

tion of increasing the size of the holdings was raised many years ago and even then it was thought that it would not be long before it was considered that a block of 1,000 acres would not be sufficient. With regard to the pastoralists, the Government certainly must be given great credit for what has been done. During the last 18 months relief has been given in several directions, notably by way of freights to get fodder up to the stations and in the transfer of starving stock. That assistance has been fully recognised by the pastoralists and members will admit that the pastoralists have never asked for anything beyond what was reasonable. A board was appointed to deal with the sufferings of the various pastoralists and that board did its work up to a period ended the 31st December, 1936. I have not heard a word of complaint regarding the decisions that were arrived at by that board. The members of it appear to have done their work very well and fairly. As has already been mentioned by other members, the drought on the Murchison is far from being at an end. There are many stations that boasted thousands of sheep and that now have only very few. I assure members that the figures the Chief Secretary gave were not in any way exaggerated. I could instance many cases on the Lower Murchison the figures in respect of which would be much worse than those mentioned by the Chief Secretary the other evening. One station that had many thousands of sheep has scarcely any left. As has already been mentioned, the trouble is going to be when the drought does break. Old hands declare that the indications are such that the drought will break, and when it does break the difficulty will be to stock up again. Although so many of the stations are still under the influence of the drought, the rains that have fallen in certain parts of the North have been responsible for an almost prohibitive rise in the price of ewes. When the drought does break, it will be almost impossible to buy ewes with which to stock the stations. Many of the stations had practically no lambing at all. In my own case I have not had any lambing for six or seven years and the few sheep left there are very old, so that if it does rain shortly there will not be many of them left and it will be many years before it will be possible to stock up. Personally, I hope that the relief to the pastoralist will be continued year by year until the drought does break, because I assure the House that the position

is very serious indeed. I am glad that the Government has brought down the Bill and I shall support the second reading.

On motion by Chief Secretary debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 17th November, 1937.

	PAGE
Questions: Native missions	1850
Council for Industrial Research	1851
Railways, Diesel cars	1851
Bills: Burden of Proof, 1A.	1851
Whaling, 3A., passed	1851
Bush Fires Com.	1851
Nurses Registration Act Amendment, Council's amendments	1857
Annual Estimates, 1937-38, Votes and Items discussed	1857
Education	1857
Police	1862
Unemployment Relief	1874

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

QUESTION—NATIVE MISSIONS.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Will he give reasons why up to date no native missions have been proclaimed a native institution in compliance with Section 2 of the Native Administration Act, 1936? 2, Will he indicate when effect will be given to this section of the Act? 3, Is he aware that the charge of 20s. per employee, chargeable under the department's voluntary payment to the medical fund, has had the effect of increasing premiums tenfold by insurance companies insuring natives under the Workers' Compensation Act?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Because of the preparation and adoption of suitable relative regulations. 2, Very soon. 3, No.

QUESTION—COUNCIL FOR INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH.

Mr. NORTH asked the Premier: 1, Was the recent visit of a member of the Council for Industrial and Scientific Research concerned solely with the furthering of the primary industries here? 2, If not, is he aware of any secondary industries that were included in the investigations? 3, Has the Government been requested by the Federal Government to invite at its discretion members of this Council to Western Australia with a view to furthering the interests of secondary industries here?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The object of the recent visit of two executive members of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was to inquire into the best way of extending its present activities in Western Australia, which are related to investigations on problems affecting primary production. It is understood that action has yet to be taken by the Federal Government before effect can be given to the proposals of the Council for extending its work into the field of secondary production. 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, DIESEL CARS.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that the alterations to the permanent way at present being made at the northern end of the York railway station are necessary before the Diesel cars can be used on that line? 2, If so, at how many other stations and sidings will alterations have to be made for the same cause? 3, What is the estimated cost of such alterations? 4, Will the cost be debited to the capital cost of the Diesel cars? 5, In the event of an affirmative answer to No. 1, will he state why such alterations are necessary in view of the Commissioner's statement in his annual report for 1936 that "an inspector from the mechanical branch is in attendance during the period of manufacture and assembly"?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, 3, 4 and 5, Answered by No. 1.

BILL—BURDEN OF PROOF.

Introduced by Mr. Watts and read a first time.

BILL—WHALING.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [4.34] in moving the third reading said: I informed the House last night that I would inquire into a point raised in connection with the liability regarding fines imposed under one clause of the Bill. As I assured members yesterday, and reassure them to-day, there is nothing unusual in such fines, nor in the action proposed to be taken under that particular clause. It is quite common in the control of shipping, navigation, the control of customs, quarantine matters, etc., for very heavy penalties to be imposed if owners or masters of ships do not conform to the conditions prescribed within the Commonwealth of Australia. I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—BUSH FIRES.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Withers in the Chair, the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 15—No smoking near stacks, etc.:

Mr. DOUST: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 the words "stubble or other inflammable vegetable production" be struck out.

Under the definition of "stubble" it will be impossible to smoke outside any towns almost throughout the State at certain times of the year. Stubble means bracken, scrub, leaves and practically every kind of vegetation. It would be better if the clause stated that smoking at certain times of the year was prohibited outside a townsite, unless a covered pipe was used. The existing clause goes too far.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I oppose the amendment. The clause goes no further than the existing Act already provides for.

Mr. Doust: The Act has been dead on that point.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All this material is equally dangerous, and people should not be allowed to smoke near it. There is no reason for striking out the words.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That after the word "covered" in line 6 the words "or upon a public road or railway" be inserted.

It is an offence to throw lighted articles from a vehicle, but it cannot be intended that one should be prevented from smoking when in a vehicle, provided one complies with the previous clause of the Bill. As the clause stands, and in view of the definition of stubble, it will be unlawful for anyone to smoke on a public road or railway, because every class of vegetation that can be imagined is included in the definition of stubble.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I oppose the amendment. I cannot see why a man should not be allowed to smoke on a public road or highway so long as he does nothing to create a fire. The Bill provides that people must not throw a lighted match and such things into a field, or other inflammable places, but the proposed amendment goes too far.

Mr. WATTS: The Minister has misunderstood my intention. I wish to allow a man to smoke on a public road or railway, relying on his complying with the provisions of the legislation regarding the burning cigar or cigarette butt. I desire to bring the smoker within the exemptions indicated.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, that is quite all right.

Amendment put and passed: the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Local authority may require occupiers of land to plough or clear fire-breaks:

Mr. DOUST: I move an amendment—

That a new subclause, to stand as Subclause 5, be added as follows:—" (5) The owner or occupier of land which abuts on Crown lands, reserves or other land that is unoccupied by abandonment, may enter upon such land for the purpose of clearing and/or ploughing fire-breaks not more than 12 feet in width from the boundary of such land."

Under existing conditions scrub grows right up to the boundaries and even through fences. When fire breaks out, unless the amendment be agreed to, the farmer will have no means by which he can protect his fencing. Under existing conditions the majority of good farmers do take these precautions, but they are not within

the law. The amendment will cover such a position.

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

Clause 18—agreed to.

Clause 19—Local authority may appoint bush fire control officers:

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause 2 the following words be added:—"and advertised at least once in a newspaper circulating in the district."

It is necessary that the people shall be advised as fully as possible of the appointment by the local authority of the fire control officer so that they may know with whom they must communicate in the event of an outbreak. I recognise it is necessary to insert an advertisement in the "Government Gazette," but that would not be sufficient because the "Gazette" does not circulate amongst the farming community.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have no objection to the local authorities being required to pay for the advertisement as suggested.

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

Clause 20—Special powers of bush fire control officer:

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The clause provides that a bush fire control officer appointed by a local authority shall have certain defined powers that are set out. In paragraph (e) he will be empowered to take water from any source whatever on any land, whether private property or not. It should be borne in mind that that water could be taken for extinguishing a fire on an adjacent property. I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (e) after "water" the following words be inserted:—"other than the occupier's domestic supply."

We should provide the fire control officers with power within reason. The amendment will leave the domestic water supply sacrosanct. At a time when bush fires are prevalent, the home supply is frequently at a minimum, and a hardship may be imposed if the domestic water supply can be used for the purpose of extinguishing bush fires. As the Minister seems to have attained once more to his fore-time magnan-

imity, I hope he will agree to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot agree to the amendment.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Mistaken again!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The domestic water supply may be drawn from a dam or a well, and to say that that water could not be used for extinguishing a fire would be ridiculous.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WARNER: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (e) after "water" the following words be inserted:—"other than the domestic supply of rain water in tanks at the homestead."

The Minister was quite right with regard to supplies drawn from dams or wells, but I hope the Minister will accept my amendment.

Mr. SEWARD: I hope the Minister will not agree to the amendment. It is quite possible that the domestic water supply is the only one available in the case of an outbreak of fire. Is it not more important to save the homestead and the crops rather than a few gallons of water? We are wasting time in tinkering with the Bill with small amendments.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Pingelly is correct in his attitude. If there were an outbreak of fire and property endangered, the ordinary farmer would say, "Take everything."

Mr. SAMPSON: In South Australia where the Rural Bush Fires Act operates, many thousand pounds worth of property has been saved by the use of knapsacks of water used at appropriate places. A little water applied at the correct time makes all the difference.

Mr. CROSS: I have some sympathy with the views expressed by the member for Mt. Marshall, but a good deal will depend upon the officer appointed by the local authority. We can expect him to exercise ordinary common sense. It would be ridiculous to restrain such an officer from making use of available water supplies. The member for Swan referred to the useful purpose served by knapsacks of water, but I think better means than that would be availed of. Probably they will get some small horse-drawn vehicle so that the water can be sprayed on the advancing fire. That would be an improvement on the

proposed knapsack system. I will oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

Clauses 21 to 30—agreed to.

Clause 31—Appropriation of penalties:

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The clause provides that any moneys received in penalties for offences against the Act shall be paid to the Minister, who shall pay a moiety thereof, less any expenses, to the local authority within whose district the offence was committed for the use of the said local authority. I move an amendment—

That all words after "to" in line 2 be struck out, and "the local authority in whose territory the offence was committed" inserted in lieu.

I want to provide that the fines imposed shall go to the local authority, not to Consolidated Revenue. The local authority must bear all the costs of providing and equipping the bush fires brigade, and all the costs involved in the prosecution of offenders against the Act. So it would be only fair that the fines should go to the local authority. Moreover, the clause provides that the Minister shall pay a moiety of the penalty to the local authority. I am not quite satisfied as to what "moiety" means. I have consulted every dictionary in Parliament House and quite a number outside, and all give as a definition of "moiety," "one-half or a small portion."

Mr. Wilson: A portion of anything at all.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The Minister might be inclined to pay to the local authority a small portion of the fine, perhaps only 5 per cent. That would be unfair to the local authority upon whose shoulders have devolved all the costs of equipment and maintenance of the fire brigade, and all the costs of the prosecutions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: "Moiety," I am told, means in legal phraseology one-half. The local authority does not meet all the expenses. There are the police to be considered, who will conduct the prosecution. Moreover, normally all penalties belong to the State. This provision is in the existing Act.

Mr. WATTS: I agree with the Minister that the word "moiety" means one-half, but

I do think it would be reasonable that the local authority should have all the fines and penalties. The Minister says this provision is already in the existing law. We do not dispute that, but Clause 35 provides that forest officers, bush fire control officers and members of the police force may institute and carry on proceedings against any person for an alleged offence against this Act, and shall be reimbursed out of the funds of the local authority within whose district the alleged offence is committed all costs and expenses which it may incur in such proceedings. So I think the penalties should be paid to the local authority in order that it may be recouped some of its expenses under the Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Clause 32 provides that it shall be the duty of every member of the police force and every bush fire control officer and every forest officer to do certain things when he finds any person committing any offence against this Act. Moreover, Subclause 1 of Clause 35 reads as follows:—

All proceedings for offences against this Act and the regulations or by-laws made under this Act shall be taken and dealt with summarily in accordance with the provisions of the Justices Act, 1902-1936.

Subclause 2 goes on to say that every forest officer, every bush fire control officer, and every member of the police force may, by virtue of his office, institute and carry on proceedings against any person for an alleged offence against this Act. So if the forest officers or the members of the police force have to prosecute an offender, why should the local authority get the fine?

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Read on a bit farther.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, I see. Even then I hope it will be remembered that the State has to pay the expenses of the prosecution.

Mr. WATTS: I regret that the Minister did not read the remainder of Clause 35 which, from the point where the Minister's reading ceased, reads as follows:—

and he shall be reimbursed out of the funds of the local authority within whose district the alleged offence is committed all costs and expenses which he may incur or be put to in or about such proceedings.

That certainly affords justification for asking the Minister to allow the local authority to be paid the whole of the fine. It is not suggested in any other statute that any portion of the fines collected should be paid to the

Minister or the Treasurer, because the local authorities are responsible for the loss they may incur in bringing such prosecutions. The same thing applies under this Bill.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	23

Majority against 4

AYES.	
Mr. Boyle	Mr. Patrick
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Doust	Mr. Seward
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Thorp
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Warner
Mr. Mann	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Welsh
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Doney
Mr. North	

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Collier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cross	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Fox	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Miss Holman	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Needham	

(Teller.)

AYE.	PAIR.	NO.
Mr. Brockman		Mr. Raphael

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 32—Duty of police officers and bush fire-control officers:

Mr. CROSS: I move an amendment—

That in the last line "ten" be struck out and "two" inserted in lieu.

A penalty of £10 is too great for the simple offence of refusing to give name and address to a bush fire officer for any breach or imaginary breach of the regulations. All the local governing bodies will have power to make regulations and so many regulations will be in force that a person entering an adjoining locality might easily commit a breach. The fine for a similar offence under the Police Act is £2.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A fine of £10 would be the maximum and the court would not be likely to impose the maximum. A breach of the regulations might involve a big outbreak of fire.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 33, 34—agreed to.

