

Noes.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Oldfield
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Doney	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Hill	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Wild
Mr. Manning	Mr. Yates
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Nalder	

(Teller.)

Ayes.	Pairs.	Noes.
Mr. O'Brien	Mr. Brand	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Grayden	
Mr. Needham	Mr. Cornell	
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Mann	

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

*House adjourned at 12.3 a.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, 27th November, 1952.

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

### BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

### BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Report of Committee adopted.

### BILL—BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY STEEL INDUSTRY AGREEMENT.

#### Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [4.36]: I, like Mr. Davies, am a member of this House representing the area in which this great project is to be established. Like that hon. member, I have always done, and always will do, everything I can to ensure that Western Australia obtains its fair share of secondary industries that may be in the offing.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I think we will reserve judgement in that respect until you have finished your speech.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That interjection is not worthy of consideration! When I speak in this House, I do so conscientiously and sincerely, and I am not interested in what any other member may think regarding what I may say. I am required to bow to no one in this House but you, Mr. President, and that gives me pleasure. I was commencing my remarks by saying that, as a true Western Australian, I wish to do everything I can to encourage the promotion of secondary industries in this State.

I make no bones about it when I say that I am opposed to the second reading of this Bill. At the same time, I congratulate B.H.P. on its attempt—I hope it will be successful in that respect—to establish itself in Western Australia. I oppose the Bill for reasons similar to those mentioned by Mr. Davies. There are portions of the Bill that I think Parliament should have been afforded an opportunity to amend, if it so desired. I do not wish to be disrespectful to any individual or to the Government when I say that that course is not possible in this instance. The measure has been brought before the House for the ratification of an agreement that has already been signed. My complaint is not against B.H.P. or any other company that may attempt to establish itself in this State, nor is my complaint against either of the two signatories to the agreement who represent this State and are both gentlemen of very high standing in the community.

My complaint is against the system that allows any individual to sign an agreement absolutely and completely binding the State to its provisions, without Parliament having any say whatsoever regarding the terms of that document. I draw the attention of members to the second clause of the agreement which reads—

This agreement is made subject to approval and ratification by the Parliament of Western Australia expressed in an Act to be passed before the thirty-first day of December, One

thousand nine hundred and fifty-two. If the Act is not so passed this agreement shall not operate and shall be of no effect and neither of the parties hereto shall have any claim against the other of them with respect to any matter or thing arising out of this agreement.

The reference in that clause to the agreement being "subject to the authorisation and ratification by the Parliament of Western Australia" is so much eye-wash, because it means nothing. I do not think anyone doubts that B.H.P. is the most efficient industrial organisation in Australia. I sometimes wish that our Parliaments were conducted as efficiently. That is a compliment I openly pay to B.H.P. But my concern is that the same procedure that has been adopted in this instance could easily be repeated in future and that important agreements could be concluded between the Government and some companies—agreements that might last for 100 years—without Parliament having any say in the framing of them. I wish to repeat for the benefit of Mr. Watson, that I am pleased B.H.P. has made an attempt to come to this State and I wish it every success.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: But you will do your best to stop them!

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I believe that the Premier and the Minister for Education are two honourable gentlemen of highest repute; but I consider the system is wrong which allows them or any other person to make agreements to give away, for a period of from 60 to 100 years, something which is of vital importance to this State and the Commonwealth, without calling on Parliament to make a decision about it. There are one or two parts of the Bill that should have been altered.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: None of it is any good.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I disagree with that interjection. But it is no use any member saying that our hands are anything but tied. We can do nothing about the measure except express our disapproval. Had it been possible to amend the agreement it would have been better. I subscribe to the principle of bargaining. I have always done so in union affairs and in private life. The greatest mistake that was made in formulating this agreement was to give away from the very jump the whole of the Koolan Island and Irvine Island iron-ore deposits.

It would have been much better if those who had signed the agreement had said to B.H.P., "You are an engineering firm of great magnitude. We have no doubt of your ability to do certain things, but we are responsible to the people who elected us, and we are going to insert a bargaining clause in this agreement to this

effect: If you decide to build an integrated steel mill we will guarantee to place the whole of the resources of those two islands at your disposal. But until such time as you do that, we will have to hold Koolan Island for bargaining purposes." But there is nothing of that sort in the agreement. I feel sure that B.H.P. would see eye to eye with us in that connection. I venture to say the company has taken such action itself many times with regard to contracts it has made with other individuals and other businesses. I would inform Mr. Dimmitt that the main reason I rose to my feet was to submit that view.

