers of Glasgow, in bringing about such a fine state of affairs as exists in that city to-day. Its population has been of steady growth.

We know very well that Glasgow has made wonderful progress, and that progress has been made on a franchise under which the working people are mainly responsible. The workers of Glasgow have not hesitated to suggest new ideas. They have taken control of these things and made a success of the undertaking. The hon. member for East Toowoomba must admit that the workers have controlled the Toowoomba Hospital with successful results. The workers by their voluntary contributions have placed matters on a satisfactory basis there. The workers have made a success of the City of Glasgow scheme, and the workers in connection with the City of Brisbane will make a success of this Greater Brisbane scheme also. The workers of Glasgow are proud of their city and its greatness. They have control of all the public utilities. They have had municipal control of water from 1855, of gas from 1869, of electricity from 1891, of tramways from 1894, and of the housing of the working classes from 1871. At an International Congress at Paris the municipalisation of such utilities was generally described as nothing short of rank socialism. In Great Britain it is called "municipal trading," but the correct designation is "civic co-operation." They even control the matter of unemployment there. They work all these schemes, and absorb the unemployed. They feel that public utilities must be proceeded with when there is a surplus of unemployment. Under this Bill the local authorities will be able to borrow the money they require, and by putting it into reproductive works for the development of the city they will make Brisbane the city it should be. The uncertainty of success should not be a deterrent. Some people say that this scheme may not be a success. That has been said about Glasgow and every new departure. If we make a start with Brisbane and South Brisbane, how can we develop along those lines and include other local authorities. If we start with part of the scheme we are merely going to have the same trouble over again. If we deal with them in one bold policy, we get rid of that trouble at once. As I said before, if we co-ordinate all these efforts and gradually assimilate them to the needs of the people, we are more likely to give satisfaction. The City of Glasgow, for instance, deals with the following public utilities:—Art galleries and museums, baths and washhouses, parks, botanic gardens, bowling-greens, cattle markets, cemeteries, gasworks, sewerage, electricity, meat markets, fire brigades, fish markets, health, registration of milk suppliers, music, offensive trades, public conveniences, regulation of restaurants, registration of slaughter-houses, and weights and measures.

The scheme in itself is simple. I intend to deal, before concluding, with the financial clauses of the Bill, but before I get on to them I should like to consider some of the remarks which have been made by mayors and chairmen or aldermen and councillors of the metropolitan local authorities with regard to the scheme. Many of them say that the scheme appears to be too big and unwieldy. If they say that it is too big because the area is too large, I reply that that is an advantage of the scheme, because it enables the central authority to go in for a uniform system of road construction. The rates can be fixed according to the needs of each district. The Bill gives the council power to assess various rates, and the people of the smaller centres need not be imposed upon. It has been said that some of the smaller shires will be imposed upon as a result of the amalgamation of the liabilities of them all. Special provision has been made in the Bill to deal with that. The financial clauses, I think, are a credit to the Government, and, I believe, will prove successful. We have declared, for instance, that the principle of benefited areas shall remain. I regard that as a very important provision. The new council will not have to amalgamate the liabilities of these benefited areas. They will remain attached to those areas. Take, for the sake of example, the town of Hamilton. It has borrowed from the Government a certain amount of money which it has expended on a benefited area. That area will continue to carry that liability until it is paid off. The only difficulty we saw in drafting the Bill was as to the method of paying it off. If it was to be paid off on the present basis of short-dated loans it was feared that great difficulty would be experienced, and provision is included in the Bill whereby such liabilities to the Government will not be repayable over short periods but over forty years, with a sinking fund for the purpose. Thus, the capital payments will not fall heavily on the ratepayers who will be called upon to shoulder the financial responsibilities of the scheme.

I think that the financial clauses are workable, and I believe that the people who will be affected will find that that is the case. It would, for example, be unfair to ask the people as a whole to take over the liability of a benefited area at Kangaroo Point, but the liability on the Kangaroo Point people will be extended so that it will fall more lightly on them. For that and other reasons I think that the financial clauses will be an

acceptable part of this Greater Brisbane scheme. It is no use complaining about the liabilities. They are there. So are the liabilities of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, but we know that the general liability of the Councils does not amount to more than £2,000,000. The Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board certainly has big liabilities, but the others will not be a heavy burden.

I could deal in detail with arguments in support of the adoption of the present scheme at much greater length, but the public, having views of their own, and being keenly interested in the project, will have sufficient in the facts I have quoted on which to build their contentions for and against it. We are now emerging from a chaotic state of municipal muddledom, and, like seafaring men who have weathered a storm, it is now our duty to make for the port of progress, put our ship in order, and thereafter follow a new and certain course which has already been surveyed by wiser seamen. I have pleasure in moving—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

At 11.57 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) relieved the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I am rather amazed at the quantity of figures which the hon. gentleman proposes to put into "Hansard"; it will take hon. members some time to digest them. The Minister drew a wonderful picture of the benefits which were to accrue from the scheme, but did not give us any details of how they were all going to be brought about. One thing is certain however, that the people of the district which will be affected will pay under the scheme just as they have been paying in the past. There is no method by which any new source of revenue is opened up to the new Council that is not available to the city of Brisbane and other municipalities to-day. All revenue is to come from the ratepayers, and the same people are going to pay in the future the same amount of money as they are paying to-day; and it does not appear to me that with the population we have in a scattered area the benefits which the hon. gentleman appears to expect are going to be realised.

One of the great points he made throughout his speech was the work which has been done in Glasgow. There is no analogy between the two cases. Glasgow has an area of 3 square miles and a population of 2,000,000, whereas Brisbane has a population of 220,000 and an area of 385 square miles. It is all very well to talk of what Glasgow can do—one of the greatest cities in the world with a dense population and a small area and consequent cheapening of public utilities. Nobody doubts that Glasgow has done very fine work, but the conditions here are totally different.

Mr. HARTLEY: They have a very poor population.

Mr. MOORE: The difficulty or otherwise of carrying out public works depends on the area over which they are to be carried out.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Their works cover a much greater area than 3 square miles. They extend to a large number of other cities.

Mr. MOORE: And the city may be getting an advantage by extending operations to them, but I am not cavilling at that. The position is so totally different in Glasgow that it is impossible to find a complete analogy between it and Brisbane. The Minister made a great point of the financial advantages of the Bill. He told us the amount of indebtedness of the various local authorities—and said that the burden would be lightened by long-dated loans—that the benefited areas were to remain, but that the loans would be paid over a longer period than at present.

It is more likely that with some of the short-dated loans the councils could effect a higher saving in interest than [12 noon] if they had to float their loans to-day. To-day money is dear, and, considering the rate of interest that the municipality has contracted to pay, it is quite possible that there would not be any cheapening of the rate if the loan was converted at the present time. There is no evidence to show that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The area of Glasgow is 30 square miles and some of the utilities extend 150 miles.

Mr. MOORE: I am sorry that the Secretary for Public Works did not have an opportunity of delivering the second reading speech on this Bill. I am only taking the statement made by the Assistant Home Secretary when introducing the Bill. I am trying to show that there is no analogy, even with 30 square miles and the population that exists, between Glasgow and Brisbane. The Assistant Home Secretary also made a fuss about the different utilities that the Greater Brisbane municipality would be able to undertake, and he instanced abattoirs and a milk supply. All those things are possible under the present system, and are provided for under the present Local Authorities Act. We have already had some discussion on the milk supply. The Government are giving the milk suppliers an opportunity of having a pool rather than continue the present system. The Minister has stated that the Brisbane City Council has talked a long time about abattoirs and has done nothing. It is only following the example set by the Government, who talked about it for years before they came into power, and as soon as they did come into power they spent a ridiculous amount of money on a ridiculous amount of work on a site outside of Brisbane, on which the scrub has grown up since and the fences are all falling down. There is nothing very much to boast about in that respect.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You cannot justify divided control.

Mr. MOORE: I am not trying to justify divided control in a limited area. My own opinion is that the proposed area is too large, and I think a limited area would be far more workable, because those in the outside areas occupy a different position from those in the denser populated areas. The main basis that we have to consider in a question of a large municipality as against a small municipality is community of interest; and, if the community of interest is not there, there will not be the same interest taken and the same progress will not be made in the outside districts as in the inside districts. It is wrong to suggest that the areas on the outskirts that are sparsely settled should

probably be developed at the expense of another that has already spent a good deal of money in its own development. If the area was considerably smaller, it would be far more likely to be a success, and then as the population increased we could bring in the other areas. I suppose it is merely a minor detail, but the question is to help to carry out what is in the best interests of the Greater Brisbane scheme. I recognise that divided control such as we have at the present time is a menace, but I do not see that we are going to have any wonderful saving by what has been suggested by the Assistant Home Secretary.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: A good deal depends on the intelligence and the public spirit of the members of the Council which is to be formed.

Mr. MOORE: Yes. A good deal depends on the system under which they are going to work. The whole area should have one departmental head, as is done with other public utilities, and the Council should only occupy itself with the control of the men who are in charge and with seeing that the work is being carried out properly, and not mixing itself up with the details as to who shall be employed. We should have a manager in the same way as we have a Railway Commissioner to control this public utility, and he should be a competent man, and the Council should only formulate its policy and see that it is carried out. If the Council is going to mix itself up with the details of the utility, it will be absolutely impossible for it to succeed. My experience has been that councils are liable in a very great measure to interfere with utilities and works that are carried out that could be far better left to individuals who are experts and who are experienced in the work to be done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Local authorities are not singular in that respect.

Mr. MOORE: Unfortunately they are not. This scheme is a far-reaching one, and is going to affect the pockets of the people and the conditions of living of a very large number of people in the comparatively large area which will be under municipal control. In municipal control one of the main endeavours should be to see that people get an adequate return for the money expended. You can only get that if the people who are under that control have some community of interest and want to achieve the same end. If you have people living on the outskirts who consider that they are being unjustly used, or that their interests are not being advocated in the same way as the people in the inside districts, it is going to make for just as much trouble and confusion as under the present system. When the Government took over the tramways and set up the Brisbane Tramway Trust they deliberately excluded several outlying local authorities, for the reason that they recognised that some of the people in the outlying districts might have been able to bring pressure to bear to have tramway extensions in a direction that would not be profitable at the time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is power to extend the operations by Order in Council.

Mr. MOORE: I think that the Government restricted the area because they realised that pressure would be brought to bear. I do not know whether it is probable, but it is mentioned in the Bill as being probable, that the Tramway Trust will come under the Greater Brisbane scheme along with the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board and other utilities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That will be delayed until the scheme is in proper working order.

Mr. MOORE: That may be so, but, when elections are being held and men are endeavouring to get on the council, it is very difficult to know what promises will be made and what pressure will be brought to bear on a Government to permit of the fulfilment of those promises. The whole situation may be totally different in three or four years from what it is to-day. When an election comes along, one never knows what pressure will be brought to bear, and it is quite conceivable that under a certain set of circumstances an Order in Council may be issued extending the tramways into a certain local authority area, because one section considers that it may be to their special benefit. It is quite likely that under those circumstances pressure will be brought to bear to extend the line in a direction which may not be to the benefit of the community as a whole, but which may certainly be of a benefit to a small section of the community. That is something to be guarded against when you are going into a scheme in which the density of the population is far greater in one portion of a municipality than in another.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No Government would extend those powers by Order in Council unless they were justified in doing so.

Mr. MOORE: I do not know. I know that Governments do all sorts of things in the way of extending powers and in a way that I never deemed possible at one time. We have had powers extended in the past, and they will probably be extended again. It is quite possible that some outside consideration may influence the Government under certain conditions at election time. It may be that the extension of the powers may be useful to them in the support of their candidature at the election, and they may extend those powers beyond the point that we do not even dream of at the present time. The Assistant Home Secretary stated that the rates in Brisbane at the present time are very high owing to divided control. In my opinion, that is a very minor consideration. The main factor in rating is not so much divided control as the extent of the area over which the services have to be distributed. If the same services have to be supplied in a large area sparsely populated as in a restricted area densely populated, the cost will be much higher. If Brisbane, with an area of 380 square miles, is compared with Adelaide, with an area of only 90 square miles, the cost of the services naturally will be ever so much higher in Brisbane than in Adelaide. It is not a question of divided control at all. That may have a little influence on the cost, but not to any extent.

The Assistant Home Secretary also made the statement that the scheme would result in great economy because the present cost of administration in the large number of officers now employed is great. I do not know that a great number of officers in those offices will be got rid of under this scheme—certainly not soon—because the Bill does not provide for the scheme coming into operation for two years, and the officers will only then be dismissed for incompetence or mis-

demeanour. There cannot be much economy so far as that is concerned for some years to come. One of the main factors in the working of the City of Brisbane will be the class of councillors who will be elected, and whether they are going to be elected on the basis of benefiting the community or a political party.

Mr. WRIGHT: They have always been elected on a political basis.

Mr. MOORE: They were never elected on a political basis until the franchise was extended.

Mr. CARTER: I have a copy of the platform issued by the Nationalist candidates at the last election of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. MOORE: Of course, they were; that is what we predicted. Directly the adult franchise is brought into the local authorities elections political interference takes place.

Mr. CARTER: What nonsense!

Mr. MOORE: Previous to the advent of the adult franchise men of all shades of opinion and sections of the community were represented on the local authorities, and there was never any question of a political platform being put forward in municipal elections—the objective was public benefit. The position now is different. We have a very serious position under this Bill. If the parliamentary elections are taken into account, we shall have in the elections for the Greater Brisbane Council ten aldermen on one side and ten aldermen on the other.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: What about the Mayor?

Mr. MOORE: Whichever side gets the Mayor will be able to put its policy into force irrespective of the other ten.

Mr. WRIGHT: The same thing has happened in Queensland for years.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member has not been long enough in Queensland to know what happened in the past.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: He belongs to the Empire, and has as much right to be here as you have.

Mr. MOORE: I do not doubt his rights. The hon. gentleman is a bit overheated because of his stay at St. Helena. (Laughter.)

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: You didn't go to Mud Island.

Mr. MOORE: I did not have the opportunity of going to St. Helena or Boggo road.

Mr. MCLACHLAN: You could get that opportunity very easily. (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: The whole success or otherwise of the scheme is dependent on the constitution of the Council. Local authority government, far more than Parliament, is closely concerned with the individual. His present and future comfort and welfare are wrapped up in it. Much depends on the economical rendering of the services necessary. The local authority area should consist of a community of interests, and the Council should act on behalf of the community for their benefit. If the taxation is not spent in the best interests of the whole community, but to further the interests of a party or in an effort to secure support for the rest of the party at the next election, then the rates will become a burden. We have seen what has happened in another case. We have no need to go to Glasgow, but only to Sydney to see what happened under a political administration, and what is possible there is likely to occur here. That gives us some grounds for anticipating trouble if the same thing should happen here.

Mr. WRIGHT: You could get some curious things if you could only get at the records of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. MOORE: It is all very well for the hon. member to draw a "red herring" across the trail in the hope of diverting attention as to what happened in Sydney. We know the extraordinary conditions that obtained there under the Labour régime not so very long ago. I am rather fearful that the same conditions may obtain in Brisbane.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is a libel on future candidates.

Mr. MOORE: We all know perfectly well that Labour is the same all over Australia. They say "All one body we" is the policy they believe in. They are all working towards the same objective. If such a condition of affairs happened in one place it is likely to happen in another. We know perfectly well that the City Council in Sydney did not act for the benefit of the community as a whole, but sat at the end of a speaking tube listening to the voice of council employees and outside organisations and then carried out their instructions. We saw the disaster that occurred from it, and how the rates went up. The ratepayers of Sydney were told before adult franchise was introduced that economy would take place, but directly the opposite happened.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: Get on to this big scheme and leave Sydney alone.

Mr. MOORE: Why should I not point out to the people of this State the position that is likely to accrue under certain conditions?

Mr. WRIGHT: Why be afraid to trust the people?

Mr. MOORE: What is the use of the hon. member talking about trusting the people when we have his Ministers bringing in Bills and declining to trust them, and at the same time compelling them to do certain things without giving them a voice? Hon. members opposite are prepared to trust the people on every occasion that is suitable to them, but when it is not suitable they will not do so.

Mr. CARTER: The present City Council is not prepared to trust the people; they issue private and confidential reports.

Mr. MCLACHLAN: You should say some of them are not.

Mr. CARTER: The minority are prepared to trust the people.

Mr. MOORE: I have seen the interests of the ratepayers subordinated to political interests. I know when a certain Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board Bill was before the House, that a member purposely kept quiet on the City Council because he thought it would affect his political party outside.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Whom are you talking about?

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: He is talking in parables.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Everyone knew what that Bill contained.

Mr. MOORE: They did not.

Mr. WILSON: Every member of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board knew. They approved of the Bill unanimously, and only two out of the nine members were Labour men.

Mr. MOORE: Every member of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board knew, but the City Council did not, and the alderman who did know kept quiet, and when it was introduced I pointed out what the effect of the Bill would be.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will confine himself to the Bill.

Mr. WEIR: The politics of that member of the City Council are the same here as they are out on the road.

Mr. MOORE: Exactly. That is what I am trying to point out. If politics are brought into any question in the Greater Brisbane Council, it will not be for the benefit of the Council, but for the benefit of the party concerned. The hon. member for Maryborough says that that hon. member's politics are the same inside the House as they are outside. We object to that, because we say there should be no politics in local government. (Government dissent and laughter.) The money should be expended for the benefit of the community as a whole, and not for a particular section or a political party. (Government interjections.) Hon. members opposite are very restive when anyone points out what occurred under a Labour régime in Sydney, and what is likely to occur if we have politics operating in our Greater Brisbane scheme.

Mr. WEIR: You missed the 'bus at the last election.

Mr. MOORE: Hon. members opposite missed the 'bus at the last elections in connection with the municipal franchise. They went out expecting to sweep the poll, and what happened?

Mr. WEIR: If you look over here you will see what happened at the last election.

Mr. MOORE: I am talking about the municipal elections. It is quite probable that if we were able to subdivide the State into electorates to suit ourselves, we also might sweep the poll.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the hon. member should discuss the objects of the Bill.

Mr. MOORE: I will, but hon. members opposite are leading me off the track. I urge that the Minister should endeavour as far as possible to reduce the area under this scheme.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: What would you suggest?

Mr. MOORE: An area that would take in only the more densely populated sections.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: A rule of thumb is of no use in a scheme such as this. A geographical area is the best.

Mr. MOORE: I do not agree with the hon. gentleman. The question should not be a matter of geographical areas, but of boundaries that will be beneficial to the interests of the community. There are sections living in the more sparsely settled areas who could better help themselves under present conditions than under the proposed scheme.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: Sandgate and Bulimba want the scheme.

Mr. MOORE: Possibly Sandgate does, but I do not think that Bulimba and some other places want it.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: If you read the requests of deputations that have been received, you would see that they do.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman will have plenty of opportunities for receiving deputations when the general public have read the Bill. He is taking in too large an area for the amount of population.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: The population will come.

Mr. MOORE: That is why you should go carefully meanwhile.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: Why not be like Professor Bellamy and look forward to the year 2,000?

Mr. MOORE: You should have a modified area to begin with—draw up a plan of arterial roads, drainage, etc., and let the outside councils work in conformity with it—and let the people outside of that area carry on with their own local authorities and work into the greater area when the proper time comes. You would then not have an unwieldy scheme—not unwieldy because of its size, but because of the population being too small in the areas to be worked. When you are going to take over such a large amount of work as is likely to occur in connection with the Water and Sewerage Board and the Tramway Trust——

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: That will be many years hence.

Mr. MOORE: Possibly no definite provision is made in the Bill to take them over at a specified time, but it is quite possible that pressure will be brought to bear to bring them in sooner than they should be included. I do not think it likely that a City Council elected on the boundaries marked out is going to take the same interest in the sparsely settled areas that it should take.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: The position is similar to that of Parliament. Do you not take an interest outside of your own area?

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman said that the councillors would give possibly one day a fortnight to the work. Of course, they will be carrying on their own work as well. In my opinion, they will have to give more time than that. I understand that the council will sit on three days a week, but I think it is going to be an everyday job

Mr. CARTER: They will be paid for it.

Mr. MOORE: The question of payment is not going to be the be-all and end-all of the matter.

Mr. CARTER: You will not get sufficient effort unless you pay for it.

Mr. MOORE: I have seen very efficient effort from voluntary labour.

Mr. CARTER: Voluntary effort pays itself.

Mr. MOORE: There is another matter which I think is an absolute necessity. There should be provision in the Bill for a Valuation Board to bring the valuations under some system of uniformity.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: Why not make that State-wide?

Mr. MOORE: Because if you had a State Valuation Board it would be used as a method of raising taxation, and not for securing an equitable system of rating.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: You ask for such a scheme for Greater Brisbane, but not for Queensland.

Mr. MOORE: I want valuations to be uniform. The present system is absolutely wrong. The difficulty is that whole State valuations are totally different to city valuations. You have definite systems laid down over a great portion of the State under which leasehold valuations have already been fixed by the Crown by its taxation officers. Round about Brisbane you have not got that system, and an enormous number of discrepancies exist in regard to our municipal valuations.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: Is that not a reason why you should have one controlling body?