Clause 35—Prosecution of offences:

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause 2 the words "every bush fire control officer" be struck out and after "office" in line 3 the words "and every bush fire control officer at the request of the local authority (or road board not being a local authority within the meaning of this Act) may" be inserted.

The amendment would mean that a bush fire control officer could take proceedings only under instructions from the local authority. As the clause stands, a subordinate officer would have greater power than the secretary or engineer of the local authority.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A bush fire control officer would act with the authority of the local body.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: According to the clause he would act on his own authority.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, he would always be the servant of the local authority.

Mr. Watts: Not under this clause.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: He could institute proceedings by virtue of his office.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He would act with the authority of the local body and could not act without it. A road board not being a local authority under this measure would not have power to appoint a bush fire control officer. I cannot accept the amendment.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: If the Minister had considered the matter, he would realise that the position is not as he stated it. One road board might be declared a local authority under the measure and appoint a fire control officer. If the adjoining board were not a local authority under the measure and did not appoint such an officer, the fire control officer from the neighbouring district could enter the road board territory and take control of a fire raging there. Such a fire control officer should not have power to institute proceedings against a person in the neighbouring area without the authority of the board. The local body should have the right to direct the fire control officer as to the taking of proceedings.

Mr. Rodoreda: Why?

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The fire control officer would not be in the same position as a police officer. He might be a farmer

who was on the job only occasionally. The local authority elected by the ratepayers is the only body that should have power to institute proceedings. Whenever a prosecution was justified the fire control officer would experience no difficulty in getting the road board to take action.

Mr. SAMPSON: I support the clause. A bush fire control officer will be invested with wide powers and should not be deprived of his authority. I do not think any road board would desire to usurp his powers. Having selected a man qualified for the job, the board would prefer to leave the work to him.

Mr. CROSS: The member for Irwin-Moore could have obtained his objective in a simpler manner, namely by moving to insert after "bush fire control officer" the words "when instructed by such local authority."

Mr. Sampson: And the local authority would meet once a month.

Mr. CROSS: Then the bush fire control officer would report to the local governing body, and before initiating any prosecution would receive an instruction to that effect from the local authority.

Mr. WATTS: The Minister has not quite understood the intention of the amendment. Subclause 3 provides that a local authority, or a road board (not being a local authority within the meaning of the Bill) within whose district an alleged offence against the measure or any regulation or by-law has been committed, may direct its secretary, bush fire control officer, or any other officer to institute and carry on proceedings. There is the proper power for the local authority to deal with offences committed in its district. Under Subclause 2 the bush fire control officer, by virtue of his office, is authorised to institute proceedings. He is in a different category from a forestry officer or a police officer, who are in the service of the Crown. In various parts of the country there is already trepidation as to the powers to be vested in bush fire control officers. Many farmers argue that some officers may not be persons well qualified to deal with crises which may arise in connection with bush fires, and they consider that further restrictions should be imposed. I do not agree with that view. In an urgent matter such as this, one must accept a small degree of risk. The local authority has to reimburse the officer for expenses he is put to in

connection with a prosecution, and thus the local authority might be involved in costs which it should not be called upon to bear.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: The words in Subclause 3 "a road board (not being a local authority within the meaning of this Act)" have no meaning. Under Subclause 3 the local authority not being an authority within the meaning of the Act may be authorised to institute proceedings. How could a road board direct a bush fire control officer whom the board has not power to appoint?

Mr. WATTS: I have not extolled the virtues of the second proposed amendment which is to follow this one. I have merely supported the amendment before the Chair. Subclause 3 gives the local authority the necessary power.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: The amendment does not alter the meaning of Subclause 2. The member for Kataning wants to discuss the amendment without taking into account what will happen later.

Mr. CROSS: The Minister has entirely missed the point. He proposes to give more power to the bush fire control officer than is given to the Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, who cannot initiate a prosecution without authority from his board.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: What the member for Canning has said is a fact. I desire that the road board should have power to direct its bush fire control officer to institute proceedings. My object will be achieved if the Minister agrees to strike out the words "every bush fire control officer." I shall refrain from moving the insertion of any other words.

Mr. SEWARD: Subclause 2 seems to give authority to a bush fire control officer to take action for any breach of this measure irrespective of whether the fire occurs within his territory or outside it. Subclause 3 seems to me to confine the board's activities to offences committed within its district. My property is half in one district and half in another district. Suppose an offence is committed on my property, a road board may have to take action in another board's district. The clause should stand as printed. A fire might occur on the property of the chairman of the board, and then the board would have to authorise the launching of a prosecution against its chairman. That is dangerous.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2 the following words be struck out:—"and he shall be reimbursed out of the funds of the local authority within whose district the alleged offence is committed all costs and expenses which he may incur or be put to in or about such proceedings."

It is already provided that the local authority shall have only a moiety of the penalty, less expenses incurred. We are now to call upon the local authority to reimburse the bush fire officer out of a penalty, which may not be received, as the result of a prosecution that was not authorised, a prosecution that may prove a total failure.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: The local authority should at least pay the expenses of its own officer.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Whether he secures the fine or not?

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: It should pay those expenses because a fire control officer is the officer acting with the board's authority. He is the authorised person and the responsible officer. The local authority authorises the appointment of the man. The State pays the police, the magistrates and the forestry officers, and it is a fair thing that the local authority should reimburse the officer for action taken to prevent bush fires in its district. Local authorities have approved this Bill and they have not taken the exception to it taken by hon. members here.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 36—agreed to.

Clause 37—Evidence.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I move—

That the clause be struck out.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I oppose the clause. This is a drag-net clause and it is ten times worse than that which was thrown out last night.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: It is not a drag-net clause at all. It provides the means of a way out for a man. If a man is charged with lighting a fire within a prohibited period, this provides him with an opportunity of showing that he observed the conditions which would excuse the lighting of a fire. He is put in the position of being able to prove that the act he committed was lawful because he observed the requisite conditions.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister says this provides a way out. It looks to me as if it provides an easy way for the Government to put anyone inside. The Minister reads the clause in a different manner from that in which I read it. The Crown should prove its case up to the hilt, and not ask the defendant to prove that he did or did not do such and such a thing.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 38 to 40—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 3: Insert after the word "and" in lines 2 and 8 of subsection (5) the words "being a trained and registered midwifery nurse."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I propose to accept the amendment. After inquiries made when the Bill had gone through this House, I discovered that it would be possible for a generally trained nurse to take a three-months course in mothercraft and come to this State and be registered as a child welfare nurse without having had any experience whatever in midwifery. To prevent that I asked that these amendments be inserted in another place. I therefore move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 7: Delete the word "square" in line 3 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 11A and substitute the word "piece."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I agree to this amendment, although both the present matron and the previous matron of the Perth Public Hospital expressed the view that the square was the proper thing. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

[67]

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1937-38.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 11th November: Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Education (Hon. F. J. S. Wise, Minister.)

Vote—Education, £733,390 (partly considered).

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [5.57]: There is one aspect of the Education Vote with which I wish to deal. It does not particularly concern my electorate, but I think it concerns the electorates of most hon. members and that is the matter of providing some kind of educational facilities for children of those who are following the occupation of relief workers. The Main Roads Department recently put a camp of relief workers about midway between Kalgoorlie and Broad Arrow. It is about 11 or 12 miles from the nearest school and no facilities of any kind are provided for the education of the children of those men. A number of workers follow these jobs around. They are shifted from one job to another as portion of the personnel of the unit and their wives are roughing it with them because they realise that the men, not being on full-time employment, are not receiving sufficient wages to keep two homes together and it is better therefore for them to accompany their husbands, together with their children, to the road camps rather than endeavour to eke out an existence on less than a full-time employment wage in a town home, while allowing their husbands to live out on the job. I have taken the matter up with the Education Department because it affects two or three people living in my electorate. It would probably be found that in the camp there were workers from pretty well every electorate throughout the State. I had been advised by the Education Department that it had been the policy of the Main Roads Department to co-operate with the Education Department to the extent

of placing their camps reasonably near a school. I went to the Main Roads office and had a conversation with the engineer and secretary. I suggested that if they could not bring the whole of the workers at the camp into Kalgoorlie or Broad Arrow, they should at least endeavour to shift the married men with wives and children to the vicinity of a locality where the children could get schooling facilities. They undertook to consider that aspect of the case. I found out afterwards that instead of doing that, the secretary was kind enough to suggest to the Education Department that correspondence classes should be conducted for the children in the camps. I know the conditions that operate, and the facilities do not exist for carrying on correspondence classes for these children. If this work were undertaken, I know too that most of the writing would have to be done by the children on the bottom of up-turned kerosene tins. There are absolutely no facilities of any description for carrying on that form of education in the camp. I was wondering whether it would be possible for the Minister to pursue the investigation with a view to providing a mobile unit which could be shifted from job to job as the camps were moved. This mobile unit would constitute a classroom for the children, and it might also be possible to attach a room to it for the purpose of providing living accommodation for the teacher. Some few years ago there were between 30 and 40 children in the camp on the Norseman line, and it might be possible for the Public Works Department to provide a type of building that could easily be pulled down and transported from one work to another and erected again by bolting it together. I hope that for the sake of the children whose parents are compelled to follow the class of occupation to which I have referred, something will be done in the direction of providing a transportable type of building, in which to impart to the children some form of education. Whilst I recognise the value of correspondence classes conducted by the Education Department under ordinary conditions, I consider that under the conditions operating in respect to road gangs it would be impossible to do justice to the children. About three years ago the work of reballasting the Kalgoorlie-Esperance line was put in hand, and there

were between 30 and 40 children at the camps. Particularly when women are prepared to go out and live under inconvenient and uncomfortable conditions for the sake of being with their husbands and children, some provision should be made for the education of the children. The other night when discussing these Estimates reference was made to the matter of providing a milk supply for children attending schools. Whilst I thoroughly agree with the proposal, we should consider just how far it is possible to proceed along the road of providing nutriment for children attending schools. We must realise that if we are to provide milk to-day, the logical argument is that we must provide it next year as well, and we shall have to do so right along the line and then perhaps arrive at the position of having to provide all needs for children attending all schools. But there is something more important than that. When we get out into the backblocks, it is a question of providing educational facilities. This is the crying need outback, because there are in many places only the barest educational facilities.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Food is the first essential.

Mr. STYANTS: There are many in the backblocks who are getting ample food but they require educational facilities. If we are to provide a milk allowance, we must do it for all. It is no use providing it for sections only. Speaking to these Estimates the other evening, the member for Swan was very solicitous for the Director of Education who has just retired at the age of 65. Had the hon. member reserved some of his sympathy for many of those men who have served much longer periods than have the ex-Director in the service of the public of Western Australia and have been retired without anything in the shape of a pension, it would have been more appropriate. Scores of men have been put out of the Government service on reaching the age of 65 and without any pension at all. On looking up the pensions list I find that the ex-Director of Education is receiving something in the vicinity of £550 per annum—about £10 10s. per week. I am in favour of compulsory retirement at the age of 65, provided, of course, that something in the nature of superannuation or retiring allowance is given to the employee. If one commences work at the age of 15 and carries on until he arrives at the age of 65, he has worked for half a century, and so should be entitled to a spell and to pass

the few remaining years of his life in comfort. It is also to be remembered that there are just as competent young men entering the service as those who have reached the retiring age and whose services have been compulsorily dispensed with. It must be remembered too that some inducement should be held out to those young men as far as promotion is concerned. Another matter I wish to deal with is linked up with the education system; I refer to juvenile delinquency. Many children of school age commit misdemeanours and have to be brought before the courts of the land. In Kalgoorlie particularly a number of children have in recent months been held up as being real outlaws. The headmaster of the Kalgoorlie Central School has been very active in getting together a committee comprising representative citizens for the purpose of endeavouring to restrict the depredations of the young offenders. Exhaustive inquiries were made by myself in respect to the supposed misconduct of many of the goldfields youths, and what I found was that they were no worse than are the lads in any other part of the State.

The Minister for Mines: Many of them should never have been taken to the court at all.

Mr. STYANTS: That is so. There was quite an outcry in the newspapers, and under great scare headlines reference was made to the depredations committed by a number of boys. I have been able to make comparisons between the goldfields towns of Kalgoorlie and Boulder and the principal towns in the metropolitan area—Perth, Fremantle and Midland Junction. I found that in proportion to the population of the coastal and the goldfields centres, fewer offences were committed in Kalgoorlie and Boulder than in the metropolitan area. The position was supposed to have developed to such an extent on the goldfields that the Education Department and the Child Welfare Department between them sent a probationary and compulsory officer to be stationed at Kalgoorlie. Again, in justice to the children of Kalgoorlie it is only right to state that after that officer had been there for a month he reported that there was not sufficient to justify his being kept in the district. He said that the number of delinquent boys in the district was nothing in comparison to what one would have imagined from reading the newspapers. I also wish to pay a tribute to the Parents and

Citizens' Association for providing wireless equipment for the Kalgoorlie Central School. With other members, I believe that wireless will be a most important factor in connection with education in the future. I consider that standard equipments will have to be supplied by the Government. It should not be left to parents to club together, carry out social functions and collect donations for the purpose of furnishing any school with wireless. As I say, it will be almost compulsory for the State to provide standard wireless equipment for all schools.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [6.14]: I agree with some of the remarks made by the member who has just resumed his seat, on the need for providing better educational facilities for country school children; and whilst on that subject, I wish to pay a tribute to the ex-Director of Education, who has lately retired. On many occasions I called on Mr. Klein and submitted various requests, and always was he not only ready to accede to my wishes, if he found it at all possible to do so, but he was ready also to do his best to assist me to formulate a scheme that would achieve my objective.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. SEWARD: In the person of the ex-Director of Education the department has lost a capable and conscientious officer. I trust he will live for many years to enjoy a well-earned rest. I agree with the policy of retiring the higher officials at no more than 65 years of age. If that were not done, the department would lose a great number of their most efficient officers, as the outlook within the department would be extremely limited for them. The importance of making more money available for education in the country is stressed in the report of the Education Department, which was presented to the House early in the session. This document states—

It is felt that the farmer of to-day and of to-morrow needs to be one of our best educated individuals. He must be a good producer, an expert judge of soil and weather conditions, something of a chemist, a machinist, and a market expert, as well as many other things.