I might draw an analogy with the cray-fishing industry along the coast between here and Koolan Island. The Fisheries Department has a system under which the small fisherman—the man with one boat and a mate—is allowed to fish in certain waters and those with big boats and 20 or 30 employees have to fish elsewhere. In other words there is a certain amount of protection for the smaller man. I do not find in this Bill any protection for other firms that might wish to become established here. The management of B.H.P. consists of clever men, like Sir Essington Lewis, and they have done a splendid job for the country. I do not propose to get up and wave my arms about and complain about the profits the company has made.

Any business has to be run at a profit or it cannot be conducted at all. If B.H.P. increases its profits it can do so only by expanding its business, and for its progress I give it full marks. But I think that the North-West should receive some sort of bonus out of this proposition. There is to be a royalty of 6d. per ton. To me, as a layman, that appears to be nothing, but to B.H.P., under its system of costing it may represent a great sum.

The Minister for Transport: It is only 3d. per ton at Iron Knob.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: We hear what the North lacks in the way of amenities, and I do not think that a firm of the magnitude of B.H.P. would quibble about increasing that figure from 6d. to 1s. if the additional money was to be used to provide amenities for the North-West. That is something I think we should have had an opportunity to alter in this Bill.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: We do not want to sell it for 1s. a ton.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: There have been many interjections, from those who I presume will support the Bill, about the £4,000,000 that the company intends to spend on the steel rolling mill. That is a vast sum of money, but the Western Mining Corporation has spent about £5,000,000 at Bullfinch and we have not heard anything about that either in the Press or in this House.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is a gross exaggeration.

The Minister for Agriculture: About £500,000 would be nearer the mark.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Prime Minister of Australia should be given full marks—in this futuristic world and this atomic age—for having done everything he could to ensure that Australia is suitably defended, but Western Australia has a vast coast line and airmen have told me that, when flying, one is deeply impressed by the sparsity of our population once one gets away from the metropolitan area. In view of the great area and small population of this State we should welcome big companies like B.H.P. to this State when they intend to establish industries here.

In another place it was stated that the iron-ore dealt with in the agreement would be used only in Australia and I have no doubt that when the agreement was signed that was the intention of the company, but there is nothing in the Bill to ensure that that provision will be observed in its entirety. Once the iron-ore is taken to the Eastern States it will lose its identity and the company will have the right to sell the iron produced from it on the markets of the world. The electric tramway system at Fremantle has been closed down and the rails have been pulled up. They were purchased by a gentleman from the Eastern States, who is now shipping them to Japan and yet we are short of steel in Australia.

There has been a lot of hilarity on the subject of Wundowie and the iron-ore from Koolyanobbing. I am not superstitious, but I have a suspicion that Wundowie, which has caused so much laughter among those in this House who would abandon it, is one of the industries that will be closed down when the B.H.P. does establish itself in this State, just because it is supposed not to have made a profit. Have our railways or the State Shipping Service made a profit? Of course not, but they have served the coastline and the hinterland and have made it possible for our secondary industries and primary producers to carry on, thereby contributing indirect profits to the State. Have not the State ships served both the north and the south—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: How?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The State ships have not served the State as well as they should have, because there are not enough of them, but Western Australia must progress and to that end we require the establishment here of as many industries as possible. I agree with Mr. Roche that the State depends mainly upon its primary industries, and no matter how much gold is produced in Western Australia, we cannot carry on without

our wool, wheat and meat. Nevertheless, any expansion in our secondary industries must be of benefit to the whole State.

A move was made in this House a few weeks ago to have appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the Coogee-Kwinana railway, which we were told was a matter of urgency and had to be completed within twelve months, but in the "Daily News" of November 25th appeared the following:—

#### Kwinana Railway Line off the Urgent List.

Construction of the Coogee-Kwinana railway extension, to be built primarily to serve the new Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's refinery, may now be delayed. The Government may reconsider its decision to push ahead immediately with the line because of an intimation from the oil company that its completion is not now quite so urgent. The company is unofficially reported to be considering the use of road transport while the refinery is being built.

Is not that just what we said a couple of weeks ago—that once an agreement is signed and Parliament has had no opportunity of amending it, the company concerned can do as it likes? I repeat that anything I can do to further the industries of this State will be done, but I reserve to myself the right at any time to say what I think in a matter such as this. For the reasons I have given, I oppose the Bill.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [4.58]: I agree with what Mr. Roche said about the importance of our primary industries, because food is vital, and yet production of foodstuffs in this State is slipping back. The project that is going forward at Kwinana will mean a heavy extra drain on the supply of water that is available to the people of the outback. We, who represent the Goldfields, know what hardships will be suffered by the people of those areas if supplies of water are further restricted.

The water that will be necessary for use by the oil refinery and B.H.P. establishment at Kwinana will almost inevitably cause a further restriction of the use of water in the rural areas and the Goldfields. I, also, am not happy about the way in which the agreement was drawn up. Members heard what the Minister for Agriculture said last night about Bills dealing with money matters, during the debate on the legislation with regard to cattle compensation. It is a great deal of money—

The Minister for Agriculture: We were dealing with the compensation to be paid.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: This agreement should have been brought before Parliament before being signed.