Mr. MOORE: It is. I think that the valuation rates that are collected for municipal purposes should be totally different to what they are for land taxation purposes, because from the former people are receiving individual benefit.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: They are only taxed on valuations.

Mr. MOORE: In many cases it is said that people are taxed on unearned increment. If you are going to have a Greater Brisbane, and are going to bring about all the improvements anticipated, it is absolutely essential to get in a sufficient amount of money to carry out the necessary services, so that we may receive the benefits that the Assistant Minister tells us are likely to accrue under this Bill. The Council will have to raise a certain amount of money, and from one source only; it will have no other method by which it can raise money. We must get a uniform, fair, and equitable basis on which that money shall be raised. Our rating at present is heavy, but it promises to be heavier. There was no suggestion in the speech of the Assistant Minister to the effect that benefit was to accrue through the lightening of taxation. There was a question of long-dated as against short-dated loans. That should not be the be-all and end-all of the benefits expected under the Greater Brisbane scheme from a financial point of
[12.30 p.m.] view. I recognise that it is a most iniquitous thing that in a place like this there should be a variation in regard to services and taxation between one part of Brisbane and another. In this connection I would like to quote what Mr. Chuter says on page 40 of his book—

> "The words 'equally distributed benefit' are to be found in the provisions relating to divisional accounts, and also in the provisions relating to the apportionment of liability for joint works. 'Equally distributed benefit' means 'equal taxation.' 'Unequal benefit' means differential taxation. If the metropolitan area of Brisbane were governed by one authority, the Victoria Bridge would, no doubt, be regarded as being of 'equally distributed benefit' to that area, whereas under the existing arbitrary conditions it is declared to be of 'unequal benefit' to the extent that the benefit to the south side is declared to be twice that of the north side. The Breakfast Creek Bridge has been declared to be of 'unequal benefit' to the city of Brisbane and the town of Hamilton, to the extent that the tax required to be paid in the town of Hamilton to meet that local authority's half-share of the liability, is fourteen times greater than in the city of Brisbane, and the tax in Clayfield (Shire of Toombul) is nil. The real effective difference in taxation is, however, about seven to one, due to the fact that values in the city of Brisbane approximate true values, whereas in the town of Hamilton the values are approximately half true values."

There you have a position where the residents in the town of Hamilton are taxed fourteen times greater than the residents in the city of Brisbane area for the upkeep of a bridge which is of "equal benefit" to both sections of the people.

Mr. CARTER: That shows the need for a Greater Brisbane scheme.

Mr. MOORE: I have never denied the need for a Greater Brisbane, but I am suggesting that the area, according to the population, is too big. I recognise the absolute necessity of a definite scheme which will give definite control over the whole area in regard to arterial communications and housing regulations that are to be brought in. I recognise that it is necessary for bridge purposes and for various other things that there shall be a concerted plan among the different areas, but I recognise that you can go too far afield, and I also recognise that you are taking in areas that have really nothing to do with the city of Brisbane. It is better to take in a smaller area rather than have a big area where pressure will be brought to bear on the Council to extend utilities at the expense of places already developed, because the people in the outside districts will think they should receive the same benefits as are received by the people closer in, and then there is likely to be an increase in the rates rather than a decrease. It is far better to allow these outside districts to develop under their own conditions until the population gets to a stage when they can equitably be brought into a Greater Brisbane scheme. Especially will that be so if the Greater Brisbane scheme is going to include the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board and the Tramway Trust.

The Bill also makes provision for the taking over of the Fire Brigades Board. There is an inequitable provision in regard to that, inasmuch as only under certain circumstances are the contributors to the Board to be given representation. If there are to be contributors from outside, and they have certain definite obligations, they should have some say as to how the money should be expended, and they should have representation on the Board.

Seeing that this Bill is not going any further I do not think it is necessary for me to say any more. We are going to have a long spell so that the people concerned can thoroughly discuss the Bill, see what it means to them, and see what the increase or decrease in taxation is likely to be, and whether there is a possibility by combining various services such as electric lighting, tramways, and other utilities, for them to be more efficiently managed than under the present system. It is quite likely that in a restricted area the economy would be greater. To my mind, in an area as large as is provided for under this Bill, the economy is not going to be nearly so great. It appears to me that the same number of men will have to be employed, but they will have to be employed as subordinates under one head

and that head will have to be paid a suitable salary for co-ordinating the efforts of the men under him.

Mr. CARTER: The clerical charges will be less.

Mr. MOORE: It is quite possible the clerical charges may be less, and they certainly should be less; but, if the activities of the Council are to be extended in the way prophesied by the Minister, the clerical charges are likely to a great deal heavier. No matter what was said before, I have always found that, when the object in view is brought about, the expenses do not seem to grow any less. There always seem to be other services to engage in, and, instead of getting rid of men, more men are required. We were told that when federation took place enormous economies would follow. What did we find? We did not find that our services generally decreased. They all increased, and the Commonwealth has become another service employing a huge number of public servants who have to be paid by the taxpayer. I am rather afraid that the same thing is likely to happen under a Greater Brisbane scheme, and it will be found, when the scheme is in actual working, that the economies are more apparent than real, and that it is not possible to do without the officers whose services are at present being utilised in the various local authorities throughout the metropolitan area. I can quite understand that economy may be effected in regard to roadmaking, because there must be a certain amount of overlapping under the present system. The main thing in connection with a local authority is to have a sufficient area of a similar class of country, which will allow of roadmaking machinery being effectively employed all the time. If you have an expensive plant that can only be employed for a portion of the year because you have not the revenue or not a sufficient area to permit of the employment of that plant, then the overhead expenses will be too great for economical use; but, if the plant can be employed the whole of the time, there must necessarily be economy, and in that way it is possible economy will be brought about by the amalgamation of the various shires and municipalities.

I trust that the Minister will take notice of any objections that may be raised by the various local authorities concerned. The Minister started off by taking credit for the tolerance of the Government in giving these people an opportunity of expressing their views. It is not a question of tolerance at all; it is a question of simple justice. When you are bringing in a Bill that will affect a large section of the community it is only right that you should give them the fullest opportunity to judge for themselves as to whether it is going to benefit them or not; and, if they consider, after going into the whole facts of the case, that it is not going to be of benefit to them, they should have an opportunity of putting their case before the Government, instead of having as we have had during this session many Bills put through in twenty-four hours that are going to vitally affect many people who will have no opportunity of saying whether they agree with those Bills or not until it is too late.

The HOME SECRETARY: The schedules which will be published in "Hansard" will fully explain the position.

Mr. MOORE: Ministers have a habit of putting down figures in a way that suits their own case.

I approve of the action of the Government in bringing this Bill in now so as to give the people concerned ample time for considering it. It is only right that the people should have an opportunity of considering it, but I do not think any credit should be taken for that action. The Government should bring in a Bill that will be of benefit to the whole of the people round Brisbane. When it is to be brought forward in that way and definitely stated that it is to be so, to my mind the only fair thing is to give the opportunity to the people to understand thoroughly what they are going into, so that they can raise any objections they may have and let the Government consider them. I do not wish to take up any further time. I only hope that the people will go fully into the facts and figures put before them and weigh the whole position, and consider whether this scheme is going to be of financial benefit to them, and I am satisfied that the councils and various municipalities about Brisbane will then be prepared to fall in with the idea or suggest improvements which will make for more efficient working, and, from what I know of them, do their best to make the Bill a success.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Merthyr*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Euchan*): This is a Bill of two clauses and one principle, and it proposes to amend section 14 of the principal Act. It is really an amendment to clear up a legal doubt as to whether the Council of Agriculture has power to make a levy for general purposes without a referendum of the farmers. Legal opinions differ as to whether that levy can be made. In view of the amendment which I accepted from the hon. member for Mirani in Committee in clause 14—the regulation-making clause—the Crown Solicitor thinks that no levy can be made in connection with the general financing of the Council without the right of referendum, and the Council of Agriculture wishes the amendment to be made. At the last meeting of the Council a resolution was passed in favour of this amendment. I might say that with the exception of one member all the elected members of the Council—the farmers—voted for the amendment, while all the Government members were opposed to it. The reasons advanced were that this is a bad time to make a levy. The Government recognise that, and there is no suggestion of making a levy now. In the Premier's speech at Laidley, when he outlined the Primary Producers' Organisation scheme, he indicated that the organisation of the farmers was necessary, and would have Government financial backing if necessary. It was subsequently decided by the Government to bear the cost of the organisation for the first year, and £25,000 was put on the Estimates. The actual cost was £26,000. But owing to the

drought and other difficulties, and the fact that the Council had not got properly into its stride, the farmers not being completely organised, the Government decided to finance the farmers for another year, and £26,000 was placed on the Estimates for that purpose for the present financial year. The total cost for the whole organisation this year will be £30,000. The Premier has agreed during the last few days to make available the extra £4,000, which will carry the whole organisation on to the end of this financial year. This amendment is necessary in order that the Council may carry out the policy and partial financing of the organisation. The principal Act, as hon. members are aware, provides for a subsidy of £1 for £1 for five years. That was an afterthought. It was not mentioned in the Premier's speech at Laidley or at the Butter Conference when this scheme was launched, but, after hearing arguments, I thought that a subsidy for five years would be a fair thing. I do not know that any organisation of workers is subsidised in that way. Organised workers are not subsidised, nor do other Governments in any other part of the world subsidise the workers for a few years to enable them to organise themselves. It has been recognised by this Government—and I think we are the only Government in the world who have done so—that, while spasmodic attempts have been made by farmers in Queensland and other parts of the world to organise themselves, some Government help is necessary. The farmers are scattered all over Queensland. They do not come together in clubs or in other meetings to discuss their problems. They cannot do that, as they are busy on their farms. Whilst those attempts have succeeded to a small degree, there has never been an attempt in the Commonwealth to launch a scheme and finance the farmers as has been done in this instance. The whole of the debate when the original Bill was before Parliament, the discussion in the country, and the speeches of the Premier and myself, have been in the direction that, once the scheme was launched and assisted for a year or two by the Government, the farmers would control it themselves, otherwise it would be of no use. If this organisation is going to fall to pieces immediately the Government cease to pay for the cost of it, it does not say much for the farmers; but I do not think that is going to happen. I believe that, with the financing by the Government for two years and the Government's subsidy for five years from the passing of the Bill, the farmers are going to recognise that the scheme is necessary and that, if they are going to prosper, they must be joined together in one solid organisation. That is the reason why the Council of Agriculture wishes to have this power given before the House rises, because it will be necessary to take steps to make this levy before Parliament meets again.

Only one principle is involved. No doubt it will be said that the farmers should be consulted. If they were consulted and they said they did not want a levy, what would happen? It should be recognised that the men who were elected to deal with the farmers' problems depend on the votes of the farmers. First of all, representatives were elected by the Local Producers' Associations to the District Councils, who elected representatives to the Council of Agriculture. I am not going into details as to what the Council has done, although many reasons for this Bill can be found in its work during the short space of two years. It formed the voluntary Butter Pool. That is one of the things really done by it, and in the face of all the disabilities and disadvantages which it had to confront, with the ultimate breakdown, it has been responsible for putting £200,000 into the pockets of the farmers of Queensland.

It has been estimated that the levy will not amount to more than about 2s. in every £100 worth of primary produce, and I would like to know whether any intelligent farmer in Queensland or elsewhere will say that an organisation of the farmers which will enable them to speak with one voice is not worth it.

Mr. FRY: Estimates do not generally work out as anticipated.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am quite prepared to admit that nearly everything which has been undertaken has cost more than the estimate, but in this case I do not think the estimate is going to be exceeded. The Bill provides that the levy shall not exceed £20,000 this year, and I am hopeful that the Council will be able to carry on with less, because it will get a subsidy of £1 for £1 from the Government, so that, if £30,000 is spent, the amount required by levy will be £15,000. In order to indicate what is in the minds of the Government, let me quote from speeches made by the Premier. Speaking at Laidley he said—

> "If farmers are willing to establish co-operation on a large scale, the Government will confer the necessary authority upon the co-operative associations, and, moreover, will back them financially."

At Stanthorpe, on 3rd March last year, he said—

> "Government aid will be granted to farmers in order to form the organisation he had suggested. . . When this organisation was established it might require Government finance to further support the operations of a farmers' organisation in the direction of co-operation. That financial backing will be given by the Government."

I could quote other speeches to show that not only the Premier but also members on both sides of the House were of opinion that this scheme would ultimately have to be financed by the farmers themselves if it was to be of any use. A good deal of trouble has arisen through the acceptance of the amendment of the hon. member for Mirani, which some people seem to think prevents the making of a levy for ordinary purposes. I admit that if the Council of Agriculture wishes to impose a levy for a special purpose, it is a fair thing to consult the industry concerned; but this is a general levy to continue the organisation, of which the farmers themselves have approved. The great majority of them have joined up with the Local Producers' Associations on the distinct understanding that they would operate under the Bill, which provides for a subsidy of £1 for £1 for five years, and that ultimately they would be expected to find the whole of the cost of the organisation. In the original Primary Producers' Organisation Bill clause 14, dealing with the matters upon which regulations might be made, included the following words:—

> "Providing for a poll of members of

any one or more local associations before any levy is made."

The hon. member for Mirani moved the deletion of those words, and the insertion of words providing that before any levy was made a poll could be demanded by 100 farmers. That, in my opinion, prevents the making of any levy without taking a poll of the farmers, if it is demanded. As I say, the farmers have been consulted, and under the principal Act they would be liable to a levy for half this current year's expenses of the organisation. That burden has been lifted from their shoulders by the Government's generosity in paying the cost of the first year's operations, £26,000, and the estimated cost of the second year's operations, £30,000. Next year, although it is difficult to forecast the expenditure, it should not exceed £30,000. The Bill makes provision for a levy not exceeding £20,000 for this year.

I need not go into the details. They have been worked out by the Council of Agriculture, and the representatives of all the industries concerned have agreed as to how the levy should be borne—so much per 100 lb. of butter, so much per 100 gallons of milk, so much per ton of sugar-cane, and so on, and the average is about 2s. for every £100 worth of produce. I say again that no farmer or anybody else who has his own interests at heart and desires to see this organisation develop and accomplish what it set out to accomplish can object to that. I have much pleasure in moving—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

At 2 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I understand that the levy can be made upon all primary producers whether they are members of the organisation or not. I think it is a mistake that those who are not members of the organisation should come under the scope of the Primary Producers' Organisation Act. Giving the power to the Council of Agriculture to make a levy for administrative purposes is quite all right, and I do not think we can find fault with that. According to the Bill, it will now be within the discretion of the Governor in Council to say whether a poll shall be taken on any matter affecting particular industries or sections of industries. The Primary Producers' Organisation Act definitely provided that on the request of 100 primary producers a poll shall be taken. This Bill really cuts away that provision for taking a poll in connection with any matters associated with the organisation. I am inclined to think that is a mistake, and that it is a pity that that power should be taken away and the matter left to the discretion of the Governor in Council as to whether a poll shall be taken or not. There is also provision in the Bill for the reduction of the penalty for non-payment of levies from £20 to £5. When we were discussing the Primary Producers' Organisation Act, which contains provision for a £50 penalty, the hon. member for Cunningham secured a reduction of that amount, and I am now pleased to see that it is being further reduced to £5 by this Bill. Generally, in carrying out the Primary Producers' Organisation Act and in organising the primary producers, there will be quite a lot of misunderstandings, and a number of the men engaged in primary production will not be fully acquainted with all the details associated with that organisation, and in a number of instances they will make mistakes and be subject to penalties. I am pleased to see a reduction in the penalty to an amount not exceeding £5; but I would also like to see the provision retained setting out that a poll shall be taken in connection with particular industries and sections of industries if 100 primary producers petition for such a poll to be taken.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I quite realise that to carry on the work of organisation money will have to be provided. I also quite agree with the principle that the farmers should pay the cost of any organisation for their benefit. They have no right to inflict on any other section of the community an organisation which is for their benefit. At the same time, I am still in favour of a proviso being inserted in the original Act providing that before levies are made a poll should be taken. It cannot be urged that the retention of that provision means that a disgruntled few will be able to block the whole movement. That is not so. Even if a poll is taken it can only be carried by a majority, and it is inconceivable to think that a majority of the farmers will turn down any scheme that is for their good. I am quite aware that a small minority might take a one-sided view of the matter, but I do not believe for one moment that a majority will do so. The Minister, therefore, could well trust the farmers' own good sense as to whether levies should be opposed or not. I find that when the original Bill was before this Chamber, such action as is now contemplated was condemned as unwarranted. At page 487 of "Hansard" for 1922, Mr. Bebbington, the then member for Drayton, speaking on the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill, said—

> "If the Minister will give his word that this is a voluntary Bill, and that only those members who are enrolled and registered will be liable for the expenses incurred, I will withdraw my amendment and leave the Minister to carry the Bill as he wishes. If you have a voluntary Bill, there is no reason for interference by anybody with the organisations. If only the members of those organisations are responsible, let them have the district councils and anything else they like, so long as they pay for them. I am informed that there is no power under the Bill to make a levy on any factory or any person except on members of organisations who decide to come under the Act."

The Secretary for Agriculture said—

> "Is not that quite satisfactory?"

It will be seen that from the very inception of this Bill the system of voluntary action was acknowledged to be included. When I moved the amendment which contains the proviso which it is now intended to delete, I pointed out that its intention was to apply to general as well as specific matters coming within the jurisdiction of the Council of Agriculture. I made the point that it was to cover every levy for the purpose of raising money. The Minister, after hearing that argument, agreed to the principle. When the question was put, the Secretary for Agriculture, on page 498 of "Hansard" for 1922, said—

> "The amendment meets with my approval, with the omission of the words

'or section of industry,' which the hon. member has added to the amendment as circulated, and with the addition, after the word 'industry' where it first occurs, of the following words—

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

"If those words are omitted, the amendment will read—

'Provided that before any levy is made on the primary producers in any industry, at the request in writing of at least one hundred primary producers in that industry, a poll of such primary producers shall be held as prescribed, and if upon such poll the majority of votes is against the making of such levy, no such levy shall be made upon the primary producers in that industry.'"

It will be seen from that that not very long ago the Minister recognised the necessity for having a poll, and I do not think he has shown any reason to-day for going back upon that opinion. It is proposed now to give the Council of Agriculture power to impose any tax it may think fit. In the first place, the Council was elected with limited power in this regard, and I think that the people who elected that Council might think differently in the matter of their choice when these new powers are explained to them. I know that from time to time it is necessary to amend a Bill and that reasons that were not anticipated arise requiring those amendments. At the same time, if it is necessary to insert such a proviso as this, it should not be done until after the re-election of councillors. I think that is a fair thing to ask. Those electing the Council should have the knowledge that it may impose levies without any limit, although the Minister says the amount will be only a small one. We know that very often estimates prove fallacious. While on the subject I might ask the Minister whether it is intended that the raising of capital to carry out schemes under the Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Bill will be effected by the Council, which may impose levies for the purpose. If such is the case, I certainly think exception can be taken to the procedure.

I again urge the Minister to consider whether this matter cannot be held over until the members of the Council go up for re-election. Those voting will then see that they put in men in whom they trust. With the voluntary conditions that are now prevailing, I do not think that a majority of the farmers would allow the Council to cease to exist for want of funds. I think that they have sufficient intelligence to keep it going. I have already pointed out that, as the Act now stands, it is impossible for a minority to hold up matters. The Council can be turned down only by a majority, and in such a case I think the Minister should trust to the farmers to decide the matter themselves. This would mean a check upon those members of the Council who may be possessed of rather extravagant views on the question of levies.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): This amending Bill will allow the Council of Agriculture far more money than it takes to carry on this Parliament, and the Farmers' Parliament may prove more expensive to the State than the People's Parliament! The limit is £20,000, and the Government subsidy will mean another £20,000. This extravagance is absolutely appalling.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the maximum.

Mr. WARREN: It is the maximum, but it is also the limit. When a limit is fixed, I do not care whether they are farmers or anyone else, they always go to the limit. The Minister will admit that the limit is too big. The other night the Minister admitted that too much money was being expended, and we all know that too much money is being expended. So long as we get the goods it is all right, but we do not think we are getting value for the money expended. The Minister should reduce the amount. It is a good thing that these men did not have sufficient money at their disposal absolutely to cripple us. The Council of Agriculture is also asking for an amendment to prevent district agents accepting dual positions. The people are very anxious about this matter, and it does not appear to be dealt with in this Bill.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask the hon. member to keep to the question before the House.

Mr. WARREN: Anything that suits the Government is put in. The request for power to make this levy comes from a section of these gentlemen, and a big section was opposed to it. I would not put a levy of 6d. on the farmer at the present juncture.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We are not proposing to put it on him until next financial year.

Mr. WARREN: I quite understand that, but I do not think we are out of the wood yet. The people are willing to pay, provided they are able to do so; but, when we see tax after tax being put on these men, it is time the Government came to a halt, as they are puttting a burden of taxation on these people that no class can bear. It will be a very serious thing if the Government do not realise that they are grinding these men to the dust with their impossible financial schemes. There is no worker living in the state the ordinary farmer is in at the present time, and I am going to stand up every time against this disgraceful infliction of taxation on the people of Queensland. Not only is it wrong to the individual, but it is wrong to the State, and it is getting us nowhere. I hope the Minister will reconsider this matter. It is against his own convictions. I quite admit it is good business for the Government to shuffle out of this responsibility which they have created.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why do you say "shuffle" out of it?