His groundwork of education is laid in the rural school. Many farmers must build entirely on this common school education. It is therefore felt that the Department must do its

very best to help the youth in the country school especially those who have passed through Class VI. and who are branching out into their post primary education.

This involves the expenditure of more money, and naturally the next question that arises is, where can the extra money be obtained? The time is long overdue for a revision of the subsidy the Government gives to the University. Owing to the lack of funds, it is impossible to give a great deal of these extra educational facilities in the country districts. That is what we are told. I do not agree with the policy of a free University, because I have seen it abused in many instances. Students who are well able to pay for their studies at the University will stay on there for a period twice as long as is necessary to enable them to take such degrees. If a boy or a girl wishes to prolong his or her stay at the University that is all right so long as such people are prepared to pay for so doing. The taxpayers should not be called upon to pay for the education of those students. The duty of the State is to see that every child, especially the children of parents who are not in a position to pay for higher education, are given every facility to qualify for the highest position in the land. That can be done by making available scholarships for children who are mentally equipped to pursue a higher course of study. The idea of giving free education to all is not in the best interests of the State or of all who are able to participate in such free education. The time is overdue for a revision of the subsidy given by the Government to this richly endowed institution. I wish to stress a request I mentioned a session or two ago, namely that of establishing a veterinary school at the Narrogin School of Agriculture. I can conceive of no better place for the establishment of such a school than at the institution at Narrogin. The Minister may say he has not the necessary veterinary officers available. It is that fact that urges me to stress the importance of this matter. A large amount of field work requires to be done. This entails a certain amount of laboratory work. What better use could be made of that work than that it should be carried out in a school where all the students are keenly interested in it? If a student goes to the Narrogin School of Agriculture, or any other institution of the kind, he does so with the object of learning as much as possible about agriculture and its

various branches. One of the most interesting courses that can be put before a student would be the research and laboratory work that is carried out by field and veterinary officers. The Minister may say he has no officers available. I know it is very difficult to get veterinary officers to carry on this important branch of the work.

The Minister for Agriculture: You cannot get them in the world.

Mr. SEWARD: The best breeding ground for the development of veterinary science in young men is at the School of Agriculture, where the students are so keen. A veterinary class there would prove of much greater advantage to all concerned than one established at the University. Students at the University are not as keenly interested in agriculture and all its branches as would be scholars at an agricultural college in the country. If the students at Narrogin had a class there and the services of an officer doing his research and laboratory work, I feel sure that some of them would be encouraged to take up a veterinary course and qualify as veterinary surgeons at the end of their time. I do not suggest that more veterinary officers should be obtained for this class. One departmental officer at present conducting experiments in his own laboratory could be moved to the Narrogin school, where the work he was doing could be carried on and where it would be of more importance in that it would be done in the presence and with the assistance of students of veterinary science at the institution. Narrogin is peculiarly suitable as a locality for the establishment of a veterinary class. It is the centre of a large agricultural district, and taps the country for about 100 miles all round. There are stock sales there three times a month and a large rural population. Indeed Narrogin may be described as one of the most important agricultural centres in the State. A school of agriculture is already established there and there is a large number of pupils in attendance. It is eminently suitable as a place where a veterinary officer could carry on his work. There is a limitless scope for field work there, and the students could take part in the experiments that were made. All this would fit them better for their farming activities and probably many of them would desire to become veterinary surgeons. The member for North-East Fremantle referred to manual training. Unfortunately I cannot

endorse the optimistic views of the hon. member with respect to making these facilities available. There is a centre in my electorate for which I have been trying to get a room established for manual work ever since I have been in Parliament. Although the Parents and Citizens' Association and the road board are prepared to meet half the cost of the room, I have been unable to get it established. I also draw attention to the wilful waste that is going on in the supply of unsuitable timber to the schools for the carrying out of manual work. I will read an extract from the report of the Education Department:—

The restriction of timber supplies to *pinus radiata* and jarrah is to be deplored. This experiment has proceeded so far now as to establish without any shadow of doubt the unsuitability of these two materials as the sole media for Manual Training woodwork instruction.

Only about half the quantity of training is now possible, and the quality suffers in the same way. *Pinus radiata* is too tough and uneven in quality to be a good medium for this purpose. It has, however, one good use. It will, if selected free from knots and shakes, make first class bench tops.

In two country schools in my electorate I was shown a supply of timber which consisted practically of knots. It was impossible to do anything with it. The report continues—

The amount of waste is in many cases up to 30 per cent. The supply of planed material as suggested by Mr. Kessell does not in any way alter this quality of the timber, and only leads to the retarding of the boys' training inasmuch as they do not get the value of using the timber straight from the saw bench.

Jarrah, on the other hand, is too hard and the supply has been of the poorer quality. Mr. Rutter, the manager of the State Saw Mills, admitted that he could not supply the really mild jarrah required for our work. No colour scheme is available as a means of training if these are the only timbers to be supplied in the future. This is a great loss educationally. How are the children to be shown the beauty to be woven into a piece of work devoid of variety in colour or texture?

The Director assured me he had exhausted all means for getting suitable timber supplied. His expert officers were overruled by an officer in the Treasury. The Treasury pleaded a shortage of funds. Unsuitable timber was purchased against the advice of the Education experts who should know the class of timber required. It amounted to a criminal waste, and the officer responsible should have his services dis-

pensed with. We talk about giving our children education, and yet we supply timber like that. As I have said, attention was drawn to the matter, not only in this year's report but in previous reports of the department. The Minister should take it up and see that the trouble is rectified. In this instance good money was deliberately wasted on the purchase of unsuitable wood.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [7.44]: I hope the Government will give consideration to the question of extending technical education in the country districts. The education system in the agricultural, pastoral and mining districts should serve a dual purpose, namely secondary and technical. The present age is calling loudly for skilled labour. In the country districts that can only be provided if the Government realises the importance of the situation, and provides the necessary facilities for the technical education of boys in the country. Whilst the speech of the member for Pingelly was commendable regarding certain aspects of rural life, I would point out that not every boy is fitted to be a farmer. Many boys in the country districts display distinct mechanical genius, but there is no possibility whatever of that characteristic being developed. Particularly in New South Wales and now in Victoria the authorities are endeavouring to deal with that phase. Railway coaches are provided, and fitted up as model workshops. They are sent through the rural districts so that the lads can thereby gain more than an ordinary acquaintance with mechanical appliances, thus expanding their technical knowledge. It is a great pity that much of our latent genius in the country districts should be starving for the lack of technical direction and knowledge that would fit them to take their place as more useful citizens than they can ever hope to be under existing conditions. The schools should be used not only for the ordinary daily routine of secondary education, but should be encouraged to provide manual training. Instead of being forced into second and third-rate, cheap, Yankee detective, moving picture stunts, our boys should be encouraged to attend classes where they could receive physical, manual and other training that is naturally dear to the hearts of healthy lads. I hope the Minister will consider

that phase. I have long thought we should prohibit the municipalities and road boards throughout the State from making available their halls for the purpose of trumpery, cheap-jack Yankee cowboy picture shows, which are doing a lot to pollute the youth of the State. Let the Yankees keep that sort of cheap rubbish within the four pegs of the country over which the star-spangled banner flies, and Australia will be the better for it. I do not wish to name any particular district, but in almost every important centre that sort of thing goes on. If eight or ten of the railway carriages could be equipped as model workshops and they were sent around the country districts, they would provide a greater interest for our boys. By that means lads could be taught elementary chemistry and gain a sound idea of mechanics and many other phases of industrial life that would enable them to equip themselves as useful citizens. The present condition of affairs is purely due to our educational system. Our secondary education is quite all right. As to the amount of money lavished on the University, possibly, in view of the results obtained, that may be said to be excusable. Not that I suggest that all the money we can afford would be wasted on the educational system which embraces the University, but we must remember that Western Australia is a small State with a limited amount of revenue at its disposal. While many people loudly applaud our system of free education from the primary schools to the University, there is much to be said for and against it. There are hundreds of our citizens who have not displayed any patriotism in the form of endowments in favour of the University. There have been some noble and striking exceptions, and their assistance has made possible the fine institution we have in our midst, but there are hundreds of wealthy citizens who have dodged their obligations with regard to contributions towards the furtherance of our educational system, and the improvement of our institutions. When the time comes for them to take their departure from our midst, they forget that particular institution known as the University, when they provide for the transmission of their wealth to various quarters. I shall not over-stress that point beyond intimating that the last word has not been said regarding the proper and equitable distribution of the money at our disposal. I trust

the Minister will pay attention to the point I made regarding the provision of technical education and training in the farming, pastoral and mining districts. That phase of education has been taken up in other countries where it is realised that education along those lines gives boys a greater community interest in each other's welfare. Therein is the trouble regarding 75 per cent. of our delinquent youth. It is not our youth that is wrong, but our system. Instead of forcing our boys into the street and into cheap picture shows, we should provide them with more healthy interests. If we neglect to do so, we will not get the results from our youth that we should expect.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply) [7.52]: I desire to express my appreciation of the contributions that have been made to the debate on the Vote, and more particularly do I acknowledge the general absence of parochialism. Many practical suggestions have been made. Where urgent district demands have been indicated I have taken a particular note of the items, and I shall see that they receive attention. With regard to the remarks of the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, I can inform the Committee that I already have specifications and plans in hand in connection with the coaches to which he referred. I think that is very important work, and I hope that something may be done in that respect in the near future. I shall not particularise further, but I can assure members that their complaints have been noted and will receive full attention.

Vote put and passed.

Department of the Minister for Police
(Hon. W. H. Kitson, Minister; Hon. F. J. S. Wise in charge of the Vote):

Vote—Police, £245,065:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [7.54]: I thought the Committee might not desire me to comment on this particular Vote, but as there has been some indication of a wish to the contrary, I shall be brief. With regard to the operations of the Police Department, very many demands have been made upon the staff and for districts to be equipped with further stations during the past year. Particularly has that been so in mining centres

where populations grow so quickly and where police protection is sought. Many stations have been erected and equipped during the year, more particularly in the mining districts. That has also been the position in some of the near metropolitan districts where there have been increases in the population. As at the 30th June last, the strength of the Police Force was 585, and towards the end of September, 22 new recruits were appointed. There are 13 cadets employed by the department, and it is possible that the staff, which at the moment is as high as it has ever been, is at present sufficient to cope with the ever-increasing demands made upon the force. Several alterations have been made in connection with administrative matters, and in country districts particularly improvements have been effected by doing away with the slow method of horse transport and the provision of motors in lieu. In many instances it has been possible to make use of the motor vehicles owned by individual police officers, and wherever that change has been made it has been found that the work of the officers has been performed more expeditiously and with increased economy. The new wireless plant at the Central Police Station has now been furnished with one of the most up-to-date equipments of the kind in Australia, and it has been claimed for it that it has definitely been a deterrent to crime. Had it not been for the installation of the wireless set at headquarters we probably would have had crimes of a major character in Perth before now. As is known, a close inspection is made with regard to the quality of liquor available to the public and the Weights and Measures branch has dealt with appliances used in the weighing of all sorts of commodities. The weight of packages is checked and that involves a considerable amount of attention from the officers of the branch. Over 20,000 packages were examined, and under 600 were rejected during the year. It is interesting to know that we now have six women police employed by the department, three being engaged in Perth, two in Fremantle and one at Kalgoorlie. Their work is more particularly in connection with social welfare, and excellent service has been rendered to the State by the women police in connection with uncontrollable girls. With regard to the administration of the Traffic Act, attention has been given, and is still being given, to the question of providing automatic signals at points within the city

boundaries where it is considered they could be installed with great advantage. Particularly does that apply in the vicinity of the larger State schools. With the expansion of the city, we have now many schools in populous centres that were formerly almost in the country areas. Those schools are now situated on main arterial roads, and therefore they constitute a menace not only to the children but to traffic.

Mr. Marshall: I thought the proportion of children was not so very great; but now you have mentioned it, I shall look up the matter.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Attention has been given to that particular phase and also in connection with the lighting of the city block. It is hoped that before long it will be possible to develop some scheme for the installation of automatic signals within the city boundaries. As members may desire to discuss this particular Vote, I shall not deal further with it, but commend it to the Committee.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.0]: I do not desire that the debate on this Vote should be very long. I congratulate the Commissioner of Police, who is a most enthusiastic and exceedingly active administrator, but also I sympathise with him because of the severe handicap under which he labours. One has only to observe what happens every day in the city and the metropolitan area to know the great difficulty that department must find in administering the many laws which come under the supervision of the members of the force, particularly the traffic laws. The Commissioner of Police is a wonderful organiser and his capacity in that regard has been demonstrated by virtue of his position. He is a most enthusiastic man, but all his abilities and capacity will never be fully recognised until he has at his disposal sufficient material on which to work. Breaches of the Traffic Act are to be observed at every hour of the day in every part of the State. That is not to be wondered at, because it is utterly impossible for the number of men at the Commissioner's disposal to give proper supervision to the many breaches of the Act and the way in which certain persons ignore the traffic laws. Over the whole of the State this year we have had 195 fatal accidents.

Mr. Withers: That is not due to lack of control in the metropolitan area.

