

Mr PRESIDENT - The honourable member for Westmorland.

Members - Hear, hear.

Mr CHELLIS (Westmorland) - Mr President, fellow members of the Council, I deem it a privilege and a pleasure to be standing here this evening representing the electors of Westmorland. The warmth, friendliness and hospitality extended to me by honourable members is very much appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the honourable member for Macquarie for introducing a touch of chemistry into the Chamber last Thursday with his reference to glycogen. I felt much more at home after hearing his remarks.

Mr President, in my opinion this bill is vital to the future of the meat industry in Tasmania. It will afford protection against the possibility of disease and unhygienic procedures. It is a proven fact that prevention is better than cure. This bill is long overdue. 'Backyarders', as we now know them, will find it much more difficult to operate once it becomes law.

I have contacted a majority of retail butchers in my electorate of Westmorland and they are extremely anxious that these so-called 'backyarders' be put out of business. Given a sufficient number of inspectors and eliminating the apparent loophole in clause 5(a) of the bill, hopefully it will ensure that these people will find it much more difficult to operate.

Mr President, I have with me photostat copies of Queensland, New South Wales and Victorian acts relating to meat hygiene and meat inspection and I thank the officers concerned for their cooperation.

The Victorian act, Part I, section 3(5) states:

'Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to prohibit a person from slaughtering or causing to be slaughtered any animals on any property in a shire for consumption on that property, and not for sale nor for use in the preparation of any food for sale.'

I suggest, Sir, that the words 'a shire' be replaced by 'Tasmania'. I feel the words 'on that property' cover the suggested anomaly in clause 5(a) of our Meat Hygiene Bill.

The New South Wales act is similar to our proposed legislation as it now stands and the words 'slaughtered at his farm' are used.

The Queensland act uses the words:

'slaughtered by any person at any place whereof he is the owner or the occupier ...'

Sir, in my opinion neither the Queensland nor the New South Wales act specifies that the meat be consumed on that property. If we are genuine in our attempt to eliminate backyard slaughtering the Victorian act is the one we should be considering as a replacement for clause 5(a).

If retail butchers can find extra turnover their profits should rise and perhaps some of these increased profits may be passed on to the consumer by way of reduced retail prices, and an increased demand for meat by retail butchers will reflect through to the slaughterhouses. So as I see it, this regulatory measure for the meat industry can be of real benefit to those people who at present show concern, in fact, to all Tasmanians.

We cannot help people permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves. This bill will foster and consolidate the local and export meat industry in Tasmania. We should be encouraging export - it is our lifeblood - and I

fail to understand why one should be wary of anyone willing to invest in an operation which has previously proved unsuccessful when we know its viability could be of extreme value to all Tasmanians.

Mr President, we cannot help small men by tearing down big men. After perusing the suggested standards which are to be included in the meat hygiene regulations, I have no fears that abattoirs supplying the local market will be put out of business by these regulations.

I endorse the remarks of the honourable member for Huon who said that this bill and its regulations are only in the theory stage. We must expect some teething troubles and we must be prepared to act quickly with regard to any anomalies which may occur in the future.

Mr President, I would be much happier if the words 'may establish' were replaced with the words 'shall establish' in clause 68(1). Clause 68(2) says that the committee 'shall' consist of certain members. I want to be certain that the committee will be formed by the minister. Further, with regard to clause 68(2), I would ask the honourable Leader to explain, perhaps in the Committee stage, why the minister requires at least eighteen names to be submitted to him of people to serve on the Meat Hygiene Consultative Committee and what criteria will be used by the minister in selecting only six people to serve on that committee. Finally, we must be assured by the honourable Leader that a sufficient number of inspectors will be appointed by the director to police this bill.

The bill before the Council has my support.

Members - Hear, hear.

Mr BRAID (Mersey) - Mr President, let me first congratulate the honourable member for Westmorland on a very fine and, if I may say so, clinical address. I would also like to take the opportunity for the first time, publicly, to welcome him to this honourable Chamber. He holds an illustrious seat and I am sure that over the years he will carry out the duties expected of him with distinction.

Mr Wilson - He's off to a great start.

Mr Petrusma - He might teach you a lesson as far as time goes, too.

Mr BRAID - He may well do. He said that he was not going to take long, and he did not. He also said it was a very important subject. I agree with him on that but I am not going to make any promises that I will be as brief tonight. It is a most important subject, and I am not so wholeheartedly in support of the bill as he is or other members are. In fact, Mr President, I am in a great deal of trouble because I do not believe this bill is the be-all and end-all or the panacea for all the so-called ills of the Tasmanian meat industry.

Before I develop my theme, I would also like to congratulate the honourable member for Meander for an outstanding exhibition in regaining his seat without an election. As I understand the electorate - and I understand it very well, being his neighbour up there - the fact that he had no opponent was a direct result of the work he has done, is doing and, I know, will continue to do for the people of Meander and indeed for the people of Tasmania.

I would be churlish also not to acknowledge the honourable member for Derwent for his near record, if not record, majority in the election held in his division. Congratulations to the honourable Charles Batt for being re-elected and being back here representing, as the only Labor member in this Chamber, the people of Derwent.

Having said all those things, Mr President, I would like to go through the notes the honourable Leader read to this Chamber. As I have said, I am in some difficulty. Nothing is black or white; there are always shades of grey, good and bad aspects in most bills.