Mr. WARREN: They agreed to carry it on for a number of years, and now they are trying to shuffle out of their responsibilities. It is good business from their point of view, but it is not good business from the farmer's point of view; and if we had ten Councils in Queensland to-day it would not be done. I hope that the Minister, even at this late hour, will see that he is being led in the wrong direction and that he is destroying and not building up.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I have no intention of opposing the organisation of the farmers and allowing the money which is essential to properly carry out the organisation to be obtained. Hon. members desire

to give the Council of Agriculture a fair opportunity of managing the organisation, because the responsibility of proving whether this organisation will be a success or failure rests upon the Council; and we are not going to hamper the Council in regard to the capital which is required to carry on the work, but we should not do anything which will militate against the goodwill of the farmer in the future. We should not force upon the farmer the payment of certain levies which he is up against for reasons best known to himself. Whilst the Council of Agriculture may be empowered by the District Councils and the Local Producers' Organisations to conduct the machinery of the organisation, and we do not wish to interfere with that in any way, still we must safeguard the goodwill of the primary producer and not force upon him anything which will be against his interests or principles. We should give the primary producer an opportunity of saying whether he will be levied upon or not. If the Council of Agriculture is going to be carried on in a way which does not give confidence to the farmer he is not going to be willing to pay a levy; but if the work is going to be carried out for his benefit he will be quite prepared to pay his share. It will give an impetus to the Council of Agriculture and put it on its mettle if the primary producers have a say as to whether they will pay the levy or not. I hope that the Minister will accept an amendment later on to permit of the matter being referred to the primary producers for their decision by way of a poll.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I am indebted to the leader of the Opposition for his remarks on this Bill. The Minister stated that this was a Bill of two clauses and one principle. On looking into the Bill very closely I find that the effect of the amendment will be very far-reaching. No one objects to the levy so far as the general management of the organisation is concerned. In my electorate there are several Local Producers' Associations. From coming into contact with them I find that they have no objection to management expenses, but in some instances they have raised the question of the huge expenditure which is taking place. I enter my protest against this large body of producers in Queensland being subjected to a levy by any body without their sanction being first obtained. I recognise how easy it is to raise money by compulsion. This matter was debated very fully when the principal Act was before the Chamber, and the Minister accepted the principle laid down on that occasion. When speaking to-day the hon. gentleman told us that the members of the Council of Agriculture, with one exception, had recommended the levy so far as general management is concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The elected members of the Council.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman said that the Government nominees did not support it. If he knew anything, he certainly did not make clear what its attitude was on this matter. I am glad to hear the deputy leader of the Country party say that he proposes to move an amendment at a later stage, and I hope the Minister will accept it.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): The Minister must admit that he has repeatedly laid down the principle that the producers should have a vote on everything that concerns them, but now he tells us that it is necessary on this occasion to take away that right. We have always advocated that the Council of Agriculture should be consulted on all these matters.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. EDWARDS: It is only right and fair that the different industries in the State should have a say as to whether compulsory levies should be imposed or not. The Minister said that the Government had financed the scheme up to the present time. He said that the Premier, when he first introduced this scheme to the people of Queensland, declared that the Government would carry it on, and the remarks of the Minister this morning would lead the House to believe that the Government had done something really big in the interests of the producers in supplying the money to carry on the scheme up to the present. I do not think for a moment that that was in the Premier's mind at all. He realised that through the Arbitration Court the workers had obtained control of the market for their own labour and that the business people were able to pass on any charges imposed upon them, but that the primary producers were unable to get a fair deal. After all, it was only fair for the Government to spend £26,000 on this scheme for the benefit of the primary producers.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must deal with the Bill.

Mr. EDWARDS: I want to say, also, that it is due to the primary producers that they should have sufficient assistance from the Treasury in the future to assist them in their organisation or the marketing of their produce. Since they have suffered heavy penalties in the way of overhead expenses and taxation, it is only fair that they should get every consideration that we can mete out to them. Everybody must admit that at present they are carrying the greatest burden of taxation and overhead expenses. I hope that the Minister will take that fact into consideration and not impose upon them greater taxation, if it is at all possible to induce the Government to carry the scheme further and also to assist in the supply of money to build up co-operative marketing concerns to enable them to handle their produce all the way from the farm to the consumer.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I can quite understand that the Council of Agriculture and the Government are up against very big difficulties in raising funds to carry on the Primary Producers' Organisation. I think that, if anything, they are under-estimating the difficulties.

If the farmers do object to a general levy and demand a poll and vote against it, there is no reason why the Government should not keep the organisation going. Whether you make the levy compulsory or not, [2.30 p.m.] the farmers will not keep the Council of Agriculture going if they decide that it is not worth keeping on. They could at any time put men on the Council who would vote against making any general levy, and they could break up the Council. It is just as well to trust the farmers in the first place. They all know whether the Council is worth keeping on. I am quite sure that if you trust the farmers and leave them alone they will vote the money necessary without any trouble at all.

That will be a safeguard against the breaking up of the Council. If they do not appreciate what the Council is doing, they will certainly put in men determined not to carry it on. Even if the Council does not get the money by way of levy or from the Government, it will still exist. It could exist on a voluntary basis, and could cut down the expenditure considerably. I know that a great many members take the view that we should make no provision altering the section dealing with the taking of a ballot. So long as the right to take a poll is preserved, I cannot see that any objection can be taken. The Minister and the Council of Agriculture should see that the original intention contained in the principal Act is not interfered with.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I regret very much that this Bill has had to be introduced. There is no beating about the bush about the people having to learn to pay levies. The primary producers will have to do just the same as the industrial workers have to do when they have to pay levies, if they want their organisation to be a success. Everything rests, more or less, on finance. Organisations cannot be run without finance, and the primary producers will have to be told straight out from the shoulder that they will have to bring about their own salvation to a large extent. We, as a Labour party, have put certain Acts of Parliament upon the statute-book solely for the benefit of the farmers, and they will have to realise that they have got a duty to perform as well as Parliament. I hope that all the representatives of agricultural centres will not hesitate to tell the farmers what I have stated. At the last general election I told the farmers at Bowen that we had placed certain legislation on the statute-book for their benefit, and it was for them to work out their own salvation. I take up that attitude now, and I hope that after this year or after the period that this measure provides for, they will realise that they have to put their hands in their pockets as the industrial workers have to do. The industrial workers, in order to build up their organisation, have to put their hands in their pockets, and the primary producers will have to do exactly the same if they are going to have a chance of success.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): The hon. member for Bowen has drawn an analogy between the industrialists and the primary producers with regard to levies. The hon. gentleman is a student, and he knows perfectly well that there is no analogy between city industrialists and primary producers, for the reason that the price for the products of the primary producer cannot be fixed. That has been proved, because the activities of the Council of Agriculture have not resulted in increasing the price of butter by one fraction of a penny.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PETERSON: I am trying to bring in the question of levies.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Nor have the unions been able to secure constant work for the industrialists.

Mr. PETERSON: The Government reduced the wages of Government employees by 5 per cent., but those employed in industries are protected by Arbitration Court awards, and any increase in cost can be passed on to the product that is being manufactured. That is not the case, nor has it been the case, with agricultural industries during the nine years that I have been in this Chamber. I admit that you can bring about better conditions if you are able to improve the organisation or distribution. We know that there is plenty of organisation in connection with the distribution of butter and other products, and despite the fact that the primary producer receives less in proportion for his labour than the industrialists of the city. I agree with the hon. member for Bowen in his argument about industrialists, that they could not hope to secure better conditions until they were compulsorily levied upon to pay union fees and dues; but we have to remember that they are in a different position entirely from primary producers. One can secure an increase in wages from the Arbitration Court, whereas the other cannot; and therefore the primary producers should be given an opportunity of saying when they shall be compulsorily levied upon in order to give effect to their organisation. I am sure, as the hon. member for Mirani pointed out, that if they believe in this scheme there will be no trouble. Surely it is not asking too much to give those people the right to say whether they shall have a system of compulsory levies! The farmers have had a very hard row to hoe for a number of years, and I believe that they will not turn down anything that savours of success for them; and I believe that anything in the shape of compulsion applied to them would meet with tremendous opposition throughout the State. Because a few gentlemen on the Council of Agriculture have recommended this Bill, that is no evidence whatever that the bulk of the members of the organisation outside, who rarely see a member of the Council and hardly get time, owing to drought conditions, to read "The Queensland Producer," are in favour of it. I know that many of them are bitterly opposed to the provision for a ballot being excluded in this way.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The big majority are in favour of compulsory levies.

Mr. PETERSON: Then why be afraid to trust them? What authority has the hon. gentleman for saying that the large majority are in favour of compulsory levies? Why be afraid to trust them with a ballot?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You have no proof that I am afraid or that the Council is afraid to trust them or otherwise.

Mr. PETERSON: The provisions in the Bill are mandatory, which shows that the Minister is going to impose these obligations upon the farmers without their consent. I have seen no evidence of the farmers having been consulted. As I have said before, I believe the hon. gentleman wants to do his very best by the producers, and I do not wish to detract from his ability in that direction. At the same time we cannot for a moment place the industrialists and primary producers side by side. The Minister must realise that there is a difference between the two sections, and he should allow the producers to have an opportunity of saying whether they are prepared to be compulsorily levied upon or not. I sincerely trust that he will accept an amendment to be moved at a later stage.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I rather regret that the hon. member for Bowen gave expression to the opinion that it was necessary to introduce this legislation. I do not think

it was. It is absolutely essential in an organisation of farmers like this for the farmers to be whole-heartedly behind it. If they are not, a compulsory levy will not make matters any better. In fact, it is going to make matters worse. My opinion is that, if a vote of the producers is taken on a levy, it will probably be carried by a fairly big majority. I also say that if the producers are debarred from the privilege of voting on a levy a certain number of people who are strongly objecting to it will make all the capital they can out of the fact and become a disturbing element. It is far better to get the whole of the producers behind the organisation by giving them an opportunity of expressing their views even on the question of keeping the Council of Agriculture going as well as on a point like this. If the producer considers that there is likely to be a benefit accruing to him, he is not likely to raise any stumbling block; but I object to the Government spoon-feeding an organisation like this, because if it is going to a benefit to the producers they should pay for it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You would not give them a vote as to whether they should pay their shire rates or not.

Mr. MOORE: That is a totally different proposition. Shires are compelled by Act of Parliament to carry out certain specific duties for the health and benefit of the community, and they have to get money to do so. This organisation is largely experimental in the hope that it will benefit the primary producer.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is controlled by a Farmers' Parliament.

Mr. MOORE: If this Bill is passed and a levy is imposed by the Council of Agriculture, the farmers who are up against the levy will become a disturbing element and do their best to elect men to the Council to reverse this decision. The primary producer should be consulted. I have believed in the principle of a levy in every Bill of this character that has been introduced and, as in the Fruit Marketing Organisation Bill, I have endeavoured to see that the men interested should have a vote on the question. I quite understand the position of the members of the Council of Agriculture. They want to be in a secure position to make plans for the forthcoming year and to be able to carry them out; but that is subsidiary to the feeling of the farmer. It is better to retain his goodwill and get him behind the Bill by allowing him the opportunity to say whether he shall keep the organisation going and pay for it or not. If he is debarred from having a voice in a levy on his own produce, it will make him think that he has been treated in an unfair manner. The sum of £20,000 is not a mere bagatelle.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you suggest that when the farmers joined up with this organisation they did not know they would have to pay a levy?

Mr. MOORE: They did not. They believed that they would have a vote on the question first. I was present at the first meeting of the producers in my district, and in nine cases out of ten the men joined up for the express purpose of having a voice as to whether they would be levied upon or not. If the organisation promised to give them adequate benefits, they were perfectly prepared to pay. Many of them declared that it was only by joining that they would have a vote as to whether the organisation should be continued or not. We had a good deal of difficulty in our district to get them together. We said—"If you come in you will have a voice as to whether it shall be continued or not; but if you remain out of the organisation you will have to carry it on just the same."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They joined up so as to have a voice in the election of the Council.

Mr. MOORE: They did not. I advised them to come in so that they would have a voice in saying whether a levy was to be put on or not. If the Bill is passed, I shall be in an awkward position, because the men joined with the avowed object of expressing their opinion as to whether a levy should be made or not.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): A very considerable portion of my electorate is composed of farmers, although I am credited with being a city farmer. I am rising to voice my protest against the producer being denied a voice as to whether a levy should be imposed or not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is the Local Producers' Association in your district against the Bill?

Mr. KELSO: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They told you that?

Mr. KELSO: Yes, and the Local Producers' Association at Aspley was very emphatic on the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How did they suggest that the scheme was to be financed?

Mr. KELSO: They were unanimous in the matter. These men were asked to send representatives to a conference, which was held, as the Minister knows. It was explained at that conference that the whole cost of this organisation was to be borne for one year by the Government. It was also explained that for the second and third years the primary producers would have to pay one half of the cost, and that the cost in the fourth year—I think the Premier explained this—was to be borne wholly by the producer. The producers were quite willing that this organisation should be started on that basis, because for one year at any rate the Government were going to pay the whole of the cost.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We have paid for two years.

Mr. KELSO: The organisation was a great experiment, though many of the producers thought the machinery was too elaborate. One producer said to me "The organisation is something like using a steam hammer to crack a walnut."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a big walnut that they have to crack.

Mr. KELSO: This producer said that after twelve months they would consider what they would do, and, if a levy were put on them, they would pay that levy; but they would have control of the organisation. They were told that. The Minister said by way of interjection that the Council of Agriculture was the Farmers' Parliament, elected by the farmers. It is not wholly

elected by the farmers, as there are in the personnel of the Council a number of experts who have votes just the same as the elected representatives.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The representatives of the farmers with one exception voted in favour of this Bill.

Mr. KELSO: I am only mentioning the protest which came from my electorate, and it is my duty to stand up here and express the views of the farmers who come under this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How many farmers have you in your electorate?

Mr. KELSO: Easily 500 or 600. I will explain to the Minister—because doubt has been expressed as to whether I represent a farming constituency or not—that my constituency includes Chermside, Aspley, Bunya, Samford, Cedar Creek, Mount Glorious, and Albany Creek.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Bunya is not a very fertile centre.

Mr. KELSO: It is not very fertile, but there are farmers who have been there for years struggling to make a living. There is a feeling on the part of the large number of farmers that the Council of Agriculture is not making good.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in debating the Council of Agriculture, although he may refer to it in passing.

Mr. KELSO: The objects of the Bill are to deprive the farmer of a right which he had previously—to have a poll taken to say whether a levy shall be imposed or not. That provision is being permanently wiped out, and I do not think it is a fair thing. The Minister claims that, if the organisation is not carrying on to the satisfaction of the farmers, they have the opportunity to disband it. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well what a difficult thing that would be. At present it is known that, if the representative members of the Council remain there for a few years, they may have preconceived ideas, and it may take a lot of pressure on the part of farmers to see that their views are carried out. If the organisation does not prove the success that it should prove and the farmers decide that they do not want to pay those levies, it is only fair that they should be allowed to protect themselves. That is a democratic request.

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

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

"That the Bill be now read a third time."

Question put and passed.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

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

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 6—"*Objects of associations*"—

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "To," on line 30, paragraph (iv.), page 4, of the word—

"construct."

It will be remembered that in previous years the matter of provisions to enable a co-operative group of producers to construct tramways was before Parliament, and it was considered desirable that provision should be made to enable those forming such groups to obtain financial assistance to build those tramways. This would place their fields in communication with railways, sugar-mills, and various channels through which the farmers can market their produce. It seems to me that the word "construct" should be inserted before "manufacture" to enable such a provision to be carried out. You would hardly say "manufacture tramlines"; you would say "construct tramlines." The paragraph, as amended, will read—

"(iv.) To construct, manufacture, purchase, or hire, or otherwise acquire on behalf of its members and to supply to its members or to work, use, or control on their behalf, agricultural and dairying implements and machinery, livestock, breeding stock, feeding stuffs, seeds, fruit trees, fertilisers, and other farming requisites."

On a subsequent line I intend to move the insertion of the words "tramways and motor lorries." I shall deal with that when the time comes.

[3 p.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I do not think the amendment will improve the Bill in any way, because, if the hon. member will turn to the next page, he will find that paragraph (xiv.) reads—

"To carry out any other objects approved by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Council."

That paragraph covers every possible object to which this Bill can be applied, and I do not think anything will be gained by accepting the amendment.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): If the Minister will give me an assurance that the Bill as it stands will allow of the formation of groups of co-operators and allow them to get financial help towards the construction of tramways or the establishment of lines of motor lorries for the conveyance of their produce to market, I shall not press the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Paragraph (xiv.) covers everything.

Mr. SWAYNE: If that is so, I will withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I want to call attention to the question I raised on the

second reading. I then pointed out that we had passed a Fruit Marketing Organisation Bill, which gave into the hands of a Fruit Committee of Direction complete control of all produce. In paragraph (i.) of this clause the associations which it is proposed to form under the Bill are given control of the growers' produce. It seems to me that there is conflict there, and I should like to know which of these two bodies is to have control under the conflicting circumstances that will prevail.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am informed that, notwithstanding anything in this Bill, the Fruit Marketing Organisation Act will prevail.

Mr. DEACON: In what way does the Fruit Marketing Organisation Act provide for the difficulty raised by the hon. member for Oxley?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Notwithstanding anything in this Bill, the Fruit Marketing Act prevails.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I beg to move the omission, on lines 27 to 34, page 5, of the words—

> "(2.) All the foregoing objects and each of them shall be and be deemed to be a lawful object, notwithstanding that the giving effect thereto might otherwise be held to be in restraint of trade or detrimental to the interests of the association or its members or any of them, or of other persons, or unreasonable or unnecessary for the protection of any association or the members or any members thereof or any other persons."

I move this amendment for the purpose of finding out just where we stand in this matter. For the first time in the history of commerce in Queensland we are asked to pass a measure which overrides the provisions which the Commonwealth Government have introduced preventing anything in the nature of restraint of trade. In this subclause we expressly provide that this measure shall give relief from that Commonwealth restriction. I can hardly think it is intended, and perhaps the Minister has not given it sufficient consideration. Therefore it is a matter that we should debate. I do not see any use whatever in putting on our statute-book a provision that would not hold in the High Court of Australia. Surely these co-operative associations do not ask for any further protection than that which ordinary trading facilities permit!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I can hardly think that the Minister would agree to put a clause in this Bill which is absolutely useless. It may be all right to provide for restraint of trade so far as Queensland is concerned, but to attempt to override the Commonwealth Act is absurd. Even if it is not an absurdity I would strongly object to the provision being put into this Bill. We went into federation with the idea that there was to be free trade between the States. If you can come to a satisfactory arrangement for the stabilisation of prices between the various States, I have no objection; but it is a wrong thing to introduce legislation which will prevent an individual selling his commodity in another State if he desires to do so. This Bill is purely a measure to provide for co-operation in the selling of primary products in the State of Queensland. If it is intended to prevent an individual from selling his produce in another State, we are entitled to put up as big a fight as we possibly can, because that will do a grave injustice. I can hardly understand the Government allowing a clause such as this to be put into a State Act. It will only come into conflict with the Commonwealth Act, and will lead to costly litigation. A case came before the High Court recently in connection with a voluntary contract entered into between certain parties in Victoria. When it came to a dispute there was not only the farmer's side to be taken into consideration but also the agents of the farmer. If the farmers were bound the agents also had to be bound to take what the farmers gave them to make the contract binding. They were not able to do this, and the agents endeavoured to get an injunction against the growers to restrain them from selling outside the organisation. The matter went to the High Court, and it was defeated, as it should have been defeated. There is an obligation on both sides. This provision is a most misleading one, and the Minister would be wise either to have it amended or to withdraw it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I am informed by the Crown law officers that this clause does not in any way conflict with the Commonwealth Constitution or with any Commonwealth Act dealing with restraint of trade. The clause is framed to bring matters into conformity with the decisions in the Port Huron case and the Victorian case, which were based on the common law. It was decided in those well-known cases that where farmers joined an organisation or company and undertook under the articles of association to sell their commodities to the company, and then broke away from the agreement, the articles could not stand. A case was cited at common law and a decision obtained. This subclause is put in so that the Bill will not conflict with section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution or with any Commonwealth Act, and to ensure that cases such as those I have mentioned shall not happen in Queensland.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): That makes the matter all the worse. If the provision is put in for that purpose I have a decided objection to it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If you do not want to observe a contract, then you will object to it.