Mr. MARSHALL: I agree, but even so, the fact is an astounding one. The figures run as follows:—There were 4,357 accidents reported in the metropolitan area, being an increase of 752 on last year's figures. Those accidents are classified as follows:—Fatal 60, serious 485, minor 3,812. Actually 62 were killed. There were two level crossing accidents. That is in the metropolitan area. But of course if people in the metropolitan area can break the law with impunity, all other citizens throughout the State are entitled to do the same. So we find that during the year throughout the State, other than the metropolitan area, there were 133 fatal accidents and 1,076 persons were injured.

Mr. Styants: Where did you get those figures?

Mr. MARSHALL: From the Police Commissioner's report. The total number of injured was 5,433 and there were 195 killed. Those figures relate to the whole State. We ourselves are not without blame for our lack of interest in the laws that we have put on the statute-book. It is not possible for Commissioner Hunter and his officers to give better results, because of the lack of material, the shortage of men and the shortage of transport for those men to supervise and enforce the traffic laws within the metropolitan area. What I am saying is not information to hon. members, because it is obvious that every day on the highways one can see individuals flouting the laws by tearing along the road at 50 or 60 miles an hour and sometimes more. But unfortunately there are no policemen to arrest them, and because of their immunity from proper supervision those drivers become utterly reckless, until finally some unfortunate man or woman is murdered as the result of their speed. I suggest to members that if they want to observe exactly how people regard the traffic laws in the metropolitan area they should go to St. George's-terrace or Hay-street after dark, when they will find that out of every 12 cars that pass, there will be 10 with defective lighting at the rear, with the result that nobody can read the number on the car. Some of them, of course, have no lights at all.

Mr. Seward: Many have only one front light.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is true, for I have seen scores of them in that predicament. But under ordinary circumstances the one light in front is usually a good one and can

be observed by the approaching traffic. The point is that we are encouraging the hit-and-run driver, because he knows quite well that if he can get a start at all from the scene of the accident there is no possible hope of anybody identifying his number, so defective is the lighting that is supposed to illuminate that number. Again, the number that any individual ultimately to become a victim of a motor smash should scrutinise is the front registration number for he has a chance to read that one perhaps, but he will not see it once he has been hit by a motor car. But it is utterly impossible to take the registration number on the average car by night, when the car is approaching, because that front number plate is not lit at all. So if a pedestrian is hit, his only chance is to pick himself up and get a look at the tail number plate as the car goes on. However, I understand that not many victims can do that. So, as I say, there were 195 fatal accidents during the year. It is time the Commissioner of Police took up this matter seriously, for there are far too many accidents in the State and in the city in particular. Many drivers flout the law and make a veritable speedway of the highways of the city, while the police are helpless because of their insufficient numbers.

Mr. Nulsen: Do not you think the pedestrians are partly to blame?

Mr. MARSHALL: I think they are more to be pitied than blamed.

Mr. Nulsen: But I mean because of their jay-walking.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not see much jay-walking in the streets, although there is a good deal of crossing outside of the crosswalks provided. But if one goes to Mr. Hunter's office and has a look at the actual spot where a fatal accident occurred, it will be found that it is not in the congested areas of the city. The trouble starts when the shiny-headed drivers of motor vehicles get going. Nothing happens while they are in the congested area, but when they open out to display their ability as drivers, only too frequently something serious does happen. Some of those flash drivers could not drive a horse and dray if they were put to the test, for they would be more likely to fall off the vehicle. If one wants to see the actual test for motor bike riding, and desires to note the number of champion riders in this State, one has only to go to a speedway.

There one can observe capacity to ride those machines, because in all open events, where they all go off the one mark, it is quickly seen that if there are, say, 10 starters, at least five of them might just as well have stayed at home. So not all of them are the capable men that they pretend to be when scooting around the streets and killing pedestrians. Incidentally sometimes they kill themselves, so we ought to try to protect them from the result of their own folly. I do not know why we should so frequently hear so much talk about living in a fast age. For after all, when a man has a motor vehicle that can do 60 or 70 or 80 miles an hour I do not know why it is he should be in a hurry. If one could hold up any of these men that are speeding and ask him where he was going, probably he would not be able to say. It is merely his mad idea to speed. The Police Commissioner's figures bear out that statement, for they show distinctly how these accidents occur and to what cause they were due. Of the total accidents, 2,060 were due to excessive speed and 2,209 to careless driving. So out of about 5,000 accidents, some 4,000 were due to speeding and careless driving.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What about drunken driving?

Mr. MARSHALL: That is not specified in this list, but I do not think it would account for a very big percentage of accidents.

Mr. Styants: Such drivers may not be actually drunk, but their minds are inflamed by liquor.

Mr. MARSHALL: On the other hand, the hon. member would be astounded at the petty matters that inspire some of them; even a blonde-haired flapper will lift some of them along at an amazing speed.

Mr. Thorn interjected.

Mr. MARSHALL: There might be something in what the hon. member says, but what I am suggesting is that this aspect of our social life cannot be allowed to continue in this State. What is required is the taking of more drastic action. We cannot allow motorists to go on murdering other people at this rate per annum. No member would argue that Commissioner Hunter or Inspector Lewis is not capable of organising a quite effective control, but the trouble is they cannot do it if they have not the necessary material at their disposal. I do not care what remedies they may take, but it

is about time that we gave the Traffic Act another overhaul. In France the penalties are set out in the Traffic Act and there is no discrimination allowed to a judge. If one is convicted of a certain form of traffic offence, the punishment is definitely set out.

Mr. Nulsen: But there is no control over them in France.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not required, because under the Act their liberty is taken from them. That is why no control is required, because if a motorist hits anyone, and is convicted, no influence can save him from the punishment that is definitely set out. It is about time that we considered having something of the sort here.

The Minister for Mines: And if a man's license were taken from him there would be a huge squeal over it.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is true. We had such a case recently. I still think the Commissioner of Police was right and the magistrate was wrong. Because a driving license is merely an annual affair. It is issued for a year and I think the Commissioner of Police was quite right, that he could have withheld it, notwithstanding that there is provision in the Act allowing a man to appeal to a magistrate. The magistrate could only re-grant the license for the unexpired period. Once a license has expired, it reverts to the Commissioner of Police or his officers. It is a bitter pill to me to see this sort of thing going on. I live in a suburb on the south side of the river where there is an excellent road, and I say advisedly that it is only by the grace of God that a lot more people are not killed there. If members went to the Belmont road on Saturday afternoon when races are being held, or on Sunday, they would see enough to make their hair stand on end. Each motorist seems bent on passing the other, and no regard appears to be paid to the life of anybody. We have reached the stage when motorists are taking matters into their own hands and doing as they like, and this is due to lack of stricter control and stricter legislation. Though property and life are jeopardised, no consideration is shown. In the major proportion of fatal accidents innocent members of the community are involved. I admit that some of the people killed have been drivers of cars or

other vehicles, but the majority have been pedestrians, and it is a scandalous shame that we should sit by and see so many people maimed for life or fatally injured owing to the lust for speed on the part of motorists when there is no great occasion for speed. It is time we introduced drastic laws to deal with the matter and laid down definite penalties for offences. Not until we do that are we likely to secure some improvement. There is another matter to which I could have referred, but I shall deal with it when moving a Bill in the near future. I have known the Commissioner of Police from the time when he was a constable in the Force, and I am pleased to see him in charge of the department. He differs greatly from his predecessors. He is most considerate to his officers and is enthusiastic in the extreme. He is a wonderful organiser and knows what to do, but he cannot do it unless Parliament helps him. It is our job to protect the lives of the people, and the sooner we do it, the better it will be, probably for us and ours. We are all born but none is yet buried, and our turn may be next.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.18]: I wish to refer to the Bentley motor car and its activities. I understand that a few nights ago there was an exciting scene in one of the electorates near Perth. A few people thought they had discovered the gentleman in the dressing gown with nothing underneath, who was in the habit of disturbing ladies at 3 o'clock in the morning. The gentleman was supposed to have been identified, because I am informed that he was asked for a match. An excited crowd chased after him, but he escaped along a right-of-way.

Mr. Thorn: Was that at Claremont?

Mr. NORTH: I shall not mention the suburb. One of the spectators rang the police and stated, "We have got the gentleman in the dressing gown. Please send the Bentley." The policeman replied, "I am very sorry, but I cannot leave because I am here alone. Will you please ring the central office and get the Bentley to do the job?" The point was that the spectators felt they had done their duty in getting into touch with the local police station, and nothing more was done. The constable at the local station said it was for the public to ring up the central station direct. Consequently our

friend escaped, and is still at large. It should be made clear whether, when a disturbance occurs at night, the public should ring up the local station or headquarters. If the local station was advised, surely the constable on duty could get into touch with headquarters. A lot of trouble has occurred at night, and the Bentley car is a wonderful institution; but the public should be informed whom to ring in order to get the car. I have not given any names of people or places because I cannot substantiate anything, but certain people approached me and I promised to raise the question generally instead of making a specific charge, leaving it to the department to take what action might be considered necessary.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [8.21]: I intend to take a very serious step by moving—

That the Vote be reduced by £1.

My object is to call attention to the growth of starting-price betting. I am sure every member of the House is aware that during the last few years the growth of starting-price betting shops has been abnormal. In almost every suburb they have grown from a few to perhaps a score. In fact, the position has become so serious that the other day a boy who was unemployed was put into a starting-price betting shop by relations in order to give him employment. The relations took the shop and started him off with £20. I do not know what he would have done had he been required to pay a fine, but that is indicative of what is going on all through our suburbs. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) has mentioned that the Commissioner of Police has not sufficient material to enable him to deal with the traffic. I suggest that the Commissioner has not sufficient police to enable him to deal with starting-price betting. If members do not know, I am sure any schoolboy could direct them to starting-price betting shops within a stone's throw of this House. On race days these shops in the city are crowded with old women, old men, young women and young men, and one may see boys or men who have received relief on Wednesday betting at the starting-price shops on Saturdays or other race days. It is known to all members, I think, that one can make a bet through the greengrocer and other tradesmen who call at the back door. They will take a bet for the occupier. The fact is

that starting-price betting is securing such a hold upon the young people of this country that if something is not done at once, the morality of the nation will be seriously undermined. That is why I am taking the drastic step of moving for a reduction of this Vote. I feel that it is about time the Government did something in the matter. It is stated repeatedly from almost every pulpit and at public meetings that the Government prefer to collect the fines imposed on starting-price bookmakers rather than close up their shops. I have been looking up the Acts of Parliament, and I have found that all those places could be closed within a week if Parliament were determined that they should be closed. It would be quite easy to close them under existing laws. There is no need for further legislation. If the Commissioner of Police has not sufficient men to close up the betting shops, then it is the duty of the Government to see that he is given sufficient men to raid and close up those places. I should like to suggest that the people found in starting-price betting shops should also be arrested and imprisoned or fined. The Minister for Justice knows that I have taken great interest in many of the men who have been fined. I have felt terribly sorry for them. Recently a man came to me with a request that I should pay his fine of £60. I went to the Minister because I was sorry for the man, who had a sick wife and three children. I was certainly sorry to see him sent to prison. I asked him how he could pay, and he replied that he did not know. He told me he had no other means of getting a living, and I discovered that he had been fined on no fewer than five occasions. Surely there is something wrong if we allow a man to be fined five times and then to offend again. He is still at the same game. I also know of respectable tenants having been evicted from their shops, which have been taken over by starting-price betting men, because they could pay a higher rent than could the previous tenants. I consider it a disgrace to this young country that the Police Department do not squash the starting-price betting shops at once, and, as I have said, that could be done without any further legislation.

Motion (to reduce Vote) put and negatived.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [8.27]: The member for Murchison (Mr.

Marshall) has referred to the control of traffic in the metropolitan area. I do not wish to enlarge upon what he has said, but I should like to urge the Minister, now that the summer has arrived, to arrange for the police on point duty to be attired more suitably. On such a hot day as to-day has been, it is ridiculous to have men dressed in heavy serge uniforms standing in the centre of the street regulating the traffic.

Mr. Withers: They should have a dressing gown with nothing underneath.

Mr. LAMBERT: It appeals to me as barbarous to expose those men to the heat of summer without any protection whatever. Members of the force are giving very good service in the control of traffic, but they should certainly be supplied not only with more suitable clothing but with helmets. Arrangements could easily be made for men on point duty to be provided with light clothing in keeping with the climatic conditions. Many members of the force have complained to me on this score. I believe that those who are using the roads would probably not be averse to contributing half a dozen suitable uniforms for those men. I am not hoping that as the result of these observations I shall receive any preference at the hands of the traffic police, as has been suggested by an hon. member. The traffic police usually pull me up in an abrupt manner. As a rule motorists deserve it. There is a serious matter mentioned in this evening's newspaper. A man named Morrison, of whom I have a slight knowledge, has been carrying on business as a private detective. The man's conduct proves absolutely that he has been indulging in blackmail. It is time the Government devised some means of stopping unscrupulous scamps of this type from plying for hire as private detectives.

The CHAIRMAN: How does the hon. member connect that with the Police Estimates?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Commissioner of Police should have power to grant or to refuse permits to men to act as private detectives.

Mr. Hughes: Are you speaking without prejudice?

Mr. LAMBERT: Definitely. It is utterly wrong to allow men of the type of Morrison to set up in business as private detectives and practically levy open black-

mail, or semi-blackmail, to the extent that man has done. I knew what would be the ultimate end of him, sooner or later. I hope the Minister for Police will take notice of the incident and see whether steps cannot be taken to prevent the blackmailing of decent citizens. When I saw that this person was setting up as a private detective, I had intended, knowing his record, to bring the matter forward. Unfortunately what I have said applies not only to him but also to others who may set up as private detectives and then go into the divorce court and swear away a man's or a woman's character.

Hon. P. Collier: They are an absolute nuisance!

