

ern Australia should come up for discussion in a court, the Attorney General should have the right to brief counsel to place his views and arguments before the tribunal. The Bill is framed largely on one that is now before the Imperial Parliament, though, of course, that Bill is larger and more complicated. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 30th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 24th September, 1947.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION.

T.B. IN HUMAN BEINGS.

As to Commonwealth and State Payments, Etc.

Mr. STYANTS (on notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) What are the weekly amounts payable by the Commonwealth Government to T.B. sufferers in this State, in the following classes:—Single man; man and wife; man, wife and one child; man, wife and two children; man, wife and three children; man, wife and four children?

(2) Does this State Government make any additional allowance?

(3) If so, how much?

(4) Is all the money available in the Commonwealth grant for the prevention and elimination of T.B. in this State being used?

(5) If so, in which directions is it being expended?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Allowances are subject to the patient receiving treatment under approved conditions, either in an institution or elsewhere, and are variable according to family income.

The maximum rates payable in any instance are:—Man (sufferer) and wife, 22s. 6d. per week; each child under 16 years, 5s. per week additional; wife (sufferer), 10s. per week.

The ceiling rates of income, including the tuberculosis allowance, are:—Man and wife, £4 17s. 6d.; man and wife and one child, £5 7s. 6d.; man and wife and two children, £5 17s. 6d.; man and wife and three children £6 7s. 6d.; man and wife and four children, £6 17s. 6d.

(2) Generally "No," but in cases of need, assistance may be received from the Child Welfare Department.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

(4) It is not possible at the present time to estimate the total year's expenditure.

(5) (a) All applicants, who comply with Commonwealth directions, have been paid.

(b) Grant for new case finding work is being fully expended.

(c) Grant for new work in after-care of patients is being fully expended.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Rodoreda, leave of absence for one month granted to Hon. W. D. Johnson (Guildford-Midland) on the ground of ill-health.

BILLS—(6)—FIRST READING.

1. Commonwealth Powers Act, 1943, Amendment.
2. Commonwealth Powers Act, 1945, Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.
3. Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation).
4. Water Boards Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Works.
5. Town Planning and Development Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Local Government.
6. Health Act Amendment.
Introduced by Mr. Marshall.

BILLS (5)—THIRD READING.

1. Western Australian Trotting Association Act Amendment.
2. Economic Stability Act Amendment (Continuance).
Transmitted to the Council.
3. Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment (Continuance).
4. Supreme Court Act Amendment.
5. Unclaimed Moneys Act Amendment.
Passed.

MOTION—KOOLAN ISLAND IRON-ORE.

As to Processing Within Western Australia.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [4.43]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the iron-ore deposits at Koolan Island should be exploited only for the purpose of processing the ore within Western Australia or for purposes calculated to lead to the establishment of a fully integrated iron and steel industry within the State in the reasonably near future; also that Parliamentary approval should first be obtained before any proposal is approved simply to export the ore from the State for processing in some other State or country.

The value of iron-ore is, I think, increasing in all parts of the world. Australia, as a whole, has been favoured by the fact that in

different parts of the Commonwealth there are large deposits of good quality iron-ore, some of them being located on the coast line. Those who remember the speech made in this House two years ago by the then member for Canning (Mr. Cross) will recall that he made some information available which was surprising to many of the members of the House at that time. He told us, for instance, that the great United States of America was a very big importer of iron-ore, most of its importations coming from Canada. He told us also that England herself had to import very large quantities of iron-ore each year to enable her iron and steel industry to be continued.

We have at present in Australia only one company processing iron-ore to any considerable extent, that being the Broken Hill Pty. Co., Ltd., whose main industries are centred at Newcastle, New South Wales. This company holds very big deposits of iron-ore in South Australia, Western Australia and I believe in Queensland. In addition, I understand it controls a very large deposit of iron-ore in one of the islands not far north of Australia. The deposit which the company controls in Western Australia is at Cockatoo Island on our North-West coast. I understand the quantity of iron-ore there, above high-water level mark, is approximately 30,000,000 tons. The company is developing Cockatoo Island for the purpose of transporting iron-ore from it to Newcastle, where it will be processed for use in the steel industry at that centre. If the iron-ore deposits in Australia controlled by the company are carefully investigated, it will be found that the company controls sufficient iron-ore to enable its operations to be continued, on their present basis, for anything up to 500 years to come.

I believe the company has been interested in the possibility of securing control over the mineral leases on Koolan Island, which also is on our North-West coastline. I have said that the quantity of iron-ore on Cockatoo Island, above high-water level, is approximately 30,000,000 tons. The quantity on Koolan Island, above high-water level, is 87,000,000 tons. The quantity on that island that could be recovered is roughly 187,000,000 tons. This indicates that if the company were able to obtain control of the Koolan Island leases it would then be in possession of quantities of iron-ore in various parts of

Australia sufficient to meet its needs for, I should say, at least 700 or 800 years to come; that is, on the basis of its present operations. It might be wondered why the company would be bothered about trying to get control of any further iron-ore deposits in Australia.

I have no intention this afternoon of criticising the company, condemning it or suggesting that it is endeavouring to establish a monopoly in the iron and steel industry in Australia for all time to come. Nevertheless, the Koolan Island iron-ore deposits are the last deposits available in Australia for exploitation, that have the benefit of cheap sea transport. Therefore, if the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. could obtain control of those leases, it would have in its hands, for many years to come, the whole of the iron-ore deposits in Australia that offer the great advantage of cheap sea transport. If that were to occur, I suggest it would be practically impossible for any company, Government, or individual to establish in the future, in Australia, an industry in competition with that now operated by the Broken Hill Pty. Co. in the Eastern States.

The Minister for Industrial Development: You have no fear of its occurring now.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Anyone endeavouring to establish a new industry of that kind, in competition with the existing industry, would require to have all possible advantages in his favour. If a person were to commence with the disadvantage of high cost of transporting iron-ore by land, he would start so far behind scratch as to make the task of establishing a second iron and steel industry in Australia almost impossible of successful achievement. It is advisable to have a second iron and steel industry within the Commonwealth. Representations were made to the Broken Hill Pty. Co. some time ago in that regard, with the suggestion that the company might interest itself in the possibility and advisability of establishing such a second industry in Australia, and doing so on the western side of the continent.

Not only were the matters of decentralisation and defence stressed in favour of the suggestion, but it was also pointed out that the Broken Hill Pty. Co., with all the ad-

vantages of its experience, technical skill and advice, would be well qualified and equipped to put the suggestion into practical effect. The response from the company was not encouraging, except in the direction that an expression of sympathy was made with the idea, and with the principles of the better defence of Australia and the decentralisation of Australia's industries and population. I do not blame this company for not wanting to establish a new and separate industry in a part of Australia far removed from where its major industries are operated at the present time.

The history of the Koolan Island leases was set out in some detail in a speech made by the then Minister for Mines, now the member for Murchison, in this House some two years ago, in reply to a motion which the then member for Canning, Mr. Cross, moved in connection with the Koolan Island iron-ore deposits. The information supplied by the member for Murchison on that occasion showed that the first interest taken in these deposits was in 1907 when the leases were applied for and obtained by a Mr. Keen. From then on, until 1936, the leases changed hands three or four times, finally coming into the possession of Brasserts Ltd., in 1936. It is recorded that Brasserts paid £35,000 for the purchase of the leases from the person, or the company, holding them in that year. If that were so, one can only conclude that Brasserts paid far too much for the leases at the time, unless they had some arrangement, understanding or agreement which would enable them to develop the deposits at Koolan Island, in the reasonably near future, for the purpose of disposing of the iron-ore to some firm or country which might have been interested in obtaining iron-ore at that time. As every member probably knows, Brasserts did not produce any iron-ore from Koolan Island for sale or for commercial purposes.

I think it can be said that up till, perhaps, 1939, the iron-ore deposits of Western Australia did not mean a great deal to the people of this State, and were not valued by them to any extent in regard to the possible future industrial development of the State. Most of our citizens knew that there were at that time large deposits of iron-ore in different parts of Western

Australia, but very few of them had the fixed idea that they might be developed, except for the purpose of exporting the ore either to other States of Australia or to other countries of the world. But from about 1939 onwards, the idea speedily developed that some of our iron-ore deposits might very well be used to establish an iron industry in this State, in the first instance, and subsequently a steel industry.

On that basis, plans were developed for the charcoal-iron and wood-distillation industries to be located at Wundowie. Work proceeded at that centre, and has proceeded up to the present day for the purpose of developing these industries to the stage where they can go into actual production. The report recently presented in connection with those industries by Mr. Gibson, who was specially brought here to go thoroughly into them, has quickened public interest in the possibility not only of carrying on the charcoal-iron industry at Wundowie but of developing it, at some later date, on a much wider basis in respect of the production of charcoal-iron, and also of linking with it something in the direction of the production of steel.

In his investigations Mr. Gibson gave attention to the proposals that were developed some three years ago for the establishment of a large scale iron and steel industry in the Bunbury district. The idea there was that an industry of that kind would be established in the event of the Wundowie industry proving successful on the technical and financial sides. In his comments on the proposed large scale industry at Bunbury Mr. Gibson suggested that a great deal of careful investigation would be necessary before any practical steps could be taken to establish such an industry. I agree with that completely. He further suggested that in the event of such an industry being decided upon in the future, careful consideration should be given to the question of using iron-ore from Koolyanobbing, which is 35 or 40 miles from Southern Cross, and where there is a large deposit of fairly good quality iron-ore.

Normally a great deal could be said for developing an inland deposit of that description. Its development would mean the establishment of a fairly large inland centre, which would build up population and help the surrounding country. It would be a good

thing from many points of view, but the vital factor for consideration in this regard is the actual cost of transporting the iron ore to the point where the large scale industry might ultimately be established. Mr. Gibson stressed the possibility that the transport of iron-ore from that source by rail might produce useful back loading for the railways, in the event of Collie coal being later sent to Kalgoorlie for use instead of the firewood that is now consumed by many of the mining companies at Kalgoorlie and Boulder and also, I understand, by the Kalgoorlie Power House. If in future Collie coal is sent to the Eastern Goldfields for that purpose, that would give strength to Mr. Gibson's contention as to the possibility of using iron-ore from Koolyanobbing in a large scale iron and steel industry that might later be established.

At this stage, however, I am strongly inclined to the view that those responsible for the establishment of such an industry in the future will find, on close investigation, that it will be more advantageous, from a financial point of view, to transport the iron-ore by sea from Koolan Island to the centre where the industry is to be established. In any event the future goes on for ever, as far as we are aware. If it is a good thing for the Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. to obtain command over iron-ore deposits in Australia and close to Australia, sufficient to meet its needs for 500 years to come, it is also a good thing for the Government of Western Australia to obtain command not only over the Koolyanobbing deposit or the Koolan Island deposit, but over both of them. The Koolyanobbing deposit is already controlled by the Government and is in its hands, so there will be no difficulty there if at any time it becomes advisable or necessary to use that ore.

The Koolan Island deposits are in a different category. As I said earlier, the leases covering Koolan Island are held by Brasserts Limited, or were so held on the last occasion that I was able to study the file at the invitation of the Minister for Mines, after I had asked him to invite me to study it. That company had not, for some considerable time, carried out the requirements of the Mining Act regarding the leases, though for a long period during the war, and for some time afterwards, it had been granted exemption from the

appropriate sections of the Mining Act, owing to manpower difficulties and because there had been an embargo on the export of iron-ore from Australia. Whether that embargo still exists I do not know, but it was imposed by the Commonwealth Government even before war started, and may still be in operation.

The Minister for Industrial Development: My advice is that it is still in operation.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: It will therefore be necessary for the Government, if it agrees with this motion—provided the motion is carried by the House—to devise ways and means by which these leases can be obtained by the Crown, or to devise some other method by means of which the iron-ore deposits at Koolan Island will be reserved for use in this State in the future. It would be a tragedy for the industrial development of Western Australia if action were not taken, reasonably soon, to ensure that the iron-ore deposits at Koolan Island are reserved for further development of the iron and steel industry in this State.

There is no need to stress the great value of this industry in building up the industrial side of any State or country. The iron and steel industry is basic, and without it industrial development is limited and handicapped. With it, industrial development is more rapid and extensive, as the establishment of the industry, if it is of any size, leads automatically to the establishment of other industries round and about it, and consequently the volume of wealth production in the State and the number of people employed increases, and that in turn is one of the greatest requirements in this State. I do not yet know whether the majority of people in Western Australia are industrial minded. This State has always been a primary producing State, in an overwhelming sense. From the establishment of the State until at least a few years ago most of our citizens considered that our economic security and future progress were quite safe provided we paid all the necessary attention to the development of our primary industries. The first time that that theory received a hard knock was during the depression when, as the result of having all our eggs in one basket, as it were, we suffered considerably and had to await, to a large extent, the recovery of world markets for our primary products before the severe effects of the de-

pression could be minimised to any substantial extent in this State.

Since the depression years there has been a great deal of propaganda in favour of industrial development in Western Australia. Considerable effort has been put forward to achieve such industrial development and some success has already been won, despite the fact that great difficulties had to be overcome from that time up to the present, and will have still to be faced for some years to come. One of the greatest handicaps suffered by Western Australia's industrial development—and this applies to iron and steel—lies in the fact that such a late start was made in realising the value of secondary industries to our economy. Secondary industries were developed many years ago in the Eastern States. They were developed not only to meet the requirements of consumers in those States but also of consumers in this State. Most of the secondary industries in the Eastern States are consequently well equipped today and have been equipped for years past to meet the full market demand of every State in Australia for the goods that they produce.

Members know that it is extremely difficult to build up an industry in competition with one already established and in operation, especially if that industry is well controlled, well managed and organised. I do not wish anyone to think it will be an easy matter for this or any other Government to set to work, on the basis of what has already been done at Wundowie, to develop plans in the near future—and to establish in the near future—a greatly extended iron industry, in association with a steel industry, in this State. Great difficulties will have to be faced and obstacles overcome. The capacity of the market to absorb what will be produced in future from a large scale iron and steel industry will also have to be thoroughly investigated. The world today is steel and iron hungry, and for perhaps ten years to come there will be no difficulty in disposing of every ounce of iron or steel that can be produced. In matters of this sort, however, those responsible have to look more than 10 years ahead; they have to look 20, 30, 50 years ahead. I am not trying to sow seeds of pessimism in the mind of anyone, especially not in the mind of the Minister for Industrial Development. I believe that any person who is afraid of the future is not likely to achieve much.

The Minister for Lands: I agree with that.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Western Australia has a very good chance to move in the direction I have indicated, and I feel sure we could obtain the technical men necessary to ensure the successful establishment of a large-scale iron and steel industry. We have the raw materials almost without exception and in such abundance as to meet the requirements of a large-scale industry for ever so many years to come. Therefore, in the interests of the people of the State today and in the interests of the people who will live here in the years to come, the time seems to be appropriate when decisive action should be taken, based upon the action taken previously, to ensure that there is available within the State at least one large deposit of iron-ore of good quality on the coast line and that that deposit is controlled wholly or largely by the Government of the State.

Under existing conditions in Australia, I do not think it would be possible for the Government to get a private company to undertake a proposition of this sort entirely on its own. Any private company from within Australia or from any other country would be nervous in the financial sense about trying to establish a large-scale iron and steel industry here in competition with the very powerful, capable and skilled B.H.P. Speaking for myself and doubtless for every member on this side of the House, I would say that we shall give the Government every possible measure of support to enable it to develop the industry along the lines I have suggested. If any legislation is required to enable the Government to secure complete or major control of the Koolan Island leases, I shall be very happy to support it. If the Government can find other means of obtaining control of the Koolan Island deposits, completely or in part, but in part sufficient at least for our needs for the future, it will be deserving of congratulation upon the achievement and such a move would receive the support of everybody within the State, save perhaps a handful of people who may have a special interest in wishing to see the Koolan Island deposits controlled by the B. H. P.

If the Koolan Island deposits were operated by a private company merely for the purpose of exporting the iron-ore, we would re-

ceive little financial return from them. The rental that any company would pay for the leases each year would amount to very little more than £300, and the rate of royalty per ton, I believe, would be 3d. for the first 10 years and 6d. each year thereafter. In view of these figures, if we regard the matter only from the financial point of view, the State would be selling one of its best natural resources for almost nothing, and no Government and no Parliament would be justified in allowing anything of the sort to occur.

It might be argued that the development of the Koolan Island leases by a private company for the purpose of exporting the iron-ore to some other State or country would establish a fairly big town there and provide work for quite a number of people and, to that extent, would bring about some decentralisation of industrial effort and of population, both within the Commonwealth and within the State. That argument does not impress me one scrap, and I am sure it would not impress anybody who gave it careful consideration. The same sort of thing is now operating at Cockatoo Island, where the B.H.P. is developing iron-ore deposits. The benefits accruing to this State as a result of that development are very few indeed and are worth very little to the State commercially or in any other way. The iron-ore will be taken from Cockatoo Island and conveyed around the north coast of Australia to Newcastle, and I should think that practically all the stores required by the workers and their families at Cockatoo Island would come from Eastern Australia.