The Minister for Agriculture: If you do not like it, you can reject it.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I will oppose the second reading of the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: Be consistent with the help you gave me.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: We have to protect our great mineral resources. Once those minerals are extracted from the ground they cannot be replaced. An excellent instance of that is the mining of gold. On the goldfields shafts are being sunk deeper and deeper every day. If the goldmines go out of production, we shall have to depend on the agricultural industry to balance the State's economy. B.H.P. has done a lot for Australia. It is a large financial concern and has competent executives in charge of its operations. Those men have certainly used all their initiative in getting the agreement signed by the Government in this State. I am of the same opinion as Mr. Lavery, namely, that we sold out to this company and we should have ensured that everything was ready before we signed the other portion of the agreement.

We have given the company everything and once the agreement is ratified it can do what it likes with us. The other day I was in a theatre where a travel talk was screened which depicted what B.H.P. had done at Port Kembla. That clearly showed that the company was big enough to supply the needs of Australia for many years, apart from its operations at Newcastle. I have visited Port Pirie and Broken Hill where this company is operating, and there is no doubt that it has done wonderful things for the Commonwealth not only during the war but also before and since. Nevertheless that company is operating only in its own interests and in the interests of its shareholders. When it commences its operations in this State the same thing will happen here, and I would like to see the agreement amended to ensure that we do not give everything away to the company.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [5.31]: The agreement contained in the Bill now before us has been the subject of a great deal of discussion in this House and another place, in the columns of the Press and also in many public places since it was signed. Much has been said in this House to the effect that we have no right to alter it.

Hon. G. Fraser: Is not that so?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No.

Hon. G. Fraser: Tell us how we can.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If a majority in this Chamber is of the opinion that this agreement is unsatisfactory, it can be waived.

Hon. G. Fraser: The fact is that we cannot alter the agreement.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I know that, but we can toss it out. If we decide to reject this agreement, it will serve as an instruction to the Government to return to the company and have another one drafted. That is the way we can alter it if we so desire, but so far as I am concerned it is all right. The main objection raised seems to be that we have not tied down B.H.P. to establish an integrated iron and steel industry in return for the leases granted to it at Koolan Island.

Hon. G. Fraser: You are not going to tell us that we have!

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: How can we expect a large company such as B.H.P. to sign on the dotted line and to say that within 21 years it must establish an integrated iron and steel industry, knowing full well that we have no possibility in the foreseeable future of finding a fuel capable of producing steel?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What is wrong with charcoal?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is everything wrong with it. America, which leads the world in the manufacture of steel, gave charcoal iron production away 20 years ago. We should get down to facts. It is of no use trying to get a company to sign on the dotted line to do something it cannot carry out.

Hon. G. Fraser: With the resources available, it can.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Those mineral resources have been available for very many years and we have been endeavouring to find someone with sufficient finance to establish an integrated iron and steel industry in this State, but to date we have been unsuccessful.

Hon. G. Fraser: The iron has not rotted away.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If we throw this agreement out, the iron will still be there and we will still be looking for someone to establish a steel industry.

Hon. G. Fraser: And we will still have the mineral resources.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No one is going to enter this State and start a steel industry in opposition to B.H.P. That company has a monopoly in Australia, but it has never abused it.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Why cannot it establish an integrated iron and steel industry here?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Of course it cannot!

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I know it could.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: What with?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Charcoal.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have already told the hon. member that the use of charcoal is out. The basis of all the objection to the agreement is that B.H.P. has not signed on the dotted line to establish steel works in Western Australia.

Hon. G. Fraser: Neither should the State have signed on the dotted line to give away all our resources.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In 20 years time B.H.P. would still be in the same position. In fact, there was no need for it to come here with the proposal to erect a steel rolling mill. It has capacity to supply all the steel needs of Australia and have some for export as well.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not you want an established integrated iron and steel industry in this State?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not want to see a steel works established in Western Australia if the cost of the product manufactured is to be out of all reason. On too many occasions have we erected factories with similar results.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: But we want Western Australian products.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: We are getting them now, mostly.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Do not you want Western Australia to progress and have its own integrated iron and steel industry?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Last night, Mr. Roche said that we should have farms before factories. I agree with him to a certain extent. I appreciate that because of the amount of money the Government intends to spend at Kwinana for B.H.P., it will delay the solution of some of our most important problems in the country. I have a great deal of sympathy for the country people and it grieves me to think that such a large sum of money is to be spent at Kwinana, but I am not going to be so narrow-minded as to vote against the Bill because of that. I know that ultimately such a project will prove of benefit to the State as a whole. Who is to say that, in the future, after some suitable fuel has been discovered, we will not be able to establish an integrated iron and steel industry and that B.H.P. will not be the company to initiate it?