Mr. LAMBERT: As the years fly past, one may run into indiscretions; and those indiscretions are likely to be exaggerated by private detectives.

Hon. P. Collier: But as the years speed by, one becomes immune!

Mr. LAMBERT: I say it more in sorrow than in anger that the immunity is here now. At all events, I do hope the Minister for Police will confer with the Commissioner so that these public nuisances may be suppressed.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [8.35]: I am sorry the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) is jealous because other people succeed where he fails. There is one aspect as to which I join with the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver), though not from her standpoint. I regard the prosecution of starting price bookmakers as a ridiculous and absurd business. Taking up any newspaper any day, we find it filled with the latest information concerning racing, and the form and pedigrees of horses, and prices. Everything that can be done is done to interest people in betting. When I was in South Australia recently, the Premier of that State, Mr. Butler, put the position cleverly. The leading paper had written a scathing article of three-quarters of a column denouncing street betting and taking the Premier to task because he did not do something to stop it. Mr. Butler said in reply, "Here is a paper and on the outside you find three-quarters of a column of virtue, and inside you find two pages of vice." That is what is now happening in Western Australia. Everything possible is done to induce people to bet.

Mr. Marshall: It goes right into the home by wireless.

Mr. HUGHES: It is only natural that as the result of intense propaganda people become interested in betting. Some of the newspapers which periodically attack starting price betting could, if they really believed betting to be an evil, do a great deal to stop it by banning from their columns all references to horse racing and betting. That would go to the root of the evil. I do not for a moment believe that betting will be stopped. I have often heard it said that Australia is a betting nation, but I do not think we are more a betting nation than any other nation in the world. A couple of thousand years ago people used to draw lots to decide whether they would go to war or not, and troublesome questions were determined by the casting of lots. What has happened here is that racing and its control have got into a chaotic state. We should now devote our energies to an examination of the position of betting, and make up our minds whether or not we will allow betting. If we are going to allow it, we must lay down the conditions under which it shall be allowed. To-day we have the deplorable spectacle of the law with regard to gambling having fallen into utter disrespect. When a person comes into court to lay a charge of fraud and tells the court that his occupation is that of commission agent, the magistrate says, "Oh, starting-price bookmaker!" Into such disrepute have the gambling laws fallen. It does not cause the magistrate the slightest surprise that a person should come into court any day, "I am running an unlawful business, and I want you to deal with this man because while I was running an unlawful business he tried to put an unlawful trick over me." Evidently the magistrate has no respect for the betting laws. He knows that a wealthy man can run a gambling den or a common gaming house and obtain the assistance of the police to enable him to do it, but that a poor man trying to cater for other poor men is visited with the utmost rigour of the law. We know that it is unlawful for anyone to bet. We know, and every policeman knows, that one could go to the premises of the West Australian Turf Club and arrest the secretary of that club for conducting a common gaming house. Again, there is no authority for bookmakers to bet on racecourses. I once said to a young officer who was displaying a lot of enthusi-

asm in his work amongst starting price bookmakers, "Why don't you go out on the racecourses and arrest those who are breaking the law there?" He replied, "I know I could do it all right, but if I did it I might as well pack my port for Broome that night." What a deplorable state the law has got into! The men employed to enforce the law know that they must not enforce it against certain lawbreakers but must enforce it against others. The Western Australian Turf Club is a non-proprietary club, and the whole of its profits go back into the sport. It is the only kind of race club that I would allow. On the other hand we have proprietary clubs, clubs owned and controlled by private individuals and run entirely for the profit of private individuals. Those proprietary clubs are not only allowed to have bookmakers plying their calling on the courses in defiance of the law, but when they want to run their common gaming houses they send along to the Police Department and get a number of police officers to attend and see that the law-breaking is done in an orderly way. The Commissioner of Police is obliged to furnish these influential law-breakers with his officers to assist them to carry out their unlawful business. All the racing clubs are using the totalisator. Now, Section 15 of the Totalisator Act of 1912, which so far as I am aware remains unrepealed, reads—

No license shall be granted to any club under this Act unless the Colonial Treasurer is satisfied that no profits or gains of any such club are divisible amongst the individual members thereof or any of them.

Yet numerous proprietary clubs in Western Australia are known by everybody to be run for the profit of private individuals, and these clubs are permitted to use the totalisator. I wonder how it comes about that the Treasurer grants permission to those clubs to use the totalisator when he knows very well that their use of it is in direct contravention of a statute passed by this Parliament? The first step towards the re-organisation of racing in Western Australia is to abolish the proprietary clubs.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away from the Police Estimates now.

Mr. HUGHES: If this is not a matter that comes within the purview of the Police Department—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must stick to the Police Vote.

Mr. HUGHES: Is it not the business of the Minister for Police to say to the Commissioner, "We want you to enforce the law impartially. Never mind whether it is against an influential racecourse owner, never mind if he is a millionaire, we want your officers to enforce the law against him just as they do against a boy like the one mentioned by the member for Subiaco, who started with £20."*

Mr. Marshall: Let the police go down to the Stock Exchange too.

Mr. HUGHES: The Stock Exchange is not so bad, because here we have a statute definitely stating that the totalisator shall not be used on proprietary courses. The statute definitely says that those places are common gaming houses.

Mr. Marshall: I respectfully suggest that the Stock Exchange is a common gaming house too. It is all common gambling.

Mr. HUGHES: I blame the magistrate for the unsatisfactory condition of the law to-day. Every now and again when there is some prodding in the shape of propaganda from the daily Press about starting price betting the magistrate increases the fines. It will be noticed that after an attack has been made the fines have jumped from £35 to £50 for a first offence. The fines appear to have stayed now at £50 for a first offence. What the magistrate should do above all things is to see that his court is not brought into contempt and made the subject of injustice. The magistrate should say to Parliament, "I have done my utmost with the legislation at my command to stamp out this evil, and cannot do it. It is the business of Parliament to tackle this question of the enforcement of the law against gambling, and until it does I will further add to the burlesque by fining every delinquent a shilling." One of his predecessors, when an influential man was prosecuted for running a common gaming house, fined him 2s. for the first offence and 1s. for the second. Consequently he was not brought up a third time because it was apparently thought that 6d. was not worth while. Although we provide all these facilities for the men who can afford to go to the racecourse to gamble, most people are not in a position to attend a racecourse. The expense of getting there is too great and the charges to go in are too high.

The CHAIRMAN: That does not come under the Police Estimates. The hon. member can deal with the abolition of gambling,

but he must not deal with railways or Crown law matters.

Mr. HUGHES: As a poor individual cannot gamble under police protection at the racecourse he is forced to have a gamble in the city. Consequently certain people have set themselves up as starting-price bookmakers, and are catering for the demands of those who want to bet but whose income is limited and who are unable to go where they will be under police protection. The starting-price bookmakers do exactly what the proprietary racing clubs do—they run a common gaming house for the sake of profit, but they are proceeded against with the utmost rigour of the law. Periodically—and I do not say they are going out of their turn because I think the arrangement between the police and the law-breakers is well organised in this particular branch of law-breaking—periodically the police go round and raid the starting-price bookmakers who are haled before the court and fined substantial sums. Nobody blames the starting-price bookmaker and nobody regards him as a criminal. When detectives go out and do police work they are ashamed of the job because they do not regard it as police work. They think they are called upon to victimise one section of the community. If there were an inquiry into this aspect of the administration of the law and the private police and the juniors who actually do the work were allowed to come forward, they would complain that it is an unsavoury job that they are called upon to perform, that they do not regard starting price bookmakers as lawbreakers, and that they consider they are being unfairly dealt with by being compelled to enforce the law against the starting-price bookmakers when they know that other people in a more influential position can break the law with impunity. The police should not go on enforcing the law in this regard. The Commissioner of Police should take a stand on the matter. He should tell his Minister that, while he is there to administer the law, he is not going to be a party any longer to this hypocritical enforcement of the law against the bottom dog, while the top dog is protected, and in that way throw the responsibility right on to the Minister for Police who, after all, is the responsible party. The Minister for Police is responsible for seeing—if there is a weakness in the law that makes it difficult for the police to enforce compliance with the law—that the whole problem

is tackled and comprehensive legislation brought down to enable betting, if we are going to allow it to be indulged in, to be indulged in just as much by the poor man as by the rich man. The poor man of East Perth is just as much entitled to have a bet on the races, if he feels inclined, as is the rich man from Claremont or West Perth or any other aristocratic suburb.

Mr. Marshall: Or, say, Subiaco.

Mr. HUGHES: The way in which the law is being enforced and the way in which the police are being held back from enforcing it impartially is bringing disrespect for the law, while there are also suggestions of corruption, and many complaints about the manner of its enforcement. Those who are obliged to do the job feel that it is victimisation. The administration of the betting law to-day is a comedy. It is a burlesque from start to finish because the magistrate knows that in nine cases out of ten when he fines a man for an offence he is fining a dummy, and not the real lawbreaker at all. The police know that, too. The police know they are not arresting the real lawbreaker but are arresting a man who, for a small fee, has arranged to take the consequences of an unlawful act. Every member of this House knows that when these men appear in the court someone else is being punished by proxy.

Mr. North: It is a form of taxation.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. I want to raise a protest against the working man being penalised and against the penalisation of the starting-price bookmaker who caters for the working man, while wealthy and influential lawbreakers are able to go free. I hope there will be enough backbone in this Parliament to tackle the question and so rearrange the whole administration of the betting law that rich and poor will be placed on the same footing, and so that if the working man wants to have a bet to the limit of his capacity he shall be allowed to do so without the degradation and humiliation attaching to it to-day.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Where would you let him have his bet? Anywhere he liked to have it?

Mr. Marshall: You have yours where you like.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am not asking you.

Mr. HUGHES: I would suggest that the whole of the laws governing racing and betting should be reviewed.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I want to know where you are going to let them have their bets? At the street corners?

Mr. HUGHES: If betting is allowed on the racecourse, then it should be allowed on the street corners. Why the difference? Why should it not be an offence for a man to go to a property that is owned by a private individual and pay him a fee for the privilege of going in and betting if a man who bets on the street corner is to have the law enforced against him? The Government dare not enforce the law against punters. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) would not for one minute stand up against the Government if an attempt were made to arrest punters, and prosecute them. I think that the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) in a weak moment suggested that punters should be arrested and prosecuted.

Hon. P. Collier: In a strong moment.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member knows that the Government dare not do it. They dare not go out to-morrow and arrest those men. Just imagine the police going around the betting shops of Kalgoorlie and Boulder and arresting all the miners having a bet on Saturday afternoon. Hotfoot there would be information from the gold-fields that the prosecutions had to be stopped.

Hon. P. Collier: I would go all the way to suppress shop betting, as has been done in Queensland.

Mr. HUGHES: Would the hon. member go to the same extent with the proprietary racing clubs?

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, I would.

Mr. HUGHES: And stamp out the W.A.T.C. too?

Hon. P. Collier: I am not giving any opinion on that. I would go as far as Queensland in regard to proprietary clubs, and the betting shops.

Hon. W. D. Johnson interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member is afraid you will do that.

Hon. P. Collier: I will support any proposition brought before this House in that direction.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member would not have my support to give the right to those who can afford it to go to expensive racecourses to bet if he is going to stop the ordinary working man from betting as

well. The question is arguable, but I would not support the member for Boulder, or any other member, who is going to discriminate and say that one person may break the law and another may not, either with regard to betting or anything else.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are preaching—

Mr. HUGHES: I am preaching that there should be no arrests for starting-price betting.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are discriminating the whole time.

Hon. P. Collier: The whole law needs reviewing entirely.

Mr. HUGHES: I agree. We should make up our minds whether betting is to be allowed at all, and if so to what extent, and having made up our minds and passed the necessary legislation, the Minister for Police should then tell the Commissioner of Police to enforce the law impartially against rich and poor.

Hon. P. Collier: I agree with that.

Mr. HUGHES: Unfortunately the Government seems to have abandoned its function of law-making. I hope the Minister for Police will do the only decent and honest thing for him to do, and that is, tell the Commissioner of Police either that the law is to be enforced against the wealthy lawbreaker, and against the proprietary clubs, and the totalisator is not to be used in contravention of the Act, or do the decent and fair thing by saying, "Leave the starting-price bookmaker alone, and let the working man have a bet in comfort so long as the rich man can break the law with impunity." If the Minister did that he would do something to restore and rehabilitate respect for the law, not only in the minds of the general public, but in the minds of those administering it in an administrative and judicial capacity. I consider the king man is the magistrate. He could put an end to the burlesque: he could say to-morrow, "I am not going to be a party to this kind of thing any longer."

The CHAIRMAN: The magistrate is not under consideration in these Estimates.

Mr. HUGHES: I might find the opportunity to deal with a number of these things in the future without the restriction of the Chairman, but I hope the Minister for Police will intimate to the Committee whether he intends to perpetuate this farce so far as the betting law is concerned.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [9.3]: I support the member for Murchison in much of what he has said in respect to the non-observance of the traffic laws in the metropolitan area to-day but I am not going quite to the extreme length to which he went in his blind prejudice against the drivers of motor vehicles. Because as one who has driven a car for years in the metropolitan area I know that but for the constant vigilance of the drivers, there would be ten times the number of accidents that are taking place from year to year. The stupidity and carelessness of the pedestrians in many cases are really astonishing.

Mr. Marshall: Do not you think that the pedestrian has any right to the road?

Mr. STYANTS: I do, but the motorist also has a right to the road because he pays a license for his vehicle and a license for authority to drive that vehicle.

Mr. Marshall: And he does a lot more in the vehicle than out of it.