The Minister for Lands: That route is supposed to be 400 miles shorter than the southern route, is it not?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am not concerned whether it is shorter or longer. What I am concerned about is the fact that the ships will travel from the East along the northern coast to Cockatoo Island and return by the same route, with the result that Western Australia will receive little or no advantage in return for allowing the company, acting within its legal rights, to take away a great deal of a very valuable commodity. We cannot do anything about Cockatoo Island. The B.H.P. has held the leases covering that island for some years

and possesses all the legal rights necessary to enable it to continue exploiting those deposits. However, I consider that the circumstances are such that something can be done legally and morally to hold for the benefit of this State the great deposits of rich iron-ore existing at Koolan Island.

I feel sure that every Minister in the present Cabinet, and indeed every member of Parliament, will take a broad and long-range view of this matter. If this be done, there can be no question that the Koolan Island deposits should be reserved as soon as possible, completely or largely, for the benefit of this State's industrial development. If that be done, we can look forward with some confidence to a great iron and steel industry being built within the State, and when that industry shall have been built, we shall be able to look forward to very rapid development in all directions. This matter is very important from the point of view of building up our future population. There has been endless talk during the last few years about Australia's, and especially Western Australia's, need of much greater population. In my opinion, there has been a lot of foolish talk on the subject, and I am not satisfied that the action taken has been wise, either.

The Commonwealth Minister for Immigration has recently returned from a trip overseas, and while I am really not in a position to speak authoritatively, I have read in the newspapers that he found that, to a large extent, the people he wanted for Australia were not available. He probably felt that he had to arrange to bring some people here and so he brought some. It might very well be that most of them, as they absorb our atmosphere and come to understand Australian ideas and conditions, will become good citizens and play an important part in this State's future. Nevertheless, I think it most necessary that we should do things within the State if we are ever going to provide the opportunity requisite to absorb successfully large numbers of new people. It is all very well to say, as many people have said, that this State is capable of absorbing one, two or five million people.

The Minister for Industrial Development:
Or countless millions.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Yes, as an ex-member used to say. It is easy to talk

like that, but the vital thing to be done is to establish opportunities in the State to enable hundreds and thousands and perhaps in the years to come, millions of people from overseas to establish homes here. It is well known that the primary industries, with the increasing mechanisation that is taking place, do not in a direct way provide employment for very many workers. Anyone who has studied the primary industries in the past, even before they were mechanised to any extent, knows that they were not very solid providers of direct employment.

Mr. Triat: Except goldmining.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: That is so; I was covering mainly the production of staples from the land. In addition to the volume of employment provided by those industries being small, the employment was intermittent and poorly paid for in many instances, although the farmer was not always blameable for that. Although the primary industries have not done much to provide a large volume of direct employment, they have been the means of providing a great volume of employment indirectly, especially in the factories and workshops that manufacture the goods and machinery required on the farms. Unfortunately for this State, in the past most of that employment has been provided to men, women and young people in the Eastern States because we have not had the secondary industries established here to supply the needs of the primary industries of Western Australia. It seems to me, therefore, that if Western Australia is to become really capable of providing for a large population there is an obligation strongly upon the Government and the Parliament of this State to take every step possible to assist in the establishment of secondary industries in Western Australia so that opportunities for employment may be provided out of which it will then be possible in a systematic way, I should hope, to bring selected migrants here from British countries if they can be obtained, and, if not, from suitable countries in which they are available.

Consequently I think that in that regard this motion and the principles contained in it are such as to provide a way by which perhaps the greatest single step can be taken to establish the foundation upon

which there can be developed in future opportunities for the absorption of large numbers of people from overseas, both in the provision to them of direct employment from the industry itself, and also from employment in other industries that will automatically be established around the large-scale iron and steel enterprise once it becomes an accomplished fact in our State.

On motion by the Minister for Industrial Development, debate adjourned.

MOTION—GOLD.

As to Stimulating Production from Low-Grade Ore.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [5.33]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House—

- (1) Gold production in W.A. can be greatly accelerated, and the quantities won greatly increased, provided the large low grade ore deposits can be exploited.
- (2) Greater availability of gold is an important part in Britain's future, in regard to dollar exchange, and therefore greater gold production in Western Australia is vital to the Empire.
- (3) The attention of the British Government should be drawn to the enormous areas of potential gold producing country in W.A. and the large known deposits of low-grade ore, and that Government should be asked urgently to consider ways and means of assisting in the production of gold from low-grade ore in Western Australia.

In moving this motion, it is my intention to endeavour to place before the House a reasonable number of facts, not from my own knowledge but facts that I have gleaned from authorities dealing with the question of the advisability of the utilisation of gold. I desire to make out a case for the production of gold from low-grade ore deposits in Western Australia. I shall seek to prove to the House that it is necessary for the world itself to have a greater quantity of gold and certainly that more gold is required by the United Kingdom. For many years England was looked upon as a centre of sound finance. For many years after its establishment, the Bank of England carried on without any gold backing at all. It existed by proclamation issued as a result of a loan of

money to the King for the purpose of enabling him to wage a war.

The Bank of England at that time was the only organisation that had a charter to carry on as a bank. As the years progressed the wiser people in control of the affairs of the bank found it necessary to have a gold backing; and, from the time such as backing was instituted, it was considered that the best place for sound finance was England, through the instrumentality of the Bank of England. No country of the world would have had any doubt about accepting any paper money issued by the Bank of England because people had in mind the realisation that the Bank of England note represented one golden sovereign which was payable on demand by that bank and, later, by other banks. In time, if people wanted to demonstrate that a proposition was worthwhile they used the expression, "sound as the Bank of England."

Hon. A. H. Panton: Safe as the Bank of England.

Mr. TRIAT: Sound or safe—the words are synonymous. The security of the bank note was based on gold. That operated for many years and was extremely successful, and the Bank of England was looked upon as the great trading centre of the world. Its credit was enormous. When war broke out in 1914 England was financially very sound. It had a great gold backing to its note deposits and during the 1914-18 war provided the requirements of its Allies. But its resources were not inexhaustible and as a result of debts accumulating up to £1,300,000,000, representing money loaned, the country found that it had to put a stop to the expenditure of credit carrying gold. England found itself in a peculiar position as a result of that expenditure of money to its Allies. That staggering amount put an end to the wonderful buoyancy of the gold position in England, because much of that gold had to be utilised in promoting the welfare of some of the nation's Allies.

Not very long after that time England decided to remove from the Bank of England the liability to meet pound notes with gold coin. England did not do that because it desired to stop gold being issued, but for the reason that it did not have the gold to meet the requirements of note circulation. There was no desire on the part of the Bank of England to depart from the gold issue if

gold were available. But it was not available and the note issue had to be stopped so far as gold exchange for it was concerned. As soon as that condition existed the wonderful credit of the English nation and the Bank of England began to slip downwards till we find that sterling today is of no consequence to many nations of the world. When I speak of sterling I refer to the English Treasury notes. So we find the position reversed and instead of England being a creditor nation it is a debtor nation and one of great consequence to various other countries, including the United States of America.

That situation became more embarrassing because to one of its Allies—America—England owed £945,000,000. This money could not be paid in pound notes because the people of the United States had no desire for them. Unfortunately it could not be paid in goods or in material, either, because America had no desire for those things, since the importation of large quantities of English goods would be the means of throwing some of her population out of employment. So England had to meet its liabilities in some way acceptable to America; or in gold, which is always acceptable to that country or to any other country; or else meet them by ceding territories acceptable to the United States, if it were prepared to relinquish such territories. That position arose after the Bank of England decided to go off the gold standard. To prove some of my contentions, I want to read extracts from a pamphlet entitled, "Thinking Ahead." It is by Edward Holloway, co-founder and hon. directing secretary of the Economic Reform Club and Institute. It carries the sub-heading, "The American Loan—What Follows?" Mr. Holloway has quite a lot to say, but I do not propose to weary the House with all of it but to quote only a few portions. He begins by saying:—

When questions of the future of international trade are under discussion it is generally assumed that Britain's shortage of dollars can only be overcome by one of the following three methods:—

1. A drastic increase of U.S. imports from Britain.
2. Another American loan to Britain, or even a chain of loans.
3. A vigorous restriction of British imports from U.S.A.

No-one doubts that the first method would be the classic and most desirable way of en-

abling us to obtain the dollars needed to meet our vital import requirements. It is, however, completely outside our control. In the first place, we are very short of goods to export, and in the second place, even if we had plenty of goods, the U.S.A. shows little signs of wanting to import them. In fact, American reluctance to take our goods has forced our Government to use up the loan more rapidly than was anticipated.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Does he not advocate peacetime lease-lend?

Mr. TRIAT: Yes, that is part of the plan that is now advocated as a means of overcoming the difficulty. Mr. Holloway continues—

These are questions exercising the minds of all thinking people in the British Commonwealth and Empire today. Whereas the people of Britain were divided about the advisability of accepting the first American loan, there is a very strong resistance to our plunging into further dollar debt. To add to our already heavy external debts would be a serious threat to the stability and independence of our economic life.

He also says—

The situation in the United States is also causing much concern. As Mr. Dean Acheson, who has recently resigned from the Administration in the U.S.A. recently pointed out, the economy of his country is becoming increasingly dependent on exports. During the months of January, February and March of this year the U.S.A. has exported £900,000,000 worth of goods, and imports amounted to only £375,000,000 in the same period. The U.S.A. needs the markets, Britain has them. A mutually satisfactory bridge between the two can only be a peacetime adaptation of lease-lend.

It is obvious that America has a great export market when she exports £900,000,000 worth of goods, whereas she imported only £375,000,000 worth of goods in the same period. America has no desire to cancel any of England's liabilities by accepting goods. The only commodity that I can see she would willingly accept is gold. Continuing his statement this gentleman said —

In this "classic" system, the debtor is from the outset put under the obligation to sweat and toil for the repayment of his debt, enlarged by the amount of interest charged, while the creditor undertakes to accept, at a later date the repayment of the loan, including the interest in form of goods and services. But, as has been pointed out before in this article, under present conditions the main creditor nation is not willing to do this. There are few signs that U.S.A. will be prepared to give us a chance of repaying loans by accepting our goods and services in payment. Her economy is geared to export, not import, and

to accept repayment in terms of goods and services will create vast problems for her internal economy that she seems ill-equipped to solve. Consequently, trouble is brewing.

There will be large-scale troubles ahead when the time comes for the debtor and creditor nations to implement their obligations under the Bretton Woods scheme: The impoverishment which has affected half of the world cannot be abolished by adding more financial burdens to weak shoulders. Lease-lend is the one method of effecting a redistribution without, at the same time, causing tension in the financial and economic relationship between the nations. Roosevelt saw that clearly when he cut out the dollar sign, and transplanted high quantities of American wealth to Britain and the other allies, without the debtor nations worrying about repayments, and without the U.S.A. the creditor, equally worrying about the problem of accepting repayment in the form of goods.

The article points out that America as a creditor nation has no desire to accept from Great Britain or any other nation that is in debt to America repayment in the form of goods, whether they are foodstuffs, iron, steel or anything else. Possibly the member for Northam mentioned one article which America might accept if it is possible to transport it, namely iron-ore. I have always looked upon the real wealth of a nation as consisting of its foodstuffs. I have argued that a nation which cannot supply its own foodstuffs is bankrupt. I was always of opinion that any nation that could supply its own wheat, wool, meat and housing was a wealthy nation. True, it is wealthy within its own boundaries. Today, however, it is obvious that the wheat, the wool, the meat, and other goods that wealthy nations can produce are not commodities that can be accepted in payment of debts.

We know that the demand for production is terrific, especially the demands for edible goods in Europe. That demand will only exist so long as European countries are suffering from the devastation due to the war and are unable to produce most of those articles that are required for home consumption. When those countries catch up with home production Australian goods will not be of any use to them, and that has already been demonstrated in the United States of America and Canada. Let me take the question of gold requirements in various parts of the world. For many years gold has been produced in many countries. We know pretty well what they are producing except possibly what emanates from Russia. Canada is con-

sidered a substantial nation so far as the production of gold and food wealth is concerned.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is a creditor nation.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes.

The Attorney General: Except in dollars.

Mr. TRIAT: I will now read an extract from the "West Australian Mining and Commercial Review." The headings are:—

"Need for Gold." "Increasing Support," "Salvation for Bankrupt World."

Mr. Graham R. Towers, Governor of the Bank of Canada, recently made the following comments on Canada's export trade which implies that Canada must produce gold. Mr. Towers said:—

Canada, like other countries, has a vital interest in the United States situation but it is clear that the early restoration of a high level of production in the United Kingdom and Western Europe also is of primary concern to us.

The "Saturday Night" journal added:—

So long as the United States continues to be the leading factor in world economy, and at the same time to be a heavy creditor nation refusing to accept payment in commodities, so long will the production of gold continue to be a primary duty and a primary necessity for any nation other than the United States. Canada, we have been reminded by the Bank of Canada, is exporting large quantities of goods to Britain on credit, and therefore receiving no payment for them except British I.O.U's. which are not transferable to the United States.

This bears out my argument that the Bank of England today is of no consequence from the point of view of that under discussion.

The article continues—

We are at the same time importing a large excess balance from the United States, for which we have to pay cash. We cannot expect to acquire U.S. currency from Britain or from any other source; it is a scarce currency and nobody who has it can afford to do anything with it except send it back to the United States in payment for the things which are needed from the United States. Gold is the one thing of which the United States will accept an unlimited quantity. Canada should produce all the gold she possibly can, within reasonable limits of cost.

The future of gold continues to intrigue economists, financiers, bankers, and shareholders in producing companies. The last-mentioned are very curious to know what position the precious metal will take in regard to the economy of the future. Assuredly gold will maintain its position as the world's standard of values, and for the very simple reason that there is nothing that can replace it. Gold

is one of the few things, for the acquisition of which, man will risk life and limb; man wants gold and will rush to the ends of the earth in order to get hold of it.

Canada is a creditor nation, and has not suffered from the effect of the war so far as dollars are concerned as Great Britain has suffered. Mr. Towers claims that the only method of salvation lies in the production of gold. I have another article written by an Englishman under the title of "Gold Price adjustment as a major factor in the solution of the economic problems of the post-war era." I will read extracts from that article:—

Article 1.—Some thoughts on gold as a metal, as a substance prized by man since the dawn of civilisation, and as a means of settling trade balances between nations.

The following is the definition of gold, taken from British Standard Dictionary, 1895:—

A metallic metal having a characteristic yellow colour, very heavy, very soft, and the most ductile and most malleable of metals, extensively used for coinage and jewellery. Not acted upon by moisture or the atmosphere. It was probably the first metal known and the original sources were probably Asia and Africa.

This definition, coupled with some small appreciation of the conditions under which primitive man lived, makes it easy to understand why our remote ancestors prized the metal. The instinct for self-adornment is a fundamental one, and here man had a metal which the atmosphere did not affect and which was easily fashioned into bracelets, ornaments and articles of all kinds by the crude implements of those days.

As a result, man down the ages has always realised that in gold the metal, or anything made of it, he had something which all the rest of the world acknowledged to have a universal value, and it therefore always had a bartering power. Thus, as adventurous traders went from their borders to neighbouring lands, they took gold, knowing that whatever commodities might be required by the peoples with whom they hoped to trade, they could rely on gold as being an acceptable medium of exchange.

To show how this has persisted up to the present time, one need only quote two examples:—

In world war No. 1 when Lawrence of Arabia went into the desert to initiate his brilliant campaign to secure the adhesion of the Arab community to our cause, he took with him not American dollars or pound notes, but gold, which was eagerly accepted.

In world war No. 2 we dropped parachutists in the mountains of Yugoslavia, and it was necessary for our men to have purchasing power to buy food and other necessities whilst

they were establishing contact with the resistance movement.

To the primitive peoples in whose midst they were, the currency of the country meant nothing; the chaos of war had destroyed its value as a token in terms of commodities; few of them had ever seen an American dollar or pound note, but gold, either in coins or ingots, was something they appreciated, and our soldiers, having that, had no trouble in getting their wants supplied to the best of the natives' ability.

Gold, then, is purchasing power, latent when it is in a mine, active when it is brought to the surface and makes its journey from the country of origin (where the price paid for it creates purchasing power in that country) to the country to whom it has been sold. If the latter country does not need it immediately either as a form of internal currency or for industrial or exchange purposes, it goes into its vaults where it once more becomes latent purchasing power. But the owners know that it will not deteriorate and that they have possession of something which may be relied upon to be gladly accepted by any country which can afford to buy it, i.e., a country with an international export surplus.

I will now read from Article No. 2, "The Development of American Production"—

In the United States of America we have a vast country, so richly endowed with the world's basic raw materials that it is almost self-supporting, and it is naturally difficult for America to appreciate the position of Britain which, save for its rich deposits of coal, has to import most of the materials for her factories.

They were remote from the battlefields, and the Allies poured out their treasure to them in order to provide the factories and raw materials necessary to manufacture the weapons of war needed on all the fronts.

Fortunately for America, her toll in loss of life in World War No. 1 was not of a proportion sufficient to affect her post-war production, and she therefore started in 1919 with a peacetime production potential far in excess of that of 1914.

It is interesting to speculate as to the favourable world trade results which would have followed acceptance by her of our offer to cancel debts owing to this country by the rest of the world if U.S.A. would cancel our debt to her.