Surely, if sufficient prospects are offered as an inducement, someone will eventually establish a steel industry in this State. There are many English firms desirous of expanding and operating in Western Australia. We have the instance of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. coming here because its executive realised that the time was ripe to expand its activities and the prospects and conditions offered by the State were worth while. Therefore, let us place B.H.P. in the same category as we would any other company that in-

tended to establish itself here. In 15 or 20 years' time, if the market is opportune, surely that company will have enough vision and ability to undertake the manufacture of steel in this State.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You have already said that it has sufficient capacity to supply the requirements for the whole of Australia.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I know that. The same could be said of the industries in England, but some of the companies are desirous of extending their operations to this State.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: We have never given the English firms a chance to erect a steel factory in Western Australia.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Many offers have been made to those firms to establish such a factory and, similarly, they would have been given a monopoly of the leases at Koolan Island if they had agreed to do so.

Hon. G. Fraser: And you are going to see that they never will.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Because I am quite prepared to let B.H.P. do it, knowing full well that another company is unlikely to come here in the near future. I am doing what is right in the interests of Western Australia and the Commonwealth. If the hon. member thinks that someone else might come here to work the Koolan Island leases, then I think it will probably not be for 100 years to come. I would like to see our mineral resources put to some use as soon as possible for the use of ourselves and our children.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: If the B.H.P. would give us some assurance that it intended to establish an integrated iron and steel industry, we would have no objection.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There was no need for B.H.P. to come to this State in any case, but it is going to spend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 in Western Australia. If the company had not signed the agreement with the Government, it would still produce in the Eastern States and our iron at Koolan Island would still await development, unless we gave some company the right to remove it. Brasserts and Japanese firms would willingly come here and take it away tomorrow; but we have to safeguard our mineral resources, and we have done that by signing the agreement with B.H.P. Many harsh words have been directed against the Government because it has signed this agreement, but it takes two parties to make a contract and both the parties in this instance have signed on the dotted line. If one of them is guilty, then both of them are, and what can be said against the Government, can also be said against B.H.P.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I have said nothing against B.H.P.

Hon. G. Fraser: The only difference is that one has to look after the interests of the State and the other is looking after its own interests.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: B.H.P. has looked after the welfare of Australia and no one can deny that it has done that extremely well. The hon. member's remarks on the agreement were a slur on the character of the executive officers of B.H.P., just as much as they were a slur on the officials of the Government.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: On a point of order, as the last member who spoke about B.H.P., I resent the implication that I at any time cast any slur on any person or on the company.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will be prepared to withdraw the statement?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I will; it was merely an expression of my opinion. I stated that the same thing could be said against the Government. It takes two parties to make an agreement, and, in this instance, two parties have reached the agreement now before us. That is why I said it was a slur against the company and its officers. If the hon. member does not like my use of the word, I cannot help that.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: What will be the advantages under this agreement?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have already told members that the first advantage will be the establishment of a steel rolling mill at Kwinana. I do not know nor does the hon. member what will follow the establishment of that mill, but I should think that in future it could easily lead to the establishment of an integrated iron and steel industry and many other industries. The company is prepared to spend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 at the outset. Is not that worth while for a start?

I feel sure that B.H.P. will not stop at that. All said and done, of whom does B.H.P. consist? It consists of shareholders, Australians, and probably a lot of Western Australians, and they will ensure that the management does the right thing. Therefore I cannot see that there is any need for disapproving of the agreement. I support the Bill.

#### THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central) [5.17]: I enjoy listening to the speeches in this House, particularly those by representatives of the Labour movement, because my memory goes back to the time when we had a discussion in another place and I was one of those who opposed the action taken by the Labour Government of the day. That Government had disposed of the Koolan Island iron-ore to an English holding company which was supplying Japan, and the

State collected 3d. per ton royalty. I recall the champions of the proposal for shipping the iron-ore away. I pointed out that the same iron-ore might later be used against us in a way that we would not desire or appreciate, and when I think of that warning and how close I was to the truth, I feel that my prophecy was rather amazing.