Mr. MOORE: A contract to be binding must be binding on both sides. The unfortunate Port Huron growers bound themselves to supply their produce to the association, which did not consider itself bound to dispose of the produce; yet, when the growers wanted to get rid of it through some other channel, the association tried to prohibit them from doing so. If there is to be a contract entered into between the growers and the organisation under this Bill for the sale of produce, it is up to the organisation to sell the produce; but, if it cannot do so, the farmer should be allowed to sell his produce through some other channel. It is difficult to understand why a clause like this, which is only binding on one side, should be put into the Bill. If men are foolish enough to go into a contract with their eyes open and bind themselves for a definite period of ten or twelve years it is their own lookout; but there is a definite obligation on the part of the organisation which is handling the produce to take it from them and dispose of it. If it cannot do so, then the individual

should have the right to dispose of his produce in the best way he can. To endeavour to prevent him from doing that when the produce is deteriorating and the people who are supposed to be handling it cannot dispose of it would be an outrageous state of affairs. The common law principle should stand. If the Bill is going to override the common law rights of the individual, the principle is wrong and the paragraph should be deleted.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I understood from what the Minister said that anyone going into one of these associations and having a previous contract could break that contract without being liable to an action. I would be glad if the Minister will make it clear.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I desire to protest against this provision being included.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: On the same grounds as the hon. member for Oxley?

Mr. KELSO: On general grounds. The fact of this paragraph being in the Bill shows that there is some doubt in the mind of the framer of the Bill as to whether or not it will be in restraint of trade. Why should the Commonwealth Constitution be overridden like this? It may happen that a farmer enters into a contract without quite understanding its effect, and he may be tied hand and foot and be restrained from dealing with his produce as he would like to do.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you not think that if a farmer enters into a contract he is in honour bound to observe it?

Mr. KELSO: That is quite true, but a farmer may make a mistake. The hon. gentleman has introduced this provision, which supersedes the general law in restraint of trade.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What general law?

Mr. KELSO: The common law in restraint of trade.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a vital necessity to include this provision in the Bill.

Mr. KELSO: You are going to tie the farmer hand and foot.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The farmer is not compelled to come in.

Mr. KELSO: If he does come in he may not quite understand the position, and there is no good reason why he should be tied hand and foot. I think it would be far better in the interests of the farming community to leave this provision out.

Mr G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): It is quite evident that by inserting this provision we are overriding constitutional law and attempting to do something by Act of Parliament which altogether contravenes the relationship which exists between the different States. I take it that when the States federated we became Australians. We are Australians first, and, whilst we may have a particular love for our own State above any other State, we are out to do the fair thing. Anyone can see what this subclause means. It simply means that a member of an association will be debarred, should he so desire, from marketing his produce on his own account in another State. I can quite understand that no one in the association will be likely to attempt to do an unfair thing; but if this provision is retained a man will not be acting bonâ fide if he trades in another State. Information may come to the Minister that an individual is commencing to do things which are of a very questionable nature, and we know that if a member of an association seeks to break the law there are penalties for so doing. At any rate, the association has its remedy, but this subclause will be a very big knock to the ordinary law if it is allowed to pass. I am sure that the Minister has been ill-advised in including it, because it can only be construed as an attempt to restrain ordinary trade associations.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I cannot understand the attitude of the Opposition. The provision is inserted only to legalise the objects of an association under the Bill, and hon. members can go on talking all day and all night without altering the fact. We know that neither this measure nor any other measure can override the Commonwealth law dealing with restraint of trade, so that this subclause merely gives the objects of the association a legal standing as between the members, so that one member cannot do things behind the backs of the others which are detrimental to them all. Hon. members opposite should welcome the provision, because this is their Bill, and it is included for the purpose of protecting the members of the associations which will be formed under the Bill. I think it would be very unwise if we had not such a provision in the Bill; it might be possible for a member to break away from an association and do something which he had a perfect right to do under the common law but which it would not be right for him to do as a member of such an association. We might as well ask, "Why have any legislation at all? Why not give everybody a free 'go'?" The reason for the legislation is that everybody should get a square deal. We know the trouble there has been amongst members of the Country party because one butter factory has gone behind another and cut into it and practically ruined the butter trade in Queensland; and, when we attempt at their own request to give them something which will practically prevent that sort of thing and give them the opportunity to carry on their business legitimately, they talk as if we were trying to do something illegal.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): This clause confers very far-reaching powers on a co-operative association, and practically sets out to override the common law against restraint of trade. I take it that the primary producers know what they want, but representatives of the primary producers on this side are told by industrialists opposite that they do not know what they want, and that the Government are fully seized with the necessities of the case and the importance of the matter and do not mind what is said on this side. The clause practically declares that a director of an association cannot be held responsible for any injury. He could even steal another trader's patent rights without paying for them. Surely the Minister will be amenable to reason and consider what the representatives of the primary producers require!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The genuine representatives of the primary producers are on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. MAXWELL: We have proof that they are not, but I am not going to "get into holts" with the hon. gentleman on that point. The hon. member for Oxley was

quite right in drawing attention to such an important provision, and I for one am going to rely on a higher authority than the hon. member for Ipswich. He may know something about coal matters, but he knows very little about the interests of the primary producers.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): The objection to this subclause is founded on very high principles of the common law, and, after all is said and done, our common law is a thing of which we ought to be very proud. It has been built up during successive generations. It is simply common custom, and to insert a clause of this nature is to upset tradition which has taken generations to form, in favour of a provision which is altogether foreign to common sense and justice. The common law is really common sense.

Mr. GLEDSON: The law is an ass.

Mr. KING: Statute law may be so in many respects, but common law and common sense are synonymous terms. I go so far as to say that this provision is misleading, because it will be found to be illegal and ultra vires, and its presence will lead to endless litigation.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I object to this subclause quite apart from the point of view of the producer. It will support restraint of trade, and if that is going to be the case how will the consumers get on?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You do not believe in co-operation.

Mr. FRY: I seconded the only motion moved in this Chamber for co-operation and the hon. gentleman did not support it. He was not in the picture at all. He can refer to our parliamentary records, which will prove the fact. The subclause provides—

> "All the foregoing objects and each of them shall be and be deemed to be a lawful object, notwithstanding that the giving effect thereto might otherwise be held to be in restraint of trade or detrimental to the interests of the association or its members or any of them, or of other persons. . . ."

The "other persons" are the consumers—the people I represent—and, if this is going to be inserted and if trade is going to be restrained so that we shall have to pay higher prices, I object to it.

At 3.30 p.m.,

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

Mr. FRY: I have supported the producer right up to the hilt. I have supported the producer because the consumer depends upon his enterprise and energy for the food he eats and the clothing he wears. When we find a provision like this giving the Council of Agriculture power that is not given to any other section of the community, I am not going to sit down and merely say, "Hear, hear!" I know that the Country party are prepared to give the consumer just as good a deal as the producer. At the same time I am not going to allow the law to be altered in this way without making some protest. The subclause continues—

> "Notwithstanding that the giving effect thereto might otherwise be held to be in restraint of trade or detrimental to the interests of the association or its members or any of them, or of other persons, or unreasonable or unnecessary for the protection of any association or the members or any members thereof or any other persons."

Wise men would not support this provision. The Government are making a weapon which will act as a boomerang and strike their party if the provision is carried.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): During the second reading of this Bill reference was made to its drag-net clauses. This is a drag-net clause, which really takes away any confidence that might have been left in the State by people wishing to carry on trade here. This clause practically drags the bottom out of decent and equitable trading ventures in this State. Any hon. gentleman associated with trade will agree that the provision is placed in the Bill so that a better law can be evaded, and so that the Government can establish what they claim to be one of the principles of the Labour platform, and also to set aside all those things that are hindering them from grasping everything for themselves in the interests of a section to the detriment of a whole community. There is a genuine protest against this subclause. Hon. members will agree that in introducing a co-operative measure there is no necessity for drag-net provisions quite contrary to the spirit of co-operation and quite contrary to that which is essential or desired by co-operationists. There was no necessity for the Government to bring about a monopoly of anything to the detriment of everything decent in trading ventures in the past. In overriding the Commonwealth law we are overriding constitutional government. We know that, whilst a section of the community might desire what is contained in the Bill and which goes in the direction of the Labour platform, it is a dangerous provision to place in a Bill which the Government claimed when introducing it and explaining its provisions to be in the interests of co-operation. It is a dangerous provision introduced under the guise of a co-operative Bill. The co-operative principles take second place in the Bill. It is clear that it is placed in the Bill to enable the Government to have what their platform says they should have and what the Emu Park Convention laid down they should have. The Government have introduced this provision under the guise of something to benefit the primary producers, and they want to brush aside everything that is constitutional and substitute a drag-net provision to override the Federal law and everything decent that we have enjoyed in the past. It is really legalising robbery.

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

AYES, 30.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Land
,, Bertram	,, Larcombe
,, Bruce	,, McLachlan
,, Carter	,, Payne
,, Collins	,, Pease
,, Dash	,, Pollock
,, Farrell	,, Riordan
,, Ferricks	,, Ryan
,, Foley	,, Smith
,, Gillies	,, Stopford
,, Gledson	,, Theodore
,, Hartley	,, Weir
,, Huxham	,, Wilson
,, Hynes	,, Winstanley
,, Kirwan	,, Wright

Tellers: Mr. Bruce and Mr. Wright.

NOES, 19.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Kerr
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, King
,, Brand	,, Logan
,, Clayton	,, Maxwell
,, Corser	,, Moore
,, Deacon	,, Nott
,, Edwards	,, Peterson
,, Elphinstone	,, Roberts
,, Fry	,, Swayne
,, Kelso	

Tellers: Mr. Edwards and Mr. Nott.

PAIRS.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Dunstan	Mr. Walker
,, Mullan	,, Petrie
,, Gilday	,, Vowles
,, Bulcock	,, Morgan

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 9, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 10—"*Submission of application to Minister and registration*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the omission, on lines 33, 34, and 35, page 7, of the words—

> "The application for registration, with the accompanying documents prescribed, shall be submitted by the registrar to the Minister."

The hon. member for Aubigny proposes by an amendment later on to omit certain other words, but it will be necessary to consider first the documents which have to be submitted to the Minister.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I cannot see the object of this power of veto in the Minister. The Bill states—

> "Subject to the approval of the Council . . . any one or more Local Producers' Associations . . . may form a Primary Producers' Co-operative Association."

Then, on page 8, we have it stated—

> "Provided that the Minister may annul any such registration upon proof by the registrar or any person interested that it was obtained by fraud."

If it is approved by the Council of Agriculture, what is the reason for the Minister to step in and veto it? I do not see the object of the Minister in having the power of veto. If the suggestion that these people should form themselves into an association is a good one, and is approved of by the Council of Agriculture, I do not see the object of the veto of the Minister. I would like to hear from the Minister his reason for including this in the Bill. The whole object of the Bill is to allow these people, without any more hindrance than is necessary, to form co-operative associations, and it seems extraordinary that the Minister should ask for this power. I can see where in one or two instances this power can be used to the detriment of a section of the growers. If the Minister gave permission to one organisation to start a butter factory in a certain district, it is quite possible for him to veto an application from another organisation which may want to have a cheese factory in the same area. That would be a good thing for the individuals concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): The power should stand. It is taken from the South African Act, and I find that it is in the Companies Act of New South Wales. I can cite an instance of a certain company calling itself a co-operative company which was prevented by the Minister from registering in New South Wales, and which came to Queensland and became registered here. There is a strong desire on the part of the Opposition to take the power away from the Minister, as they do not believe in the doctrine that the Government should govern. The Minister will have to take that responsibility. If he vetoes any company that is a bonâ fide one, the responsibility will be his. I cannot, therefore, accept the amendment.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): The case the Minister cited cannot have any application to this Bill, because that company could not possibly register under it, as it could not comply with its provisions.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It registered under the Companies Act. Cases may arise where it may be necessary to use the power of veto. I intend to let the provision stand.

Mr. MOORE: I cannot see that the Minister has any justification for his attitude. The hon. gentleman says that he is going to allow the words to remain in the Bill. They may be detrimental to a section of the community who wish to form an association which may happen to be detrimental to one that the Minister takes a personal interest in. Take the question of two factories being established in the one district. Efficient management can only be obtained by competition. If a man is to be compelled to supply a factory because it happens to be situated in his district, irrespective of its management, it will not be an advantage to him. The hon. member for Rosewood some time ago said that the principle of true co-operation did not exist in a certain district, because the producers there sent their produce past a local co-operative factory to the factory at Kingston. The reason for that was because the latter was more efficiently managed, and the producers got a better price there for their products. The producers, therefore, supported the more efficient managed factory.

Mr. GLEDSON: It does not say that, because the one factory paid more than another factory for cream, it was more efficiently managed.

Mr. MOORE: I am not in favour of a premium on incompetence. The one thing necessary to secure adequate supplies for a factory is efficient and economical management. If those factors are not present, no justification exists for compelling a man to supply his products to that factory. To do so would be subsidising incompetence.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you think that we could have carried on our sugar-mills without that provision?

Mr. MOORE: That is a different proposition altogether, because the money of the State was wrapped up in the sugar-mills.

Mr. GLEDSON: You have no right to say that the farmers' companies in Queensland are inefficiently managed.

Mr. MOORE: That does not affect the position. What I am getting at is that the proposal to compel an individual to send his product to a particular factory, and prevent any other factory from being established in the district, is putting a premium on incompetency. Competition is bound to lead to efficiency. If the Council of Agriculture

has no objection to the people in a certain district forming a company, the Minister has no right to step in with a veto.

Mr. KELSO (*Yundah*): Under clause 5 any association or body of producers may form a Primary Producers' Association.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is right.

Mr. KELSO: I cannot see that the approval of the Council of Agriculture is necessary in that case, so long as they bring their articles into conformity with the provisions of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is no reason why the Minister should not have the power of veto.

Mr. KELSO: It seems to me that they can form an association in spite of the veto.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why worry about it, then?

Mr. KELSO: The power of veto was put in this clause for some purpose. What is the purpose? It may be used in a certain direction to suit the Minister in some particular case.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You may depend upon it that any power this Minister has will be exercised very wisely in the interests of the primary producers.

Mr. KELSO: I am not saying that it would not. The hon. gentleman must realise that someone else may take his place who may hold a different opinion. I pointed out that under the Companies Act any body of persons who wish to form a company may do so without submitting an application to the Minister or anyone else except the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, to whom they tender the memorandum and articles of association. Under clause 5 it is provided that any seven or more persons, being primary producers, may form a company. They can do so under the Companies Act if they like, and the Minister will not have the chance of objecting so long as they conform with the Companies Act.

Mr. CARTER: This is to prevent them trying to trade under a false name.

Mr. KELSO: The hon. member is wrong in thinking they want to trade under a false name. So long as they conform to the Companies Act they may form their company in spite of the Minister, provided that two-thirds of the shareholders are suppliers and that the dividends shall not exceed 5 per cent. They merely submit the memorandum and articles of association to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies. Simply because the Minister chooses to put this provision in a separate Bill and to have numbers of similar Acts, instead of bringing them all under the Companies Act, is no reason why he should have the right to veto the registration of any association. It seems to me that people have a perfect right to form an association if they raise the necessary money and conform with the Companies Act, and I think that this provision allowing the Minister to veto registration should be deleted.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): It seems peculiar that the Minister should insist on this right of veto. First of all, provision is made that a man has to be a producer within the meaning of the Act. If a body of men form themselves into a company for the purpose of carrying out what is defined in this Bill, they have to follow the model rules which are set out in the Bill. Providing that they comply with those model rules and the regulations, there should be no necessity to give the Minister the right to veto the registration of any association.

The Minister spoke about sugar-mills. There is nothing in the nature of a veto in the Sugar Works Act, but the Government were empowered to refuse to lend money for the establishment of mills too close together. I do not think anything of that nature could arise in connection with this Bill, because it covers quite a different scope of work. I take it that the Agricultural Bank will have power to refuse loans if they think necessary. We have ample safeguards against State loan money being applied to purposes which are not likely to be remunerative. Seeing that this is provided for in the clauses of this Bill and in other legislation, why is it necessary for the Minister to take to himself this right of veto? It leads to the suspicion that the purpose of all this legislation is to enable the Government to discriminate between those of the right political colour and others. That is the natural inference that must be arrived at. I trust that the Minister will accept the amendment.

At 3.55 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) resumed the chair.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I do not see why farming companies should be treated any worse than any other companies. We are applying restrictive conditions to co-operative companies which would not be applied to any other companies.

Mr. GLEDSON: You have just voted to put a restriction on them.

Mr. DEACON: They should come under the same conditions as anybody else. Why do hon. members opposite not trust the farmer? They know their own business and they should be allowed to manage it.

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) negatived.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I fail to see the necessity for lines 4 to 12 of this clause. Cutting out the unnecessary verbiage, it reads—

> "A Local Producers' Association or associations shall continue to be a Local Producers' Association or associations under the Primary Producers' Act of 1922 until dissolved under the provisions of this Act, notwithstanding that it or they may have ceased to be a Local Producers' Association or associations."

It cannot cease. It says at the beginning of the paragraph that the Local Producers' Association shall continue to be such. It is impossible to cease if it will continue, and I cannot see any sense or meaning in the paragraph. The first part of the paragraph seems to be clear and definite. I do not want to press this as an amendment, but I think it is absurd.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): The reason for the paragraph is that, after 80 per cent. of the members of the Local Producers' Association have proceeded to form themselves into co-operative association under this Act, they shall continue operative under the Act. Eighty per cent. is a pretty big majority. The main object is to allow new trading associations to form, and after it is decided that they shall become trading organisations under this Act they shall continue

to be Local Producers' Associations under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act of 1922.

Mr. MOORE: The paragraph says—

"Notwithstanding that it or they may have ceased to be a Local Producers' Association or associations."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the explanation. (Opposition laughter.)

[4 p.m.]

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "association," on line 12, page 8, of the following new paragraph:—

"Upon the decision of a Local Producers' Association to become a Primary Producers' Co-operative Association under this Act, any member of such Local Producers' Association who has not signed an application for membership of such Primary Producers' Co-operative Association as hereinbefore provided may at any time within thirty days thereafter by notice in writing to the secretary of such Local Producers' Association elect to be not a member of such Primary Producers' Co-operative Association, and upon such notice being given such member may remain a member of the Local Producers' Association without becoming a member of the Primary Producers' Co-operative Association. A person who becomes a member of a Local Producers' Association at any time after such association has become a Primary Producers' Co-operative Association shall not thereby become a member of such Primary Producers' Co-operative Association unless he elects to become such member by signing an application for membership thereof and such application is accepted in accordance with the rules of the association."

The difficulty is that if the Local Producers' Associations are to keep on and any member does not agree to his association becoming a co-operative association, he has either to get out or else he is liable for anything done by the association. The Local Producers' Association cannot do their work properly unless their members are to be free.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): As I have already explained, the object of allowing Local Producers' Associations to form associations under this Bill is to permit of their performing the two functions. Complaints have been made already about the expense of these associations. The Local Producers' Associations this year will absorb more than £4,000 of the total vote, and the District Councils, together with the Local Producers' Associations, will require considerably more than half the £30,000 voted by the Government. When the time arrives that the farmers themselves will have to pay these expenses they will recognise the wisdom of inserting this provision in the Bill. It will make for economy to allow a Local Producers' Association by a majority of 80 per cent. of its members to decide to form an association and to carry out the two functions. If we allow a small minority to break away and form another Local Producers' Association, there will be no advantage in putting this provision in the Bill at all.

I regret that, while members have had quite a number of days to prepare their amendments and have them circulated, the hon. member was only able to furnish this amendment to me a few minutes ago and very badly typed. It is not fair to the Committee and it is not fair to me to thrust amendments on me in this way. However, I have given full consideration to the amendment, and I cannot accept it, for the reasons given.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The hon. gentleman must not be annoyed at the delay in receiving amendments when we are having measures thrust upon us in the way they are at the present time. Bills are often recommitted here and members of the Opposition never see the proposed amendments.

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

Mr. CORSER: The amendment is a very simple one, and it is one that any member in this Chamber can understand immediately he sees it. It does not alter any vital principle of the Bill. It merely asks that, in the event of a member of a Local Producers' Association not wishing to join a co-operative company formed by that association he shall be allowed to stand out. The clause at present provides that he must dissociate himself from the whole of the organisation scheme if he disagrees with the formation of a co-operative association. It may be desired to form a co-operative association to deal with certain products in which he is not interested, and the amendment is only to give him an opportunity to stay within the organisation of the Local Producers' Association, and, at the same time, give him an opportunity to vote himself out of a co-operative association formed under this Bill.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I can quite understand that, if we are going to allow 20 per cent. of the members to drift away from these Local Producers' Associations, these bodies will soon break up, but a certain percentage of the members of a Local Producers' Association may not be interested in the business of the co-operative association. I regret very much not having been able to circulate this amendment sooner, but I would point out that Ministers and others have had Bills before them for six months and they are not able to circulate amendments till the last minute.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 and 12 put and passed.

Clause 13—"*Model rules*"—

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I should like to draw attention to the powers of the Governor in Council in connection with the rules of associations. Subclause (2) provides—

"The Governor in Council may from time to time alter, add to, or rescind any of the model rules, and any such alteration, addition, or rescission shall, on publication in the 'Gazette,' have the same force and effect as if they had been contained in such Schedule, and Part I. of the Schedule to this Act shall be deemed to be amended accordingly."

Then subclause (3) reads—

"Every alteration of, addition to, or rescission of any of the model rules shall be laid by the Minister upon the table of the Legislative Assembly within fourteen days after the publication thereof in the 'Gazette.'"