The position at that time was that the United Kingdom had made loans to its Allies totalling £1,300,000,000 whilst the U.K. debt to U.S.A. was £945,000,000. The offer was, therefore, a suggested double "Lease Lend" with a balance of £355,000,000 against this country.

England was prepared to sacrifice £355,000,000 to obtain a cancellation of its debt to America, but there was no cancellation

of debts with regard to any of the rest of the world. To continue—

The refusal of our offer and the terms of the war settlement laid the train to the inevitable world crisis which followed. We were America's best customer and had sacrificed a large part of our overseas investments, the income from which had considerably helped us to buy her goods before 1914. We had contracted to repay a capital sum, the interest on which, at the rate charged, was a severe and increasing strain on our international exchange equilibrium. The height of American tariffs precluded the entry of sufficient goods; the embargo on loans stopped that palliative, and the stream of gold imports was not sufficient to equate the flood of surplus production, the disposal of which meant the difference between internal prosperity and unemployment. Once the inevitable crisis started, it gathered speed with frightful momentum, and President Roosevelt, assuming office at that time, was confronted with one of the greatest problems and tragedies the world has yet seen.

Here was a nation, abounding in resources, possessing the most efficient engines of production in the world, with millions of unemployed, and its Banks closing one after another because they could not pay depositors; a people dispirited and bewildered. At the same time in the world outside countless millions were hungering for the supplies which had caused the trouble, but were unable to buy them because they could not find the means to pay for them.

America and the world will never be able adequately to assess the debt owed to President Roosevelt. His first step was to restore confidence, and one of his first utterances to his people was: "The only thing we have to fear is fear." This created the feeling that here at any rate was one who saw a way out.

The next step was the investigation of the position of the Banks, and those that were in a hopeless position were shut down, the rest being reopened under a Government guarantee and a system of Government audit.

Internal conflict having been restored, the next step was the creation of a condition under which the world could pay for the production surplus. Obviously, the need was for more dollars to be placed at the world's disposal. It could not be done by loan—Congress would not allow that—neither would they allow a sufficient reduction in tariffs, and in any case the latter method would probably mean that the imported goods would create unemployment by reducing the demand for the particular goods in the U.S.A. factories.

So he adopted the novel experiment of devaluing the dollar, which meant that he gave a larger number of dollars for each ounce of gold imported.

That is how Roosevelt solved the nation's problem, thus getting a flow of gold from

other countries into America. The article continues—

The scheme worked; America got on her feet again and the restoration of trade and confidence lasted till 1939, when the same conditions which operated in 1914 were repeated on a more favourable basis for America and less favourable basis for the rest of the world.

The bulk of the world's gold stocks above ground America had already accumulated, and the Allies' saleable investments had already been sadly depleted by World War No. 1. It was obvious, therefore, that under "Cash and Carry," the Allies' resources, compared with our needs and America's capacity to produce, were totally inadequate.

Thus America was faced with an extraordinary situation postulating refusal to supply war material to friends fighting an enemy which they knew to be as much theirs as ours.

Then the President, perhaps using an idea which he had developed as a result of our cancellation of debts offer after 1918, created and secured the consent of Congress to "Lend Lease."

That refers to the cancellation of Allied debts to England if America cancelled her debts against England.

Output of materials no longer rested on whether we could pay, and America began to show what she could do.

Later on in the pamphlet, suggested remedies are indicated and on this point it states—

It is imperative that a monetary equivalent, in order to be established as a universal means of exchange, must possess the following attributes:—

1. Durability.
2. World-wide acceptability.
3. Extreme improbability of over-production.
4. Sufficient high ratio of value to bulk to permit of ease of transport.

It strikes me that those are important aspects and all indicate the importance of gold. Certainly, the metal has durability. It does not waste, rust or rot; it does not deteriorate if placed under water, underground or elsewhere. It retains all its properties. Then there is the consideration of world-wide acceptability. Gold is definitely acceptable in any part of the world and among people of all colours—black, white or brindle. If one were to take gold to China, one would be able to get probably more commodities in exchange in that country than elsewhere in the world. The same would apply in India, where the production of an ounce of gold would quickly bring results in the purchase of commodities.

Incidentally, I do not think the people there are very keen about putting money in the bank, but prefer a few ounces of gold that they could secrete under their floors where they would be readily available when required.

Next there is the extreme improbability of over-production. There can be no doubt on that score. The world has been producing gold for many centuries and yet the quantity available is not extremely great. One ship could easily transport all the gold in the world. The next consideration is a sufficiently high ratio of value to bulk to permit of ease of transport. The position of gold in that respect is obvious. A ton of the metal could be transported in a very small space, and yet a cargo of that sort would have a terrific value. The writer goes on to say—

Gold is the one commodity yet discovered by mankind which fulfils these requirements. The world's economic troubles cannot therefore be placed on the function of gold as a medium of exchange, but in the mechanism of its utilisation as such. The fact that the gold standard served for nearly a century as a world exchange medium proved that it was entirely satisfactory, and we must therefore look elsewhere for the cause of the world's trouble. Whilst the supply of gold held by the rest of the world was sufficient to pay for America's surplus exports, the gold standard worked, but when the surplus became too great for the supply of gold it failed. This was not the fault of gold, but the fault of the ratio between the supply of gold and the surplus.

It follows that while U.S.A. has her vast natural resources, and particularly now that she has embarked on a peacetime production on a wartime basis, the production of gold (unless further vast goldfields as yet unknown are discovered), however much it can be increased by more labour and fresh prospecting, will be unable to provide the purchasing power at the present price to cope with the vast flood of goods and raw materials which America herself will not be able to consume.

Those quotations, coming from such a source, should prove conclusively to this House the vital importance of gold in the world's economy today.

The Premier: Would not your motion do more good if you sought to draw the Commonwealth Government's attention to the fixed price of gold and the effect of rising costs? What could the British Government do?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know that rising costs particularly affect this position. A

goldmine can be worked only when adequate value is obtained from the work done.

The Premier: The increase in the income tax by the Commonwealth Government will not do much to add to the output of gold.

Mr. TRIAT: It may do a lot, unless the income tax takes the place of other taxation.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The basis of this suggestion is the availability of gold from sources not being worked.

Mr. TRIAT: That is so.

The Premier: But the other factors enter into it.

Mr. TRIAT: Gold that can be produced profitably is not left in a mine that is worked. In Western Australia we have enormous lodes that are not workable with the present price of gold and current methods. I am endeavouring to convince the House that the British Government should be informed of our extensive gold-bearing areas. From Marble Bar to Ravensthorpe is 1,000 miles and that does not include the gold-bearing districts in the Kimberleys. Then again, from Gullewa to Duketon is 500 miles. Between the centres I have mentioned we have an enormous area of gold-bearing country, 1,000 miles by 500 miles. Probably most of the area would carry low-grade ore, but it could be worked if the British Government required the metal.

The Premier: If they could get it at a payable price, they would surely want it.

Mr. TRIAT: What is a payable price for a commodity that is required, and who fixes it?

The Chief Secretary: America, at present.

Mr. TRIAT: The nation that desires gold would have a say in it.

The Chief Secretary: At any rate, sterling would have to be exported to get it.

Mr. TRIAT: We say we have the gold.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It might pay Great Britain to subsidise the production of that gold.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. I presume these people know their business and their requirements. They know what they are prepared to do in order to obtain gold. On the other hand, I do not think we could get

more gold from the Lake View and Star Mine, because it is operating to the fullest extent. The same applies to the Sons of Gwalia and other mines, and no inducement could make them produce more than is being obtained under existing conditions. On the other hand, there are properties with two dwt. or three dwt. ore that could be exploited, and the output made available to Great Britain, if required. There are one or two other quotations I want to read to the House. No. 5 Bulletin of the Chamber of Mines issued in July of this year dealt with "Gold in an Era of Paradoxes," as follows:—

The world is suffering from too much money today. Unless some remedy is immediately applied, the world is headed for the greatest financial explosion in its history, an explosion which will cause as much devastation as the atomic bomb. The re-introduction of gold into the field of domestic financial utility would provide the necessary safety valve to those countries fortunate to possess either gold mines or gold deposits.

Professor F. A. Fetter, of U.S.A., has suggested as part of the solution to curb the inflationary movement a factor which would help in all countries—the restoration of the gold content of the dollar to the standard of the 1920's. He argues that without some such action, the whole financial structure will break down through its own weight.

This is sound commonsense. The utilisation of gold, not only for the lubrication of the International Monetary Fund, but for internal currencies, would do much to restore some sanity to nations' finances. Many critics of gold as a medium of exchange are unwilling to acknowledge that gold has any use for internal purposes although, begrudgingly but irresistibly, they have been forced to admit that gold is necessary for the settlement of international transactions.

They contend that internally a currency can be managed and that any gold the country possesses can be utilised for outside purposes. But acceptance of the International Monetary Fund agreement, while it gives advantages and imposes obligations in international dealings, also implies stability in a nation's internal currency. Some curb must, therefore, be placed upon internal finances. Where the paper money in circulation has skyrocketed, some very salutary measures are needed to anchor it to reality. The use of gold will have that effect. It is not sufficient for theorists to say that the public has accepted a managed internal currency. It is asking if the Government is more fit to control credit than the banks and other financial institutions and is not very satisfied with the answer. Lack of a gold backing to paper is proving that paper currency is getting uncontrollable and that without some brake in

the way of gold, it can be easily inflated and is an incitement to recklessness in public spending. After nearly 17 years of instability in financial matters, the man in the street wants some feeling of security that his money will not shed its spending value. He has seen the value of his savings move downwards and is alarmed at what might finally occur.

So these people are definitely of opinion that a gold backing for internal as well as external currencies is absolutely necessary. The last of these budgets I intend to quote is the London "Mining Journal" of the 14th December, 1946. At page 988 an article appears entitled, "The Future of Gold," from which I quote the following:—

Among the many papers read at the convention of the American Mining Commerce which opened in Denver on September 25 last, one of the most interesting was a study of the future of gold by Mr. Donald H. McLaughlin, President of the Homestake Mining Co., which presents in a collected form most of the problems connected with the production, functions, and use of gold as they present themselves for our consideration today. The paper is as follows:—

Acceptance of gold as a token of inherent value is so common a characteristic of all manner of men that there is scarcely any part of the world in which an individual possessing gold would not be able to exchange it advantageously for the goods or services he desired. This is not theory; it is simply an observation of a human trait that comes as near to being a law as anything can in the social sciences. Consequently, gold is trusted as a basis of exchange and as a measure of the value currencies to a degree that is not even approached by any other means. Confidence in gold far exceeds confidence in governments, and possession of gold is rightly regarded as a better security for wealth than the holding of promissory notes.

The profound dislocations in the world's economic order that lead to wild fluctuation in the value of paper currencies and to the excesses of the printing press are not the fault of gold, nor can they be corrected by gold alone. In the post-war periods, it was not gold but paper currencies that lost their virtue. Surely it was no reflection on gold that its value in German marks went to a fantastic figure; or today its value in Hungarian pengos. No rigid standard can protect a people from the disasters resulting from losses in war, from dislocated trade, and from their own economic follies, but the existence of gold as an international measure of value, even though at times it may be somewhat in the background, exerts a restraining and stabilising influence that in the end tends to restore financial sanity after the most drastic disturbances.

In comparison with artificial units, such as the commodity dollar or other strange creations based on economic indices of one sort or another, gold has the supreme virtue of tangible existence and traditional value that make it resistant to political manipulation and not exclusively dependent on definitions and agreements that are apt to become scraps of paper when they run counter to national expediences.

The gold miners these days may have their troubles, but in my judgment they need have no fears about the steady persistence of demand for their product. The world will continue to want it and over the years will undoubtedly continue to pay enough for it to keep gold mining active and attractive for new ventures as well as profitable for established and stable operations.

At page 989 of the same journal under the heading "The Right Use of Gold," appeared the following—

In the long run, the value of our gold will be best protected by allowing it to function as a medium of exchange instead of a means of storing inactive wealth. If we follow the same policies that prevailed after the first world war—and to date they seem much the same—we shall have the choice of parting with our goods for paper, or making an even more outright gift of them, or accepting gold at some price that makes our goods reasonably competitive in the world's markets.

For a creditor nation, such as we have been for more than a quarter century, the only policy that makes sense, as the British so well demonstrated in the same decades that preceded the first world war, is to import goods or to employ services of greater value than those we export or perform for others.

A renewal of the heavy flow of gold to the United States, however, is unlikely in the immediate future, simply because we are lending or otherwise providing the necessary dollars. When we have again grown tired of accepting paper promises in payment for our goods and are once more disinclined to give our resources away for nothing, we shall again have the alternative of accepting what foreign nations have to sell us or acquiring gold.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TRIAT: To conclude my quotation from "The Mining Journal"—

If we maintain tariffs that restrict imports and still insist on maintaining our exports at a high level, the answer will be simple. We must take gold; and if purchasers abroad are to be found, paper dollars will have to be valued in gold at a price that puts our goods within competitive range.

I have already said that worldly wealth today in some countries consists of food, clothing, timber and so on, while in other

countries it consists principally of iron and steel. Countries like the United States, however, have those commodities and I presume that if we were to send our goods to those countries we would not receive the cost of their transport in exchange. In fact, those countries would not require our goods. I am not a prophet and do not desire to be a prophet; but if I were a farmer today I would make certain of selling my wheat at world prices to those countries which are suffering from food shortages. I have some friends who are wheatgrowers and who recently have been visiting Perth. They were able to buy handsome motor-cars. I am not talking of utilities, which are a necessity on a farm, but when a farmer can buy a motorear, it is something he does not really require, and he only buys it because he desires to get rid of his money. We in Australia can sell our food to countries requiring it, but those countries are certainly not the United States and Canada.

Coming to the question of low-grade ore in Western Australia—and this is the crux of my motion—there are a number of such deposits, but only one big deposit that is being worked today. That is the Big Bell. When all is said and done, I suppose the Big Bell can afford to work this low-grade proposition, because the mine is opened up and there are big ore bodies. The company has American capital and produces a huge tonnage of ore per day. As a consequence, I believe the company makes 13s. or 14s. per ton from three dwt. ore. A small mine or a prospector cannot make three dwt. dirt pay.

I am of the opinion that there are millions of ounces of gold yet to be produced in Western Australia, and I sincerely hope that the Mines Department will be careful to see that none of that gold is lost. In saying "lost" I mean that the gold should not be left behind in stopes or in portions of the mine which will be inaccessible in the future. Once a mine has been worked and filled up with mullock and the water rises, the gold deposits cannot be unearthed in our time or for generations to come unless the gold becomes so valuable that it will pay to work the deposits again. The future of our gold industry, as everyone knows, does not depend upon a good season. Once gold is taken out of the ground, it

does not reproduce itself. Never in the history of the world have we known gold to reproduce itself; it was formed in the ore bodies at some early time in the history of the world.

I listened attentively to the Prime Minister when he delivered his Budget speech over the wireless the other morning. Mr. Chifley undoubtedly was perturbed at the financial position. From his statement it is evident that he was in touch with the British Empire and the leading men of finance there, who also are perturbed about Australia trying to obtain dollars from England. Mr. Chifley made the definite statement that imports would be reduced in order to lessen dollar purchases by Australia. I have one or two extracts which I would like to read before I briefly sum up. The first is headed, "Gold Standard. Hint from Canada." It reads—

Mr. J. P. Bickle, president of the McIntyre Porcupine Mines Ltd., Canada, recently said that if the world were to be saved from inflation on the one hand, or complete regimentation on the other hand, he was one who firmly believed that some form of gold standard must be generally adopted. He was willing to suggest that such a standard would be adopted earlier than most people now anticipated.

Most mining people know the McIntyre Porcupine Mines. We heard a lot about the company in this House when we were speaking about the aluminium treatment for miners. It is a very big company situated in a dollar country. The next extract I wish to read is headed, "Dollars for Britain. Loan from International Monetary Fund."

It is as follows:—

London, September 17.—The Treasury announces that the International Monetary Fund has been requested and has agreed to provide 60,000,000 dollars (£A18,355,000) in exchange for sterling in the next few days.

Reuters financial correspondent says the move is a purely British decision. So long as Britain can show that she needs dollars for dollar payments consistent with the fund agreement the fund is bound to supply them. Any country is entitled to draw from the fund annually one-quarter of its total quota. Britain decided to make this withdrawal from the fund rather than advance the date when she would have to sell more gold to the United States to raise dollars.

Briefly, that means Britain has already drawn from the International Monetary Fund to the extent of 60,000,000 dollars, but there is nothing to say when she is to

repay it. There is an article in "The Daily News" dealing with the subject. It is as follows:—

The International Monetary Fund has agreed to provide 60,000,000 dollars (£A18,490,260) in exchange for sterling within the next few days. For the first nine months of the loan Britain will have no interest to pay. After that interest will be charged on a steeply ascending scale. The Treasury, no doubt, will make every effort to repay the loan before the charges become heavy. Decision that Britain should draw the money from the fund was entirely a British one. Britain decided to make the withdrawal rather than advance the date when she would have to sell more gold to the United States to raise dollars. Any country is entitled to draw from the fund each year a quarter of its total quota. Dull conditions existed on the London Stock Exchange yesterday. A fairly substantial decline of 10s. in some British Government securities was reflected in other domestic issues. Most movements in industrial sections were against holders. There was little alteration in the mining markets.