Hon. G. Fraser interjected.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member was one and several other members who have been interjecting were parties to that transaction. The House should not forget that. Now we have an Australian company—a company that has established one of the most successful industries Australia has had. There are two companies I know of that have been outstandingly successful, but I shall not mention the name of the other. The fact remains that they have been outstanding and have proved of great benefit to Australia. Now, however, members are advancing paltry arguments in opposition to B.H.P. having the right to come to Western Australia and engage in industry.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: No, we have not done that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then what is the objection?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: The objection is that the agreement does not bind the company to do enough for Western Australia.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member might be told by his electors that he is not giving sufficient return for his salary. I would not say that he is not, but perhaps he would have done a better job for the State had he remained in the department with which he was associated before he entered this House.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You told me the other day that I was one of the best members in the House.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Sometimes we hand out a few platitudes, but that sort of thing is generally done for a reason. There was a chance of its proving useful, but it did not. I appeal to members not to let Western Australia down on this occasion. We ought to be speaking with one voice on this question. We should be delighted to know that the company is prepared to come here to establish an industry and help to build up the population of this State.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: We are all delighted.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then why the criticism? I do not happen to be a shareholder of B.H.P. I could wish that I had been one of the original shareholders, realising the brains behind the company. In that event, what

a wealthy man I would have been today! I have the greatest appreciation for a company that will come here to establish an industry, knowing the difficulties that will probably confront it for a few years. As an agriculturist, I regard the advent of B.H.P. to Western Australia as of great value, because it will help to build up a permanent population that is necessary for two reasons. The first is to enable us to hold and defend this country.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is what I said.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** On occasion the hon. member does utter words of wisdom, so, in repeating his remarks, I am on solid ground. I am very anxious that this company should establish its works here in order to build up the population and establish industries that may prove very useful for future generations.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: We all are.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Then why not get behind the Government and support the Bill?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Because this agreement is not good enough. We ought to be able to make a better agreement.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** How many members would be able to stand up and declare that they were unable to find fault with anything? It is easy to find fault. Some criticism is justified; some is unjustified. On this occasion, it is unjustified.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is merely your opinion.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It is a very sound opinion. I am trying to convince members that, by this company's starting operations here, it will enable us to build up a permanent population by reason of the employment that will be made available and because that additional population will provide a very good market for the men who are operating under my department. There is no better market for our primary products than is the home market. This is a point that should appeal to members. I believe that one member who was in opposition will support it and I shall expect him to record his vote in favour of the Bill because he has evidently seen the light.

We must not discourage companies desirous of coming here and establishing industries. Admittedly, we must have a balanced economy. For a long time we have been engaged in the work of developing this country, and I could only wish that someone possessed of similar initiative, enterprise and funds would come here and work up some of our agricultural and pastoral areas.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: They would if you gave them a chance.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** We would be prepared to give them cheap land; probably land for next to nothing. I mention this as a hint to Mr. Bennetts because he might feel inclined to change his mind. What about all the agricultural land in the Esperance district? It is not a question of the value of the land; what matters is the production that can be obtained from the land. The same argument applies to iron-ore. Let us remove the iron-ore from those islands and have it converted into useful products. The three islands with their deposits of iron-ore must be the envy of Asiatics. Members have asked about producing charcoal iron. Let us make a comparison between the cost of charcoal iron and coke iron.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Seven pounds a ton difference on the world's market.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is all he knows about it.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I believe that Wundowie has been the only place where charcoal has been used so extensively. The reason is that it was so unprofitable. The Labour Government at the time wisely decided to start that industry because we were at the point of almost imminent disaster. I am not complaining of its action, but I look at the Loan Estimates and see the large sum of money that the State has contributed to the Wundowie industries. I do not know whether it will become remunerative but it cannot be profitable in comparison with steel manufactured by the other method.

Hon. E. M. Davies. The company will not be manufacturing it here.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Not at the moment, but the company is giving an undertaking that, if it becomes possible to coke Collie coal, it will manufacture here. Let us examine the matter from a business point of view. What would the hon. member himself do? Would he have the iron-ore brought to Fremantle and unloaded and then have the ships sent empty to Newcastle to bring Newcastle coal back here? I was hoping that I should find a good business man in the hon. member, because he was an old soldier pal of mine and I should like to see him on a board of directors but not if he entertains that idea. One needs to have a business mind to make a success of such an industry.

Let us examine the position in the light of the benefit this agreement will confer upon the State. Let us not discourage people who are prepared to come here and spend money in establishing industries. B.H.P. will not want Government assistance, whereas nearly every industry that has been started in this State, I am reluctant to say, has had to be backed by the people's money. This is one of the com-

panies that will not need financial help and will prove of great benefit to the State.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: No one is denying that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but members are objecting to the agreement, and if we submitted it to members for their revision, we should probably need a Philadelphia lawyer to understand its terms.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Then I must be a Philadelphia lawyer.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member is one who understands everything and, in saying that, I am only giving credit where it is due. I guarantee that Western Australia is the envy of some of the other States.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Of course it is.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then let us put our hands together and be joyful that the company is prepared to establish an industry here—an industry that will build up our population and thus assist in the defence of this country.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: No one objects to that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then why condemn the agreement?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Cannot you make a better agreement than this one?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is very easy to suggest that a better agreement be made when it is not one's own task to make it. I tried to take that line early in life and failed, and I know too much to attempt to follow it now. I lost a lot of money but, as a result of the knowledge I gained, I would not put my name to paper for anything of that sort again. B.H.P. is a company possessed of business acumen and knowledge, and we are not standing to lose anything by making the agreement.