Irrespective of any model rules that may be

passed, the Governor in Council may flout the whole of the associations interested. I am just drawing the attention of the Committee to the seriousness of the position. The Council of Agriculture is formed to do certain things, and, if the rules which have been framed do not meet the wishes of a certain section, the Governor in Council can wipe them out altogether. I think it is a most unfair clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14—"*Association may adopt model rules.*"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I move the omission, on lines 24 to 31, both inclusive, page 9, of the words—

> "Upon the registration of an association under this Act, in so far as any rules submitted for registration and registered are not inconsistent with or do not exclude or modify the model rules, the model rules shall be deemed to form the rules or part of the rules of that association in the same manner and to the same extent as if they were contained in the rules so submitted and registered."

An association is formed on the basis of a set of rules which is submitted for consideration, and it would be unfair to require the members to be bound by alterations made in those rules during the process of the formation of the association. It is a most drastic provision which enables rules submitted for registration to be altered in any way whatever without those who are registering under them having any opportunity of discovering what the alterations are going to be. When an association is going to be formed the articles of association are sent to let the people know the exact conditions on which they are going into it; but the clause permits an alteration of the articles of association to be made by which they will be bound although they may know nothing about the alteration. It seems unreasonable to be able to alter the articles of association in that way.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15—"*Provisions as to rules.*"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I move the insertion after the word "Council," on line 11, page 11, of the words—

> "Provided that an Order fixing a lesser per centum per annum shall not apply to an association existing at the time such Order is made."

The subclause reads—

> "The maximum amount which may be paid to members in the form of dividend in respect of the shares held by them, but which shall not in any case exceed 5 per cent. per annum on the amounts paid on the shares, or such lesser or greater per centum per annum as may be fixed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Council"—

to which I propose to add the words contained in the amendment. There is a definite basis stated in regard to associations, and it would be unfair to have that basis altered. There is no reason why it should be altered.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I see no reasonable objection to the amendment and therefore I will accept it.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 16, 17, and 18 put and passed.

Clause 19—"*Formation of Primary Producers' Co-operative Federations.*"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I move the omission, after the word "person," on line 41, page 13, of the words—

> "approved by the Council."

If a Local Producers' Association wishes to join up with another body, that action has to be approved of by the Council. I do not see any reason why the approval of the Council should be obtained, or what object there is in doing so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I do not see any objection to the deletion of those words. It is a small matter, and I will agree to the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 20 and 21 put and passed.

Clause 22—"*Provisions as to co-operative companies.*"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I move the insertion after the word "held," on line 28, page 14, of—

> "(i.)."

That is preliminary to moving the insertion after the word "on," on line 32, of the words—

> "or (ii.) by workers actually employed in the business or industry carried on or to be carried on by the company; or (iii.) by bonâ fide regular purchasers of the commodities or articles or some of the same in respect of which the business of the company is to be or is being carried on."

This restricts the formation of a company to one section of the community. The clause states that two-thirds at least of the number of the shares must be held by persons who are producers and suppliers. I think there are many other sections in these co-operative associations. Besides producers and consumers there may be purchasers. It is restricted within such narrow limits that I do not see that there is anything to be gained by the clause as it stands. I moved the amendment to make it possible for workers employed in the business or bonâ fide and regular purchasers to be regarded as producing shareholders. I know that the Minister will say that they can register under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, but they will be cut out of the provisions of this Bill and will not be able to call themselves co-operative companies. There are stores run by the Downs Co-operative Dairy Company and the Oakey Co-operative Company, which are genuine co-operative stores, but they will not be able to class themselves as co-operative companies unless this clause is amended. I want them to be able to continue under a designation which is perfectly justifiable.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I think that the proviso to the clause and the provision that one-third of the shares may be held by persons who are not producers or suppliers

meets the case, but in any case it is not desirable that purchasers from primary producers' co-operative companies should have this privilege. As I have already said, there are other provisions on the statute-book enabling other classes of persons to form themselves into associations.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) negatived.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I have an amendment to move on this clause which I think will meet the case which has been put forward in favour of children of shareholders. I move the insertion, after the word "articles," on line 41, page 14, of the words—

> "For the purposes of this section every child of a person being a shareholder in and a producer and supplier to the company who resides with such parent shall be deemed to be a producer and supplier if such child is of an age exceeding sixteen years and is also a shareholder in the company."

Amendment (*Mr. Gillies*) agreed to

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I think the Minister might give us a little more information as to the effect of this clause. We know that companies have been established under the Companies Acts which are using the word "co-operative" in their titles. I should like the Minister to tell us whether the charter under which those companies were formed is to be overridden by this Bill. Will such a company have to change its name?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): The clause says—

> "Subject to this Act, it shall not be lawful for any company to be registered under any State law or, if registered in Queensland, to remain registered with the word 'co-operative' as part of its name, or for any company to use in any way or by any mode whatsoever as part of its name or in connection with its name the word 'co-operative' unless—
>
> (*a*) Two-thirds at least of the number of the shares and of the voting power of the company are in fact always held by persons who are producers and suppliers to the company of the produce or some of the same in respect of which the business of the company is to be or is being carried on; and each member of the company is entitled to give one vote only (whether in person or through a proxy, where proxies are allowed), at any meeting of the members of the company; and
>
> (*b*) The articles of association of the company contain provisions in conformity with paragraph (*a*) of this section.
>
> And it shall not be competent for the company at any time to alter such provisions of its articles."

I think that makes it quite clear as to what registered companies have to do.

Mr. KELSO (*Yundah*): Does it affect only primary producers' companies?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. KELSO: What about the Civil Service Co-operative Store?

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Minister certainly quoted the clause very distinctly, but I want to say that certain companies have received a charter under the Queensland law, and now they will have to change their names unless they can conform to the provisions of this clause. It seems to me that it affects not only primary producers' companies but all companies. The hon. member for Nundah has mentioned the Civil Service Co-operative Store—a limited liability company which will have to alter its name under this Bill. That appears to me to be a repudiation of its charter. The clause should make some provision to protect them.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): If I understand the position rightly, there are some co-operative companies already in existence which will be affected by this provision. They have been trading for some years and have expended a good deal of money and built up businesses. Now they will be unceremoniously advised that as a result of this legislation they can no longer use the word which has been a power in their business. I can quite understand that the people concerned are not aware of this infringement of their rights, which is altogether beyond what is fair and right. They may have built up huge concerns on truly co-operative lines.

At 4.30 p.m., under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 18th October, the House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

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

QUESTIONS.

MARKETING OF RATOON COTTON.

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

> "1. Is he aware that the Central District Council have written to Mr. Daniel Jones offering to defray the expenses of a visit by him to Great Britain for the purpose of inquiring whether there is a remunerative market there for ratoon cotton?
>
> "2. Is he aware that ratoon cotton is being used in Australia at the present time for the manufacture of cotton goods at the spinning mills of Messrs. George Bond and Company in Sydney? Also, that evidence has been quoted showing that in many instances the fibre of ratoon cotton is equal in length to that of seed cotton?
>
> "3. Is he aware that, on account of the greater reliability of ratoon cotton as a crop in times of drought, many Queensland producers state that it is a question of either a crop of ratoon cotton or relief rations?
>
> "4. Will he, on verification of the above statements, showing that Queensland producers are willing to bear the expense themselves of testing the question whether there is a market in Great Britain for ratoon cotton or not, also, in view of the fact that there is evidence showing there is a local market for the same, delay the coming into force of the Cotton Industry Act until the matter has been thoroughly investigated?"

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

"1. No.

"2, 3, and 4. I refer the hon. gentleman to 'Hansard' reports of speeches on the Cotton Bill, which he evidently did not hear."

CESSATION OF DRILLING OPERATIONS AT GYMPIE.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*), in the absence of Hon. W. H. Barnes (*Wynnum*), asked the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Have the Mines Department ceased drilling operations at Gympie?

"2. If so, do they propose in the immediate future resuming operations at Gympie?

"3. Was the foreman of the operations at Gympie transferred to Charters Towers?

"4. Was the foreman at Charters Towers loaned to the Palmer Syndicate; and, if so, has he the necessary qualifications for the work upon which he is to be engaged?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*), in the absence of the Secretary for Mines (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*), replied—

"1. Yes, for the present.

"2. Answered by No. 1.

"3. Yes.

"4. Yes. Am not aware of the nature of the work upon which he is to be engaged."

QUEENSLAND CANNED FISH.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. Has he noticed the statement in 'Hansard' No. 30, page 1864, in which Mr. Taylor, M.L.A., refers to fish canned in Queensland as 'canned muck,' and on which he alleges the Government has lost thousands of pounds?

"2. Has any fish been canned in Queensland by the Government?

"3. Is any fish being canned by private enterprise; and, if so, by whom, and what is the quality?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. No.

"3. Queensland fish are being canned by Messrs. Foggitt, Jones, and Company, and the Fishermen's Co-operative Company, the quality of which is excellent. The efforts of those firms to establish new industries in this State should be encouraged, and it is a matter for regret that Mr. Taylor did not make proper investigation for himself before making statements at variance with fact."

TAXATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN COMMONWEALTH AND STATE GOVERNMENTS.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*), without notice, asked the Treasurer—

"1. Has the taxation agreement between the Commonwealth and the State been signed?

"2. Will he indicate when the staff arrangements in consequence thereof are likely to become operative?"

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

"1. The agreement was signed last night by the Acting Prime Minister and myself.

"2. The State Government will take over the collection of income tax almost immediately. The transfer of the necessary officers will take place without delay."

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COTTON-GROWERS.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"In the event of a cotton-grower requiring financial assistance, is there any legal obstacle to such grower obtaining such financial assistance from any financial institution or private person?"

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

"I do not know of any legal obstacle; and if a grower requires financial assistance and has security, he can apply to the State Advances Corporation for a loan."

Mr. FRY: Can he get it by way of a lien?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot see any legal objection to that.

QUESTION NOT ALLOWED BY MR. SPEAKER.

The SPEAKER: Yesterday the hon. member for Cunningham gave notice of a question which does not appear on the business-sheet to-day. I ruled it out of order because it was not in connection with a matter of public business, and was trivial.

PAPERS.

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

Regulations, dated 26th October, 1923, under the Insurance Act of 1916 and the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1921.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921, and Regulations, dated 26th October, 1923, under the Racecourses Act of 1923.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. King, Logan, in the chair.*)

Clause 22—"*Provisions as to co-operative companies*"—

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): We were discussing whether the word "co-operative" could be applied to various companies that had been commenced under the Companies Acts. With those companies a lot depends upon their name, and we have to recognise that we have a number of such co-operative companies. It does not seem fair that now they shall have to take another trade name. Only a few minutes ago the Secretary for Public Works, in replying to a question, mentioned the "Fishermen's 'Co-operative' Company."

We could cite that company to the Secretary for Agriculture. There seems to be some misunderstanding as to whether that company will still be able to retain the word "co-operative" in its name, when it is not solely dealing with primary products. I hope the Minister will give some information on this matter.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): The vexed question, so far as I understand it, is what traders can rightly be styled dealers in primary produce? I think that position can be met if we turn to the definition of "primary producer" in clause 3. There we see a very drag-net provision. It reads—

> "'Primary producer'—Every person, not being a person engaged in primary production as an employee on wages or piecework rates, engaged in the occupation of—
>
> (*a*) Dairy farmer; or
>
> (*b*) Wheat, maize, or cereal grower; or
>
> (*c*) Cane grower; or
>
> (*d*) Fruit grower; or
>
> (*e*) Grazier; or
>
> (*f*) Farmer, whether engaged in general or mixed farming, cotton, potato, or vegetable growing, or poultry or pig raising; and
>
> (*g*) Any class of persons not being persons engaged in primary production as employees on wages or piecework rates declared by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Council, by Order in Council, to be primary producers for the purposes of this Act;
>
> and 'primary produce' and 'primary production' have correlative meanings."

I am quite sure that hon. members will appreciate that that description brings in practically any class of trader that the Minister cares to include, and the application of the clause will have a far-reaching effect, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Enoggera.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): The point that has been raised is a very important one. Attention has been drawn to the fact that this clause is not quite clear in a certain particular, and a number of companies will want to know where they stand in relation to the Bill. I am astounded that the Minister did not get up and reply to the points raised by the hon. members for East Toowoomba and Oxley.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What was the real essence of their questions?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The real essence of them was as to how certain existing companies stood in relation to this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If any hon. member desires any information and I can assist him, I will do so.

HON. W. H. BARNES: A question was asked as to the position of certain trading companies that now use the word "co-operative."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a very vague question.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I take it that the Minister desires to get on with the business in order that the session may be closed to-morrow, and I can therefore understand his attitude; but there is considerable doubt on this side of the Chamber as to what names business firms are now entitled to use. The hon. member for Enoggera pointed out that certain firms registered under the Companies Act include in their names the word "co-operative." The Secretary for Public Works a few moments ago indicated in reply to a question by the hon. member for Bowen the Fishermen's "Co-operative" Company—one which we did not know of. We are asking whether similar companies will still be entitled to use the word "co-operative."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That co-operative company, the Fishermen's Co-operative Company, will not have to change its name.

Mr. ROBERTS: What of the Civil Service Co-operative Stores?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No, they will not have to change their name.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I would like to bring under the notice of the Minister co-operative companies which a number of people consider to be truly distributing co-operative companies. Has the Minister taken into consideration the effect that this Bill will have on the Civil Service Co-operative Stores?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have already stated that the Civil Service Co-operative Stores will not be affected by this Bill.

Mr. KELSO: I hope that the Minister has not overlooked the fact that they are distributors of primary products.

Mr. PETERSON: They sell them.

Mr. KELSO: Yes, they sell chaff, hay, and that class of produce.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, they are still exempt.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

At 4.40 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) resumed the chair.

Clause 23—"*Restriction on operations of unregistered associations, &c.*"—

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I beg to move the omission, on lines 7 to 13, both inclusive, page 15, of the words—

> "To carry on the operations of or pretend to be or in any mode or manner to hold himself, itself, or themselves out as a primary producers' (or agricultural or farmers' or rural, or other word or words of similar import) association (or society or union or bank or company); or"

Agricultural show societies or associations are exempted later on in the clause. If the words that I have proposed to omit are not omitted, they will prevent the Queensland Farmers' Union, the United Cane Growers' Association, the Australian Sugar Producers' Association, the Primary Producers' Union, and suchlike associations from existing under such names. This is a devious method of wiping out primary producers' organisations by not allowing them to be called what they

really are. It is quite possible that the Government will apply this paragraph to the Country party and wipe it out.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The people will do that in due course.

Mr. MOORE: I don't know so much about that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There are not many members left now.

Mr. MOORE: Paragraphs (*b*) and (*c*) prevent any organisation or union other than an association formed under the Act from using such words as "agricultural," "farmers'," "rural," or word of similar purport, as descriptive of such organisation or union. Surely that does not apply to a co-operative association? A later paragraph states—

> "Provided that this section shall not apply to any agricultural show society."

No one dreamt that it would, but there are many other associations of a similar class and nature, and there are also those industrial organisations which are registered in the Industrial Arbitration Court. When the name is descriptive of those organisations they should be allowed to call themselves by it, as it is by no means misleading or detrimental to the people of Queensland. It would be misleading if they called themselves anything else. The Bill is going too far. If paragraphs (*b*) and (*c*) did not appear I could possibly understand that this paragraph slipped in by the misplacement of words or a little carelessness in drafting. Paragraph (*b*) states—

> "To carry on operations of or pretend to carry on operations of a co-operative nature or in any mode or manner to hold out himself, itself, or themselves as so doing,"

Then paragraph (*c*) states—

> "To use the word 'co-operative' as part of its name or to assume or use or exhibit any name, title, term, or sign which means or may be construed to mean that he, it, or they is or are carrying on or will carry on operations of the class or nature in either of the foregoing provisions."

Those paragraphs have been carefully drawn up to prevent full effect being given to the intention of the Bill, and as paragraph (*a*) in consequence seems quite superfluous, I suggest to the Minister that he should agree to its omission.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I would like to stress the point so ably expressed by the leader of the Country party. This clause is evidently designed to wipe out all existing organisations or companies that do not agree with the aims or objects of the Bill. It practically means compulsory registration or extinction. I ask the Minister to consider the suggestion made by the leader of the Country party.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I have no intention of deleting paragraph (*a*), but I will agree later on to accept an amendment to insert, after the word "association," on line 37, page 15, the words—

> "nor to any person or association or body of persons, corporated or unincorporated, who or which is not or are not carrying on operations of the class or nature in either of the foregoing provisions (*b*) and (*c*) hereof mentioned or referred to."

That will meet the wishes of the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): The leader of the Country party mentioned the Cane Growers' Associations and the possibility of political bodies being formed by farmers. If anything of this kind is done under clause 10 it will be in the power of the Minister to forbid any body of farmers banding themselves together for political purposes in opposition to his party. However, I am not going to labour the question, and I am glad that the Minister has been reasonable on this point.

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

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "association," on line 37, of the words—

> "nor to any person or association or body of persons, corporated or unincorporated, who or which is not or are not carrying on operations of the class or nature in either of the foregoing provisions (*b*) and (*c*) hereof mentioned or referred to."

Amendment agreed to.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): Before the clause goes through I should like to draw attention, as I did on the second reading of the Bill, to the drastic nature of the penalties provided in this clause. Commencing on line 29, we find—

> "In every such case every person guilty of such offence shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds for every day during which the offence has continued; and in the case of any body of persons (corporate or uncorporate) guilty of such offence, the manager or other principal officer thereof shall, in addition be liable to the like penalty."

It seems to me that the penalties prescribed in the Bill are out of all reason.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why did you not move an amendment?

HON. W. H. BARNES: What would be the use of moving an amendment? It would receive no consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I would have accepted a reasonable amendment in this case

HON. W H. BARNES: If the hon. gentleman thinks that the penalties are too heavy, he knows as well as I do that there is nothing to prevent him making the alteration by recommitting the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not saying the penalties are too heavy, but I am always reasonable.

HON W. H. BARNES: What a wonderful change there is coming over the Minister! I think his party go to extremes in the matter of penalties.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are getting upon dangerous ground, because you know you are the hanging party.

HON. W. H. BARNES: There are some things that have been carried out by the Labour party that want hanging, and I

should be pleased to belong to a party allowed to hang some of those things.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 24—"*Provisions as to certain existing societies and companies*"—

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I beg to move the omission, after the word "produce," on line 54, of the words—

> "or within twelve months prior to the commencement of this Act has so carried on such operations."

The object is to delete from the Bill the retrospective proviso that these words convey. I think everyone will agree that it is most unjust that any person who has been carrying on a business in a perfectly legitimate and lawful manner should all of a sudden, through the passing of an Act of Parliament, find that he has been a criminal for the previous twelve months. Under such conditions nobody would know when he would be likely to be termed a criminal, and that would have a detrimental effect on business of any kind. I think the Minister will acknowledge that retrospective legislation has not been a good thing for Queensland in the past. Coupled with other legislation, it aggravates the position, and, unless there are some particular reasons for this proviso, which we do not as yet know——

The PREMIER: Retrospective legislation for the reduction of cattle rents is looked upon as a good thing.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That was brought about by previous repudiation.

Mr. SWAYNE: It is unjust that a man should be made a criminal for doing something that he did in good faith before this law was passed. Anybody may wake up some morning and find that he has committed a serious offence. This is not at all an encouragement to people engaging in business, and I ask the Minister to accept the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I beg to move the omission, on lines 7 to 9, page 16, of the words—

> "At such meeting every member present shall have one vote only, and the majority of members present and voting at such meeting shall decide the question."

This is a very important matter, and I do not know whether the Minister has given it consideration from the point of view that I take. There are companies carrying on at the present time who have used the word "co-operative" in their titles, and they will not be able to carry out the conditions of the Bill. Such a company has been registered legally, and individuals who put a large amount of capital into the concern have a controlling interest; but under this Bill it will be possible for a few individuals who have very little financial interest in the company to outvote the people who have put the whole of their capital into it. The men who have put their capital into the concern will have their voting power taken from them. They will be placed in a very unfortunate position, and may be compelled to register under the Bill by men who really have no controlling interest.

[5 p.m.]

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): The conditions of affairs that the leader of the Country party has drawn attention to actually exists in more than one direction in Queensland to my own knowledge. There are companies which hitherto have been allowed to register with the word "co-operative" in their titles. Whether they were justified in doing that or not is beside the question. The Companies Act permitted it to be done, and the position is that investors have put their money into these companies and are drawing from that investment emoluments much in excess of the 5 per cent. prescribed by the Bill. As soon as this measure becomes law these companies will have to call their members together to decide whether they will come under the operation of this Bill or otherwise, and "one man one vote" is to decide the issue, whereas hitherto the voting power which has controlled the situation has been "one share one vote," and it was on that basis that these men were induced to put their money into the undertaking. It cannot be conceived that a measure would be brought in at this stage of a retrospective character which would take away from these men the very security which the principle of "one share one vote" gives. I cannot conceive that the Minister is going to allow a measure of this nature to go through without giving some relief. It is only another nail in Queensland's coffin if this sort of thing is allowed to be perpetrated. It is this uncertainty as to whether we in Queensland appreciate the financial obligations which our erstwhile laws entailed that makes our position so insecure at the present moment. The amendment deserves the most serious consideration because its consequences will be very far-reaching.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): As has been said, there are existing companies now registered under the Companies Act, and the shareholders put their money into these companies under certain conditions. They have the right to amend the articles of association, and I do not think it is right for the Government to step in and break the contract that these shareholders have made with each other. If the shareholders put their money in on the basis that they would get a larger representation for a larger amount of money, then surely, if the Government insist on this clause being retained in the Bill, they are breaking a contract. It is a repudiation of the contract made by these shareholders with each other. The Government should regard that contract as sacred. If the Minister will only realise it, he will see that he is tackling a very dangerous proposition. Elsewhere in the Bill we find that all these matters are to be decided by vote when each member shall have only one vote. That is quite reasonable once a company is formed. If the shareholder goes into it with his eyes open he knows what to expect, but it is not right for the Government to take away the rights that the shareholders in existing companies have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not be guilty of tedious repetition.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I would urge the Minister to take the amendment into his serious consideration.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): I hope the Minister will see his way clear to accept the amendment. It seems quite reasonable to provide that companies formed under the existing law should be protected under this legislation. It is unjust if a person who has put a certain amount of capital into a company is liable to be deprived of his interest

in the company and be debarred from getting a fair return on his capital. I think the Minister did not intend that to be the case.

