**METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1948**

**Legislative Assembly, 10 August 1948, page 660**

**Second reading**

**The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Newcastle—Minister of Agriculture)—**In 1945, an Act amending the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Act was passed laying down the present constitution of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board. Under this Act, it is provided that the board is to consist of a chairman and six other members. One of the members is a consumers’ representative and is elected by constituent councils and the other five members are representative of various interests concerned in the operation of the abattoirs, and these members are appointed by the Governor from a panel submitted by the appropriate organization representing the particular interests.

It is provided that one member is to be a person who, in the opinion of the Governor, is suitable to represent butchers and exporters of stock and the two organizations representing these interests are, between them, required to submit a panel of three names from which the appointee is to be selected. It has been suggested that each of these interests should have separate representation. Obviously, both butchers and exporters of stock are vitally concerned in the administration of the abattoirs and it is therefore proposed by clauses 2 and 3 that the membership of the board will be increased by one member. One member will be representative of exporters of stock and the nominating organization will be, as at present, the South Australian Meat Exporters’ Association. The new member will "be the representative of butchers and will be selected from a panel of three names submitted by Master Butchers’ Limited as the organization representative of the butchers concerned.

Clause 3 provides for the retirement of the new member first appointed and so that his term of office will fit in with the terms of office of existing members. The present quorum of the board is any four members so that it is unnecessary to make any change in this regard.

Section 50 of the Act provides that the board is to have the sole right to slaughter stock within the metropolitan abattoirs area for export as fresh meat in a chilled or frozen condition. This is in general conformity with other provisions of the Act which provide that, within the metropolitan abattoirs area, stock must be slaughtered at the metropolitan abattoirs. This rule is subject to some exceptions, one of the most important being a provision that swine may be slaughtered at other than the abattoirs for purposes such as the manufacture of small goods. There is an export market for parts of swine sold as fresh meat in a chilled or frozen condition and it is obvious that a trade of this nature must be combined with the trade of supplying small goods, bacon, and ham in the metropolitan area. It is therefore provided by clause 4that, notwithstanding section 50, the Minister may grant permits to slaughter swine in the metropolitan area for export as fresh meat in a chilled or frozen condition. This power, it should be noted, is confined to the slaughter of swine as it is intended that slaughter for export in this manner should be carried out in combination with slaughter for the trade in the metropolitan area which is already permitted under the Act. The grant of any permit will be in the discretion of the Minister and any permit will be issued for such period and upon such conditions as are fixed by the Minister. This provision is substantially similar to a section enacted in 1937 under which the Minister has power to license premises outside the metropolitan abattoirs area for the purpose of slaughtering stock for export but, as before stated, the provisions of the present Bill are limited to the slaughter of swine.

# 662 Abattoirs Bill. [ASSEMBLY.] Stock Foods Bill.

Bacon factories operating outside the metropolitan area are able to obtain a permit from the Minister to enable them to export certain pieces for which there is no local market, but any person who has a bacon factory within the metropolitan area could not be issued with such a permit by the Minister. This clause has been provided for the express purpose of allowing the same conditions to apply to a bacon factory operating within the metropolitan abattoirs area as apply to factories operating outside the area.

Mr. Dunks—Will they all be inspected?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—No factory can slaughter for export except under the supervision of inspectors. In some cases inspectors are appointed by the State and accepted by the Commonwealth and actually do the work of inspection for the Commonwealth under conditions laid down by the Commonwealth.

Mr. Dunks—We have our own inspectors at the abattoirs.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—If the Commonwealth accepted the State inspectors that would be quite all right, but if they are not prepared to accept them, they must appoint their own. The inspection of meat for local consumption at the abattoirs is on a different scale from the inspection for export. The latter is very rigid and more strict.

Mr. Dunks—Will the factories slaughter swine for use in the metropolitan area as well?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The slaughtering of swine under this clause will befor the manufacture of bacon and small goods which can be sold in the metropolitan area at present.

Mr. Fletcher—Any bacon and small goods from outside can come into the metropolitan area?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Yes, that applies at present. If it did not my friend would not be able to get any bacon for his breakfast in the morning. Clause 5 makes a number of amendments to the principal Act which are necessary if clause 4 is enacted. Clause 6 corrects an omission in the principal Act. As before mentioned, the Act provides that swine may be slaughtered in the metropolitan area other than at the metropolitan abattoirs for the purpose of the manufacture of small goods, and it is also provided that small goods from swine slaughtered outside the metropolitan area may be sold within that area. The Act has always been administered on the assumption that this exemption also applied to bacon and ham derived from swine slaughtered under these circumstances and clause 6 amends section 76 of the Act so as to make this position clear.

The question arose whether the Act was sufficiently explicit and whether strictly speaking the sale of bacon and hams within the metropolitan area was permissible under the Act. Although it was generally contended that that was always so, there was a shadow of doubt, and the clause is designed to make the position clear. The question of allowing retail butchers to have a representative of their own on the Abattoirs Board was a live one when previous amendments to the Act were made and they were allotted one representative in conjunction with exporters and wholesalers. However; they were never satisfied with that position and have persistently asked the Minister of Agriculture to amend the Act to give them direct representation. I think the House will agree that those doing business continuously with the board should be entitled to some representation on it. Before asking Cabinet to agree to this amendment, I took up the question with the chairman of the Abattoirs Board and the board freely stated that they considered people doing business with the abattoirs to the extent that the retail butchers were should have representation on it. They said that it would not make the board unwieldy and they would be happy to work under these conditions. I move the second reading.

Mr. O’HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.