Britain has a period of nine months during which she will pay no interest on the 60,000,000 dollars, but it is not stated how steeply the interest will ascend when the time comes for repayment. According to "The Daily News" the rate will be very high, and when Britain repays the money she will have to repay it in dollars. She will not pay it back in wheat and wool; at least, I presume she is not going to pay it back in kind. She will have to pay in dollars or in gold. If gold is not required by Britain that article is very misleading. On the 16th September of this year Mr. Chifley issued a warning on the gravity of the dollar position. Here is a newspaper report of the matter:—

The Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, is understood to have warned members of the Parliamentary Labour Party of the gravity of the dollar position.

Australia had dollar deficits with North American countries of about 100,000,000 dollars last year, which had been met by dollar purchases from the United Kingdom, Mr. Chifley said. Such purchases would have to stop now as Australia had been asked by the United Kingdom to live within dollar earnings.

The deficits were made up as follows:—

United States: £18 million, or more than 54 million dollars.

Canada: £14 million, or more than 42 million dollars.

The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Dalton, in asking Australia to conserve dollars, had revealed that there had been a

run on the Bank of England for United States dollars before the British Government froze the remaining portion of the United States loan to Britain. At the time of freezing, there remained about £400 million of the loan.

The necessity for freezing had been brought about by unusual demands to convert sterling into dollars, Mr. Chifley said. Argentina, for instance, had sold goods to Britain at high prices, but instead of using the sterling credits so built up to purchase British-made goods, had converted the sterling credits into United States dollars to buy goods from the United States.

That is the end of my quotations. The position to me looks to be serious. Countries like Argentina that supply a great quantity of goods to England, instead of taking back goods in kind immediately convert their sterling into dollars for the purpose of buying goods from America. I presume Argentina has no privilege of exporting goods to America and if she desires to purchase goods must do so in dollars. What we can do in Australia to assist Britain to get on her feet again and take her place as one of the leaders of sound finance in the world, I feel sure every man, woman and child and every Government will be anxious to do. Her position is very serious.

As everybody knows, the £1,000,000,000 loan made to Great Britain had terrific strings attached to it. Had the loan been made straight out for Britain to do as she liked with, there may have been no great hardship; but the most important string was the necessity for trade between the two countries, and the point was that Great Britain had to purchase from America the same quantity of goods after the loan as she had purchased before. Unfortunately for the English people the cost of American goods rose 40 per cent. immediately the loan was granted so that instead of the loan being worth £1,000,000,000 it was worth only 60 per cent. of that amount.

Mr. Reynolds: Do you think that was accidental?

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know. I have no idea. But it was unfortunate, because the loan to England was almost spent before stabilisation could be effected and England has frozen the £400,000,000 that are left. It is interesting to note the gold production of Australia in the last two years. We know that during the war the gold-

mining industry had a heavy penalty imposed on it. In the first place a great number of its men enlisted to fight overseas. In the second place the Commonwealth Government endeavoured to take as many away from the industry as possible, having the view that it was of very little consequence at that time.

I can recall members from this House going to Canberra and putting up a strong argument for retaining men in the industry in order to keep the mines going so that they would not cave in and that we would not face hardship when the war ended and the mines were reopened. I can give an assurance that very little sympathy was extended to goldmining in those days. In fact I remember that one Minister told us that it was dress and of no consequence and he was of the opinion that mining could go by the board. When gold production was resumed after the war we found that the mines were depleted of men and much machinery had disappeared. I will not go far back in the figures I am about to give members. In fact I will deal only with 1945 and 1946 when goldmining was on the up-grade and had recovered to an extent so far as labour was concerned, but was not over-supplied even then. Here are the figures—

Year.	Ounces.	Value in Australian currency.	Value in dollars.
1945	468,550	£5,010,541	16,399,250
1946	616,936	£6,840,069	21,592,790

In 1946, with our mines not in full production, we produced approximately 21,500,000 dollars worth of gold, of hard currency; that is to say of currency that would meet the dollar test in any part of the world, even in the United States. The production of gold in Western Australia for 53 years totalled 50,217,847 ounces, valued in dollars at 1,757,624,625. That is a terrific production and it came from mines of fairly reasonable grade, and not low-grade mines. It came from mines that small prospectors and small companies worked to get a substantial profit for themselves, but not from patriotic motives to produce gold to meet the commitments of Britain or even Australia. The market is short of hard currency—of dollars or gold. If England requires gold, my motion suggests that ways and means can be found to produce it. I have no doubt that though I may not have put the case capably, the House, after

listening to the evidence I have submitted from authorities, will be convinced that the essential requirement for trade between America and England is gold.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fre-mantle) [7.50] in moving the second reading said: The objective of this small Bill will be readily obvious, but nevertheless it required some ingenuity on the part of the draftsman to be able to be reasonably certain that it would be achieved. In short, the Bill is designed to prevent the establishment of a monopoly in the treatment of milk. During the session I have asked a series of questions of the Minister for Agriculture—whose absence at the moment I regret—in order to ascertain whether my fears were well grounded. The answers he gave confirmed the opinion I was slowly forming, namely, that we were on the high road towards the establishment of a complete monopoly in this State in the treatment of milk.

The Premier: What do you mean by complete—one firm?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, one firm. On the 7th August the Minister for Agriculture replied to the following questions which I asked:—

1, Is the action of the Milk Board in refusing to approve of contracts except as between dairymen and holders of treatment licenses a scheme, or part of a scheme, for the improvement of the supply, delivery or distribution of milk for consumers?

2, If the answer to question 1 is in the affirmative, has the scheme for the improvement of the supply, delivery or distribution of milk to consumers been submitted by the Milk Board to him for consideration?

3, Has he approved of the scheme?

The Minister's replies were—

1, No.

That is, the action of the board in refusing to approve of certain contracts was not a scheme, or part of a scheme for the improvement of the supply, delivery or distribution of milk to consumers. His answers to questions 2 and 3 were that they were answered by No. 1. I followed that up by asking further questions on the 12th August. I asked the Minister—

As the action of the Milk Board in refusing to approve of contracts except as between dairymen and holders of treatment licenses is not (according to the Minister's statement) in pursuance of a scheme, or part of a scheme for the improvement of the supply, delivery or distribution of milk for consumers, what are the reasons for the Board's action?

His reply was—

The action of the Milk Board is in accordance with its powers under Section 26 of the Milk Act.

According to the Minister's reply, this is the position: The reduction of certain licenses was not a scheme, or part of a scheme for the improvement of the production or distribution of milk, but was an arbitrary use of certain powers conferred upon the board under Section 26 of the Act. I want members to remember that because it is important in view of what subsequently transpired. On the 19th August I asked further questions as follows:—

(1) Is he aware that in the exercise of powers under Section 26 of the Milk Act the Milk Board in reducing the number of treatment licenses and refusing to approve of contracts except as between dairymen and holders of treatment licenses has created a situation which is already developing to a state of complete monopoly of the treatment of milk for distribution to consumers?

(2) Does he consider that the formation of a monopoly of the treatment of milk was intended by the Legislature when the Milk Bill was enacted?

(3) Does he believe that a monopoly of the treatment of milk is in the best interests of the people of the State?

(4) Does he intend to take steps to prevent it?

The Minister replied to question No. 1 as follows:—

(1) No. This action was advocated by my predecessor when introducing the Milk Bill last session. (Hansard No. 4, page 297.) The Chief Secretary also indicated the policy of consolidation of treatment depots in the Legislative Council. (Hansard No. 14, page 1554.) This has been the policy of the Board since 1945 (see annual report, pp. 8 and 9), and apparently approved of by my predecessor and Parliament.

That was a very clumsy attempt on the part of the Minister for Agriculture to show that what was being done at that time was in accordance with my desires when I introduced the Milk Bill. I propose shortly to deal with this aspect and to prove conclusively that I had no such idea at all. The Minister went on to answer question No.

2 by saying that it was answered by his reply to question No. 1. He dealt with question No. 3 in the following terms:—

(3) The proposed reforms are very much more in the interests of the people, insofar as the supply of clean safe milk is concerned, than the conditions prevailing during the past 14 years.

That was in answer to the question as to whether the Minister believed that a monopoly was in the best interests of the people. He answered question No. 4 as follows:—

(4) The question of a monopoly does not arise.

We shall have to see whether it does or does not. On the 21st August I further questioned the Minister along these lines—

(1) How many treatment licenses issued by the Milk Board in the exercise of its powers under the Milk Act are at present current?

His reply was—

(1) Twenty treatment licenses were issued under the Milk Act for the year ended the 30th June, 1947. One further treatment license was approved by the board but the issue was deferred at the request of the applicant. These licenses were issued on the understanding that the granting of any subsequent treatment license was contingent upon the holder complying with a standard to be set. Such standard has now been set by the board and was announced in "The West Australian" on the 14th August. Applications for treatment licenses for the current year are under consideration by the board.

Question No. 2 was—

(2) Have any persons or firms in possession of a treatment license, a financial interest in more than one treatment depot?

The reply was "Yes." The following is question No. 3—

(3) Does he know of any firm in possession of a treatment license that is endeavouring to acquire other depots for which treatment licenses have been granted?

to which the Minister replied, "Yes." The next was question No. 4—

(4) How does he reconcile his answer to part (3) of my question of the 19th August, wherein he stated that the consolidation of treatment depots was in the interests of the people insofar as the supply of clean milk is concerned, and his answer on the 7th August, in which he stated that the consolidation of treatment depots was not a scheme, or part of a scheme, for the improvement of the supply, delivery, or distribution of milk for consumers?

The Minister replied—

(4) I consider that the hon member's questions implied that the action of the board was

implemented under Section 62 of the Act, whereas it had the necessary power under Section 26 of the Act to take the action it did.

The Minister completely evaded the point in question, which is not to be wondered at because it was a bit ticklish. On Wednesday the 27th August I asked him—

(1) When is it expected that the applications for milk treatment licenses for the current year, which are at present under consideration, will be decided?

The Minister's reply was—

(1) No precise date. As soon as possible. To my second question, asking whether it was intended to limit the number of treatment licenses that could be held by any one person or firm, the Minister replied—
(2) No; provided they conform with the board's policy.

This question was the crux of the whole matter. Because the Minister would not give me the information that he felt I was seeking, I had to ask that direct question, to which his answer was "No." The obvious conclusion is that if we have a firm large enough and wealthy enough, there is no bar—so far as the Minister and, I presume, the Government are concerned—to its acquiring all the licenses and finishing up in complete control. That is what is happening under our eyes. In an endeavour to find out in whose names the licenses were issued, and to compare them with the information in my possession as to what purchases had taken place, I asked the Minister some further questions. I asked—

(1) (a) How many licenses for milk treatment depots have been issued for the current year?

That was the year commencing on the 1st July, and to that question the Minister's reply was, "Nil." On the 9th September, no licenses had been issued for the year that commenced on the 1st July. The second question was—

(b) What are the names of the persons or firms to whom such licenses have been given?

But as none had been given that question was answered by (a). Question No. 2 was—

(2) (a) How many unlicensed milk treatment depots are being operated with the permission of the Milk Board?

To which the answer was, "Twenty," and—

(b) What are the names of the persons or firms operating unlicensed milk treatment depots?

To which the Minister replied—

Westralian Farmers Ltd., Masters Dairy Pty. Ltd.—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They are one and the same.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN:

—R. M. Mounsey, W. Della, C. J. Kielman & Sons, Sheppards Dairy, Estate G. W. Birkbeck (deceased), J. Carrie, Estate F. J. Roberts (deceased), C. L. Wild, Brownes Ltd., City Milk Company—

That is an interesting one, by the way—

—Arthur Smith, Albert Smith, F. S. Marchant, A. R. Nunweek, E. H. Mitchell, S. Famlonga, Powell's Coogee Dairy, Grant Bros., South-West Co-op. Dairy Farmers Ltd., Estate late J. Kelly.

I think there is sufficient in those questions and answers to indicate, firstly, considerable reluctance on the part of the board to make up its mind as to who shall be licensed and, secondly, that as far as the Minister—or the Government—is concerned, there is no intention of limiting the number of licenses which any one firm can hold. The Minister and the Government are either indifferent to the establishment of a monopoly, or are strongly in favour of it, and in fact want to encourage it. Under the Milk Act, the powers and functions of the board can only be exercised subject to the consent of the Minister. That provision was deliberately inserted in the Act to prevent the board doing anything that would be contrary to what the Government believed to be sound public policy.

So the Government has the power—if it wishes to exercise it—to check the board from permitting a monopoly to be established. But the Government does not mind; therefore I am obliged to endeavour to check it by having the Act amended so that it will not be possible for the board to allow any one firm to get a complete monopoly of the handling and treatment of milk. I have already referred to the fact that the Minister for Agriculture, in one of his replies, endeavoured to show that the policy being pursued was similar to that advocated by me when introducing the Bill. The Minister was considerate enough to mention the page of "Hansard" where it could be found, and that facilitated my search. I will read what I then said, to see whether it proves the Minister's case or not. Referring to the guarantee that the Bill was giving to the people, I had this to say—

We will do all we can to improve the conditions at the dairies to ensure that the milk that you get is produced under hygienic conditions. We will also watch its distribution to endeavour to give you a good clean wholesome food.

So it was obvious that I was referring to a general scheme for the improvement of the production, distribution and supply of milk. Referring to the need to have depots advantageously placed, and dealing with the idea of the installing of small pasteurising plants by every milk vendor, I said—

This is the very last thing we want to do, namely, multiply the number of treatment plants to such an extent that they would be located all over the place. We want a limited number of properly placed treatment plants so that the least amount of supervision will be necessary in order to ensure an absolutely clean and high quality product.

That is what I said was the policy of the Government—that it did not desire to have an unlimited number of small pasteurising plants distributed all over the place. It desired to have a limited number of treatment depots advantageously placed for the treatment and distribution of milk.

The Premier: That would be a monopoly for someone.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It would not be a monopoly, as it would enable quite a number of persons—at least 20 and probably 30—to have licenses for treatment depots. From the way it is now developing, one company will soon own the lot, as it is paying enormous sums, running into tens of thousands of pounds, for depots which it is buying from all who are prepared to sell.

The Premier: For how long has it been doing that?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: For the last four or five months.

Mr. Marshall: Since the 15th March, to be exact.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I suppose they thought about it immediately the Bill was passed, realising that it gave to those operating in the milk industry a security that did not exist previously. They probably realised that the security was worth having and immediately commenced to seek out ways and means of capitalising it. The owner of one depot rang me one morning some four or five months ago and asked whether I would advise her to sell, because she had received a very attractive offer. She

is a widow. I said, "If you are thinking of selling, do not sell now, because the license which you hold cannot fall in value. If anything, it must appreciate, and the firm that is anxious to buy your license now will be more anxious to buy in future. It would not be to your personal advantage to sell now." The point was interesting to me because it showed that this firm was reaching out in an endeavour to acquire control of milk treatment and distribution. The board does not care about that; neither does the Minister nor the Government.

It has been truly said by many people from time to time that monopoly means slavery. We can readily understand that, if this one firm did succeed in getting control of all the treatment depots, it would be impossible for the board to take any action subsequently. Such a company could defy the board and hold up the public to ransom. How could the Milk Board discipline such company if it was the only one operating?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The board had a job to do so in the past.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It would be impracticable to take any step other than to withhold the license, and that would simply have the effect of leaving the metropolitan area without a supply of milk.

The Attorney General: I think you should send a copy of your Bill to Mr. Chifley.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Attorney General is referring to a Government monopoly as contrasted with a private monopoly. The two things are entirely different. This is neither the time nor the place to argue the differences between private and public monopolies, but the Minister would not raise any objection to the Government having a monopoly of the postal facilities, for instance.

The Premier: Will you enlarge a little?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But he would raise an objection, as I do now, to a monopoly in the milk industry. I believe I shall have the support of the Attorney General and of the Deputy Premier because, when I was piloting the Milk Bill through last year, they expressed fear that a monopoly was being created with regard to vendors' licenses. I am glad I have been reminded of this because I propose to quote a passage from last year's "Hansard" to make sure that the Attorney General's memory will not fail him and that he will support me in this move.

The Attorney General: There are some very good words in that speech.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is why I propose to quote them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are they relevant to the subject-matter of the Bill?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, the remarks refer to a monopoly, and the object of my Bill is to prevent a monopoly. The following is the passage which appears on page 299 of last year's "Hansard" when I was dealing with the provision in the Bill to prevent the supplying of adulterated milk:—

Unfortunately, there has been some experience in that regard. The original milk has been watered down and the product thus made to go a little further. We do not want that to happen, and steps are being taken to prevent the practice The use of separators in places where the treatment of milk is carried on will be prohibited, for very obvious reasons. The Bill also provides for a more expeditious hearing of appeals against decisions of the board to refuse licenses. Under the existing legislation, it is a lengthy process which often results in considerable loss to the men concerned. Under the Bill, if the board refuses a license, the unsuccessful applicant has the right of appeal to the Minister and, should the Minister uphold the appeal, the applicant will be compensated for the loss of income incurred during the period he was without a license.

Mr. Watts: Will licenses be transferable?

The Minister for Agriculture: No. Nothing in the Bill will enable a person who is already licensed to have the right to apply for another license. An individual will have to apply to the board for a license.