Mr. GLEDSON: You stand for the big capitalist.

Mr. EDWARDS: I want to know what the hon. member stands for. He is a Sunday school teacher

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member is not going to indulge in personal reflections.

Mr. EDWARDS: The principle should be the same whether a small amount or a large amount of capital is involved. We are standing up for the recognition of a principle. The hon. member for Ipswich should be willing to mete out even-handed justice whether people have a small amount or a large amount of capital. That would encourage the investment of capital in the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): It is a vital principle of the Bill that the principle of "one man one vote" shall apply. If it is decided at a meeting of shareholders that a company shall come under the provisions of the Bill and that is not acceptable to some of the shareholders, provision is made in another part of the Bill for the purchase of their shares on reasonable terms.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It may not even be convenient to do that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No legislation has ever been passed which is of any use that has not caused suffering to someone, though I do not say that that will be the case here. This is a sound co-operative principle, and therefore I cannot agree to the deletion of the principle of "one man one vote."

Hon. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I am sorry to hear the Minister make the statement which he has just made. I thought that, after the consultation he has had with his officials and the request which has been made by hon. members on this side, the amendment of the hon. member for Aubigny would commend itself to him. It would be all right for anyone going into a company in future to have only one vote if he understands the conditions on which he is going into the company. The Premier may be interested in some company—I do not suggest that he is—and may have 4,000 shares in it. Would he consider it fair if a shareholder with 500 shares had the same voting power as himself? The principle involved is a very important one. I want to stress another point which was made by the hon. member for Mirani. The effect of repudiating our contracts by legislation is going to be disastrous to Queensland. The Minister ought to recognise that. We on this side are not talking for the mere sake of talking—we are as much concerned as the hon. gentleman about the interests of Queensland.

The PREMIER: We have already accepted amendments on this clause.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman allows this kind of thing to go on in the face of the journey he expects to take shortly in the interests of Queensland. There is a feeling outside of real uneasiness, and we are adding to it by legislation of this character.

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

AYES, 34.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Hynes
,, Bedford	,, Land
,, Bertram	,, Larcombe
,, Brennan	,, Lloyd
,, Bruce	,, McLachlan
,, Carter	,, Payne
,, Collins	,, Pease
,, Conroy	,, Pollock
,, Cooper, F. A.	,, Riordan
,, Cooper, W.	,, Ryan
,, Dash	,, Smith
,, Farrell	,, Stopford
,, Ferricks	,, Theodore
,, Gillies	,, Weir
,, Gledson	,, Wilson
,, Hartley	,, Winstanley
,, Huxham	,, Wright

Tellers: Mr. Bedford and Mr. Carter.

NOES, 22.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Kelso
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Kerr
,, Barnes, W. H.	,, King
,, Brand	,, Logan
,, Clayton	,, Maxwell
,, Corser	,, Moore
,, Costello	,, Nott
,, Deacon	,, Peterson
,, Edwards	,, Roberts
,, Elphinstone	,, Swayne
,, Fry	,, Taylor

Tellers: Mr. Deacon and Mr. King.

PAIRS.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Dunstan	Mr. Walker
,, Mullan	,, Petrie
,, Gilday	,, Vowles
,, Bulcock	,, Morgan

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I move the insertion of the following new clause to follow clause 24:—

> "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prevent any bonâ fide co-operative trading society registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1920 with the word 'Co-operative' as part of its registered name, from continuing to use the word 'Co-operative' as part of its name so registered."

New clause agreed to.

Clause 25—"*Regulations*"—put and passed.

Schedule—

Part I.—"*Model rules for Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations*"—

Clause 13—"*Cancellation of shares in certain cases*"—

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I want to draw the attention of the Committee to the wonderful method of finance set out on page 19. I think it is the most remarkable instance of high finance that I have ever read or heard of. Clause 13 reads—

> "Each member shall pay in advance to the association a membership fee of [*amount*] and annual dues of [*amount*], and at the time of becoming a member shall receive a certificate of membership, and when called upon by the board of directors shall loan an amount to be fixed by the board, not less than two pounds nor more than twenty pounds in cash to the association, to be used in building warehouses or other necessary buildings

and the lease or purchase of lands therefor, or in securing necessary equipment—

(*a*) Such loans shall carry interest at the rate of [*amount*] per centum per annum;

(*b*) Such loans shall be paid from a special loan fund created by levying a percentage of assessment on the produce sold or supplies bought through the association, the amount of which shall be fixed by the directors, which amount shall be sufficient to pay one-fifth [*or insert proportion*] of all loans and the interest thereon in each year;

(*c*) At the end of each financial year each member shall receive a certificate showing the amount of money which he has contributed that year to the special loan fund by way of levies on his produce and supplies. After the original loan has been paid in full, the special assessments above referred to shall continue, and the holders of such certificates, out of the proceeds arising therefrom, shall be paid the amounts due thereon in the same manner and form as was the original loan, and this process of repayment shall continue during the life of the association."

So that a man is compelled to lend money to his association by means of a levy on his produce, and after the loan has been completed he gets a certificate to that effect. Then, in order to pay back the money, the association levies again on the same man's produce. Could there be anything more ridiculous? It is the most remarkable provision I have ever seen in any Bill. It is such a wonderful idea, that it might with advantage be copied by the State. If the Government could only get money by taking it from people and then paying it back with money taken from the same people, we would never have any difficulty in financing any enterprise.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I desire to move an amendment in the clause quoted by the hon. member for Aubigny. Apparently, the argument which the hon. member used has not affected the Minister in any way.

The HOME SECRETARY: How do you know that?

[5.30 p.m.]

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Minister was going to allow the clause to go through if I had not risen.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no amendment before the Committee that I know of.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am going to move an amendment. I move the omission, on line 37, page 19, of the word—

"twenty,"

with a view to inserting the word—

"ten."

If these men are going to be forced to lend their money, then they should be let off with a maximum of £10.

The HOME SECRETARY: That does not meet the position suggested by the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. MOORE: No.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I have no objection to the amendment, for the reason that these are only model rules and can be accepted or rejected by Order in Council. I accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. W. H. Barnes*) agreed to.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): If these are only model rules, I suppose they will be altered afterwards. I would like some explanation from the Minister as to whether my reading of the clause is correct.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Your reading is not correct.

Mr. MOORE: Will the Minister tell us what it does mean?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We are past that now.

Mr. MOORE: We are not. We have just agreed to an amendment on line 37, and what I refer to commences on line 53. This position seems so absurd, and I would like an explanation from the Minister.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): If these rules are model rules, it must be anticipated that they are to be accepted by the associations or they would not be in the Bill. There is something in the schedule that no hon. member can explain, and, if the Minister does not know anything about it, perhaps we can get an outside opinion. I understand that a man lends his money and gets a piece of paper and then pays some more money to pay for the money for which he has obtained the piece of paper. The Premier may be able to do something like that in connection with his loan mission in London.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman cannot discuss loans on the schedule of this Bill.

Mr. DEACON: The expenses of government may be provided for in the same way. I would like some explanation from the Minister.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): Seeing that we cannot get an explanation, I shall move an amendment. I beg to move the omission, after the word "supplies," on line 52, page 19, of the words—

"After the original loan has been paid in full, the special assessments above referred to shall continue, and the holders of such certificates, out of the proceeds arising therefrom, shall be paid the amounts due thereon in the same manner and form as was the original loan, and this process of repayment shall continue during the life of the association."

It seems to me that a man has to lend the money and then pay a levy in order to pay back his own money. A man gets a certificate to say that he has paid himself back, and he can go on again the next year.

Mr. FRY: It is like a dog chasing its tail.

Mr. MOORE: Yes. It says—

". . . . and this process of repayment shall continue during the life of the association."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): These are only model rules, and, as I have already stated, they can be altered by the Governor

in Council, but to please the Country party I am prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) agreed to.

Clause 41—"*Delivery of produce*"—

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): Clause 41 is a very serious clause. It says that every member shall be bound for ten years to deal with the association, or be subject to a heavy penalty. I admit there are the alternative words "(or specify period)" in the clause, but this is going to ruin a lot of the country storekeepers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: More ruination! What would you do without that word?

Mr. MAXWELL: Irrespective of what the hon. gentleman says, I want to point out the damage that is likely to accrue to a lot of the storekeepers and agents in country districts. The clause means that only through a co-operative association can the business be done. I would stress to the Minister the damage that is likely to occur. Paragraph (i.) of the clause reads—

> "Every member shall be bound for a period of ten [*or specify period*] years after he becomes a member of the association to sell the whole of his produce, viz. [*description of produce*] through the association, with the exception of what he requires for his own consumption."

There are a number of very decent men in the outside areas who depend for a living on this business. Is the hon. gentleman going to force them from the country into the city to swell the ranks of the unemployed?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't try to pull the leg of the Committee as well as your own.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is the hon. gentleman who has been trying to pull the leg of the Committee, and his own too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MAXWELL: I would like some explanation as to what effect this clause is going to have.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I emphasise the fact that these are model rules. If we are to reach the millennium in 1925, why should we bother about things ten years hence? Under these rules there is provision for the binding of members of associations hand and foot for ten years. Are those the model rules that the hon. gentleman held out? The farmers are handcuffed by a Government who are supposed to be the friends of the farmers. It seems incredible that the hon. gentleman should come down with this measure for this Committee to swallow holus bolus at this late hour of the session.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I have already pointed out that this is the schedule of the Bill and it contains a set of model rules. The associations can accept one rule or they can accept the lot. On the other hand, they can reject the lot, or they can be altered at any time by Order in Council. This clause lays it down that every member, after he becomes a member of the association, shall be bound down to sell the whole of his produce for a specified period to the association whether it be for one year or for ten years. Is there anything wrong with a man who is a shareholder agreeing to supply his produce to a butter factory for one year or ten years? The association can reject or accept these rules. While I am on my feet I wish to take exception to the cowardly reflection made on Mr. Macgregor by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. Why should the religious beliefs of any man be referred to in this Chamber?

Mr. FRY: I did not hear him do so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We all heard it on this side of the Chamber. This is not the first time that question has been referred to by hon. members on the other side. It is mean and contemptible in the extreme. That is, from a man who calls himself a Christian!

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I regret the Minister has seen fit to make the remarks he has done, for I did not refer to Mr. Macgregor in the way the hon. gentleman said I did. I would not do such a thing. These are a set of model rules, but is it right to tie a man up for ten years? They are rules laid down for the guidance of associations, and probably will be followed later on, as it will be said they came from Parliament. I beg to move the omission on line 49, clause 41, page 24, of the word—

"ten"

with a view to inserting the word—

"five."

That will reduce the period during which a member shall be bound from ten years to five years.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I recognise that there is nothing binding in any of these model rules, but once they are carried by this Committee the associations will consider that they have been suggested to them by Parliament. There is no reason why the period should not be reduced to five years.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What is the difference?

Mr. FRY: It seems to me unimportant, and, if I were in the position of the Minister, I would accept the amendment.

Mr. HARTLEY: Why not accept an amendment for twenty years just as well as five?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. W. H. Barnes*) agreed to.

Part II.—"*Provisions governing business, etc.*"

Clause 7—"*Levies.*"—

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I want to get some information on this clause as it seems rather drastic. It reads—

> "Two or more associations may, with the prior approval of the Council, enter into agreements with each other to make a levy on suppliers of primary produce or on output for the purpose of applying such levy to common advantage, and on any such agreement being made such levy may be made accordingly, and shall be payable and the proceeds thereof shall be applied solely for the purposes set forth in such agreement."

Two small co-operative companies may desire to enter into an agreement to help each other. The Bill provides that, if they decide to strike a levy for the purpose, 100 members can ask for a poll. It is

quite possible that they would not get 100 members to do so as their share lists would be small.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are confusing this Bill with another Bill.

Mr. MOORE: Do not the same provisions apply under this Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No, the other Bill says "shareholders."

Mr. MOORE: This Bill says "associations."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The members are shareholders under this Bill.

Mr. MOORE: These associations have lists of members carrying the same responsibility as shareholders, and they may combine to help each other in some object and strike a levy to enable them to do so. If these associations decide to make a levy, without a poll, on the primary produce supplied to the factory and a member refuses to continue his supply, he can be subjected to a penalty of £25. He does not seem to have any say. There is no protection for members at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eachem*): They have the ordinary protection. The directors are subject to the shareholders and cannot do anything without their sanction. There is no danger to members in the clause. What I said in regard to the whole schedule applies to that.

Mr. MOORE: These clauses cannot be modified.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They can be modified.

Hon. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): Clause 25 of the schedule, page 32, reads—

> "1. An association shall have the power to impose fines or sums by way of liquidated damages on its members for any infringement of its rules or any breach of contract. The conditions and circumstances under which such fines may be imposed and the amount thereof shall be prescribed by the rules.
>
> "2. If a fine is imposed on a member of an association because of failure to sell his produce through the association, and legal proceedings are instituted for payment of the fine, the burden shall lie upon the member of disproving the allegation of the association in respect of which the fine was imposed.
>
> "3. The whole or any part of the fine may be set off against any moneys due to such member in respect of produce delivered by him to the association.
>
> "4 The members shall not be deemed to have infringed the rules of an association on account of the failure to deliver produce to it, or as or when directed by it, if the failure was due to the fact that under the rules of another association he had bound himself before he became a member of the first-mentioned association to deliver such produce to that other association, or as or when directed by it, and had actually delivered such produce to it."

That clause makes provision for the imposition of fines under certain conditions. We find that fines are distributed throughout this Bill—fines that are drastic and against the principles of freedom.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are for the protection of the farmers.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It may be as the Minister says, but I think they are for their destruction. I know that I shall again be told that these are model rules, but naturally they will be accepted by the different associations after passing through this Chamber. I ask whether it is a fair thing to send rules of this nature to these people? What is going to be the result?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: There will be a big revolt.

Mr. GLEDSON: They may fix up their rules themselves. Have they not sense enough?

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Who inspired these rules? Where did they come from? I make no charge; but is the Minister responsible for them?

Mr. KELSO: Of course, he is.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I know that he is nominally, but does he appreciate the fact that they are going to penalise the people of this country who are engaged in primary production?

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): This is the whip that is going to be used to flog the producer. It is a whip that is going to be used to flog the producer. It is a whip that is going——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That is the third time the hon. member has said that, and I cannot allow tedious repetition.

Mr. FRY: If these farmers do not fall into line, they are going to be flogged into line by this clause. Part of it reads—

> "If a fine is imposed on a member of an association because of failure to produce"——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not read that subclause, as the hon. member for Wynnum has already read the whole clause.

Mr. FRY: I want to use it in support of my argument. I shall refer to the clause read by the hon. member for Wynnum—clause 25, page 32. When any legal proceedings are instituted for the payment of fines, the burden shall lie upon the producer of disproving the allegation of the association in respect to which the fine was imposed. This appears to me to be a clause which is going to have the effect of making more enemies than friends to the Government. As a member of the Opposition I have no objection to it going into the Bill, because the farmer will then know that we are standing up to protect his rights and are his friends, and that the Government are really his enemies. The farmers are being trapped by this clause——

Mr. GLEDSON: Talk sense.

Mr. FRY: They are being trapped into a position for which they will be sorry later on, and, when they endeavour to get out of that position, they will find it is too late. It is known that unions can fine members up to £10 and that there is no appeal. Here the circumstances are similar, and farmers may be fined and they will have no appeal. The farmers are going to be bound hand and foot, as I said last week when another primary producers' Bill was going through the Chamber. This clause should be very seriously considered. I am not going to support it.

Clause 39—"*Provisions for intestacy*"—

Mr. Fry.]

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "widower," on line 50, clause 39, subclause (2), page 35 of the word—

"mother."

The subclause will then read—

"If any such member is illegitimate and leaves no widow, widower, mother, or issue, the directors shall deal with his property in the association as the Minister directs."

The member, whether male or female, will have a mother.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Taylor*) agreed to.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): With the permission of the Committee I should like to say that I have been charged with attacking an officer of the department. I certainly had no such intention, and, if my words were construed in that way, I can only say the construction is incorrect.

Schedule, as amended, agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

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

INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): There is very little in this Bill that requires explanation. The principal object of the Bill is to increase the primary exemption and to increase the amount of deductions allowed to the taxpayer in respect of his wife, children, and dependants. There is no necessity for me to make a long speech, and indeed I ask the indulgence of hon. members, as I am suffering under a disability on account of a heavy [7 p.m.] cold. The primary exemption at the present time is £200, and the Bill increases it to £250. It is the intention of the Government to increase the exemption to £300 so soon as it can be done, but it has been found impossible to do it during this financial year. Indeed, the loss of revenue on account of the increased primary exemption and the increased deduction will amount to £65,000 for the present financial year. In the next financial year it is hoped to be able to increase the primary exemption still further, but I think it is sound policy so to arrange taxation as to place the burden upon those who can best afford to pay it. I recognise the necessity of keeping taxation generally down to the lowest possible level. All taxes are imposed on the principle of ability to pay.

The Bill also makes provision that the exemption is to be deducted on the same basis as heretofore. That is to say, those who receive a taxable income of £1,000 will not be entitled to any exemption. It is a disappearing exemption. The full force of the exemption applies to small incomes, and the exemption entirely disappears when the income reaches £1,000. The same principle applies in regard to the wife, children, and dependent relatives of the taxpayer, although in that case the deduction disappears on a taxable income of £800.

The Bill makes provision for carrying out the decision arrived at at the recent Premiers' Conference to bring the interest on Government loans within the ambit of taxation. The representatives of the Commonwealth and all the States subscribed to that decision. The Commonwealth has since passed legislation which operates from the beginning of next year.

I think it is compulsory so far as their taxation of State issues is concerned, but whether they will tax their own loans depends upon the decision of the Governor-General in Council.

In our case the arrangement will operate when it is proclaimed, because it is obvious that we should place ourselves at a serious disadvantage if we legislated while the other States remained out. If it is to be effective all the States must agree to tax their loans. Therefore provision is made that that section will be proclaimed when the other States fall into line. I am not sure whether action such as this is being taken in the other States. As far as I know, they have not introduced legislation yet. The understanding was that the arrangement should operate from the beginning of the current financial year. This will enable us to adopt the arrangement if the other States fall into line. I mention that because I am somewhat doubtful whether any of the other States have yet fallen into line, although they all entered into the agreement to do so at the Premiers' Conference.

Mr. TAYLOR: South Australia is putting a local loan on the market the interest on which is to be subject to taxation.

The TREASURER: All the loans which have been put on the market so far have been free of tax, and will not be affected. The understanding was that this legislation would be operative from the beginning of next year, and no sound argument can be advanced against that proposition, because I think everyone recognised that it is equitable that the interest on these loans should be taxable. It is also admitted that freedom from income taxation of interest is a greater concession to people with large incomes than to people with small incomes who may have holdings in Government securities.

Mr TAYLOR: We have admitted that for a long time.

The TREASURER: No other State has yet carried out the arrangement as it is proposed to do here by proclamation.

There are a number of minor amendments in the Bill. They are brought forward, not for the purpose of making comprehensive alterations in the taxation law, but for the purpose of making concessions in various aspects to taxpayers. The unfortunate early demise of the late Commissioner of Taxes, Mr. Brennan, prevented us from going on with what we intended to deal with this session—that is to pass a consolidating measure and a simplification of the Act. The Act has been amended so many times that it is now a very complicated statute and very difficult to follow and understand. The intention is to go on next year with a comprehensive overhaul of that legislation with a view to simplifying it—not with a view to introducing new principles. I propose, when we are in Committee, to introduce a couple of amendments, which are not provided for in the Bill, as the result of representations which have been made to me by the Standing Committee on Taxation. That is a body which has

existed for some time in Queensland, and which has proved very useful in making suggestions from a purely impartial point of view.

Mr. TAYLOR: Are those amendments circulated?

The TREASURER: They are printed and will be circulated.

Mr. TAYLOR: Who are the members of the Standing Committee on Taxation?

