**DAIRY PRODUCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1942**

**Legislative Council, 2 September 1942, pages 552-3**

Second reading

**The Hon. A. P. BLESING (Northern - Minister of Agriculture)—**The Dairy Act, 1934-1940, will unless renewed expire on the 30th of this month. This Bill has been brought down to extend the Act for a further period of two years. As members know, the Dairy Produce Act does not deal with the general control of the dairying industry but merely provides the legal basis for the equalization scheme for butter and cheese. Under the scheme Australian prices for butter and cheese are controlled, and those who export butter are assisted by an equalization payment. The Government is advised that the continuance of the scheme is essential. Overseas prices are still substantially lower than local prices, and the burden of having to export would in the absence of machinery for equalization fall unevenly upon the manufacturers. Legislation similar to our Act is in force in all other States. I more the second reading.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1- Leader of the Opposition)—I understand the Bill merely lengthens the life of the principal Act, and as the Minister desires it to be passed to-day I will accept his assurance that that is its purpose. I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2) —I am not sure that we should accept the Bill on its face value. The Minister has not given us any evidence that the legislation is desirable and should be continued.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—He said that the principal Act expires at the end of this month when this House will not be sitting.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—Yes. We have had frequent appeals to pass legislation that is to operate for only a limited period. It was urged that the Bills should be passed because the Acts would expire at a specified date. This happened in connection with the Act now being amended, and now we are asked to pass a Bill extending its life again. That is not sufficient for me. No doubt the principal Act was considerably debated when it was before Parliament, but we are entitled to more information about its effect. Often we are told that a measure deals with an emergency matter and that the board appointed under it will operate only for a certain period. Often it is said that the industry wants the legislation. Usually a committee reports on the matter mentioned in it and then it becomes a board, and so the story goes on. We should be told whether the Dairy Produce Board has been successful, and why it is necessary to alter the expiry date of the legislation. Personally, I would like the life of all boards to expire at the earliest possible date. I will not support the second reading until I get more information.

The Hon. Sir WALTER DUNCAN (Midland)—The principal Act was passed in 1934

and section 26 indicated that it would expire in September 1937. In that year the expiry date was altered to 1938. Then it was altered to 1940 and then 1942, and now we are asked to make it1944. The Bill has operated for eight years and we all know what it has done. Hon members know my views on this type of legislation, but I am afraid there is not much chance of our being able to clear up the mess before 1944.

Hon. C. R. Cudmore—We are entitled to more information.

The Hon. Sir WALTER DUNCAN—Probably the Minister works on the principle that the less information he gives the less debate there is likely to be. The measure deals with butter and cream, and there may be some good reason for the introduction of the Bill but I am always suspicious of Bills introduced in this way. Perhaps it was not until last week that it was decided to adjourn Parliament for three weeks. Unless the Bill is passed now no legislation will be in force for a week or so after September 30. The scheme is working as smoothly as such schemes can work, and for these reasons I support the second reading.

The Hon. A. P. BLESING (Northern—Minister of Agriculture)—Sir Walter Duncan gave the main reason for the introduction of the Bill. It was not realized until the last week or so that Parliament would not be sitting when the legislation expired. I think Mr. Cudmore understands the reason for the equalization scheme. Dairymen have rendered this country a good service and they are entitled to a living wage, which they have not always had. Often they have had to depend upon their wife and family to keep going. The passing of the Bill will assist them.

The Hon. J. Cowan—Similar legislation is in operation in the other States.

The Hon. A. P. BLESING—I have made that clear. I am hoping that in Mr. Cudmore’s Parliamentary career, which I trust will be long and valuable, he will pay more attention to some matters of importance. The interests of the primary producers must be safeguarded.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.