Mr. Cross: He will still be able to buy an extra quota.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is no interference with that, but such an individual will have to apply to the board for its approval and for a license.

Mr. McDonald: Will the licenses be permitted to create a monopoly value?

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not see how we can avoid that which has already grown up.

Thus at that stage the question of a monopoly was lurking in the mind of the hon. member. I continued—

A definite interest has been created and, apart from confiscation, we cannot prevent that.

Mr. Watts: Will you prevent any more being created?

The Minister for Agriculture: The Bill will not prevent that.

Mr. Watts: Do you not think it ought to?

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not see how that could be done.

Mr. McDonald: Do you not think that the benefits of such a monopoly should be enjoyed by the people instead of by the recipients?

The Minister for Agriculture: If a man desires to supply milk and there is a market for it, we cannot refuse him a license.

So this question of a monopoly—it was then a very small thing compared with what is happening now, because it had regard to the quotas of vendors for the selling of milk—was then exercising the mind of practically every member of the House. But we were unable to devise a fair way to prevent the growth of a monopoly of licenses and at the same time safeguard for those people what they had paid money to buy. So the House left the position at that. We must recognise that a quota today is something of value. The milk vendor with a quota has something he can sell—the right to supply people.

So a vested interest has been created by the Act because of the protection and control made possible by it, but we never contemplated, when the powers of the board were being increased, that those powers might be exercised in such a way as to enable one firm ultimately to gain complete control of all the treatment depots. That is what I am concerned about. Had the Government made a pronouncement that the number of treatment licenses any one person could hold would be limited, I should have been satisfied, but when I received a reply to my question that there was no intention of limiting the number any one person could have, it was plain that we would have a progressive state of absorption under which one big firm already advantageously placed would finish up by controlling all the treatment licenses in the State.

The Attorney General: I do not think that follows.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I think it does, because the board licenses premises. If these premises are satisfactory in a certain place—and it costs a considerable sum of money to establish them—no other person would erect similar premises on the off-chance of securing a license for them afterwards. It is therefore almost a certainty that if a person buys some premises which are already licensed and consequently satisfactory to the board, he will not lose the license for those premises, and will not be likely to do so, in view of the policy of

the board that no further licenses will be issued in that district.

Under the policy of the board and the Government it is certain a position will arise where the number of treatment licenses held by one firm will continue to grow and the number of licenses held by other people will diminish, until we reach the final stage where one company will own the lot. That would be a bad thing for the State and the people in it, as it would mean that the milk consumers would be at the complete mercy of that one company, which would be able to do what it liked with regard to the distribution of milk; and, when price control is gone, the company will be able to charge what it likes and please itself whether it supplies milk or not. We do not want that to happen.

The Minister for Works: Is not the price of milk fixed under the Act?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The board fixes the price under the Act, but how could it control one single company if it set out to defy the board?

The Minister for Works: Does not the board effectively control the position if it controls the price?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But there would be only one company.

The Minister for Works: Whether there is one company or more would not matter.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What disciplinary action could the board take against a single firm which is the only firm dealing with the distribution of milk in the metropolitan area?

The Premier: I am not advocating a monopoly, but it would be easier to deal with one firm than with 20.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, it would not.

The Premier: Surely!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If there are 20 firms supplying milk, it is a simple matter to say to one of the 20 which is misbehaving itself, "Your license is revoked," and allow the customers of that firm to be served by the other 19.

The Minister for Works: Do you think the supply of milk would stop immediately in the circumstances you mention?

The Minister for Railways: Do you think the board would allow it to get to that stage?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: That is rather far-fetched.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister told me in this House that there is no intention of limiting the number of licenses which any one firm may hold.

The Minister for Railways: There is a big difference between that and a sole monopoly.

The Premier: There is no chance of a sole monopoly.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is a grave chance. I know of a number of depots which have already been purchased.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Big ones?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes. The cost of one of them exceeded £20,000.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There must be money in milk.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have already mentioned an instance where an attempt was made to purchase another. Had it been for sale it would have been bought. If it is worth while for this company to start so early to buy up other companies, would it be satisfied with three or four, knowing that the board would not limit the number it could hold? Of course it would not. It would go on swallowing up these other companies until it had complete control.

Mr. Leslie: What is the name of the company?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Pascomi.

Mr. Leslie: I did not expect you to reply.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: You asked the question and I gave you the answer.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Now you are both happy.

The Minister for Works: Are there any directors of that company by any chance on your side of the House?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not know.

The Minister for Works: Are you quite sure?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am not a confident of the company and do not have access to its records.

The Minister for Works: I know.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: For all I know, the Minister might be a director.

The Minister for Works: I am not, but why do you not answer the question? Don't you really know?

The Premier: It does not matter. It would not assist him to get a monopoly for the company.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Apparently the Government has thought better of this matter and is prepared to limit the number of licenses which any one firm may hold, so we are getting somewhere. My Bill proposes that no one firm or company shall in any way whatever, by following the familiar methods of interlocking companies or anything of that nature, be permitted to hold more than one quarter of the licensed depots in existence. Therefore, at the very worst, if a process of assimilation went on, there would be at least four companies operating in years to come. There could not be a lesser number than that under the Bill. It might mean, if the Bill is passed, that for a long time there could be 12, 14 or 15 or even 20 companies operating. If they broke off into groups and one company in the group absorbed the others, we would eventually reach the stage where there would be four major companies operating. As I said, if my Bill is passed there could never be less than that number, and I do not think that is asking for a great deal.

I think there is merit in having a limited number of companies holding milk treatment licenses. It would not be economical to have a large number of such companies, because overhead costs would have to be loaded on to the price of milk and the consumer eventually would have to bear the burden. It is desirable that there should not be a large number of small units, but equally desirable that there should be enough companies operating to ensure that the evils of monopoly could not arise. The intent of the Bill is to prevent the possibility of the establishment of a complete monopoly by one company. The Bill proposes to make it obligatory on the board to limit the number of licenses. I was forced to take that step because of the reply given by the Minister that it was not intended to limit the number of licenses that any one firm or company could hold. As the Attorney General is

against monopolies and as the Minister for Education has also declared that he is against monopolies, if I receive the votes of those two gentlemen it should be sufficient.

The Minister for Works: Did they so declare themselves?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, are you deaf?

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I read to you from "Hansard" their own statements.

The Minister for Works: They did not stand for the assertion you made.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member need not answer these questions at all.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I suggest that the Minister ask his colleagues whether they are in favour of a monopoly or not.

The Minister for Works: I will ask them.

Mr. Marshall: You cannot depend upon their answers.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I did not suppose, because they had changed seats, they had also changed their minds on this subject. When they were on this side of the House they made it quite clear that they were concerned about the establishment of a monopoly in these licenses. They were not the only ones. When that subject was under discussion, quite a number of members in this Chamber had something to say on that aspect of the matter. I recall that the member for Geraldton was one who was concerned about the vested interest that had grown up under the protection of the Milk Act and the Assembly then attempted to make proper provision. If I remember rightly, some amendments were moved with the intention of trying to prevent the growth of this vested interest, but such amendments, upon examination, were found not to be satisfactory. I mention that to remind members that when the Bill itself under which powers are now being exercised was under consideration in this House, members were genuinely concerned about the establishment of a monopoly. There has been a change in the House and some members who were on this side and have found themselves on the opposite side are apparently not so concerned about monopolies now.

Mr. Mann: Were you concerned about them?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have always been concerned about them.

Mr. Leslie: We have a proposal for a monopoly in the suggestion that there should be nationalisation of banking.

Mr. Marshall: You don't say so!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Bill is not a big Bill. It is designed with a very clear objective, and there is no subterfuge about it. I apologise for the verbiage used in it. It appears to be somewhat involved, on a first reading, but as I said at the commencement, considerable ingenuity was required on the part of the draftsman to try to block up all possible avenues of defeating the object of the Bill. And when there are companies bent upon securing complete control, it is necessary to be somewhat apprehensive about it and realise that all possible steps have to be taken to make the establishment of a monopoly impossible. The draftsman believes he has succeeded in doing what I asked him to do.

The Attorney General: Nobody could drive a milk cart and horse through your Bill.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am glad to hear that. I content myself with those remarks and move.

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

MOTION—ELECTRICITY ACT.

To Disallow Licensing and General Regulations.

Debate resumed from the 17th September on the following motion by Mr. Marshall:—

That Regulations Nos. 157, 161, 166, 180, 183, 184, 193, 196, 197, 203, 208, 274 and 278, made under the Electricity Act 1945 published in the "Government Gazette" of the 27th June, 1947, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 5th August, 1947, be and are hereby disallowed.

to which an amendment had been moved by the Minister for Works as follows:—

That the figures "157, 161, 166, 183, 184, 193, 196, 197, 203, 208 and 274" be deleted.

MR. MARSHALL (Marchison—on amendment) [8.33]: In moving his amendment, the Minister clearly indicated to me that he was particularly out of his depth. He did not seem to be at all at home about

these regulations and in his remarks in support of his amendment showed that he did not appreciate the essence of the regulations. The Minister has been here long enough now to be sufficiently astute when in difficulties to use the proverbial red herring across the trail in the hope that he will be able to convince the House that utterances such as mine in support of my motion are well wide of the facts. The Minister played upon the phraseology of my statements rather than on their substance. He played upon the passions of the House by emphasising that I made certain statements in regard to civil servants, and sought to suggest that I implied that every civil servant in the State was a bureaucrat in essence when I said distinctly—and the words I used are indelibly fixed in my mind—"some of them".

The Minister for Works: I purposely made the necessary qualification, too, when I made mention of the matter.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course the Minister made the correction, after I reminded him.

The Minister for Works: No, before that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I think I could mention quite a number of ex-civil servants who I think the Minister will admit were most bureaucratic.

The Minister for Works: You will find a little acknowledgment by me of that fact, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: The acknowledgment came after my endeavour to correct the Minister in regard to what I said.

The Minister for Works: That may easily have been so. I do not remember.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then the Minister said that the officer responsible for drawing up these regulations had enjoyed the experience of living in the more remote and isolated parts of this State for a greater number of years than I.

The Minister for Works: That was not how I put it.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is exactly how the Minister put it.

The Minister for Works: As a matter of fact it was not.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want to know the name of the officer who lived in the more remote and isolated parts of this State longer than I have.

The Minister for Works: I did not say that.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no civil servant who has done that, because I have spent the whole of my life in the isolated parts of this State.

The Minister for Works: I will look it up and see what I said.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister will find that my statement is entirely correct.

The Attorney General: Do not disparage Belmont.

Mr. MARSHALL: As a matter of fact, these regulations were not drawn up by State civil servants to any great degree. They are copied from the statutes of other States—I understand from Victoria in particular. Just imagine using regulations here that were drawn up in a small State like Victoria!

The Minister for Works: They were drawn up by your Government, not this one. Do not forget that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. That is another point used by the Minister to which I may make some reference. There is a great desire—I do not know when it is going to end—on the part of individual members to jump on some political hack and go for a joy ride when some matter of great importance to the people is brought forward.

The Minister for Education: You started the idea, you know!

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister said I made the statement that these regulations were brought silently into this Chamber. I did make that statement, and I repeat it. There are 318 regulations in this book and no reference was made by any Minister to the substance of any one of them. When did this House discuss them?

The Minister for Works: You had the opportunity, but did not accept it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister needs a little patience. I will come to that point. We do not debate regulations. I respectfully suggest that 90 per cent. of members have no knowledge of the great majority of the regulations and bylaws laid on the Table of the House. In the first place we cannot hear the Minister when he moves to lay them on the Table, and in the second place he makes no reference to them other

than to use the title and say that they are the regulations made under a certain Act. Could anything be more silent in legislature than that procedure? In consequence, members are constantly being confronted by their electors with complaints about certain bylaws or regulations; and the members have had no knowledge of such documents. And they could not have had any knowledge! A member could be fully occupied in going over the multiplicity of bylaws, regulations and other papers laid on the Table of the House each session. In the main, these bylaws and regulations are silently introduced. Again, I remind the Minister that it is not 14 days in which we have to consider these regulations after they appear here, but 14 sitting days, which is just a little longer. But there are so many of them that it is almost impossible for an individual member to follow them all.

The Minister for Education: Is the hon. member in order in referring to these matters on an amendment to strike out a number of these regulations?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have been listening to the hon. member's remarks, and I have been assuming that he has been opposing the amendment, but I do accept the suggestion of the Minister for Education that he should keep as closely as possible to the amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: May I say, for the edification of the Minister for Education, that I am replying to the statements of the Minister for Works when he moved his amendment, against which I am speaking. Had the hon. gentleman been in the Chamber he probably would not have risen on that point of order.

The Minister for Works: I did not comment on my amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister was incapable of commenting on the regulations, or even on his own amendment. He had no knowledge, and he displayed that ignorance when he moved the amendment.

The Minister for Works: That is not the point we are debating.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am replying to some statements made by the Minister himself. I have not concocted these utterances. This is what the Minister said when he moved his amendment.

The Minister for Education: You will make the same statements when you reply to the motion. That is what is wrong.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister for Works also said it took ten years for me to find out about the effects of these regulations.

The Attorney General: How about a short circuit?

Mr. MARSHALL: For ten years, apparently, I slumbered like Rip Van Winkle. The Minister has a particularly bad memory, or a most convenient one, or he would have recalled an ex-Minister for Works agreeing to amend certain regulations made under this Act, as the outcome of a resolution moved by myself.

The Minister for Works: Why did not you include these in it?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister speaks of ten years, but he knows full well that we have 14 sitting days, and no longer. If there is no motion for the disallowance of regulations we have to tolerate them. I thought the Minister's memory might have served him in good stead, because he is a regular attendant in this Chamber. Now that I have drawn his attention to the matter he will probably recall the occasion when an ex-Minister for Works, Hon. H. Millington, agreed to my suggestion. If the Minister were to do the right thing now, he would withdraw the lot of these regulations and have them completely reviewed.

The Minister for Works: Why did not you object to them at the time?

Mr. MARSHALL: Two wrongs do not make a right. I am not concerned about what type of Government introduced them, but about their effect. The Minister contended that these regulations have not been injurious to any individual, notwithstanding the fact that I distinctly pointed out that I had, on three occasions, to re-wire my home. I also quoted another case.

The Minister for Works: It would be more convincing if you mentioned some case other than your own. Yours was the only one you knew of.

Mr. MARSHALL: I referred to another place where the installation was done by an unauthorised person and there was an instruction recently to have it done by an

authorised person. A licensed man came out and said, "What is wrong with it?" We said, "We do not know, but it has been done by an unauthorised person, and it has to be re-installed." Those are two cases. I do not know them all. The Minister made out that no-one has been affected by the application of these regulations. The point I make is that they have probably not been effectively applied, but we have a new set of individuals now—they are brand new.

There is a Commission to take complete charge, as I will indicate directly from letters I have received. There is a new authority and I suppose it has to justify its existence. Hence, it recently cost me £6 10s. to have the same work done for the third time. I have been one of the most acute sufferers, but I am not taking exception to the regulations because of that. The Minister has moved to delete from the motion all regulations I moved to disallow, with the exception of two. As I have said, the Minister seemed to be completely out of step and not to understand the effects of the regulations. He did not attempt to explain them, or to defend his own amendment. The first is regulation 157 which provides by paragraph (b)—

No person who holds a license as an electrical worker and is registered with the board as the employee of an electrical contractor shall be licensed as an electrical contractor and if he has been licensed as an electrical contractor before he has been registered with the board as an employee, he shall cease to be licensed as an electrical contractor on being so registered as an employee.

Paragraph (c) states—

(c) No electrical worker shall be registered as such employee unless he consents in writing thereto in the Form S.E.C. 24 provided in these regulations, and when he ceases to be in the sole and continuous employment of the said electrical contractor he shall notify the board, and the board shall then record on the register that he is no longer so employed, and he shall thereupon cease to be so registered.

What sort of an army are we to have in the Public Works Department if all of this is to be strictly enforced?

The Minister for Works: None whatever. They are not lodged there.

Mr. MARSHALL: I pointed out, when I was speaking, that if an employee desires to do a contract job—even if it is only a small one—he has first to go to the Commission and say, "I have a contract, but I

have been employed by contractor so-and-so." He is then de-registered as an employee, and registered as a contractor, for which he pays a premium.

The Minister for Works: He has always done so.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not concerned about that, but we are building up an army of civil servants. Is it any wonder that it is proposed to make such extortionate annual charges when there will have to be an army of officers to deregister and re-register these people? If a man who has been working for a contractor wishes to make a small installation in a home, on his own account, he has to be deregistered as an employee and registered as a contractor, and when the job is finished the process is reversed. The Minister says that is all right.

The Minister for Works: It is a pity your Government ever brought down the regulations.

Mr. MARSHALL: I hope members will not agree to striking out that regulation.

The Minister for Works: You will have to find some better reasons than you have so far advanced.

Mr. MARSHALL: Regulation 161 says—

Every license, or renewal of license, in respect of which renewal is not applied for as aforesaid, shall be surrendered by the holder to the board not later than the 31st day of July next following the date of expiry thereof.