The TREASURER: Mr. McInnes is one of the leading members. It is not associated with the Taxpayers' Association, but is known as the Standing Committee on Taxation. It is comprised of representatives of institutions and individuals who are interested in taxation—men who thoroughly understand the needs of the taxpayers. I have found them very helpful in the way of suggesting amendments which are necessary to remove anomalies. They have made suggestions in regard to amounts standing to the credit of profit and loss account being regarded as capital for the purpose of assessing the rate of taxation. By a recent amendment we allowed reserves to be included as capital when not credited to profit and loss account, but used as capital in connection with the business.

There is also an amendment which will be made in Committee in connection with property which passes at death. Under the present law transmission at death has been taken as a sale of the realisable assets, and the casual profit rate has been applied. That has been represented as being somewhat unjust, and for that reason we intend in future not to regard the realisation of profit on the distribution of the estate consequent upon the death of the testator as realisable profit subject to taxation. With that explanation, and on the understanding that I shall be happy to furnish more information in Committee, I content myself with moving—

> "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I regret that, in view of the state of the law dealing with income taxation in Queensland, a consolidating measure is not contemplated this year. If one reads clause 1 of the Bill under consideration, he at once discovers how necessary a consolidating measure is. It says—

> "'This Act may be cited as the Income Tax Act Amendment Act of 1923, and shall be read as one with the Income Tax Act of 1902 and its several amendments (herein collectively referred to as the principal Act)."

That means that if one wishes to trace back the effect of the various alterations of the taxation measures of these days, it becomes really a task for a specialist. No layman can do it effectively and intelligently, and it is becoming a most difficult undertaking. Much as we all regret the death of the late Commissioner of Taxes, I do hope that this consolidating measure will not be held up one hour longer than is necessary.

As the Treasurer points out, the Bill, first of all, proposes to increase the income tax exemption from £200 to £250. It also proposes to increase the allowance for a wife, children, and female dependants to £40, and further—and this is very important—it makes the interest on all future State loans subject to State income tax. Although, of course, the hon. gentleman in his policy speech before the last election foreshadowed an increase of the exemption to £300, this Bill proposes to raise the exemption to £250 only. That is a matter for him and those who supported him, but I would point out that had he adopted the policy which the United party advocated, he would have found it possible to keep his promise of an exemption of £300 to its fullest extent. We proposed to give that exemption of £300 to married men. We consider that a distinction should be drawn between the man who has the responsibility of rearing a family, as compared with the man who has no other responsibilities than those which he carries under his hat.

The TREASURER: He gets deduction for his wife and children.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I quite admit that, but that is not sufficient. To my mind, there should be a distinct difference. I quite realise that the bachelors in the House will cry out when one makes references to the matter; but the fact remains that there should be a distinction, and it would have been possible to give the married man an exemption of £300 by letting the bachelor remain at the exemption of £200 which he enjoys to-day instead of an all-round exemption of £250. That would have been fair and equitable, and would have enabled the Treasurer to keep his promise. We are sorry that the exemption for single men is to be raised, because it will put beyond the realm of taxation those single men who are receiving the basic wage. Single men who are permanently employed should come within the realm of taxation. The Bill removes from them any obligation of that nature to the State. I do not want to see men in receipt of small incomes paying high taxation, but I think every citizen should contribute something towards the revenue of the State, and that he is a better citizen for being called upon to do so.

Another point in the policy of our party is that the allowance for children should be £50. It is little enough in these days to allow a deduction of £50 from the taxable income of the taxpayer for a child. We know quite well what it costs to maintain children in these days. In fact, the cost is so high that we very frequently see married people avoiding their responsibilities in that regard. It is one of the most significant phenomena of the day.

Therefore I do think it would have been a statesmanlike policy to increase that deduction to £50 per child and at the same time give the increased exemption to the married man, and that would help the State in some of its problems and give relief where relief is really needed. The Treasurer said in his speech that he believed in taxation falling on the shoulders of those best able to bear it. We endorse that. We contend that of two men each in receipt of £300 per annum—one a married man and the other a single man—the married man is less able to bear taxation than the single man similarly placed so far as income is concerned.

In connection with taxation on income from loan sources, the Treasurer has pointed out that we have advocated this step for a very long time. It has been quite obvious to those who study the question that the time must come when we shall have to tax income derived from State loans, and Federal loans, too, for that matter. We know quite well that the Commonwealth Government altered their practice some two or three years ago,

and have imposed taxation upon income drawn from loans, and it was only a matter of time before the States had to fall into line. I admit that for a Treasurer of these days and under these conditions to make income from State loans taxable is a bold move. It is quite obvious that the Treasurer finds it difficult to get loan money, and he is relying upon those contributions which are made from local or Commonwealth sources to maintain the Exchequer in loan money; and for a Treasurer to deprive these loans of one of their greatest attractions—that is, freedom from taxation on income derived from that source—is carrying out a very bold policy. I must admit that under the circumstances I think the Treasurer is to be commended for having taken up that stand. In my judgment, it is high time that it was done, because every year it means that more and more income is being placed outside the realms of taxation, and therefore it means that you either have to increase the burden of taxation upon those who do not obtain income from State loans or you have to do what the Treasurer has done and bring that income within the realms of taxation so far as future loans are concerned. It is wise that we should not take the lead in that regard until the other States have done the same, because obviously it would mean that the other States which avoid their obligations in this regard would be benefited to the detriment of those who recognise them and put them into practice. I anticipate, and presumably the Treasurer does too, that before 1st January next, or very soon thereafter, all the States will be in line, and the Commonwealth, too. I presume that all future loans in Queensland, from the new year on, will have the income therefrom subject to both State and Federal taxation. Where the State is going to look for loan money in these days I do not know, but I am pleased, in one regard, that this Bill is introduced, because commerce is suffering from the locking up of large sums of money in State loans. Commerce in Queensland needs all the money which the savings of the people can provide, therefore commerce will benefit by losing a very important competitor in loans to this State when we are now going to make the income from those loans subject to taxation.

The general effect of the Bill means that the revenue from taxation during the current year will be less than last year. What the State is going to secure from the bringing of income from State loans into the realm of taxation will not be felt this year, or at least very little of it. The Treasurer pointed out that the revenue from taxation would be £66,000 less during this year by reason of the increase in exemption. We cannot help questioning the wisdom of the policy which is going to cut out taxation under the conditions which exist to-day. I am sure that the Treasurer must appreciate—probably more than anyone else here, by reason of the responsibilities which fall upon him in the duties of his office—that the financial outlook is by no means a promising one, and calls for the most careful and rigid economy, and for the Treasurer to give away £66,000 under such a taxation policy is, in my judgment, open to question. I quite see that he was in the difficult position of having made certain promises in his policy speech, and, on the other hand, being faced with a money shortage, so he has compromised the situation by adopting half measures. I still argue that we can ill-afford the loss of £66,000 per year in the revenue of the State under the difficulties which exist to-day. I intend to examine briefly the situation to fortify and confirm the statement that I have made. The Estimates which the Treasurer placed before us some few weeks ago did not place any further burdens whatever on the taxpayer, but relied on a greater net return from the railways to compensate him for the increase in the public debt interest. That increase nowadays is at the rate of over £100,000 every year, and is likely to increase. The Treasurer, therefore, instead of imposing further taxation to meet the increased liability, relied on a greater net return from the railways for the current year. He anticipated that the net improvement in the returns from the railways would amount to £166,000. I thought at the time that he was exceedingly optimistic in placing on the railways the burden of carrying the increase in the public debt interest. What is the position for the time that has already elapsed since the beginning of the present financial year? The net railway improvement anticipated, as I have already pointed out, is £166,000. The figures for the first quarter ended 30th September disclose that the income of the railways has decreased by £10,363, and the expenditure has increased by £18,707; so, instead of the railways showing an increase for the year at the rate of £166,000, for the three months so far elapsed they had gone back to the extent of £29,000.

The TREASURER: I am afraid that the hon. member is not up to date in his figures. The figures that will be published to-morrow will show a considerable increase.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am glad to hear that. I can obviously only make use of the figures available to us at the moment, and the figures for the first quarter are as I have stated. The figures of the Treasury for the quarter ended 30th September last must cause us serious reflection. The revenue for the first quarter of 1923-1924 is given as £2,916,067, against a revenue in the first quarter of 1922-1923 of £2,874,359, showing an increase in revenue of £31,708. The expenditure for the first quarter of 1923-1924 was £3,023,537, as against £2,965,807 for the similar period of 1922-1923, and showing an increase in the expenditure of £57,730. Those figures show that our revenue has increased for the first three months of this year as compared with last to the extent of £31,708, and our expenditure has increased to the extent of £57,730.

The TREASURER: For the four months period of this year we are £48,000 better off than last year.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am very glad to hear it, and I hope that improvement will be maintained. We can see the difficulties ahead of us in this regard, and it does not give hon. members on this side of the House any pleasure to see the country drifting towards a difficult situation. The excess of expenditure over revenue for the first quarter in 1923-1924 amounted to £107,000, whereas in 1922-1923 is was £91,000. I was very delighted to hear by interjection from the Treasurer that this drift has been arrested, at any rate for the current month. One of the increases of revenue for the three months ended 30th September last was £119,223 from taxation. In that regard it does not seem to me that

there is much room for congratulation, because I would refer hon. members to page 42 of the Auditor-General's report, in which the Auditor-General makes use of this expression—

> "The amount shown as outstanding at 30th June last does not disclose the true position at that date. Further assessment notices for 1922-1923, the issue of which was deferred until July, August, and this month, represent £348,933"—

that is deferred assessments—

> "making a total of £769,200 that was due for collection on or before 30th June.
>
> "From the 1st July, 1923, to 22nd September, the amount collected on account of the 1922-1923 outstandings, after allowing for refunds, was—

	£
Income tax, approximately ...	320,000
Land tax	19,000
	£339,000

That clearly shows that our revenue for the first quarter of this year has been augmented by this revenue from income tax assessments, which, for purposes we do not hear of, were delayed and came in during the first quarter of this year instead of in the last quarter of the preceding year. I am quite prepared to admit that it would have had an effect on the last quarter of the year which has just closed had payments been made in that quarter, but the object of my comment is not to let us take any comfort in the fact that our revenue is maintaining itself when, as the Auditor-General points out, it has been maintained by reason of the returns being delayed last year.

There is another point that certainly deserves attention, but which may have been due to the illness of officers in the Taxation Department. If that is so, my remarks must be studied with that in mind. If it is due to illness we all understand that it is unavoidable, but if not I think the Auditor-General's comment deserves serious consideration. He says in his report—

> "In view of the financial position at the Treasury at the 30th June, 1923—accumulated deficits amounting to £810,000—and the obvious necessity for collecting all available revenue as early as possible, there is every reason for greater activity in the issue of the assessment notices by the Taxation Office."

Now, I am quite sure that that comment has not escaped the Treasurer's notice.

The TREASURER: Allow me to interject. It is necessary on the part of the Commissioner of Taxes to give due time for payment, otherwise serious hardship would fall on the taxpayers.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If the delay in collecting the assessments is due to an effort to assist the taxpayer it only lends colour to what I have argued—namely, that taxation is becoming too heavy a burden, otherwise these taxpayers would not require that consideration so far as the meeting of their taxation obligation is concerned. As it is apparently necessary, it discloses a position that calls for comment. I think one of the most gratifying features of the last seven or eight years has been the buoyancy of the revenue. In spite of all sorts of interferences with natural developments—which I do not intend to dwell upon in this financial measure—the revenue has been unchecked until this year; but I believe that it will be checked this year. I do not make these remarks with the idea of making political capital, but with the object of curtailing expenditure. Every business house in Queensland to-day is called upon to curtail expenditure. A slump has set in—I hope it is not serious—but every business man is compelled to take note of it and curtail expenditure—not to take fright, but to use ordinary caution and see that unnecessary channels of expenditure are cut out and that resources are conserved to the best of his ability.

We have to bear in mind that we still have an accumulated deficit of £810,000 which has not been met, and that we still have an overdraft covering this amount from the Commonwealth Bank on which we are paying interest. There are £253,000 worth of Treasury bonds which fall due in 1928 covering a previous deficit.

The TREASURER: We are paying no interest on that.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is as broad as it is long. The amount stands as an overdraft in the Commonwealth Bank to-day.

The TREASURER: We are paying no interest.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There are other directions in which we may be paying some compensating consideration. The point I wish to make in dealing with taxation is that you must look at the general effect of finance right through. You cannot deal with taxation without taking a general survey of the financial situation. I do not intend to trespass unnecessarily on the time of the House, but it is necessary to make some passing reference to this, because it means that the maintenance of taxation is caused by these financial obligations which have been accumulating. Since the advent [7.30 p.m.] of this Government there has been an unsatisfied deficit of £1,063,000, which has got to be met some day or other, but it is the taxpayer who is called upon to face the situation. That has happened in spite of the fact that we are enjoying to-day £5,397,000 more revenue than we were in 1915, or, in other words, our revenue is 75 per cent. greater than it was in 1915, and yet we have got this accumulated deficit of £1,063,000—all incurred since the advent of this Government. Our revenue has increased by 75 per cent. in those eight years, whereas the population has increased by only 15.72 per cent., and I contend that that minute increase in population—those figures have been furnished to me by our Government Statistician, Mr. Porter—cannot stand that enormous drain on its resources to the extent of 75 per cent. greater extraction in the form of providing revenue than existed eight years ago when the population was 15.72 per cent. less.

The TREASURER: Is the position any different in the other States?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I have no doubt it is different in the other States, but I do not intend to wander over the other States of the Commonwealth to find consolation for or confirmation of what exists in Queensland. That does not affect us in the meeting of our obligations. I could in an ordinary discussion on the Financial Statement draw comparisons with other States, but I think that is too frequently done. We have to

meet the situation as it is here and face it as it is here. We all must admit that taxation is largely affected by the loan situation, and, as is well known to hon. members now, it is the paramount question with us all in these days that the loans which mature in the next five years amount to no less than 36 per cent. of our total public debt. The present Labour Government have been fortunate in one regard: that they have been deprived of the necessity of renewing loans during their existence heretofore except in regard to a very negligible amount.

The TREASURER: We renewed over £2,000,000 in one year.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is a negligible amount compared to the total indebtedness of the State. Now you have got a "slug," to use a colloquialism. You have to meet a situation of £31,500,000 of loans falling due for redemption or renewal within the next five years—a situation that calls for a study of our resources as we find them to-day. I am not making these comments in any carping spirit. We have to face it, and it is by a careful scrutiny that we can meet the situation. I often hear people say, "Why don't the Opposition attempt to make political capital out of the position in which the Government find themselves in regard to this loan position?

The TREASURER: You say you often hear it suggested?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Treasurer knows that it is frequently suggested to us outside, but the Opposition are fully alive to their responsibilities in this regard, and do not attempt to make political capital or to make the situation more difficult to the responsible Minister on whom devolves the onerous duty of finding a way out of our present difficulties.

Another matter in regard to which I feel constrained to make brief reference, because it undoubtedly affects the situation so far as taxation is concerned, is this drain in regard to soldier settlement. We have £3,295,000 invested in soldier settlements—advanced by the Commonwealth—but we have to pay interest on it. There is an amount of £75,000 of settlers' interest in arrears which has been capitalised, and which, of course, is only taking it out of one pocket and putting it in another. This is an enormous drain on the financial resources of the State and on our income derived from taxation. That has to be met, and I sincerely hope that the Committee—which I presume is appointed with the object of carefully scrutinising the situation—will make some practical business-like suggestion of dealing with this problem of soldier settlement which has to be met. In the meantime, it is an enormous drain on our resources.

There is a significant fact, too, in regard to our "Golden Casket" revenue. It shows that in 1922-23 we have derived £82,000 less revenue this last year than the previous one. I am not going to trespass on your good nature, Mr. Speaker, and every reference I make in this regard will have a direct bearing on the taxation. The Consolidated Revenue in this State looks for revenue from the taxation on "Golden Casket" returns. In 1921-22 we obtained £33,631 from that channel, while in 1922-23 we obtained only £25,000, a reduction of £8,631, which means that the taxpayer has got to make up the difference between these two amounts because the expenditure is not being reduced. The expenditure, as I have pointed out, is increasing as time goes on. In the meantime, the Treasurer feels constrained to grant some relief in connection with pastoral rents. I do not propose to examine that at this stage—we have had other opportunities of doing it; but we have to bear in mind that that means a loss of revenue, and it means that taxation has to be increased, or the burden of taxation has to be borne by some other shoulders. I am not arguing whether that is right or wrong. We have to balance the ledger, and any balance which is unmet by the existing channels of revenue has to be made up through taxation.

Another burden is the one we have been discussing this very day. The taxpayer is being asked still to maintain the burden of the Council of Agriculture, and another £25,000 a year is coming out of the taxpayers' pockets to maintain that Council for the current year. How long that is going to continue I do not know. In that regard I fully endorse the argument put forward in this House to-day that the farmer should maintain his own organisation. At the moment the burden is falling on the taxpayer, and it is a great responsibility on the Treasurer to know how he is going to make his ledger balance with these greater burdens cast upon him and at the same time give relief in taxation.

Then there is the great burden of State enterprises, which probably is one of the greatest that is falling on the taxpayer to-day. I do not intend to labour the question at all, because we have had an opportunity of discussing this question, but all this has a tremendous effect upon the position of the taxpayer in Queensland. According to the Auditor-General's report—

	£
The Iron and Steel Works lost	49,000
The Roma bore lost	37,000
The Chillagoe enterprise lost	179,000
The Irvinebank works lost ...	33,000
The Railways lost	9,882,000
The Inkerman scheme lost ...	175,000

And just to complete the schedule, according to the Auditor-General's report upon State enterprises just to hand, the accumulated results to 30th June last showed—

——	Loss.	Profit.
	£	£
State Stations	572,000	..
Butcher Shops	..	1,702
Produce Agency	4,776	..
State Cannery	53,963	..
Babinda Hotel	..	4,403
Fish Supply	35,796	..
Refreshment Rooms ..	..	9,071

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I do not wish to trespass on your good nature, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will realise that his remarks have no bearing on the question.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I should like to realise it, but as a taxpayer I cannot realise

it. I recognise that these losses mean that I as a taxpayer in Queensland will have to pay more taxation than I otherwise would pay, and every taxpayer naturally appreciates the same thing.

The TREASURER: You should go to Yeerongpilly to make these remarks.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Yeerongpilly people are all converted to a proper conception of the position. They have shown that on more than one occasion. I should like to go into the hon. member's electorate to show the taxpayers the true position, and possibly we shall have an opportunity of doing so.

The TREASURER: I feel somewhat crushed.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There is one other reference I should like to make without in any way infringing on my rights and prerogatives on this occasion. I wish to make a brief reference—and this has a very important effect on the position of the taxpayer—to answers to questions which were asked the Treasurer some few weeks ago as to the number of State employees and the amount of revenue the State paid in wages up to 30th June last. They are extraordinary figures. The number of officers who find employment from the State Government at present is 36,068, and the amount paid to them in wages for the twelve months ended 30th June last was £8,411,000. That is a staggering amount, and it shows what a huge sum is being paid each year to State employees, and how stagnating an influence it is having upon our affairs in Queensland to-day. I have no grudge or complaint against the State employee, but he should not represent more than a reasonable proportion of the population of the State, and should not, in my judgment, absorb two-thirds of the total revenue of the State, which he is doing at the present moment—that is, by the payment of wages and salaries for the last financial year. This demonstrates how the State is usurping trading activities. I do not often indulge in quotations, but I am just going to quote some words of Lord Macaulay's which, though uttered nearly a hundred years ago, seem to fit the situation in Queensland admirably—

> "Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties, by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment; by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this; the people will assuredly do the rest."

That, in my judgment, crystallises the position as it is to-day. Queensland wants to be allowed to proceed on the even tenor of its way, without interference and without undue legislation, and if it is given that opportunity it will progress in a manner which will satisfy the most exacting of us who are here.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3—"*Amendment of section 7—Rates of income tax*"—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I move the insertion, after line 2, page 2, of the following subclause:—

> "(1) The said section shall be read as amended by paragraphs (*a*) and (*b*) hereof in the case of a person who is married and whose wife is wholly maintained by him."

This amendment may appear somewhat involved, but the object is to give more exemption to married men and leave the exemption to single men the same as at present. I have already exhausted the arguments in favour of my contention, but briefly I would say that in these days it is the married men who require the greater consideration. The Treasurer stated that he anticipated a loss of revenue from income tax of £66,000 for the current year under this Bill, and he has an opportunity of reducing that loss by accepting the exemptions which I suggest.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I agree with the hon. member that it is a fair thing to make a discrimination in favour of a married man. The system of taxation in force does that, and this Bill will increase the benefit to a family man to a very tangible extent. If there is any argument for an exemption it must be in favour of a man who has family obligations and a number of children to support, and that is what the Bill does. There is less necessity for consideration in the case of married people without children than in the case of a married man with a family. Take the case of an average family of a wife and three children, for instance. The man gets £40 exemption for his wife and £40 exemption for each child, or a total exemption of £160; so that a married man with these family obligations earning a salary of £410 is taxed no more than a single man who gets a salary of £250. He has a deduction of £160, which is a very fair consideration, and it was for that reason that the deduction for children was put into the Act originally. If further consideration were required, it would be far better to increase the deduction than to increase the exemption.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Will you do that?