Some members might think that we ought to allow the iron-ore deposits to remain on the Island as they have done for many years. True, so long as they remain there, they are an asset provided we are able to hold this very sparsely populated territory for the British Empire, but there are many millions of people who must be looking on this country with envy. It is a great magnet for those people, a fact that members should not overlook. Do not let us be critical. Far better is it to take a commonsense view of the matter. If the agreement is not favourably regarded by every member, what is the alternative?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Make a better agreement.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It takes two to make an agreement; it takes the Government and the company. Do members consider the Government, consisting of my colleague on my left and others that members know, is not capable of looking after this?

Hon. R. J. Boylen: I did not say it was a matter of being able to make a better agreement, but possibly of not wanting to make a better agreement.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is hardly a fair statement. That almost shows want of confidence in the Government.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You can take it that way.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I thought so.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You do agree that you could make a better agreement?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You asserted as much.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not, and I do not allow the hon. member to interpret my assertions. What I said was that I was perfectly satisfied that the best agreement was made to get these people to come here. Even if we do give a little in their favour, it will be of benefit to the State.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You are not giving a little.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member is a generous man, and he would give the company a little. I hope that when the vote is counted, this House will show its whole-hearted support. The matter is not political. Let us show that we can demonstrate to the public that this can be an independent House, and a House of review without any politics in it. There are times when I have to support the Labour Party, even though I am a Minister, because I think it is right. That does not happen very often, but it does now and again.

Hon. E. M. Davies: We often support the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I was sorry and grieved to see Mr. Davies, who has been a friend of mine for many years, take the lead in this objection. He satisfied me that he was the same Mr. Davies, but that he did not understand the agreement, and that it was the best we could make.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery interjected.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When the hon. member has had the same experience as I have had, he will not be so unsophisticated.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I am not unsophisticated.



**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** The hon. member is in some respects, although in others I think he is very shrewd. First, the company is establishing a permanent industry. I have seen the time when we had depressions, and B.H.P. still kept its people employed.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: How many people will the mill employ?

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I am not going to answer haphazardly.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I will tell you.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I know the hon. member has all the figures in his hands.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Did not you go into the proposition? You are a signatory to the agreement.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** No.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Well, you are a member of the Government.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Yes, I am a member of the Government that agreed to it, and I am not ashamed of it.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It will employ approximately 300 men.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Three hundred and fifty.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It will probably take 350, but they will be the first. What will these 350 new people mean to Western Australia? They will mean more loaves of bread, more sheep to be killed and more to be supplied. The hon. member must realise that if we bring in a thousand people, they bring about the employment of additional people. Let us not have a narrow outlook.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They will be only temporarily employed.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** That is one in our favour. The company is to spend £4,000,000 here and then shut the works down! The hon. member is confusing the construction work in his mind.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: No.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** He does not know what number is likely to be employed, or the others that will be consequently employed. This is one of the great values of the proposition. Also, there is need for us to build up our defences. We must be extremely careful in the future not to be caught napping.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Just imagine in time of war having to bring steel billets from the Eastern States to be rolled here!

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It would be better to do that than to bring them from overseas. We can at least bring them by rail and so will not be subjecting our ships to submarine attack, as we would if the billets were brought

from outside. If the hon. member persists in his interjections, I will be making a long speech, although I had no intention of doing so. I appeal to members not to prevaricate over this.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We are enjoying your appeal to members.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** The hon. member is an intelligent man and I wish, on this occasion, I could appeal to his intelligence. I wonder what would have been his attitude had the company decided to establish the industry at Esperance. What a jam the hon. member would have been in! How difficult it would have been for him then to say, "No, it is not the right thing." I think we could have made a much worse agreement.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: We in the West Province think it is a very good thing.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But you still oppose it.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It is easy to be a critic. We have people who are prepared to come here with a terrific amount of money. I can remember that when I was a Minister previously the revenue the State had to spend was £8,000,000. Here we have one company spending half that amount.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: What is it giving in return?

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It will give employment to quite a lot of people and will provide a most valuable industry.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Do you not think we are giving too much for that?

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I do not know what we are giving. We were going to give all this iron-ore to Japan at 3d. a ton. If it had not been for the intercession of the Commonwealth Government of the day, that agreement would have gone through.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I am not denying that.

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** We may find fault with this agreement, but there were no loud objections at that time from the few members now in the House who were associated with the Government of the day. I was Leader of the Opposition then, and I was fearful about it.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Is not that what an Opposition is for?