I communicated with a big contractor, who is also connected with a supply authority in my own electorate. He is a competent man who has followed the calling of electrical contractor for many years. I went through the regulations with him and he said that this one will be ineffective as, if a man does not propose further to practise his calling, he will not worry about sending back his certificate, and it will be a problem for the Commission to find him. He and his license will no doubt vanish, but I am not particularly concerned about him.

The Minister for Works: I was about to say the same thing.

Mr. MARSHALL: The next is Regulation 166, which reads—

(1) Every person who is licensed as an electrical contractor shall, during the period for which his license is in force—

(a) At all times carry on his business of electrical contracting at and from an address which is registered with the board as his business address.

The man I referred to lives in Nedlands, and is no doubt known to the member for Nedlands. He pointed out that these regulations apply to contractors in a big way, and not to the small men in whom I am interested. I am therefore not concerned here and so will argue no further on this regulation. The next is Regulation 180. There will be an anomaly here, as the Minister has agreed to permit this regulation to go out.

The Minister for Works: With the object of reconstructing it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would like the Minister to look at it. Regulation 37 deals with ordinary licenses.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Mr. MARSHALL: This deals only with contractors who pay a higher premium in addition to the ordinary license fee that must be paid. No. 37 deals with licenses.

The Minister for Works: You did not seek to disallow that regulation.

Mr. MARSHALL: I take exception to annual licenses.

The Minister for Works: You did not seek to disallow it.

Mr. MARSHALL: Unfortunately, no. I thought I had covered it in 180, but that deals only with contractors. I find that the Minister made reference to individuals being licensed as other tradesmen are licensed. There are no other tradesmen licensed.

The Minister for Works: For the moment I do not know to what you are referring.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no other trade or calling where the individual is obliged to obtain an annual license.

The Minister for Works: What about those that I mentioned?

Mr. MARSHALL: These are the only regulations under which employees must be registered.

The Minister for Works: What about builders and dentists?

Mr. MARSHALL: They are professional men. I am speaking about workers.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about taxi-drivers?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister said "like other trade unionists or workers".

The Minister for Works: I said "like many others".

Mr. MARSHALL: There is none. The Minister is under a misapprehension.

The Minister for Works: You are!

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We cannot have a duet.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would like the Minister to name one trade or calling in which employees are obliged to get annual licenses.

The Minister for Works: I named them for you.

Mr. MARSHALL: I made some reference to the various licenses, and I will tell the Minister that his argument that an "A" grade license man, or a contractor with an "A" grade license could perform any function whatever—

The Minister for Works: I was not referring to a contractor.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister is under a misapprehension. The "A" grade man can do any class work.

The Minister for Works: That is what I said.

Mr. MARSHALL: What about the "B" and "C" class men who do installation work?

The Minister for Works: I was not referring to them.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister is entirely wrong there. Regulation 183 says—

No electrical installation shall be connected to any public electricity supply system unless carried out by a person licensed to carry out such work and in accordance with the S.A.A. wiring rules.

My contractor friend explained how that applies and I do not think there is need to press it further. I agree to the amendment. Regulation 184 says—

Where existing installations do not comply with these regulations or with the S.A.A. wiring rules (as existing at the time when the installation was carried out) the supply authority may serve a notice on the consumer stating how such installation does not comply with the regulations or the S.A.A. wiring rules, and shall give the consumer a reasonable time to have the installation brought into conformity with the regulations or the S.A.A. wiring rules.

The words I object to are "existing at the time". That might go back 30 years. How could anyone know whether the rules had

been complied with at that date? I am not prepared to press further on that one. The next is Regulation 193, which says—

The Commission may appoint inspectors for the various purposes and duties as set out hereunder.

I was under a misapprehension there, and the Minister was correct. What the Minister said about that appointment is true, and I have no desire to press the matter further. The next is Regulation 196, which says—

Any general inspector or inspector after having made an inspection may by notice in writing in accordance with Form No. S.E.C. 32 forbid the use of any installation, apparatus or fittings or prohibit any person or persons from exposing for sale or from selling any apparatus, appliance or fitting or part thereof, which in his opinion is dangerous or likely to become dangerous or is not in accordance with the S.A.A. wiring rules or regulations made under the Act.

When moving the motion I told the Minister distinctly that I had nothing to complain of regarding the second portion of that regulation but that I took strong exception to the earlier portion. I was under a misapprehension when I thought that old types of electric irons and other electrical apparatus could be forbidden. I am given to understand that that is not so, and consequently I am prepared to allow the Minister to have his way there.

Regulation 197 deals with the cost of inspection. I have been told by my informant that this will not be an annual inspection; an inspection will be made only occasionally and the supply authority will be liable for it, so I do not propose to press my objection to that regulation. I took strong exception to Regulation 203 which places the onus on the consumer. I wanted to know why that was being done. I have been informed that it is being done because it is simple to put the responsibility on the consumer, whom the authorities may get at easily. Sometimes there is difficulty in finding the owner of the premises, so the army of individuals to be employed by the Commission will say, "Do not bother. We shall make it the legal responsibility of the householder or the consumer. If he can get the landlord to indemnify him, well and good, but if he cannot, it will be too bad for him." That is the only justification for this regulation.

Mr. Styants: If you could not find the landlord, you could find his agent.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course, but that would be too much trouble. When an inspector looks at a place and finds that it does not comply with the regulations, it will be simple for him to tell the householder that he must do certain work. Then what would happen would be that the landlord would sit back and say, "I am sorry, but the law makes you responsible and you must do it." Will the Minister deny that that is the reading of the regulation?

The Minister for Works: I gave an explanation of that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Apart altogether from the Minister's explanation, he must admit that the consumer will be liable under the regulation.

The Minister for Works: The consumer is the one who has a contract with the supplier. It is something you cannot escape. The consumer and his family are the persons who would be in danger, and it is desirable to let them know.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then if I had occupied a home for only 24 hours and was paying 30s. or 40s. a week for it and an inspector said that the whole of it had to be re-wired, the Minister considers that I ought to pay.

The Minister for Works: You are quoting a most extreme case.

Mr. MARSHALL: The regulation does not make the landlord responsible.

The Minister for Works: No, but the supplier uses the consumer.

Mr. MARSHALL: What is the use of the Minister's saying that the supplier uses the consumer when the consumer is made liable under Regulation 203?

The Minister for Works: Of course that is so. I pointed that out and showed that it was justifiable.

Mr. MARSHALL: I hope the House will not permit such an iniquitous regulation to pass. A man might have occupied a home for only a week before the inspector arrived on the spot.

The Minister for Works: Quite right.

Mr. MARSHALL: And because the consumer is accessible, he is to be made liable under this regulation for any expense that

may be incurred in bringing the installation into conformity with the rules.

The Minister for Works: That is futile argument.

Mr. MARSHALL: Regulation 208 is along the same lines; the occupier is again to be made liable, whereas the liability is distinctly that of the landlord. I hope the House will not approve of that regulation. Let the Commission find the landlord or his agent and require him to carry out the enhancement of the value of the property and secure it against fire or accident instead of requiring the occupier to do it.

The Minister for Works: That has always been done in every State.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have heard many complaints voiced in this Chamber about people being subjected to autocratic laws and regulations, but there could be nothing more autocratic than making a tenant liable for the enhancement of the value of the landlord's house. Under Regulation 274, the consumer is again made liable for loss by damage, fire or theft of apparatus hired from the supply authority. A working man might have the misfortune to have his home burnt down and suffer the loss of all his goods, and he is to be made liable for the loss of such apparatus also. Insurance companies do not look with favour upon applications for insuring homes on the Goldfields; in fact it is very difficult to get a fire policy.

Mr. Styants: And fairly expensive.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but one has to own a good type of home there before one can get an insurance policy.

The Minister for Works: That might easily be so.

Mr. MARSHALL: A worker might lose everything he possesses and the supplier can come along and say, "I am sorry, but a meter and other electrical apparatus were attached to your home and now you are liable to pay for them on top of the other loss you have sustained." That is quite wrong.

Hon. N. Keenan: What would you suggest?

Mr. MARSHALL: It is quite wrong to provide that the occupier shall be liable for loss by fire or theft.

Hon. N. Keenan: Who should be liable?

Mr. MARSHALL: The supply authority or the owner of the property. It is all very well for people who live in a state of luxury and to whom a few pounds is neither here nor there to treat this as a laughing matter, but for a man on the Goldfields who has lost everything in his home to be made liable for the loss of such electrical apparatus is no laughing matter.

The Minister for Works: No-one was laughing about it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Nedlands did not seem to be very sour about it. Now I come to Regulation 278, the one the Minister agrees should be disallowed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is not mentioned in the amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not propose to speak in reply to the motion, and I should just like to say that the Minister gave no indication that he was going to remove the minimum, only the maximum.

The Minister for Works: If I did not, it was an inadvertence. I give you an assurance that we will remove the minimum as well as the maximum.

Mr. MARSHALL: We shall have another opportunity to discuss these matters when the amended regulation is tabled, and I can assure the Minister that I shall be very watchful. Unless he exempts all the small supply authorities—

The Minister for Works: Yes, I will do that.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then I have no further complaint.

The Minister for Works: I mean that I shall exempt them from the minimum.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have a letter from the Cue Road Board entering an emphatic protest in regard to this matter, but I shall not read it in view of the assurance given by the Minister. I hope the Chamber will not approve of the deletion from the motion of the other regulations mentioned in the amendment by the Minister for Works.

Amendment put and passed; the motion, as amended, agreed to.

BILL—STREET PHOTOGRAPHERS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 17th September.

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Hon. A. F. Watts—Kataning) [9.10]: It is somewhat disappointing to me that this rather minor matter should have to engage the attention of the Legislative Assembly and perhaps of another place in order to settle it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is not minor to some people.

The **MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**: It seems to me that it might be classed perhaps as a storm in a teacup. It is a pity, in my opinion, that it could not be resolved without having to be brought before the House by way of legislation. I think the best thing I can do in regard to the measure introduced by the member for Mt. Marshall is, in a moment or two, to give a brief resume of the discussions which have already taken place between the Local Government Department and the Perth City Council on the question, and to express one or two other views that have been given to me upon matters involved in the measure, and then to leave the question as to whether the Legislature should interest itself further in the Bill entirely to the consideration of the House.

First, I would like to suggest to the member for Mt. Marshall that, should the Bill reach the Committee stage, he would be well advised to give consideration to three or four aspects of it. If one takes the definition of a street photographer coupled with the provisions relating to the licensing of street photographers later on in the Bill, it seems to me it will present almost insuperable difficulties to any local authority in deciding who shall receive a license. "Street photographer" is defined to include any person, firm or corporation who does the work of street photography. That is putting it shortly. Therefore, one license would be issued to a person, one would be issued to a firm in which there might be two or more persons up to, I think, 20, and one license would be issued to a limited company or corporation. Further on in the Bill it appears that the license, when issued, would be passed from employee to employee, so that if employee A was on the street in the morning he would have the license, and if employee B was on the street in the afternoon he would have the license and so on. It occurs to me that great difficulty will be experienced in determining who shall be licensed.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It might even build up a vested interest.

The **MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**: Yes. I submit to the member for Mt. Marshall that it might be much more desirable, if we are to have this measure at all, to strike out all references to corporations which, as I understand the term, would include all types of limited companies, and confine ourselves to individuals or the ordinary type of partnership which is known as a firm. Later on in the measure we have the provision that a local authority shall license the applicants. We also have a provision that the number of licenses, when issued, shall not exceed one to every 10,000 of the estimated population of the area of the local authority.

I take no exception whatever to the limitation of one to every 10,000, because that would very definitely severely restrict the number of licenses that could be issued. But I place myself in the position of the local authority in whose district we will imagine there are 100,000 persons and therefore ten licenses to be issued and the local authority receives 50 applications. By what ingenuity so far as this Bill is concerned, the local authority is to determine which ten out of the 50 shall receive licenses I have yet to learn, but no doubt there are ways and means by which it can be done and perhaps the member for Mt. Marshall has already given this aspect his consideration, and, in the event of the Bill going into Committee, will be able to present to the Chamber a satisfactory solution of this problem.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The licenses must issue.

The **MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**: Yes, but not more than one license for every 10,000 of the population, because the clause which provides that the licenses shall be issued is subject to that which provides that they shall be limited to that number. I think my presentation of the argument is perfectly fair to the member for Mt. Marshall and it only needs his well-known ingenuity to be displayed to evolve a satisfactory way out of it. I would go just a trifle further. It has been suggested to me that, so far as the Bill in its present form is concerned, the only way to reach a satisfactory conclusion on this subject would be to draw lots. I am sure that that is far

from the intention of the Legislature if it makes this Bill law, and I am equally sure it is far from the intention of the hon. gentleman. So I commend that suggestion to him before he takes the Bill out of Committee, if it reaches that fortunate place.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You seem to be very doubtful about it.

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: There is another aspect which is somewhat concerning me, and that is whether the member for Mt. Marshall has in mind the tenor of an amendment which I see on the notice paper and which proposes to restrict the operations of street photographers, when registered, to certain portions of the area of the local authority, as defined by the local authority. I see many difficulties in carrying that proposal into effect, because if it is carried into effect with too great rigor it could easily nullify the whole intent of the measure, if passed. Therefore, it seems to me that if such a proposal is to be incorporated in the Bill it will have to be viewed and handled with considerable caution, because if it were not so dealt with, we should have a measure which on the one hand purported to give the street photographers a reasonable measure of freedom on the other hand to place the matter back, as it were, in statu quo.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There will be a great difference in the value of the various beats.

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Precisely, and perhaps that would make it intolerable for a licensee. To give, as I said, a brief resume of the situation! On the 23rd June, 1933, the Perth Municipal Council gazetted, as part of Bylaw No. 3, dealing with streets and footpaths, para. 14 as follows:—

No person shall in any street or public place give out or distribute to passers-by or scatter or throw down, any handbill, ticket, placard or notice.

It is under that bylaw that prosecution of street photographers has taken place. Early in June last, in consequence of that prosecution, I was asked to receive a deputation from the Outdoor Photographers' Association. On the 26th of that month I sent the following reply—

Your letter of the 9th June suggesting a deputation regarding the by-laws of the Perth City Council and their effect on the persons engaged as outdoor photographers, has been

referred to me as Minister for Local Government.

The matter is one which comes under the control of the Perth City Council who are the local governing body empowered to make by-laws in respect to the City of Perth. I have, therefore, directed that a communication should be sent to the Perth City Council to ascertain their point of view in this matter, and in the meantime I do not think it desirable for me to receive a deputation. I am not unsympathetic to those of your association who are engaged in the occupation in question, but you will understand from the above the limitations that are imposed upon me.

When a reply is received from the Perth City Council I will communicate with you again.

I read that letter mainly because I wished to indicate that my attitude in this matter has always been and still is that some consideration or deference must be paid to the Perth City Council, as to every other local authority which in its own particular district has been entrusted with certain rights, and it is for the Legislature to say whether in its opinion those rights have been reasonably exercised and, whatever opinion is formed on that point, whether they should be taken away. So having that feeling then, that there was no evidence before me at the very least that the Perth City Council had done anything which warranted any lessening of their powers, I despatched that communication while at the same time expressing the sentiment I still feel as an individual that I have some sympathy with those members of the association who have been engaged in this particular occupation.

I suggested in the communication to the Council that they might be prepared to license a limited number of these people, say, not in excess of those then operating and specify the streets or ways upon which such individuals or pairs of individuals could operate, taking steps to limit any undue obstruction of traffic, but at the same time giving them the opportunity to carry on the business. I had previously noticed in "The West Australian" of the 12th February in the reported proceedings of the Perth City Council that as a result of representations from the Professional Photographers' Association, the Perth City Council decided to instruct the acting Chief Health Inspector to enforce bylaw No. 3 which prohibits the distribution of any handbill, ticket, placard, or notice, and subsequently an allegation by the president of

the Outdoor Photographers' Association to the effect that the Professional Photographers' Association was using the Perth City Council to drive his association out of business in order that an extravagant scale of charges might be ascertained. So it will be quite obvious that at that stage, about eight months ago, there was some considerable dispute between those two organisations.

Early in July a deputation from the Professional Photographers' Association waited upon me seeking the setting up of a board for the registration of photographers. In fairness to the association, however, I recollect no statement by its representatives that they desired to render it unlawful for the street photographers to carry on, though they would certainly come—as with few exceptions all photographers would come—under the board in relation to the qualification and registration. This deputation to which I have referred caused me to set on foot inquiries in the Eastern States as to what had been done over there. The Premier of Tasmania replied that no legislation had been enacted providing for the registration of photographers, nor was any such legislation contemplated. The Premier of South Australia stated that there was no such legislation in his State nor was any under consideration.

The Premier of Victoria replied that there was no legislation in his State, but representations had been made by the Institute of Photographers which were then being considered. The Premier of Queensland advised that there was no legislation of that nature in existence in Queensland and he was unaware of any representations having been made to his Government. New South Wales advised that under Section 249 (aa) of the Local Government Act there is provision that a local authority may regulate the photographing of persons for gain in any public place, which power of regulation confers on councils discretionary power to control street photographers, but apart from that provision there was no legislation in force in New South Wales.

The Perth City Council, in reply to the suggestion that a limited number of street photographers should be licensed under a system which specified the streets in which they may operate—and I mention that because of the amendment on the notice paper to which I previously referred—replied under

date the 7th August that they were strongly opposed to any system of licensing of street photographers and indicated that in their view footpaths are not designed for commerce, and the increasing load on the street pavement is already difficult enough to handle without adding the further encumbrance of people attempting to use the pavement for commercial purposes. Those are the exact words of the communication.