Mr. STYANTS: I often think that accidents involving fatalities are caused by the stupidity and negligence of pedestrians, but I am not going to say that one section is more culpable than the other. I believe, however, that the Traffic Branch of the Police Department should pay greater attention to the major offences being committed. We find every day with the exception of Sunday, that there is a police patrol going round the city streets putting a blue chalk mark on the tyres of vehicles that have been left standing for more than 15 minutes alongside the kerb. We find also that every day in the police court a number of motorists are fined for minor offences of that description where no danger to life or property is involved. Yet if we go further afield we will see flagrant breaches of the traffic laws taking place day and night, breaches involving the safety of human life and damage perhaps to valuable vehicles. One has only to drive from Perth to Fremantle or to Midland Junction or Armadale and back to come across dozens of cases, at night time, of course, of dazzling head lights. I frequently drive a car around the metropolitan area, and how people can get away with offences of that kind is a mystery to me. In addition to that it will be found that many vehicles take up more than their fair share of the road. These are not isolated instances; they are happening every night and at every hour of the night in the metropolitan area. In many cases too, one

can go on the same journey and find cars running with only one headlight and that headlight on the offside. That is a distinct menace to all traffic because the light can be mistaken for the headlight of a motor bicycle and in such a case it is not always an easy matter to avoid a collision. I have also driven around the main block in the city and have passed cars without headlights. But that is not as flagrant an offence as cars with one light only or with dazzling headlights. As the member for Murchison said, quite a number of cars are often seen with defective tail lights or without any tail light at all. I am not so concerned about that because if the driver himself has a reasonably good headlight, he can see the car in front of him, even though that car has not a tail light. From the point of view of identification, however, it is a serious matter for a car not to possess a tail light. I am pleased to see that the police are going to enforce the regulations that tail lights of all cars must be operated by an independent switch. This will prevent what I suppose happens now—a driver, in the event of trouble, switching off his tail light to avoid the number being seen. Another source of annoyance on the road is that heavy vehicles, generally motor trucks, monopolise the road. They will definitely claim more than half of the thoroughfare and to pass that heavy vehicle one often has to go off the made road on to the loose material at the side. The driver of the heavy vehicle knows that he has the pull on the man who is driving a lighter car, and does not give way to permit the lighter car to pass him.

Mr. Thorn: You could prosecute him.

Mr. STYANTS: I do not like being an informer under any conditions; but I was almost tempted to do so the other day because I was nearly knocked over at a cross walk and in the heat of the moment I took the number of the car. However, on calmer reflection I decided not to take any action. Another breach of the traffic laws that is rampant in the city streets is committed by boys on push bikes. Often they ride without a light of any description and thus they are a menace to themselves and to drivers of motor vehicles. Very often they will ride along with their hands off the handle-bars, while at other times motorists find themselves in the position of suddenly having to take the precaution against running one of them down by having to switch off the road-

way because the rider of the bicycle will not move from the centre.

Mr. Mann: And they often ride three or four abreast.

Mr. STYANTS: That is so and a car driver can toot his horn as loudly as he likes. They will refuse to move over. The most alarming and most dangerous breach of all, however, is the speeding that takes place in the metropolitan area. I was away from the metropolitan area for six years and after returning I found that the speed had increased at least five or six miles an hour. The speed limit around the city is 25 miles an hour, but one can go from Perth to Fremantle in the daytime or at night and see not only private cars, but big motor buses and parlour cars all travelling at 40 miles an hour. That is going on all the time. If a careful driver is proceeding at 25 miles an hour he becomes a menace to the others because, by reason of the slowness of that speed, he is constantly causing other drivers to pull out into the other stream of traffic. The speed limit in the metropolitan area is certainly honoured more in the breach than in the observance. When the law in any particular section is constantly being flouted and no action is taken then there becomes a general disrespect for it all round. That is the position in regard to the traffic laws in the metropolitan area. In the police report it is set out that after investigation it was found that 2,060 of the accidents that occurred last year were the result of excessive speeding. Thus there are probably thousands who are exceeding the speed limit every year in the metropolitan area. I admit that the traffic branch of the Police Department has a difficult job to carry out. That branch is under-staffed and the Commissioner constantly draws our attention to the fact that he has only four motor patrols in the metropolitan area, a totally inadequate number. In Melbourne there are 40, and while they have ten times the amount of traffic, they have better facilities for handling that traffic, and moreover there is not the same extensive area for supervision that we have here. Even in Melbourne it is recognised by the Police Department that the number of motor patrols is not sufficient. The Minister will probably say that there is no money available for the provision of additional patrols. Going through the year book, I find that the number of cars registered in the metropolitan area last year was

16,208 and averaging those cars at £7 each the license fees would return £113,000. The lorries and trucks and vans registered numbered 4,582 and averaging them at £10 each there would be a return of £45,000. The buses number 241 and averaging them at £45 would give £10,000. Motor cycles number 3,897 and each of those would pay £1, so that in license fees paid in the metropolitan area there is collected £192,000 a year. I think the traffic branch receives 10 per cent. of those license fees for the service of collecting them. The supervision of the traffic branch would work out at £19,000 a year. In addition there would be a considerable amount collected by way of fines. Thus if the department received something like £40,000 a year it should be possible to employ more than four motor cycle patrols in the metropolitan area.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Do not forget the drivers' licenses.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, there are something like 38,000 of those issued. Thus the revenue earned by that department must run into a considerable figure. I do not know whether there is any surplus, and whether such surplus goes into Consolidated Revenue, but we do require more supervision of the metropolitan traffic. Where there is supervision, there is observance of the traffic laws. If one happens to be going along a road and to see one of these isolated motor patrols, it is noticed that the traffic laws are at once strictly observed, but immediately the patrol gets out of sight, breaches of the traffic laws begin again. Each year that a vehicle is relicensed it should be tested by a competent mechanic attached to the Traffic Department. When reading through the circumstances surrounding accidents I have been astonished at the number of occasions that the vehicles after examination by the police have been found to be defective in one or more ways. The hand-brake may not have been effective, the foot-brake may have been defective, and in many cases the steering gear has not been 100 per cent. efficient. I have ridden in cars and trucks around Perth where there has been a three-quarter play of the wheel before the steering gear takes effect. The vehicle will run into the centre of the road, and then nearly run into the kerb. Many of those vehicles are travelling in streams of traffic around the metropolitan area. More strict attention should be paid to that aspect

of our licensing laws. According to figures I have received from the State Statistical Department, the situation does not appear to be as alarming as that portrayed by the member for Murchison. I am afraid he has added the total number of accidents in the metropolitan area to the figures contained in the police report for the whole State. According to the figures I have received for 1936, 104 persons were killed and 1,213 seriously injured. For the whole State for 1937 (the year ended the 30th June), 133 persons were killed, and 1,076 seriously injured. In the last six years, 555 persons have been killed. With the small amount of traffic we have it is certainly an appalling and an alarming situation that such a large number of persons should have been killed in six years, to say nothing of those who have been seriously injured, and possibly maimed for life. It may be said that the increase in traffic which has taken place since 1932 has contributed to some extent to this alarming increase in the number of accidents. It must also be considered that in 1932 there were 12 major accidents per thousand licensed drivers, whilst last year there were 20 serious accidents for every thousand licensed drivers. Whilst the traffic has increased, the pro rata number of serious accidents per licensed drivers has increased almost 100 per cent. In 1932, 29 per cent. of the serious accidents which occurred was due to a striving after speed. In 1936, 46 per cent. was considered to be due to speed. In 1932, there were 835 cases in which it was considered that the accidents were due to excessive speed, and in 1936 there were 1,818. It appears that the speed mania is taking possession of motorists in the metropolitan area. Most of the accidents did not occur in the business block, although many pedestrians were knocked down there. Most of the accidents occurred at intersections in the suburbs, according to figures supplied by the Police Department. It has been suggested that the streets are not sufficiently lighted. When we consider that in 1936, 28 persons were killed at night-time and 22 in daylight, and that the serious accidents were more by 3,177 in the day-time than at night-time (1,180), it seems that the trouble is not due to defective street lighting. It may be said that the majority of the traffic runs during the day. That may be true. It must be remembered, however, that there are more private cars out at night than during the

day. The goods vehicle traffic would certainly be greater during the day-time. After looking up the Traffic Act and studying the number of penalties provided, I do not think we could improve much in that direction. The penalties appear to be ample. The Government should, however, seriously consider providing more money for a sufficient number of motor patrols throughout the metropolitan area. That is the most effective means of preventing this tremendous loss of life and the serious maiming of people using the roads. I hope the Minister will see that money is provided for this purpose. I believe that within 12 months we would notice an appreciable diminution in the number of persons killed and maimed.

Vote put and passed.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

Department of Minister for Employment, Labour, Child Welfare and Industrial Development (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, Minister).

Vote — Unemployment Relief and State Labour Bureau, £68,727.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [9.22]: At the end of June last there were 6,480 men on relief work or in receipt of sustenance. The number dependent on the Government at that date had decreased by 3,280 compared with the figure for the June of two years previously. Practically the whole of the 3,200 men were absorbed into industry as a result of obtaining employment in the different undertakings carried on in the fields of primary and secondary endeavour. The revival of goldmining was responsible for the absorption of a considerable number of men who left relief work. Secondary industries generally also played an important part in providing opportunities of full-time employment for those men who are now no longer dependent upon the Government, either for relief work or sustenance. The farming industry is another which played an important part in recent years in providing employment opportunities for men. Of the Government departments, the Railway Department has been an important contributor in the finding of work for additional men. During the last two or three years, that Department has employed a considerable number of additional men in the different services it operates. In June last approxi-

mately 1,050 men of the total number of 6,500 dependent upon the Government were in receipt of sustenance. At that time it was not possible to provide the additional relief work necessary to enable these men to be employed in relief work schemes. As a result, they had to be supplied with sustenance to enable them to eke out the rather poor existence that is forced upon those who have to subsist with their families on sustenance. To-day the 1,050 have been reduced by approximately 500, with the result that we have only about 500 men still dependent for their existence upon sustenance alone. That number is still far too high. It is desired that no man shall be compelled to continue to subsist upon a sustenance basis. That basis is in every way undesirable. Every effort has been made in recent times, and is being made at present and will continue to be made, to have additional work organised in order that the 500 men existing on sustenance shall be reduced to the lowest possible number.

Mr. North: Does that include the "C" class men?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The number I have given includes mostly "A" class men, but also includes "B" and "C" class men. Of the 500 now on sustenance, it is estimated that approximately 300 comprise "A," "B" and "C" class men, who could be employed if the right type of employment was made available. It is estimated that upwards of 200 men have reached a stage that renders them practically unemployable, unless it be possible to organise a specially light type of work for them. It is hoped that within the next week or two additional works will be organised to absorb 300 of the 500 men now on sustenance.

Mr. Doney: What type of work will that be?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The ordinary type of work in connection with "A" class men, something near the ordinary type for "B" class men, and if possible a lighter type of work for "C" class men, who are regarded as capable of carrying out the ordinary class of light work.

Mr. Doney: Are you finding work for "C" class men?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Recently we were able to put in hand at Ludlow a certain amount of forestry work, which is the particular type of work suited to men graded in "C" class. We have had

to depend almost entirely upon the Forests Department for providing light work suitable to the physical condition of "C" class men. There is no doubt that the Forests Department has been very helpful in that regard. The officers have co-operated with us to the fullest possible extent and have been responsible for making available light employment that has enabled "C" class men to be taken away from sustenance conditions and given an opportunity to obtain work for which they have received wages and have enjoyed a better standard of existence for themselves and their families. The 49s. men—that is the man with a wife and at least five children—who work in the metropolitan area now average at least £3 12s. 6d. per week, not including margins for skill.

Mr. Hughes: I can produce plenty of them that do not.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The member for East Perth is capable of producing anything at any time.

The Premier: From anywhere.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I can also produce some who do not average that amount. As a matter of fact, it is possible to produce individuals in connection with any rate who do not average the general average. My statement is, and I repeat it, that the 49s. men in the metropolitan area now average at least £3 12s. 6d. a week, not including margins for skill, which are paid for in addition.

