BREAD ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1972

Legislative Council, 21 November 1972, page 3183

Second reading

**The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Bread Act, 1954. Read a first time.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

It amends the Bread Act, 1954, by substituting, for references to avoirdupois weights, weights determined by the system international or, as they are more commonly called, metric weights. It is intended that metric measurements will be introduced into the domestic bread market on January 1, 1973; hence, it is important that this Bill pass during the present session of Parliament.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends section 3 of the principal Act by substituting as the minimum weight of bread as defined for the purposes of this Act 170g for 6oz avoirdupois. Clause 4 substitutes for the avoirdupois weights, used for ascertaining minimum and maximum dough weights for bread, weights expressed in metric measurements. I think the substitutions are clear from a reading of the clause. Finally, I indicate to honourable members that the conversions proposed are so close to the avoirdupois weights formerly used that the housewife will find the difference in the weights of her bread to be imperceptible, so this is one area in which metric conversion should cause no difficulty in retail trading.

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): It is refreshing to have before us a Bill that contains no complications. When Australia converted to decimal currency, there were many complications with regard to prices. Now we are about to convert to the metric system of weights and measures, and in the next few months we will have before us other measures that will convert the avoirdupois system to the metric system. Under this Bill, I assume that there will be no cost to the small baker to convert to the metric system and that he will be able to use the same bread tins.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The industry wants the Bill.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I appreciate that the industry wants this measure. All it will need is a different set of scales. I was interested to hear the Chief Secretary say that the housewife would find the difference in the weight of bread imperceptible. This is one area in which conversion to the metric system should cause no difficulty to the retail trade. I assume that, if there is any imbalance in favour of anyone, it will be in favour of the manufacturer and not the housewife. However, the imbalance will be so small that no-one on either side will benefit. I see no point in delaying the passage of this measure, and have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

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