Mr. Leslie: What an imagination!

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: In the opinion of the City Council it was almost impossible to make any bylaw discriminatory—that apparently had reference to the proposal to set apart certain streets—as if such a course were adopted it would certainly result in repercussions from all established photographic commercial concerns who, it seemed, could reasonably demand a similar right as might also a number of other commercial undertakings. The Town Clerk also stated that in Sydney the street photographer traffic had reached such proportions as to constitute a major problem, and that replies received by the Council from Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane, indicated that photography is not allowed in those cities unless operating in special areas such as parks and the like. The City Council therefore suggested that in Perth stands might be provided in front of the Railway Station, on the Esplanade reserve and Stirling Gardens, etc.

I then gave further consideration to the matter, mainly in view of the fact that it appeared to me that as there was nothing in the bylaws to make street photography unlawful, except this bylaw I have read, dealing with handing out tickets and dodgers, the association was entitled to the belief that prior to the dates of the prosecution its members were carrying on a lawful occupation. I proposed to the Perth City Council, therefore, that a license should be granted to those street photographers who had been carrying on business prior to the 1st April, 1947, especially if they were ex-Service personnel whose health was such that normal active work was beyond them; that they were not employed by any business firm; and that they paid a license fee. Upon these lines the Perth City Council was again asked to reconsider the matter.

Under date the 4th September, the City Council replied that they were strongly averse to any form of license, and that—in the

first place—there were no photographers legitimately carrying on businesses as at no time was the practice of taking photographs and handing out cards in connection therewith legitimate. In this connection it seems clear to me that in the present state of the law, were the street photographers able to carry on their business without handing out tickets there would be very little to make their occupation illegal. But the Perth City Council still adheres, I believe, to the opinion that in the absence of sub-bylaw 14 of bylaw (3) under which it prosecuted, it could still bring about a successful prosecution by some other means. However, I am not prepared to go into that matter. The prosecution it did make was under the bylaw in question, and there is nothing in the bylaws, or from what I could discover after a casual inquiry elsewhere, to enable a successful prosecution to be carried out. So it is open to question whether these people are carrying on, other than for that bylaw, a legal or an illegal occupation. I must say that I am inclined to agree with the member for Victoria Park, that the street photographer offers no serious injurious competition to what is known as the studio photographer.

Hon. A. H. Panton: None whatever!

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: I am firmly convinced that people who would wish to sit for a studio portrait would be most unlikely to take any serious advantage of the offer made to them by a street photographer; and on the contrary anyone who wanted to have a photograph taken by a street photographer, either for sentimental or amusement reasons, would be most unlikely to refrain from going to a studio photographer if he wanted a serious photograph; or alternatively to go to one if he did not want a studio photograph. I do not think we need consider these things as being interlocked. On the contrary, they can be taken as being entirely separate, one from the other.

It is merely a matter, in my opinion, of the House deciding whether the powers of the local authority should be minimised or derogated from in this particular matter of pavement traffic. The City Council, however, has reiterated that it is undesirable to license any form of commercial undertaking on the street front. I must say that of recent years it has been pretty consistent in this regard, because there is precious little now of that sort of thing. I do not know that I had any

enthusiasm in seeing the departure of some of the people whom I thought served a useful purpose in past years, but who are no longer to be found carrying on their occupations in the street.

When the member for Mt. Marshall gave notice of his Bill, the Perth City Council sought a deputation. Having at that time no knowledge of the contents of the measure, I desired the City Council to withhold its deputation until the Bill was available. Accordingly the deputation took place yesterday and the representatives of the City Council strongly expressed the opinion given in the letters from the Council that I have read. In addition, the deputation pointed out very strongly that the right of local authorities to regulate traffic on footpaths in their districts had, in its opinion, never been questioned, and any legislative activity limiting that right or derogating from it would be a retrograde and most undesirable step.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I wonder where the Lord Mayor gets all his photographs taken. I should say he is the most photographed man in Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: I informed the deputation that this was neither a Government nor a party measure, and that so far as I was concerned my duty would be discharged if I set out, as far as I could, the information for and against the Bill. I think I have set it out pretty clearly from the point of view of the principal local authority involved, the Perth City Council, and I now propose to state one or two views that have been submitted to me on the other side of the ledger.

I have already observed that I can see quite strongly the argument advanced by the member for Victoria Park, that there is no competition that matters between the so-called studio photographers and these particular people. It would appear that the street photographer fulfils a requirement of a certain type of people, and the House may think that that type is entitled to consideration, notwithstanding other aspects of the matter. I have information of a number of cases where most excellent photographs have been taken by street photographers. In some instances persons would have had no photographs at all of those closely related to them had it not

been for the activities of these people, and the opportunities afforded to acquire the photographs per medium of the ticket or card which has been the subject of this discussion. Therefore, I have no doubt that there is in the minds of quite a few people some sentimental ground for believing that these outdoor photographers might be given a better break than they otherwise would be prepared to offer.

I must say that I object to any further cumbering of our traffic problem on the footpaths which, in many parts of Perth, is already bad enough. But from my own observations I doubt very much whether the operations of the few who would be permitted to operate under the Bill would gravely, or even greatly, affect that question. Were it not for the fact that I am most unwilling to lessen or derogate from the powers of the Perth City Council, or any other local authority in such a matter as this, I say quite definitely that I would support the Bill. It is this point only which influences me to leave the matter to the discretion of the House.

MR. PERKINS (York) [9.37]: I listened with a good deal of interest to the member for Mt. Marshall when he introduced the Bill, and also to the member for Victoria Park, who is a member of the Perth City Council and has some special knowledge of the subject. I also heard the Minister for Local Government, and the aspect he dealt with in his closing remarks is the only one that I desire to refer to. I am not going to say whether street photographers should be licensed or not, but I do view with a good deal of misgiving any attempts by this House to over-ride the authority of local governments charged with a particular responsibility. I think it is the aim of most members to build up a system of strong local government in Western Australia. I have often heard the criticism—and I think there are good grounds for it—that we suffer in this State by reason of lack of strength in our local government system.

In some of the other States the local authorities have considerably wider powers, and are less likely to be over-ridden by the State or Commonwealth Government than they are in this State. Obviously, if we are going to build up self-reliant local authorities, it is necessary for us to respect

their authority in the particular spheres for which they are responsible. Members should give some thought to this aspect. The division of authority between the State and the Commonwealth Governments might be taken as an analogy. We, in this State Parliament, have often objected to the over-riding of our authority by the Commonwealth Government. If that is a fair principle to apply, in regard to the division of power between the State and the Federal authorities, then is it not right to apply the same principle to the division of power between the State Government and the local authorities?

Mr. Marshall: You are on bad grounds. There is no comparison. We created the local authorities, but the Commonwealth did not create us; we created it.

Mr. PERKINS: If we are to build up a strong and virile system of local government in this State, we must be prepared to respect the powers that we have already entrusted to local authorities. If members do not believe in a strong system of local government, it is all right to take action such as this to over-ride the authority of those bodies, but I must point out the danger of taking such action, and the effect it must have on our efforts to build up a strong system of local government. I will not discuss the rights or wrongs of the licensing of street photographers, which I think is something to be decided by the Perth City Council. That body has been given sufficient power to deal with the matter under the local government legislation that is in force in this State. If it has made an error on this occasion, I think it is up to the council to put it right. It would be an abuse of power if this Parliament were to override the decision of the council in this particular matter.

Mr. Marshall: You would make them a free body and Parliament the weaker of the two.

Mr. PERKINS: That question does not arise. If Parliament has on previous occasions decided that local authorities should be entrusted with certain powers—obviously the Perth City Council has been entrusted with this power—the responsibility lies with the council to exercise such power properly. One can realise that, if any authority is to be overridden in its decisions, there is danger of a feeling of frustration or irre-

sponsibility arising in decisions which it may give for time to time. On those grounds, I must oppose the Bill. It is not that I am against street photographers, but I believe the decision should rest with the Perth City Council, and not with Parliament, which, in the past, has charged the council with responsibility for this particular control.

MR. YATES (Canning) [9.45]: Before the Perth City Council decided to issue summonses against street photographers, those people operated freely in the city or wherever else they decided to use their cameras. Had not the council acted as it has, this measure would not be before the House tonight and the street photographers would still be allowed to carry on as before. The taking of such a stand by the Perth City Council has resulted in the introduction of this Bill, the purpose of which is to tell the council what it must do in a matter governed by its own bylaws. Having gone through the Bill carefully, I find that it is proposed to adopt a system of licensing men to operate as street photographers in the ratio of one to every 10,000 of population. If we analyse the population of the metropolitan area, we must agree that this is not a fair method.

Hon. A. H. Panton: What do you call the metropolitan area?

MR. YATES: There is a floating population which comes to the metropolitan area from outside the boundaries of the Perth City Council, and therefore the street photographers to be licensed in Perth will reap benefits from people coming in from other areas and from the country. I take it there will be only nine men licensed in Perth, where the population is about 92,500, and they will be doing the work previously done by approximately 18 men. Who is to decide which nine men shall operate? I understand that the Perth City Council summonsed some of these men in about April. If street photographers are to be licensed, are those who were brought before the court to be penalised—that is, if the council is forced to license them? It will be a difficult decision, not only on the part of the council but on the part of every local government authority,* to decide who is to be licensed.

Another important point is that each of these men who is to operate on the streets of Perth must have a depot at which to develop his films and display the photographs to the public and those who have been issued with tickets. There is generally a window display so that people can see the style of photograph provided and decide, if they have been handed a ticket, whether they wish to buy a copy. These men must therefore have depots in the city. Where are nine men—if they are licensed individually—to get shops in Perth today? I can visualise them banding together and having one depot, so that all their cards may go to the one shop. Though they might be issued with individual licences, for the sake of cheapness and accessibility they will eventually combine and the public will come to know the particular shop, and will not mistake it for others in the city.

When that comes about, we will have the monopoly of which so much has been said this evening. It must come about, as such men cannot make a profit individually. They cannot stand in the streets incessantly, over long hours. They must pay the cost of their cameras and films, and pay rent for shops. They will probably need a staff consisting of a girl in the shop and one to do the developing and printing. I am certain that they could not make a living in that way and that they would band together, as they did in the past. It is well known that a certain taxi-driver in Perth controlled a number of street photographers, who worked for him. He had a business somewhere in the city, where the films were developed and prints were displayed in the windows. The public went to that shop to get their photographs.

If the Bill becomes law, what is to become of Bylaw No. 3, which deals with the issuing of cards? Must that bylaw then be cancelled, or will it still hold good? If it holds good, the council will still have power under it to charge other persons who hand out tickets. Then people, other than street photographers, may be charged with the offence. I take it that if the Bill becomes an Act it will wipe out that bylaw, as it affects street photographers, but others who hand out tickets of a similar nature will still be liable to be charged with the offence.

All these points have to be taken into consideration.

Other local governing bodies have never at any time said anything about photographers in their towns and villages, and if we agree to this legislation it will mean that the men concerned will lose the right to go anywhere in the State and take photographs. Of what avail would it be for a man to go about the streets of Perth on a Sunday when they are mostly empty? He would not contemplate doing anything of the sort, but would prefer to go to the beaches, to motor sports or wherever there were large gatherings of people affording him greater opportunities to engage in his occupation.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They would even go to the Zoo.

Mr. YATES: Yes. Obviously these men would not engage in their work under conditions that would not enable them to make a living. A man would not seek a license to operate in Subiaco because it would not pay him. That would apply to other metropolitan suburbs and country towns because the incentive, due to large populations and ample opportunities for photographic work, would not be present. It all boils down to the fact that this legislation is designed for the protection of street photographers in the City of Perth. It could never operate with success in other parts of the State. Yet these men will have the right to carry out their trade in the city or to visit the city beaches, where there are opportunities for lucrative business during the summer months.

With the member for York, I feel that we should not act in opposition to the desires of local governing authorities. In the short space of time I have been a member of this House, I have had opportunities to observe the workings of such bodies. I have attended their meetings, noting the hard work they carry out in a voluntary capacity and gaining an appreciation of their keen desire to promote the prosperity of their respective suburbs and of the State in general. We have such men associated with the Perth City Council, and that has been the position over a period of many years. That body has applied itself to its task in a most commendable manner and has gained the approbation of Parliament for the excellent job it has carried

out. I fail to see why we should step in now with legislation, the effect of which will be to set aside a bylaw that has been in force for years.

It was stated by the Minister for Local Government that many undesirable types of people had been taken off the streets of Perth because they were carrying on trades to the detriment of the public. Perth streets are congested and will continue in that condition while we allow dealers to operate therein. If the Bill be passed, the City Council will be faced with the problem of licensing others to deal in the streets. Much pressure will be brought to bear upon it with that object in view. If this concession can be granted to street photographers, similar privileges must be accorded people in other avenues. The statement has been made that the street photographers merely take a snap of an individual in the street and on receipt of 1s. 9d. supply prints, and generally that no-one is hampered. Members should appreciate, however, that these men are infiltrating into other avenues. For instance, there is one man who is making good money by taking photographs at functions held at night. One firm has practically the sole right for such work at the Embassy. During the winter months a great trade is enjoyed in taking photographs of couples and groups of people at evening functions.

Mr. Rodoreda: They would not require to be licensed to do that.

Mr. YATES: Those avenues are not open to other photographers.

Mr. Rodoreda: Why not?

Mr. YATES: Because they do not operate in that way. Ordinary photographers are content to work the normal hours and employ staffs to do what is required. I feel certain that street photographers do not confine themselves to one type of work but branch out into other avenues. I know that these men go to functions and take a whole series of photographs, putting the prints into attractive albums. I have nothing against that, but I merely mention it as indicating an avenue of trade open to these men. That type of work is not open to the professional photographers, of whom there are not so very many in Perth. Excluding amateur firms like Kodaks and Tilley's I should say that there are altogether about 250 individuals working for

professional photographers. Amongst that number about 60 per cent. would be ex-Servicemen. In the circumstances it is difficult for me, as an ex-Serviceman, to decide whether I would be assisting other ex-Servicemen if I supported the Bill merely for the purpose of licensing nine men to take photographs on the streets of Perth—

Mr. Nimmo: Who might not be returned men?

Mr. Leslie: They are all ex-Service men.

Mr. YATES:—or whether I should oppose the Bill and therefore lend support to the ex-Servicemen employed by members of the Professional Photographers' Association. Having in mind these various points and considering whether we should over-rule a bylaw promulgated by the Perth City Council and whether the street photographers should enjoy practical immunity in their infiltration into the various avenues I have mentioned, I have come to the conclusion that the best course would be to oppose the Bill, and accordingly I shall do so.

MR. ACKLAND (Irwin-Moore) [9.57]: I approach the consideration of the Bill with very mixed feelings. I would like to support it from a sympathetic point of view and because I believe the men concerned are not doing any real harm in carrying out their work. On the other hand, I have a tremendous appreciation of those associated with the work of local government throughout the State. For nearly 20 years I was a member of such a body and for more than half that time was on the executive committee of the Road Board Association of Western Australia. I entered this House with the idea of assisting them with respect to their responsibilities and activities. When I read in "The West Australian" towards the end of last week that the Perth City Council had received a letter from the Minister for Local Government suggesting that a certain number of these people should be licensed and that the council had rejected the proposal unanimously, I came to the conclusion that there must have been good and valid reasons for the adoption of that attitude.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Did you say that the decision of the Perth City Council was unanimous.

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, that is so according to "The West Australian" of last Friday.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: A member of the council, who is also a member of this House, says that that is not so.

Mr. ACKLAND: The statement in a sub-leader published in "The West Australian" to which I refer is—

Last month the Perth City Council rejected unanimously a suggestion of Mr. Watts, the Minister for Local Government, that it should license a limited number of street photographers.

I have not seen any contradiction of that statement.

Mr. Read: I contradict it now.

Mr. ACKLAND: I accepted the statement in the paper as authentic.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I would not place too much reliance on that because "The West Australian" said, with regard to a debate in this House last night, that there was only one dissentient voice whereas there were many.

Mr. ACKLAND: At any rate, I am speaking about street photographers. I am strongly in favour of increasing the responsibility of local authorities and I believe they are the most competent people to judge of this matter. Therefore I must oppose the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SHEARN (Maylands) [10.0]: There are two important points that ought to be taken into consideration when dealing with this Bill, firstly, is there any special demand for the particular service which it is sought to be given under this measure and, secondly, is it the responsibility of this House virtually to veto the resolution of a local authority. Regarding the first point, I think it will be conceded that there is a public demand for this service. We must bear in mind that a number of people have been engaged in this work for some time. I remind the member for York who is, or has been, a member of a local authority, that it is not at all an infrequent experience for a local body to refer a matter to the Minister administering the Act in order to obtain some direction from him. Consequently, it appears to me to be perfectly reasonable and logical that in a case such as this, when a local authority has decided that it cannot grant this privilege under its bylaws, there should be some superior authority to whom an appeal might be

made. On that ground, I am not greatly concerned, although I say that Parliament should be very wary about interfering in the province of a local authority. Still, when circumstances demand it, no apology need be made if Parliament decides that it is wise to take a hand in the matter.