Mr. Hughes: Some are not getting half that.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Some of the 49s. men average more than that figure. Others, because of regular periods of employment not having been made available for them for one reason or another, do not average £3 12s. 6d. at all. They average considerably less than that amount. On the other hand, the whole of them who are working in the metropolitan area, or have been for a certain period, have averaged £3 12s. 6d. per week plus margins for skill. Many of them get more than that. Practically all relief workers in the metropolitan area receive the margin for skill, which assists to bring their average weekly earnings higher than would otherwise have been possible. I propose now to place before members a comparison of the average weekly earnings paid in

1933 with those that prevail to-day. The following table shows the position:—

Rate.	Sept., 1933.			Present.		
	Basic wage, £3 9s. 3d.			Basic wage, £3 14s. 11d.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
14s.	1	15	8	2	10	7
21s.	2	2	2	2	13	11
28s.	2	8	6	2	19	7
35s.	2	14	6	3	2	11
42s.	3	0	2	3	8	11
49s.	3	3	4	3	12	5

It will be noticed that the main increases over that period have occurred in connection with the lower-rated men. That policy has been deliberately followed, because it was felt that the lower-rated men in 1933 were receiving an income that was altogether too low to afford them any chance to eke out an existence for themselves and their families. I have already indicated that margins for skill are paid in addition to the weekly earnings I have mentioned. Camping allowances, where they operate, have also been paid in addition. Moreover, any man engaged upon relief work may now, during his standing-down period, earn sufficient to bring his weekly average earnings up to the basic wage without affecting his subsequent period on relief work. Prior to this year that practice did not operate. The private earnings obtained during the standing-down periods had to be reported, and the individual's subsequent period of employment was often reduced on account of the fact that the relief worker had earned during the standing-down period a certain amount of money by obtaining private employment. Since October last the new practice has been put into operation, with the result that relief workers may, during their standing-down periods, earn at least sufficient to bring their average earnings over the whole period up to the basic wage. This alteration may not appear to give very much in actual practice, and probably it does not give a great deal to the men, but where relief workers are able to obtain private employment during their standing-down periods, it represents an improvement in their position. The general improvement in average weekly earnings and other conditions associated with relief work effected during the past three or four years has been of considerable value to the men concerned and to their families. Though the improve-

ment has not been as great as might have been desired, nor as extensive as is necessary if the men and their families are to be given an opportunity to enjoy a standard of living established on the basis set down by the legal tribunals that deal with wages and industrial conditions in this State, nevertheless it has been instrumental in easing the struggle to some extent. The limited amount of money available to the Government has been the one factor responsible for preventing even greater improvement in conditions being granted. The position has been watched continuously. At the end of each month a careful check of the whole position has been made, with the object of effecting further improvements whenever it was felt that the time had arrived to enable those improvements to be fairly made. Members will realise that it would be foolish on the part of the Government to bring about improvements in conditions to-day and find at the end of a month or two that those improvements could not be continued. Not only would that be a foolish policy for the Government to adopt, but it would be most unfair to the men concerned. It is my opinion, as it is that of other members of the Government generally, that improvements made should be maintained, and that when improvements are made that position should not be departed from. The policy of the Government in that regard has been, when making improvements, that those improvements were to be effected when justifiable, and when made, were not to be retreated from. In recent weeks considerable detailed attention has been given to the possibility of effecting a further improvement in the position of these men, and tentative arrangements have been made to initiate an improved scheme as from the beginning of the New Year. The proposed new scheme would perhaps have been in operation earlier but for the fact that most of the men will receive increased work between now and Christmas as a result of a decision already arrived at by the Government. With regard to the Christmas and New Year holidays, it is proposed to close down all country relief work jobs for two weeks. In order that the men on those jobs may not be penalised during the period of two weeks when the jobs are to be closed down, the Government has arranged that an additional two weeks' work, to cover that period, shall be given to

relief workers in the country before the jobs are closed down for Christmas. In addition to that, the Government recently decided to give all relief workers, whether in the metropolitan area or in country districts, a week's extra work in connection with Christmas. The result of those two decisions is that all relief workers employed in the country will work practically full time from now until the closing down of the jobs at Christmas. In those circumstances, it would have been ineffective to initiate any improved scheme before the Christmas period. The metropolitan relief workers are not in exactly the same position in that respect. Work here will be closed down for three days only for Christmas and New Year. It has, therefore, been arranged that the men on relief work in the metropolitan area shall be permitted to work an additional three days before the jobs close down. That will cover the period during which work will cease on those jobs. In addition, as I have already mentioned, the relief workers in the metropolitan area will receive an extra week's work, in common with the workers in the country districts. That means that the relief workers in the metropolitan area, in the great majority of instances, will obtain an increased measure of work between now and Christmas, which will mean, in effect, that most of them will work full time until Christmas. The new scheme, which it is proposed to operate after Christmas, is one that I feel will be received with considerable satisfaction by the relief workers, even though it may not receive much praise from some members of this Chamber. Nevertheless, I feel that almost every member will agree when the scheme is fully explained, as it will be in due course, that it represents the greatest single step towards the achievement of the Government's objective to re-establish full-time working conditions on all Government work in the State. In the new scheme it is proposed to operate as from the beginning of next year, special consideration has been given to the position of the higher-rated men. The 35s., 42s., and 49s. men will receive assistance under the proposed new scheme which, in my judgment at any rate, will give them a better return than they could possibly receive in the event of full-time conditions being restored to the basis we had prior to the depression. I think it is necessary for members of this

House and the general public to work out in their own minds just what they consider is the meaning to be attached to the term "full-time employment." If members will cast their minds back to the pre-depression period, they will remember that all public work carried out by the Government in those days was on the basis of full-time employment. That basis meant that men were picked up for the various jobs, and provided they could hold the jobs they remained employed until the jobs were completed. When the jobs were completed it was then the responsibility of the men concerned to battle around and obtain employment either in private industry or upon some other public works that were in progress.

Mr. North: There was no permanency about it.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: No permanency whatever, not even on the job on which they were employed unless they proved themselves capable of carrying out the amount of work which those in charge of the job considered to be a fair thing. If it were possible to have a close analysis of the average number of weeks worked per year in the pre-depression period by those men who made a practice of following public works, it would mean that the average employment of those men would not be greater than about 40 weeks per year. I ask members to give some consideration to that point, because it is a very important point in connection with the agitation that is continually going on to have all Government works carried out on a full-time basis. I mentioned a few moments ago that the proposed new scheme in my judgment will give to the higher waged men a much greater measure of employment for the year than it would be possible for them to obtain if the Government said that the whole of the public works in this State were to be carried out on a full-time basis as from January next. It has been arranged that those three groups of men shall not be compelled to operate under what is known as the cycle, which includes of course a period of work and a period of stand-down. That is to say, they will not have a definite period on and another definite period as stand-down, as at present. These men will be picked up and they will continue to be employed, provided they are able to give the work which is considered to be fair in all circumstances. Improvements are proposed in connection with all the other men, and

the details of those improvements will be announced when the Government has finally given its decision in regard to those men. One thing that will be done under the proposed new scheme is to eliminate the present practice of calling upon relief workers to work a certain number of weeks and then a portion of a week, to be followed by a stand-down. That is to say, a broken portion of a week. It is felt that that practice is uneconomic from every point of view and inconvenient to the men, because it involves them in considerable difficulties of transport, especially if they are employed in country districts. It is easy to obtain transport facilities at the end of the week to return to their homes, and easy for them to obtain transport facilities at the beginning of the week in order to travel from their homes to their particular jobs. But if their period of work finishes in the middle of the week, as it does under the roster, they meet with many transport difficulties, and if the period of stand-down ends in the middle of a week, the same difficulties are again encountered. So under the new scheme each worker will have a period of work covering a number of complete weeks, and will have a stand-down period of a week, or more if that period covers more than a week. In their purpose of bringing about improvement of the relief workers the Government have been faced with a number of difficulties not apparent to the casual observer. For instance, the Government could make an even greater step towards the re-establishment of full-time employment conditions if they were prepared to abandon almost completely their programme of non-labour works. Members will understand that there are works known as labour works, and then there are other works known as non-labour works. The labour works cover railway work, road work, sewerage work, and others. Non-labour works involve the purchase of rolling stock for the Railway Department, the erection of public buildings, and other works of that description. Those are regarded as non-labour works because they do not provide direct employment to any of the men dependent on the Government. They are not non-labour works in the real sense of the term, because the erection of public buildings, for instance, provides opportunities for the employment of a large number of men.

Quite a number of those non-labour works provide employment indirectly in avenues of private industry. In addition, many of those non-labour works are most desirable from the State's point of view; from the point of view of promoting development, and earning revenue and providing some return, they are the most desirable types of work. So the Government could not possibly consider the question of abandoning its programme of non-labour works merely for the purpose of making a greater step in the direction of providing full-time employment upon labour work. As a matter of fact, even if the Government decided to do that, I am inclined to think that in a short period the result would be that considerable unemployment would be created in private industries which depend on the non-labour works put in hand by the Government. Consequently a large number of additional men would come upon the Government for relief work. That in turn would mean that the Government would have to provide for a considerably increased number of workers, and of course would have to retreat from the improved position taken up in connection with relief work conditions generally. So our second position would be no better than the position from which we had moved. The passing of time also makes it more difficult to find even labour works in which the amount payable for wages is not heavily outweighed by the sum required for materials. Those works upon which wages constitute a greater percentage of expenditure are the least desirable types of work. They are works that the Government put in hand mainly for the purpose of providing work. If 6,000 men had not to be provided for by the Government, those works would not be considered for a second. If the Government had only a normal number of men to provide for, say 2,000 or 3,000, the Government would concentrate on the best types of works, labour and non-labour.

Mr. Doney: What would you regard as a typical labour work?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The construction of roads would be one, drainage works another, and river snagging and other such activities. Labour works upon which the greatest amount of expenditure is paid away in wages from the point of view of providing work are the best

jobs, but from the point of view of expending money wisely, they are of the worst type of work, and they are put in hand only because of the large numbers of men for whom provision has to be made.

Mr. Sampson: Unskilled workers are continually increasing.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT:

I am afraid the hon. member was not here when I began these remarks. It has not been our experience that the number of men requiring this class of work is increasing. During the last two years we have lost over 3,000 men who were formerly depending upon us for relief work or other assistance. I emphasise again that normally the Government would not worry at all about this class of labour work which provides an opportunity of employing a great number of men, but which does not provide return in any shape or form; if we were able to do what we would desire to do with the money available to us we would concentrate on the best class of works. That would be the wise and safe policy to follow in the best interests of the State. However, we are not absolutely free in our activities in that regard. We have to give consideration to the fact that 6,000 odd men and their families are still dependent upon the work or the relief that the Government is able to make available to them. This task of finding works that will absorb men on a basis of even 50 per cent. for labour and 50 per cent. for material is becoming more and more difficult. That is understandable. In the worst years of the depression and in all the years since, the different Governments that have been in office have picked up the works that would provide the greatest measure of employment on a basis enabling the greatest amount of expenditure to be paid in wages. This permitted of the jobs absorbing a larger number of men than could those jobs where the material costs were high. So the possibilities in this direction are becoming smaller. I have one or two examples to show how the cost of different undertakings is increased because of the large amount of money that is paid for material.

		Wages per man employed per week.			Material, etc., per man employed per week.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Goldfields	water	4	0	1	7	19	1
	supply	..					
Metropolitan	water	3	14	6	5	6	7
	supply	..					
Railways		3	19	3	5	7	6

Thus it will be seen that the cost for materials on many of those jobs and on the most desirable types of jobs is considerably higher than the cost for the wages of the men actually employed. That factor, of course, makes it increasingly difficult for the Government to employ the same number of men at the same cost as previously.

[Mr. Sleeman took the Chair.]

Mr. Sampson: Would not the whole of that material be purchased in the State?

The Premier: We purchase as much as we can get in the State.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Wherever possible the necessary material is purchased in the State. This is keeping in employment in private industry men who otherwise would probably have to depend upon the Government for employment. Indirectly we maintain the volume of employment in private industry by carrying out works of this kind. However, that does not lessen our problem in connection with the number of men dependent upon us for employment. There has been some criticism regarding the loan expenditure of the Government both in respect to the purposes for which it is used and in respect to the total amount expended in recent years. Strangely enough most of this criticism has come from so-called business men's organisations. If those business men went deeper into the matter, they would find that the expenditure of loan money by Governments over the last few years has been a strong contributing factor to the revival that has taken place in commercial circles. The expenditure of loan money by the Government immediately places in the hands of a large number of people the means whereby to buy the goods that business men have to sell. It is true also that the men who receive loan money in the form of wages are the men who, by force of circumstances, are compelled to put their wages immediately into circulation. I am convinced that the expenditure of this money by the Government over the last five or six years has really been a God-send to practically the whole of the business enterprises in the State.

Mr. North: The Banking Commission showed that.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Therefore, the criticism of the expenditure of money by the Government seems to be

rather short-sighted. If the business men of this city desire to do themselves an injury, if they desire to lessen their turnover, if they desire to lessen their opportunity to balance accounts or to make a profit on the business they transact, then of course they would be well advised to maintain and even increase the type of agitation they have been carrying on in recent years. If, on the other hand, they desire that the purchasing power of the community shall be maintained at a reasonable level until such time as private industry is able to absorb the greater number of men now dependent on the Government, they will at least keep silent, if not give the Government and the Parliament a measure of commendation for having stepped in and filled the breach by providing purchasing power that otherwise would not have been available.

Mr. North: The slump has taught some hard lessons.

Mr. Marshall: And the next slump will teach us harder lessons.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT:

Unfortunately a large percentage of the men in receipt of sustenance are incapable of performing ordinary manual work. Quite a number of them are almost completely unemployable on any class of work that the Government could organise. Some consideration has been given to that position in recent months, and a decision has been reached to transfer those particular cases to the care of the Child Welfare Department. Some transfers have already taken place and others are now receiving consideration. The policy of providing work suitable for the physical condition of "B" and "C" class men is still being carried on wherever possible. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find sufficient work of a suitable nature to absorb all those who are eligible for it. During the year 868 men were examined by the medical officer. Of that number 331 were classed "B" and 245 were classed "C." Those 576 men require special consideration in regard to the type of work upon which they shall be placed. When the medical examination reveals that a man is quite unfit for work, he is advised to apply for a pension. In 1936-37 the number of pensions granted was 67. During the year 10 families covering 33 individuals were repatriated to Great Britain, the cost being £1,020. The reduction in the number of men dependent upon the Government has permitted a reduction of staff to be effected. Members will thus see that a reduction in the

number of unemployed on the books of the Government has had the unfortunate result of putting out of employment a number of men who had full-time work. The staff in 1934 numbered 84; to-day it is 48. The report of the State Labour Bureau has been laid on the Table of the House and has undoubtedly been carefully read by every member. Therefore it is not my intention to say much about it. There is one point, however, to which I should like to refer. The advances for fares during the year to persons going to private employment or seeking work amounted to £6,352. Of that amount £5,863 was recovered, representing a repayment of 92 per cent. of the amount advanced. The State Labour Bureau finances the fares of men being sent to jobs by private labour bureaux. That is a service that the State renders to the private labour bureaux and to employers who recruit their labour through those private bureaux. I do not know whether the Government should continue that practice. Perhaps I should not have mentioned it within the hearing of the Treasurer.

Mr. Sampson: It is a good move.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT:

It seems to me that there would be more justification for calling upon the private labour bureaux and the employers who recruit their labour there to make their own arrangements than to advance fares to the men concerned.