The TREASURER: As I have already said, we have gone as far as we can at present, but we propose eventually to make it more.

Amendment (*Mr. Elphinstone*) negatived.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I move the insertion, on line 22, page 2, after the word—

> "repealed,"

of the words—

> "also in subparagraph (ii.) after the words 'Of all reserves' the words '(including in such reserves all amounts standing to the credit of profit and loss account)' are inserted."

That is to enable the credit to profit and loss account to be treated as capital.

Amendment (*Mr. Theodore*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 6, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 7—"*Amendment of section* 14—*Specific classes of incomes liable to tax*"—

Mr SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I move the insertion, after the word "vendor," on line 54, page 3, of the words—

> "Where a crop has been harvested by the vendor from the same land during the same year in which such sale is made, the profit derived from the sale of such standing crop shall be deemed to be income of the next following year."

My reason for moving that amendment is that, under the graduated taxation system, there is an obvious unfairness in including in one year the results from two crops. The best way to explain my reason for moving the amendment is to quote an instance which came under my notice a few days ago. A farmer well on in years sold his land. He had been working hard, and was a most saving man, and when he sold it he received £3,800. That was practically the result of a life of hard work. The State income tax charged to that man was £450.

The TREASURER: What profit did he make on the sale?

Mr. SWAYNE: That represented his whole capital. The reason for that excessive assessment is this: The taxation period runs from June to June. After last June he harvested, and he sold about March when there was a standing crop on the land. The value of the crop then standing was overestimated in value and included as income. The Commissioner has power to do so in the Act as it stands. The result was that he was assessed on two crops in one year, and so the income credited to him was far and away above anything he had had in his life before. The consequence was that he was charged income tax on the highest scale. I do not think that is a fair thing.

Mr. COLLINS: You have not made it clear yet.

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. member for Bowen, who represents a sugar-cane growing district, should be able to grasp the point straight away. I could understand other hon. members not appreciating the case. His income from crops was doubled, because he was looked upon as having sold two crops in one year—the crop he had harvested prior to December and the crop which was on the ground when he sold in March and was not harvested until after the 30th June following—that is, about September. The estimates were high—they were based on a good year—and altogether the circumstances gave him a fictitious income far beyond what he could have earned in any year. My amendment would have the effect of regarding the crop sold with the land in March as income for the following year—that is, the year in which it would have been harvested and taxed in the ordinary way. By that means that man would not suffer the hardship of the excessive rate of tax at which he has been assessed, because two crops were regarded as having come into his pocket in the same year. It would simply mean that the Commissioner of Taxes would get his tax in the ordinary way year by year. In 1923 he would tax the income from the first crop, and in 1924 the second crop, and the taxpayer would not be credited with an abnormal income for one year.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I am afraid that I am not able to accept the hon. member's amendment. It is possible that such a case might arise, but it cannot be one of very great hardship, because an individual who pays £450 in income tax must be in receipt of an income of £3,000 at least. At any rate, in the following year he will not pay on the standing crop.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It is the result of his life's work.

The TREASURER: The result of his life's work is not taxed. He pays tax on the profit he makes on the sale unless he has sold more than seven years from the time he bought it. If he has a standing crop and sells it, that is his taxable profit, and is no different from the taxable profit on the sale of live stock in similar circumstances.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I should like to point out that, if the standing crop had been marketed in the next financial year, he would have been assessed at a very much lower rate. He actually paid income tax on a crop which might never be harvested.

The TREASURER: He pays income tax on the profit for the year in which it was earned.

Mr. MOORE: He sells the property with the crop in March, and the crop is valued at what it would return in the following September. If that income had come into the next year, his receipts from crops would have been divided approximately into two, and he would have paid income tax on a lower scale.

The TREASURER: The principle is that he pays income tax on the year in which he earns his income. He actually received it in that year.

Mr. MOORE: I cannot see that he actually received it. He received a price for the property, and the value of the crop was included in it, but the man who buys a crop does not pay for it at the same rate as the Commissioner values it, because he takes a risk.

The TREASURER: The vendor realises the crop.

Mr. MOORE: He does not realise the value which the Commissioner puts upon it.

The TREASURER: It is his own estimate, as the hon. member stated.

Mr. MOORE: I do not think so. I think the hon. gentleman must realise that it is a hardship. If you assess income tax on double crops which would otherwise be spread over two years, it is a hardship.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I should like to reply to something which the Treasurer has said as to this man being well able to pay the tax. If it had been the income of an ordinary year, no doubt he would have been able to pay the tax. That sum represented the man's whole life savings—

[8 p.m.] nearly forty years' work. I think the total amount that he sold for was £3,800, on which he had to pay £50 or £60 Federal income tax and £450 State income tax. We saw the Acting Commissioner of Taxes, and he made a reduction, but even then the amount was very big. When it comes to affecting a man's total wealth or property the taxation should be assessed as though the man had not sold the property and had harvested the crop in due course. All we ask is that the value of the crop should be assessed as if the crop had been harvested in the ordinary way.

Mr. FERRICKS: The department would then lose the revenue on one year's crop.

Mr. SWAYNE: No. The hon. member has been in the sugar districts and he should

realise that what I am asking is fair. According to my statement the man would be taxed in 1923 for the cane cut in 1923, and in 1924 he would be taxed for the value of the crop cut in that year and would pay his tax accordingly; but under the present system he is charged for the two crops in 1923 and will be assessed upon the estimate of the crop for 1924 in 1923, which is really placing the value on a fictitious level, and, under the present system of graduated taxation, be liable to a much higher rate per pound. I am sorry that the Treasurer cannot carry out this act of justice. Lately he has been posing as the farmers' friend, and it is by such actions as these that we can gauge the true value of his protestations in this regard. The case I have mentioned is not an isolated one, and may occur over and over again with the farmers. If the hon. gentleman wishes to do justice to the farmers, he should take some little trouble, even if it is necessary to recommit the Bill to carry out what I suggest if my amendment is not exactly what is required to meet the case.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): The hon. member for Mirani is quite right in what he says. The department may get income tax on two incomes in one year. They would collect a tax on four incomes in one year if they could get it. They would certainly ask the purchaser of the property to make a return and they would tax him on that.

Mr. HYNES: You stated during a previous debate that the farmers were paying no taxation.

Mr. DEACON: The hon. gentleman seems to have got lost. We have had no previous debate on income tax. In the case pointed out by the hon. member for Mirani the income would be assessed on a higher scale and the man would have to pay income tax on part of the next year's income.

Amendment (*Mr. Swayne*) negatived.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move the insertion, after line 56, of the following:—

"(2) After subsection two under Heading I. the following subsection is inserted:—

(2A.) For the purpose of the foregoing subsections one and two under this heading (I.) the cost to the vendor of property sold (other than a growing crop, stock-in-trade or livestock) which has been acquired by the vendor as a beneficiary or as an executor or administrator in the estate of a deceased person, shall be deemed to be the cost price of such property to such deceased person, and the date on which such property was purchased or acquired by such deceased person shall be taken for the purposes of this Act to be the date on which such beneficiary, executor, or administrator, purchased or acquired such property."

This amendment and the following amendment were referred to during my second-reading speech as intended to give relief to beneficiaries in the estate of a deceased person where income tax has been assessed on the supposed profit from property transmitted at death. This is an equitable provision. In some cases it may be urged that some estates should pay taxation, but generally speaking this amendment will correct an anomaly which has brought about hardship in the past.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Is that a recommendation by the Standing Committee on Taxation?

The TREASURER: Yes.

Amendment (*Mr. Theodore*) agreed to.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move the insertion, after line 5, page 4, of the following:—

"(4.) The following amendments are made in subsection (7) under heading I.:—

In paragraph (*a*) the words 'or to any beneficiary under any will or in the distribution of an intestate estate; or' are repealed.

Paragraph (*b*) is repealed, and the following paragraph is inserted in lieu thereof:—

'(*b*) The transfer to any beneficiary under any will or in the distribution of an intestate estate or the taking over by an executor or administrator on the death of a taxpayer of any livestock and produce owned by a taxpayer, who, up to the date of his death, had taken advantage of the provisions of section twenty-two of this Act.'

Also, the words 'subparagraph (*a*) or (*b*) or (*c*)' are repealed, and the words 'subparagraph (*a*) or (*c*)' are inserted in lieu thereof; also, after the words 'and in the case of livestock,' the words 'to which subparagraph (*b*) refers' are inserted.

"(5.) The following proviso is inserted at the end of subsection 2 under Heading II.:—

'Provided further that if the consideration aforesaid received is received by a beneficiary, executor, or administrator in the estate of a deceased person, such beneficiary, executor, or administrator shall be entitled to all allowances to which such deceased person would under this subsection have been entitled if he had been alive.'"

This is a consequential amendment following on the amendment just agreed to.

Amendment (*Mr. Theodore*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 8—"*Amendment of section* 15—*Deductions*"—

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move the insertion, after line 9, of the words—

"(1.) In paragraph (iii.) the words 'and any interest actually paid by him in that year on any mortgage of his residence' are repealed."

Under the present law the taxpayer has to return 5 per cent. of the value of his residence as part of his income tax and deductions are allowed for repairs, interest on mortgage, etc. It is now proposed that the taxpayer shall not return 5 per cent. on the value of his residence, and he is therefore being relieved of the deductions allowed at the present time.

Mr. DEACON: Does that apply to all residences?

The TREASURER: All residences owned by the taxpayer which would be returned as income.

Amendment (*Mr. Theodore*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 17, both inclusive, put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

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

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): The principal object of the Bill is to reimpose the super land tax for another year. When the Bill to reimpose the super land tax for another year was before the House last year, the hope was expressed, as it has been each year, that it would not be necessary to reimpose it this year. It is recognised, and has been stressed, that it would be utterly impossible for the State in view of the state of the finances to forgo the tax this year, as it would mean a loss to the revenue of £50,000. The necessity therefore arises to continue the super tax this year. The tax only applies to large estates. The opportunity is also being taken of correcting one or two errors and making one or two alterations in the Bill.

Mr. BRAND: Do you think the Government will be able to carry on without the super tax next year?

The TREASURER: I hope so. I beg to move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I regret the necessity that arises for the reimposition of the super land tax. I was in hopes that the Treasurer, if he was not able to omit the tax altogether, would be able to reduce it by one-half. The hon. gentleman told us a few moments ago that, although the finances of the State showed a deficiency of about £16,000 for the three months ended the 30th September last, as compared with the 30th September, 1922, the figures for the month ended 31st October showed an improvement of £40,000.

The TREASURER: We are £48,000 better off than we were for the same period last year.

Mr. TAYLOR: A considerable amount of that money which the hon. member for Oxley referred to as coming from the assessments which were late in going out has evidently been received. We cannot go on those figures, because the prospects for the remainder of the financial year are not too bright. The Treasurer has seen his way clear to make a large remission in taxation to-night. I hope that, when we come to reconsider the Act next year, if the super tax is not altogether removed, it will, at all events, be reduced by one-half.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I regret very much that the exigencies of the Government have made it necessary to continue the super land tax. I want to ask the hon. gentleman to take one point into consideration. A Bill was introduced into this House the other evening with the object of remitting rents on pastoral properties used mainly for cattle purposes owing to the difficulty that cattle-owners find in paying their rents. It is a tremendous anomaly to me that the Lands Department should find it necessary to bring in a Bill to reduce the rents on cattle properties, and that the Treasurer should introduce another Bill to continue the super land tax on freehold property. The cattle-owner who possesses his own freehold is to-day in exactly the same condition through the state of the cattle market as the owner of the leasehold property. It seems that because under a previous Government a man put his money into a freehold cattle property he is to be penalised now by having to pay a super land tax. I do not suppose that there are a large number of them, but there are certainly some. The leaseholder, by reason of having his rent reviewed by a special court which will take into consideration the state of the industry to-day, will be placed in a far better position than the freeholder. It would be no use my moving an amendment, as it would be ruled out of order because it would in effect reduce the amount of income to be received under a money Bill: but I hope that the Treasurer will give some consideration to these unfortunate people and see that, as far as possible, they are placed on the same basis as the owners of leasehold properties.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): We should not allow this Bill to go through without a protest. I do not regard a land tax on a living area as a fair one. It is absolutely unjust. The Government do not impose a tax on the capital that a business man invests in his business, but the landowner is singled out and taxed on the value of his property, which is his business.

The TREASURER: Do you mean the farm?

Mr. DEACON: I mean any landowner. The Treasurer has stated that the farmer has an exemption of £1,500. That is the capital he has in his business; but if his farm should happen to be valued at a greater amount, his exemption decreases on a sliding scale. It is unjust that any man, because he is a landowner, should have to pay a tax on his land. Grazing land is worth about £1 an acre, and how on earth can he make a living off 1,500 acres of land? It is an impossibility. We have heard hon. members on the opposite side of the House state that no man can make a living on first-class grazing land anywhere in the West on an area of less than 10,000 acres. That land is worth, approximately, £1 an acre in the West, and cannot be bought under that figure. Hon. members admit that. Why should you not allow the same thing to the man who takes that freehold property as you do to the man with leasehold? We should be fair to everybody. If the State has to raise money, it can do so by income tax, which is a fair tax. There is no reason at all for singling out the landowner, except to penalise him with this tax. The exemption of £1,500 is a small benefit. I hope that the Treasurer will see the justice of our plea, and see that some fair reduction is made.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I must add my protest to that of other hon. members on this side of the House. We protest especially against a super tax on land. I want to emphasise the fact that the small grazier grazing stock on land that he has purchased or that was acquired by his parents many years previously is penalised by this land taxation. He may be holding an area of interior freehold land. The exigencies of the present time have compelled the Government to reduce the rent of the leaseholder, yet no attempt is made to alleviate the penal land taxation placed upon the freeholder. Instead of being relieved of about 50 per cent. of his obligations as is the leaseholder, he has to pay, approximately, five times as much as that person, and then pay a super tax. It is only the person who holds a very fair area who is able to make a living at all. A

man holding leasehold land that is only fit for grazing purposes may apply to the Land Court and secure a reduction in rent of 50 per cent., but there is no assistance to the freeholder. I think that we have every right to oppose the principle of super taxation. The landowning farmer or grazier is the only person in the community who is taxed upon his instrument of labour. The carpenter is not taxed upon his tools, nor the tradesman upon his bench or implements with which he makes his living, but there seems to be no exemption for the man using land, of which only 6 per cent. is alienated. He is taxed, not only on his income derived from the land, but on the land which God alone has given us—both on what he makes and for the sin of owning land.

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

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 put and passed.

Clause 4—"*Mortgages*"—

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): Unfortunately, it has been found that an error was made in the reprint of the statute in the use of the word "mortgage" instead of "mortgagee," which was correct in the original statute. There is, therefore, no necessity for this clause.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 5, 6, and 7 put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

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

GOVERNMENT LOANS REDEMPTION AND CONVERSION BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 7, both inclusive, put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

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

PRIVATE SAVINGS BANKS BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

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

Clause 2—"*Restriction on application of Act*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "Bank," on line 12, page 1, of the words—

> "and the Governor in Council may by Order in Council exempt any other bank, company, institution, or person either wholly or to such extent as may be deemed desirable from the operation of this Act."

I hope the Treasurer will see his way to accept this amendment, as it is certainly a reasonable one. It means that certain institutions which the Governor in Council may think fit to exempt may be exempted.

The TREASURER: I accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3—"*Interpretation*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "Act," on line 36, of the words—

> "but does not include the current account business of any banking institution."

I hope the Treasurer will see his way clear to accept this amendment. It was pointed out on the second reading that there are certain institutions which are doing banking business in a small way, and they help the community by paying a small rate of interest. These institutions help the community by receiving deposits which are not exactly savings. They do the business that an ordinary bank does, and, as a matter of fact, they are banks. They allow moneys to be withdrawn by cheques, and they perform all the functions of a bank. The definition differentiates between those institutions and the larger institutions known as associated banks which pay no interest on current account balances. I feel sure the hon. gentleman does not want to press too heavily on the smaller institutions. Since the larger institutions are exempt, it is only fair that this amendment should be agreed to.

[8.30 p.m.]

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I am afraid I cannot accept the amendment. The definition of "Savings Bank business" has caused a good deal of concern and careful study on the part of the Law Department and of the Parliamentary Draftsman in order to get it into a satisfactory form. The amendment, if it were carried, would obviously exempt trading and savings banks, and I am afraid I cannot accept that. The hon. member must be prepared to rely on the good faith of the Government to see that no hardship is done to any institution that at the present time is doing business and which should be allowed to continue its business.

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—"*Approval to be obtained*"—put and passed.

Clause 5—"*Application for approval*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "banker," on line 30, of the words—

> "but such rate of interest shall not be less than the rate for the time being allowed on deposits in the Savings Bank Branch of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia."

Subclause (3) reads—

> "The regulations may from time to time fix the rate of interest which shall be allowed on deposits with the banker."

Obviously that rate can be fixed at a very low figure.

The TREASURER: I accept that amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 6—"*Savings Bank to deposit securities with Treasurer*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "Act," on line 47, of the words—

> "or such longer period as may be determined by the Minister."

The TREASURER: I accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 7—"*Yearly investments with Minister*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the insertion, after the word "January," on line 5, of the words—

"April, July, and October."

The TREASURER: I accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the omission, on line 7, of the word—

"seventy,"

with a view to inserting the word—

"ten."

This is an important principle in the Bill. The amendment will reduce the amount to be deposited with the Minister from 70 per cent. to 10 per cent. of the excess of the total deposits over the total withdrawals. The matter was debated pretty fully on the second reading of the Bill, and I would call the Treasurer's attention once more to the fact that the deposit which is asked under this Bill is really by way of being a forced loan on financial institutions.

The TREASURER: I have an amendment in that connection which is as far as I can go to meet the Opposition.

Mr. KELSO: In that case I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the omission, on line 9, of the word—

"year,"

with a view to inserting the word—

"quarter."

The TREASURER: I accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I beg to move the omission, on line 11, of the words—

"one pound,"

with a view to inserting the words—

"two pounds."

The clause reads—

> "The sum so invested as aforesaid shall bear interest payable to a banker at the rate of one pound per centum per annum higher than the rate per centum which the banker has allowed."

On the second reading of the Bill very strong arguments were put forward which should induce the Treasurer to accept this amendment. He must know perfectly well that a margin of 1 per cent. is not a sufficient margin for any institution. It may be the case perhaps with large sums of money in the savings banks, but in most of the institutions which will be affected by this Bill there are a tremendous number of transactions by cheque. In such institutions a comparatively large staff is required in comparison to that required in the Commonwealth Savings Bank for the same turnover. I hope the Treasurer will see the justice of the claim and accept the amendment.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I am sorry that I cannot accept the amendment. Institutions such as the Queensland Deposit Bank and the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Company, Limited, would be badly done by if this alteration were made. The amendments I have accepted, and one which I intend to move at the end of the clause, will have the effect of meeting the situation so far as institutions of this kind are concerned. I do not want to make these institutions subject to penalties in carrying on their business, and this Bill is not intended to do that; but provision has to be made if they carry on savings bank business like the Commonwealth Bank.

Mr. KELSO: You will take the case of these institutions on its merits.

The TREASURER: In the case of the institutions to which the hon. member is referring the deposits with the Government will be very small indeed in the event of their paying the 70 per cent. of the excess of deposits over withdrawals to meet their obligations.

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) negatived.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the omission, on line 13, of the word—

"year,"

with a view to inserting the word—

"quarter."

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) agreed to.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the insertion, on line 13, after subclause (1), of the following provisos:—

> "Provided that the deposit of ten thousand pounds or securities to the value of ten thousand pounds referred to in clause six hereof shall be deemed to be included as part of such investment;
>
> "Provided further that Queensland Government securities may be deposited in lieu of cash and the interest thereon shall be paid to the banker depositing such securities."

Amendment agreed to.

Further consequential amendments were made on lines 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, and 26.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I move the insertion, after the word "banker," on line 32, of the words—

> "or may from time to time, by like Order, for such period of time as shall be fixed by such Order, reduce in favour of any banker the percentage of excess deposits as aforesaid, which under the provisions of subsection one of this section he is required to invest with the Minister, to such percentage thereof as the Governor in Council thinks proper."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 8, 9, and 10 put and passed.

Clause 11—"*Ceasing to carry on business*"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the insertion, after the word "that," on line 20, of the words—

> "including the deposits and securities held on his behalf by the Minister, he is able to discharge."

The clause will then read, with consequential amendments—

> "In the event of a banker ceasing to carry on savings bank business in Queensland, such banker (on satisfying the Minister that, including the deposits and securities held on his behalf by the Minister, he is able to discharge all liabilities arising under his savings bank business in Queensland) shall be entitled, after the date of so satisfying the Minister,

to have transferred to such banker any deposits or securities for the time being held by the Minister on such banker's account under this Act."

The amendment is necessary because, if a bank ceases to carry on savings bank business, it cannot possibly meet all its engagements unless the money and securities deposited with the Treasurer are available.

Amendment (*Mr. Kelso*) agreed to.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the omission, on lines 21 and 22, of the words—

"have been discharged."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I move the omission, on lines 22 and 23, of the words—

"at the expiration of three months."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 12—"*Power to make regulations*"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

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

The House adjourned at 8.56 p.m.