There are other points about the Bill with which I am not at all satisfied and I hope that the member for Mt. Marshall, when replying to the debate, will clarify those points. I am not permitted on the second reading debate to refer specifically to clauses, but the Bill contains a provision that licenses shall be restricted to one to every 10,000 of the population of the district. Many speeches have been made regarding the undesirability of creating monopolies, and I consider that this will be a monopoly with a number of additional unfortunate features, inasmuch as it would mean that while some 20 people were operating in the city or the city area, under the Bill it would be physically impossible to license more than nine or 10 street photographers. I should like the member for Mt. Marshall to tell us what is going to happen about that.

The suggestion has been made that it is unlikely that the measure would have application except in the area of the Perth City Council, but I can visualise this business providing quite a lucrative avenue in the larger country towns such as Northam and Bunbury. In such towns, photographers are already established, and if they desired to apply for licenses under the provisions of this measure, they would be debarred from doing so. In my opinion the Bill is entirely too restrictive.

Again, if it is desirable to enter upon a discussion as to the advisability of licensing photographers, as we have licensed people engaged in other professions and trades, why not cover the whole ambit and provide for the control of all classes of photographers? One is reminded of the responsibility we owe to other photographers who employ staff, many of them consisting of a considerable proportion of returned Servicemen in the process of their rehabilitation sponsored by the Commonwealth Rehabilitation or Trade Scheme. I am wondering whether the hon. member can explain what is likely to happen in that connection. Has he contemplated the sectional nature of this legislation and the apparent total disregard of the claims of ex-Servicemen, as the member

for Canning has pointed out, numbering something like 60 per cent. of those engaged in the metropolitan area? It seems to me that the amendment of which the member for Victoria Park has given notice would minimise what would be another entirely unsatisfactory state of affairs.

I realise that these street photographers have a perfect right to make a living. I move about the city as much as does the average member of the community, and I have never seen any evidence of their obstructing traffic. However, I feel concerned about setting up a sectional piece of legislation such as this, which is likely to interfere with the rights of people whom this Bill sets out to aid. I propose to await the remarks of the member for Mt. Marshall in relation to the various aspects I have mentioned and then will decide whether I shall support the second reading. If the Bill passes the second reading, I shall certainly support the amendment of which notice has been given.

MR. GRAYDEN (Middle Swan) [10.9]: I do not intend to prolong the debate unduly, but wish to support the second reading. I consider that this House should not now or at any time pass legislation that would have the effect of limiting the avenues of employment, particularly in the circumstances now prevailing, when we are about to receive immigrants who will be seeking employment and when we have returned Servicemen who will be looking for work. Many men have adopted the profession of street photographer, and now we are asked to consider legislation that must be passed if they are not to be deprived of their opportunities in that direction. I believe that street photographers supply a very definite need in our society, and I do not think that anybody can honestly say they are competing with established photographers. I think the type of photography is completely different. In one case it is a matter of going to the studio and paying £1 deposit and having a photograph taken. In the other case it is simply a matter of walking down the street and being handed a card. If a person chooses to accept the photograph, he may; if not, he can tear up the card given to him.

Members at various times have seen photographs taken by these street photographers. I have visited houses in my electorate and in conversation with the people they have pro-

duced such photographs, which they seem to cherish. I recall one instance, that of a couple who went to Sydney for a holiday, on their honeymoon I think, and the only photograph they have to remember that holiday by is one taken by a street photographer. Therefore, I consider the street photographers fulfil a definite need. The argument has been raised that if we pass this Bill to allow street photographers to operate, a precedent will be established and the Perth City Council will have to license fruit barrows, paper stalls and that sort of thing. Several members have referred to paper stalls. They said that the Perth City Council, if this Bill passes, will allow paper stalls on the streets, but that is not the point.

We have in the city today at almost every street corner men and boys selling papers and I do not know of anyone who has raised any objection to their doing so. They fulfil a definite need. As the member for Victoria Park said, no-one has ever protested to the City Council against street photographers. My only regret is that the Bill does not go far enough. I would have liked to see it go very much further, as I consider that no restriction should be placed on the number of street photographers to be allowed in the city. I believe they should be allowed an open go.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: Without any license at all?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Too many avenues of employment are closed today and this House should certainly not add to the number. I would have liked to see some provision incorporated in the Bill that persons licensed should have to operate on their own account; they should not be permitted to work for wages, as apparently many of them do. I understand some street photographers have a number of men working for them. If we decide not to limit the number of street photographers, then I say, well and good; but in view of the fact that the intention is to limit the number to 20, those licensed should, if they can obtain the necessary finance in some way, be those who are prepared to work on their own account and get all they earn.

MR. BOVELL (Sussex) [10.14]: There is only one point I want to discuss on the Bill. It is the principle that Parliament has bestowed upon local governing bodies certain authority. I feel that if those bodies

do not abuse such powers, we should not interfere in the administration of their affairs.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Irrespective of how autocratic they may become?

Mr. BOVELL: I said if they did not abuse the powers that Parliament had bestowed upon them! It is not my intention to detain the House; but, on a matter of principle and in fairness to local governing authorities, I must oppose the Bill.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall—in reply) [10.15]: I do not intend to detain the House long, although most of the criticism of the Bill has not been very encouraging.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There has been a private fight on the other side of the House.

Mr. LESLIE: At the same time, the silence that has been maintained makes me face the result of this vote with some confidence.

The Minister for Works: There has been something more than silence!

Mr. LESLIE: The trend of the criticism has been that the Bill will interfere with the powers of local authorities. When introducing the measure I replied to an interjection, as to whether a photograph was good or bad, by saying it all depended on the point of view. In this connection, there may be considered to be a point of view also. Some members have expressed the opinion that they are jealous of the powers of local governing authorities: I am equally jealous of those powers, but I ask those members to view the position in this way: Today street photography is a lawful occupation and local governing authorities may have no power to control it. Some local authorities may have invoked the aid of a bylaw, which has nothing whatever to do with street photography, in order to attempt to exercise some control. This Bill actually gives local authorities far more power than they already have. The member for Sussex said he was fearful of interfering with the powers of local authorities and that, so long as they did not abuse those powers, we should not interfere with them. The trouble in this case, however, is that the local governing authority which has the power is fearful of using it. Should it wish to use the power, it could license street photographers. I

refer to the Perth City Council. The council has not denied that it is within its power to do so; it has merely adopted the attitude of passing the buck.

At no time has the Perth City Council actually said that the licensing of street photographers, or street photography itself, is undesirable. I repeat what I said when introducing the measure, namely, that the action of the Perth City Council—this is no secret—was the result of representations made to it by the studio photographers. The City Council admits that, and the Studio Photographers' Association admits it also. Therefore, the council's action was taken merely at the instigation of a section of the people to protect them against what they considered was a danger to the monopoly which they had established. Later, the Perth City Council was asked to consider permitting a certain number of street photographers to operate. After introducing the question of street trading, the council replied that to permit street photographers to operate would be a discriminatory action on its part, and that that was undesirable. There was no question about not wanting these photographers on the street, no question about their conduct on the street being undesirable, merely that the Perth City Council felt, to put it plainly that it was not prepared to make use of the powers which it had. Therefore, it is necessary for the Government to step in and make a decision. I would be quite prepared to meet—

Hon. A. H. Pantou: Parliament! You are not the Government.

Mr. LESLIE: I would be prepared to concede the point raised by those who are so jealous concerning the powers of local governing authorities if the proposals in this Bill were for the purpose of unlimited licensing. But it places in the hands of local governing authorities complete control of the operation of street photographers. The Minister for Local Government adopted what I might best term a benevolent neutrality towards the Bill. He gave the history of what had transpired between his department and the Perth City Council.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And what is going to transpire too!

Mr. LESLIE: His survey vindicated the case I submitted on behalf of the street photographers. The Perth City Council

has not attempted to do anything in this matter and this Bill will compel it to take some action.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Minister did not even tell us whether he was voting for or against the Bill.

Mr. LESLIE: As I said, he adopted an attitude of benevolent neutrality. I noted the points he raised in connection with the definitions, and when the Bill reaches the Committee stage—I am an optimist—I am prepared to move for the deletion of the word "corporation". I confess I was not aware, at the time the word was inserted, of its full implications. It was used as a legal term, as is the case in almost all legislation, to ensure that nobody was left out. In this case it seems that too many were dragged in. I am prepared to leave it at that. So far as the council making a selection is concerned, should there be a greater number of applicants for licenses than the number that will be permitted to operate under the Act, the council will have sufficient material to work on to make its selection.

I observe an amendment on the notice paper by the Leader of the Opposition regarding the character of applicants having to be submitted when applications are made. I am quite happy about that. But this Bill in its initial stages is to permit those engaged in the profession at present to continue. There is a clause which says that preference is to be given to those already engaged. I propose to amend that to provide that preference shall be given to discharged members of the Forces who shall have been previously established in the profession and can give evidence to that effect.

Mr. May: Including ex-Servicewomen?

Mr. LESLIE: It will cover women. That will safeguard definitely the people who are at present engaged in the profession and whom we want to protect. In regard to the queries raised concerning the number of licenses in proportion to population, I suggest that that is quite an open question. I am not wedded to the numbers. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage members may submit whatever number they think fair and reasonable and the Committee may decide as it thinks proper. I believe it is necessary to have a definite

restrictive control over the operations of street photographers. I do not see the possibility of a monopoly creeping in because there will be one license to one photographer. It will be necessary because of the nature of the job for somebody to be employed part of the time in taking photographs in the street. It would not be reasonable to say that the person with the license shall be the only one to operate as a photographer. For that reason the conditions of the granting of the license cannot be made more restrictive than at present.

Mr. Styants: Do you propose to make a license transferable?

Mr. LESLIE: Definitely not! I believe that is the greatest drawback with regard to licenses—that they can give rise to trafficking. A license can become a valuable thing.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Look out that you don't talk your mates out of this!

Mr. LESLIE: I may talk them into it. As to those concerned about the ex-Service-men engaged in working for studio photographers, I think that sufficient has been said tonight and previously to convince them—and the member for Canning was particularly concerned about this—that these street photographers are not in competition with the studio photographers, and that the livelihood of the ex-Service personnel engaged by the studios is in no way in jeopardy. Those who will be provided for under the Bill, that is those who are at present engaged in the work, will be wholly ex-Service men. There will not be any outsiders at all, because the number of ex-Service personnel who will be seeking licenses will be sufficient to cover the number for whom licenses may be issued. These people have employees and more than 60 per cent. of those employees are ex-Service personnel, the remainder being young girls and messenger boys who are necessary in any profession and whose work would not be considered suitable for ex-Service personnel.

I appreciate the remarks of the member for Maylands. I have said that the Bill will not in my opinion create a monopoly. Nor do I consider the Bill will veto the decision reached by the City Council, because the City Council has not reached any decision. Had it done so, there would have

been no necessity for Parliament to take action in this way. The Bill will prevent the business from getting out of hand. I hope members will give it their support and, if they consider there are any parts of it which should be altered, they can attempt to do something along those lines when the Bill reaches the Committee stage.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	23
Noes	15
Majority for				8

AYES.

Mr. Cornell	Mr. Read
Mr. Doney	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Fox	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Smith
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Styants
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Triat
Mr. May	Mr. Wise
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Braud
Mr. Panton	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. Murray
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hill	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Mann	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Yates
Mr. McLarty	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; Mr. Leslie in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Definitions:

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not like the definition of "public thoroughfare." I think the inclusion of the words "lane" and "arcade" is detrimental to the Bill, and also to both the public and the licensed street photographers. Where, in any restricted area in the city, there is a heavy movement of pedestrian traffic, there should be no opportunity for these photographers to practise. While I do not think the exclusion of the words "lane" and "arcade" is necessary to meet the position, I intend to move an amendment to exclude street photographers from operating in confined streets, such as Hay and Murray-streets, which carry far too much pedestrian traffic at the moment

for the accommodation they provide. So that the areas to be defined by the local authorities will be in accordance with an amendment I have on the notice paper, I now move an amendment—

That at the end of the definition of "public thoroughfare" the following words be added:— "but shall not for the purposes of this Act include any street in the city of Perth which is restricted to one-way vehicular traffic."

I have included the word "vehicular" to describe these streets, but there are no streets where there is only one-way traffic for pedestrians.

Progress reported.

BILL—WAR RELIEF FUNDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. A. H. PANTON (Leederville) [10.40] in moving the second reading said: During the 1914-18 war a considerable fund was collected but, unlike the position that obtained during the recent war, no provision was made as to what should be done with the fund when hostilities ceased. The Parliament of that day—in 1922—discussed the matter, with the result that there was appointed a Select Committee, afterwards converted into an Honorary Royal Commission, for the purpose of considering what was to be done with the funds that were held by many people in different parts of the State, under little or no control. That Commission reported in November, 1923. It made very few recommendations, but one was to the effect that the Government should take steps to appoint three trustees, one to be nominated by the Government, one by the central executive of the R.S.L. and one by the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association, to take charge of all unused moneys collected during the war for relief purposes and then lying in banks, such trustees to have power to disburse those moneys in the districts in which the various amounts were collected.

The Bill was introduced and passed in 1926, and became an Act. The three trustees appointed were Mr. Wilson, ex-member for Collie, who was chairman, the late Colonel Collett, representing the R.S.L., and the late Mr. Clydesdale, representing the Ugly Men's Association. The money handed over to the trustees amounted to £6,902 10s. 9d. Bank interest during the period up to the 26th July, 1947, was £1,967 8s. 11d. There was

land valued at approximately £2,000 brought into the fund, seven blocks of which have since been sold for £615. The amount paid out during the period by the trustees to ex-Servicemen and their dependants—the Act provided only for 1914-18 war Servicemen and their dependants—was £6,192 10s. 4d., and to sub-branches £146. Over those years the whole of the administration costs were only £431 9s. 11d., which was very cheap. The books were audited without cost by a city firm of auditors. The cash balance at the 26th July, 1947, was £2,700 0s. 3d. The approximate value of the land still held is about £1,500. The Act provided a definition of "war," as follows:—"The war means the recent war against Germany and its Allies," so it is obvious who can come under the provisions of the Act. Section 3 provides—

The Governor may appoint a council of three persons, one of whom shall be appointed on the nomination of the State Executive of the Western Australian branch of the Returned Soldiers' League, and another on the nomination of the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers Association.

I have already told the House who were the first three men appointed. Mr. Wilson resigned and it was then that the Government appointed the late Colonel Collett as chairman in his place, and the member for Nelson to take Mr. Wilson's place on the board. Unfortunately we lost Colonel Collett, in addition to Mr. Clydesdale, who had died earlier, leaving only one trustee. The R.S.L. executive had the right to nominate a trustee and I understand that Mr. Alf Yeates has now been nominated. I wish to pay the greatest possible tribute to the men I have named for the work they did during that period but, as far as I can find out, there is no-one now operating as a member of the Ugly Men's Association. During the whole of the recent war, when I was closely associated with patriotic work, I heard nothing of that association. The reason for the introduction of this Bill is so that the provisions regarding the three trustees can be brought up to date. The Bill provides for the striking out of the words—and another on the nomination of the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association.

So that the section will then read—

The Governor may appoint a council of three persons, one of whom shall be appointed on the nomination of the State Executive of the Western Australian branch of the Returned Soldiers' League.

The Government will then have the right to appoint two members as trustees, while the executive of the R.S.L. nominates one. I am content to leave it to the Government to do the right thing. I am informed that many people are now making applications for assistance. There are obvious reasons for that, but I will not do more than touch on them now. Many Servicemen who returned from the 1914-18 war are now much older. In fact they are even now five or six years older than they were when I was a trustee of the R.S.L. I hope the provisions of the Bill will be agreed to, and that the Government will appoint three trustees. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.47 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 25th September, 1947.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE.

As to Inclusion as Trading Concern.

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Attorney General:

Will he lay upon the Table of the House the file relating to the proposals to make the Public Trust Office a State trading concern?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

If the hon. member will be good enough to call at the Crown Law Department I may

be able to make available for his inspection certain papers relating to the subject matter of his question.

TEXTILES.

As to Local Shortage and Exports.

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Prior to answering these questions, will he view the item in the "Personal" column of "The West Australian" of the 8th inst., wherein a statement appears that the principal of a wholesale firm will be absent from the State for about three months seeking openings for larger exports of textiles to South Africa?

(2) In view of the acute insufficiency of suiting and other clothing materials, and textiles generally, does he believe such action is desirable?

(3) Will he examine the validity of the assertion of interested exporters that it is necessary on economic grounds to establish and expand markets beyond the State, notwithstanding shortages locally?

(4) Does he consider the disregard of citizens of this State is influenced by the higher prices obtainable elsewhere?

(5) Is he able and willing to take steps to ensure adequate supplies for our own people before oversea markets are stimulated?

(6) If so, what action does he contemplate?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) to (6) The State Government has no jurisdiction in this matter, but will be very pleased to transmit to the Commonwealth Government any representations which the hon. member may submit.

NURSES.

As to Shortage, Trainees and Training Centres.

Mr. REYNOLDS (on notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Is there a shortage of trained nurses in this State?

(2) If so, what is the number?

(3) What will be the duties of the recently appointed tutor sister?