Mr. Sampson: The Treasurer will not complain of that.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT:

I have a little to say about the Council of Industrial Development. Having regard to the limited funds available, the council has pursued a careful policy when considering applications for financial assistance. Nevertheless the council found it possible to assist secondary industries in other directions. The Albany woollen mills are now regarded as being on a safer basis than ever before. Approximately 160 people have regular employment there, while a better sale is being obtained for the products. The management of the mills has shown considerable initiative in recent times and has placed upon a market a greater number and wider variety of goods than previously. Through the courtesy of Goode, Durrant & Murray, Ltd., an exhibition of Western Australian products took place in the Barrack-street warehouse in May and June of last year. The display was on a scale never

previously attempted in Western Australia and 150,000 people viewed the exhibition.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It was well organised and staged.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Goods produced by manufacturers were displayed, and the Railway Department availed itself of the opportunity to bring vividly before the public many of the scientific activities carried on by that department. Many expressions of appreciation from exhibitors and the general public have been received. As in past years, exhibitions have also been arranged in leading country centres. On the goldfields an active committee has been formed to further the sale of Western Australian products in that part of the State. We have felt that we have not been obtaining a reasonably fair share of the goldfields trade in years past. Eastern States manufacturers have to a large extent monopolised the Kalgoorlie and Boulder markets. The appointment and the activities of the committee I have mentioned will, we hope, have the effect of obtaining for local manufacturers a far greater proportion of the profitable trade that is available in Boulder and Kalgoorlie and other parts of the goldfields. The Advisory Committee on Eastern Trade forms a valuable link with the Commonwealth Government on matters relating to trade with the East. Through the department it arranged for a State display at Singapore Trade Fair and the Nagoya (Japan) exhibition. Exhibits were despatched for display in the offices of the Australian Trade Commissioner in Netherlands Indies, Shanghai, and Japan. Assistance was again rendered to the Empire Shopping Week and Local Products Council; and, with its assistance, 40,000 posters advocating the use of Western Australian goods were distributed throughout the State. Included in the inquiries and so forth made by the Council of Industrial Development to assist local manufacturers, the following are quoted:—A contract for the supply of railway caps and uniforms, as the result of which the product of the Albany Woollen Mills was specified as the material to be used in the manufacture of these articles. A Sydney company secured a monopoly for the supply of certain material for theatre chairs to be used in this State. The matter was taken up with the Federal Government, and as a result a local company has been able to obtain supplies and has since secured contracts for the manufacture of theatre

chairs in this State. The Lotteries Commission agreed to make a grant of a sum of money for the purchase of hospital equipment. Included in the equipment was the provision of hospital beds. It was at first suggested that these were not procurable locally, but subsequently it was decided that the articles should be made in Western Australia. I am glad to say they are now being manufactured here. Early in the year, Lord Gowrie visited this State and expressed a desire to obtain first-hand information of Western Australia's secondary industries. The department organised visits of inspection, and the Governor General expressed his interest in the development that had taken place in this State's secondary industries. He also gave an undertaking that when he returned to Eastern Australia he would as far as possible assist in advocating a policy that would lead to a wider extension of manufacturing industries within Australia. I think every hon. member will agree that from all points of view it is desirable to expand the establishment of our secondary industries rather than concentrate practically the whole of them in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne. An application was made for financial assistance in the manufacture of kalsomine, to the extent of £250. It was considered that although financial assistance was not warranted, action should be taken to assist the manufacture in its initial stages by bringing the product before Government departments requiring the material. This was done, with considerable benefit to the concern I have mentioned. It may be informative and somewhat surprising to hon. members to learn that a local man has recently commenced the manufacture of tennis racquets in Western Australia. As a result of representations made to big firms in the metropolitan area, opening orders for the locally manufactured tennis racquet have been secured. If any hon. member desires a recommendation regarding the racquet, I can offer my own personal recommendation that they are great racquets.

Mr. Marshall: You got a free one.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I was not offered a free one and I would not have accepted a free one had it been offered, because the young man concerned has started from scratch in the manufacture of these tennis racquets. He deserves, and needs, every possible encouragement that can be given to him. I am quite sure that

once the racket becomes reasonably well known among good tennis players, its sale will increase rapidly. I may also say, and with great pleasure, that this young man is a Northam lad, and that his manufacturing activities are carried on in that town. Then there is the case of a firm which was assisted in the manufacture of bolts and nuts. The progress of this firm was such as to attract the attention of manufacturers of similar articles in the Eastern States, and the business has now been taken over by one of them, a big firm. It is hoped that as the result of the business being taken over by the Eastern States firm, which has plenty of capital, the works will be considerably extended, thus providing additional wealth production in Western Australia and automatically, of course, furnishing additional employment opportunities.

Mr. Marshall: Take care the business is not closed down. We have known one or two propositions of that sort.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am quite convinced that will not occur in this case. Visits have been made to this State by the Trade Commissioner from Egypt, the Trade Commissioner from the Netherlands East Indies, the Assistant Trade Commissioner in China, and the Trade Commissioner in Japan. Opportunity was taken to permit of those gentlemen becoming better acquainted with the possibilities of Western Australia, and also of meeting men engaged in export business. A firm which is engaged in the manufacture of jam in the Eastern States made inquiries as to the possibility of becoming established here. The necessary information was forwarded, and an assurance given that if the firm decided to commence operations in this State it would receive every encouragement. The operations of the Child Welfare Department are much along the lines of previous years. The department deals with infant life protection, legal adoption of children, investigation of complaints of ill-treatment of children, supervision of children placed in orphanages and industrial schools, boarded-out with foster-parents and foster-mothers, and those released on probation by the Children's Courts, assistance to women on whom children are dependent, assistance to unmarried mothers both financially and in legal aid to obtain affiliation orders wherever possible, outdoor relief to

those in distress through sickness, street trading by children, offences by children up to the age of 18 years dealt with through the Children's Courts, probation and preventive work in connection with children. On the 1st July, 1937, relief was being given to the following cases:—Widows 382, incapacitated husbands 382, deserted wives 183, single 35, husbands in sanatorium 5, husbands in asylum 17, husbands in prison 19, foster-mothers 4, special 17, temporary cases 48; total 1,092. In the families being assisted there were 2,539 children receiving assistance who were not wards of the department. Each of the homes is visited at least once a quarter by a departmental inspector. Five of these inspectors are qualified nurses. Street trading by children has been fairly strictly controlled during the last 12 months, although it is my opinion that perhaps the control is not yet as strict as it ought to be. Under the Child Welfare Act a child may not trade under the age of 12 years. Provision is made in the regulations that a child under the age of 14 may not trade after 8 p.m., and under 16 after 9 p.m., provided that the Minister may vary the hours in specified cases. Certain children between 14 and 16 are permitted to trade until 11.30 p.m., on Saturday nights only, to assist the boys to earn a little money for their homes. Street trading by children is not permitted during school hours or after 10 a.m. on Sundays. At the 30th June, 1937, 57 licenses were issued to boys between 12 and 14, and 82 to boys between 14 and 16. The revenue estimates provided for an anticipated expenditure of £122,069 as against the expenditure for the previous year of £116,338, special provision being made for certain cases of "C" class men being taken over from the Unemployment Relief Department. On the 30th June, 1937, assistance was being rendered to 1,230 families, 420 incapacitated husbands, and 2,539 children, a total of 4,189 persons in receipt of sustenance. These figures disclose an increase on the 12 months of 20 cases, and 166 persons. At the 30th June, 1936, there were 1,028 wards of the State on subsidy. At the end of June last there were 988, showing a decrease of 40. The Child Welfare Vote provides for the entire upkeep of the Government Receiving Home, which is the house used for all children committed to the care of the State by the Children's Courts prior to their

transference to institutions, or to their being sent to private families. During the past year 624 children passed through the institution, the average weekly number maintained being 37. The staff of this home consists of 14 persons. During last year 2,790 boys were paid for at the Fairbridge Farm School. It is estimated that the number to be provided this year will be 2,189. The Fairbridge Farm School is subsidised on the following basis:—The Imperial Government provides 5s. per week per child, the Commonwealth Government 3s. 6d., and the State Government 3s. 6d. per week per child up to the age of 14 years. The Government recently decided to alter the system of appointing magistrates for the children's courts. For many years it was the practice to appoint legal magistrates, or recruit someone from the legal profession. After giving the position a great deal of consideration and making extensive inquiries, the Government arrived at the conclusion that it would be in the best interests of the children and all concerned if a departure were made from that practice. The result was that a layman was appointed to the position of magistrate to the children's courts in the metropolitan area. It is not my intention this evening to say anything in commendation of the gentleman who has been appointed, because I have supreme confidence that the work of Mr. Schroeder will provide its own recommendation. I had intended to say something regarding the activities of the department of Labour.

Mr. Thorn: Why not?

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: In past years the activities of the department have never been dealt with, and so far as I have searched back have never been mentioned. The Department of Labour is a very important one, and does a great deal of valuable work in relation to industrial matters. The fact that it works quietly prevents it from obtaining the credit which the work it does deserves. Only two officers are associated with the department, Mr. Fisher who is now the secretary, and Mr. Reeve, his assistant. The department was established by the late Mr. McCallum some years ago. At that time Mr. Andrew was appointed secretary. He did remarkably good work. In fact, his work was so successful that it earned for him the very substantial promotion he recently received when appointed

Under-Secretary for Public Works. In response to the entreaty of the member for Toodyay I will give members some particulars concerning the activities of the Labour Department. The Labour Department acts as adviser to all Government and semi-Government departments on all industrial matters. The work involves giving a considerable number of rulings, often on very difficult points, as a result of new conditions associated with works being carried out. It also investigates claims submitted by unions and negotiates with the parties concerned for a settlement. The officers fix margins for new classes of work. They inspect works on which disputes occur, and if necessary address workers in the case of threatened disputes. They represent Government departments on some boards of reference that are set up, and prepare draft briefs for and assist the Government advocate in connection with the main cases that come before the Arbitration Court wherein the Government is involved. For some time and up to the present the work of Government advocate has been carried out by Mr. Thomas of the Railway Department. After March of next year, when Mr. Thomas will retire on reaching retiring age, Mr. Fisher will act as Government advocate except in connection with the Railway Department. The officers of the Labour Department carry out the procedure under the Arbitration Act and its regulations when preparing and filing claims by departments, and when preparing and filing answers to claims by unions in the Arbitration Court. They assist in connection with legislation when necessary. They attend to all work dealing with basic wage adjustments which affect the Government, and the employees of the Government. They do a considerable amount of inquiry and investigation in connection with the International Labour Office. The International Labour Office is in direct communication with the Federal Government, and recognises that Government in all its negotiations. All that that Government does in the matter is to forward communications from the International Labour Office to the State Government for investigation and attention. The result is that all the work of inquiry and investigation has to be carried out by the officers of the Department of Labour. During the year the following

work has been carried out by the department:—

1. Agreements have been negotiated and entered into with the following unions:—

Australian Workers' Union—General.

Australian Workers' Union, Wistralian Goldfields Mining Branch Industrial Union of Workers, to cover State battery employees.

Federated Clerks' Union of Workers, to cover timekeepers and cost clerks.

Amalgamated Transport Union of Workers, to cover Government motor car drivers.

2. Negotiations have almost been finalised for agreements with—

Australian Workers' Union, Pastoral and Agricultural Industrial Union of Workers, to cover employees on the State farms.

Shop Assistants' Union of Workers, to cover storemen employed by the Government Stores Department.

3. Negotiations have been started for agreements with the Carpenters' Union of Workers and the Plumbers' Union of Workers.

4. Answers to claims have been prepared and filed in the Court of Arbitration and issues settled in the cases of—

Hospital Employees' Union, to cover employees at the Wooroloo Sanatorium.

Hospital Employees' Union, to cover domestics employed at mental hospitals.

Hospital Employees' Union, to deal with employees at the Old Men's Home.

Amalgamated Engineering Union, to cover employees at the Public Works, Water Supply, and other departments.

Amalgamated Engineering Union, to cover men working at pumping stations in connection with the Goldfields Water Supply.

The Australasian Society of Engineers, to cover employees of the Public Works, Water Supply, and other departments.

5. Negotiations have been carried on to settle the following references of disputes filed in the Court of Arbitration:—

Dock, Rivers and Harbour Works. All matters agreed to and award made by consent.

Hotel, Club, Caterers' Union, to cover State Hotel employees. Final offer has been made to the union, and the department is now awaiting acceptance.

Hospital Employees' Union, to deal with domestics employed at mental hospitals. An award has been made, one point having been left for the court to determine.

Hospital Employees' Union. This covers the employees at the Wooroloo Sanatorium. The final stages have been reached, and an agreement will probably be arrived at.

6. Claims by Water Supply Union served on departments now under consideration. An answer is being prepared for the metropolitan and goldfields water supply systems.

These particulars should furnish members with an idea of the vast amount of detailed and intricate work that has to be attended to by two officers of the department. Their services are very valuable. They are men who are fair and just in every way. They desire and endeavour to do the fair and proper thing on all occasions. Their relationship with the different industrial organisations is of a very happy character and the greatest confidence exists between the officers of the Labour Department and the representatives of the industrial organisations throughout the State. I feel that the officers of this department and the work carried out by the department from time to time are deserving of the highest praise, and I am very pleased to have this opportunity to make a public utterance in connection with the work those officers are doing, and the activities carried on within the department. I commend to the Committee the Estimates under their various headings.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 19th November, 1937.

	PAGE
Question : Workers' compensation, Select Committee evidence	1884
Bills : Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act	1885
Amendment, report	1885
State Government Insurance Office, 2a.	1887
Bush Fires, 1a.	1888
Income Tax Assessment, 2a.	1888
Factories and Shops, Com.	1893

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

Select Committee Evidence.

HON. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: 1, In view of the public statements made by members of the Select Committee