**The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** No. Have a look at some of the legislation that was passed and see if we opposed it. We helped to build it.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It was too good to oppose.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I would like those men who have grown a bit old in the service of their country to be capable of judging right from wrong; and to be unanimous in saying to this company, "We welcome you. You are going to do a great service to our people."

**Hon. C. W. D. Barker:** We do welcome it.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Well, do not welcome it with the left hand and belt it with the right.

**Hon. C. W. D. Barker:** Those associated with the company are good business people.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Yes.

**Hon. C. W. D. Barker:** Then let us make a good business proposition with them.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I know the Bill will be approved by the House, but I do not want members some time later to look back on their lives with a pang of regret—

**Hon. C. W. D. Barker:** That will be you.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:**—because the passing of the Bill will mean so much to the State.

**HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East)** [5.39]: The Bill seeks to ratify an agreement which the Premier has entered into with the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. in respect of a proposed industry at Fremantle. The Minister for Agriculture asked us to embrace it with unanimity, and to give it a great welcome. I put this view to members, that if ever we had an obligation to be critical, now is the time, because this is a vitally important agreement. It consists of approximately 20 pages, and purports to bind B.H.P. on the one hand and the State of Western Australia on the other. There are important consequences to each party. We are asked to ratify the agreement, and I repeat that it is our obligation to peruse it most carefully and critically. Every member will agree that if he enters into a simple agreement respecting a lease, the purchase of a house, the letting of a tribute on a mine or the letting of a share-farming contract, he must peruse it very carefully and analyse each clause.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker:** He does not have to publish it in the paper before he gets it signed.

**Hon. E. M. HEENAN:** So, if members criticise the terms of this agreement, I think they are fulfilling the obligation which is imposed upon them. They may be right or wrong in their deductions, but they are at least contributing their views

to this vital question. There is no doubt that we all want to see Western Australia progress, and I do not think there can be any question that the establishment in Western Australia of an iron and steel industry, in some form or other, will be of general advantage to the State. B.H.P. has proved to be an efficient organisation that has specialised in this branch of industry, and if anyone can make a success of the venture, it is likely to do so. I welcome its interest in this State and I applaud it for the stupendous works it has carried out in other parts of Australia, and for the contribution it has made to the welfare of this country.

We have, in Western Australia, a most valuable asset and I understand that it consists of approximately 200,000,000 or 250,000,000 tons of iron-ore; that is a most valuable and essential commodity. I realise that while it is lying up in these islands it is not doing much good. It is like a lot of the gold that still remains hidden on the goldfields of this State—it is not much good until it is taken out and used. However, we are fortunate that we have this great prize and apparently it is of such magnitude that the State Government has not been able to exploit it and up to date no other company has been able to undertake the stupendous task. I always take the view that one can pay too much for one's whistle. We have this valuable asset and if this agreement is ratified that asset will be made over, practically for all time as far as we are concerned, to this company.

**Hon. C. W. D. Barker:** It will be handed over for ever.

**Hon. E. M. HEENAN:** We are giving away something which is one of our most prized assets and therefore it is only right that in consideration for transferring this asset we should in return obtain some worth-while benefits. I have not been impressed by the statements that have been made outlining what we are going to get out of it. Apparently the company is to spend a vast sum of money, and the industry will create a good deal of employment. Consequently the company will, for many years, employ some hundreds of men and it is only reasonable to assume that the number will be increased as the years go by. But I gather from Mr. Barker's remarks that no one in Western Australia will get cheaper steel. The people in the country will probably suffer some real disadvantages.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** We are getting it cheaper than any other part of the world now.

**Hon. L. C. Diver:** They land it at Fremantle without any surcharge.

**Hon. E. M. HEENAN:** My first complaint is about the long term that is being granted to the company. The agreement

is for 50 years and it provides for a renewal of 21 years. After the expiration of that term the agreement will continue in force until such time as either party gives the other two years' notice in writing of its termination. Some of the leases have been granted almost in perpetuity, if my reading of the agreement is correct. I am inclined to think that we have entered into this agreement for too long a term and I put that to members for their careful consideration.

Apparently the Government has asked B.H.P. to come in and exploit these deposits because in the preamble to the agreement there is this statement—

The State of Western Australia is desirous that an integrated iron and steel industry should be established in the said State and has requested the company whose principal business is that of iron and steel masters in the Commonwealth of Australia to assist in that objective.

So it looks as if we have made the first move; we have made a request to the company and it is driving what I consider to be a fairly hard bargain. I do not altogether blame the company; it is not coming here with the sole motive of doing a good turn for Western Australia.

It is coming here to expand its organisation and to embark on a large policy which will assist the company to make a success of its various ventures and to continue to be an attractive investment and thus pay dividends to its shareholders. There is nothing wrong with that, but I would point out to members that if the agreement ended there it would not be so bad. But apparently the State will have to spend a large sum of money—I estimate it to be £1,000,000 or more. We have to provide power.

The Minister for Agriculture: Which the company will pay for.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes.

The Minister for Agriculture: Surely you will not charge that against it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We have to provide water.

The Minister for Agriculture: Which it will pay for.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes, but we have to undertake the expense of taking it to the works.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The same as we do to the Goldfields.

The Minister for Agriculture: You would hardly expect the company to provide the facilities for taking it there.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We also have to provide a railway and roads.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Which can be used by everybody.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We also have to carry out dredging work.

The Minister for Agriculture: The roads will be there in any case.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We also have to provide berths.

The Minister for Agriculture: It provides the berths.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is correct. The company has to provide the berths.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think the hon. member is reading the agreement wrongly.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Mr. Barker made the same mistake yesterday.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If I am wrong, I withdraw that statement. I am not in the happy position like some other members who are always right. However, we have to incur a good deal of expense in depositing the spoil.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think we might even sell that.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We have to make over a large area of land at cost price.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: We do not want to make anything out of it. We want to start the industry.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We have to indemnify the company against claims arising out of silting up in connection with the retaining wall.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: In other words, we have to do a fair thing.

The Minister for Agriculture: It has to let us use the wharves.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We also have to co-operate with the company in locating other minerals.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Is not that to our advantage?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am pointing out that the State has to do a great deal. We are parting with a very valuable asset for a long term and on top of that we have to do a lot of other things. There is a clause in the agreement which reads—

That if and when the establishment of an integrated iron and steel industry in the said State becomes economically possible the State will, if requested, co-operate with the company in locating suitable deposits of limestone magnesite dolomite fire clay and silica rock.

The Minister for Agriculture: We have to tell the company if we know where any of those deposits are situated. We would undertake to do that for any citizen.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: It is to our advantage if we can get an iron and steel industry established here.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: There is another clause which reads—

That if as the result of research and investigations into the operation of a blast furnace as portion of an integrated iron and steel industry within the said State it is found necessary to utilise ores other than those available to the Company from the Islands and the Company undertakes to proceed with the establishment of such blast furnace in the said State then the State will make available to the Company on favourable terms and conditions Crown resources necessary to supply such ores.

We are not to resume the railway. Then there is another clause to which I would like to refer members so that they can consider it before the agreement is ratified. It reads—

That the Company shall have the right with the consent in writing of the State to assign or otherwise dispose of its rights and obligations under this Agreement or any interest therein and such consent shall not be arbitrarily or unreasonably withheld and any subsidiary company shall have a right to assign in like manner any right or obligation it may have under this Agreement.

So if in the years to come some other wealthy company comes into the State of Western Australia and wants to exploit this industry, and is prepared to pay a huge sum of money to B.H.P. for its agreement, they will be the ones who will make the profit and not the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: They will have to work the show if they are going to invest their money. They will not leave it idle.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Those are some aspects of the agreement that cause me to be critical and to come to the conclusion that it is a bit one-sided. Good luck to the company because it looks upon this as a business proposition; its primary interest is the welfare of its shareholders. The company is out to make money for itself, and I think we on our part are entitled to drive an adequate bargain with it.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: To my mind, the State is not only parting with its most valuable asset but it is undertaking obligations which are to involve the taxpayers of this State in a vast amount of expense, not only in the immediate years but in the years that lie ahead.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: That has not been the State's most valuable asset up to date.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The immediate benefits that will accrue to the State do not impress me to the same extent as

they apparently do a lot of other members. There is to be an industry established which will create employment; this is all to the good. But there will also be some bad consequences, if I am any judge. People will be attracted from the country, and the State is going to spend a vast amount of money at a time when it is very short of finance, and when its inland areas are struggling for their very existence. Our greatest problem in this State, as I have said repeatedly, is centralisation. This undertaking will merely accentuate that problem. There is a lot of merit in what Mr. Roche said, namely, that we want to maintain a balanced economy.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He said farms only.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The State is not going to be much good if all the people are to be centred around Perth, Fremantle and Kwinana.

The Minister for Agriculture: The primary producers are about the only people exporting their products.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We want the people to stay in the northern areas and on the Goldfields.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do not you want consumers to consume the farm produce.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They will be consumers whether they are in Woop Woop or in Fremantle.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Of course we want consumers! What is the use of producing anything unless we have consumers.

The Minister for Agriculture: We want steel pipes for water supplies.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am very worried about the grave problem of centralisation. I realise that very few things are unmixed blessings in this life. If the Bill is carried in its present form, it will create a lot of work, will increase the tempo in Western Australia and will lead other industries to establish themselves here.

The Minister for Agriculture: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The Bill has some merit, and I will be quite frank and honest about that. On the other hand, however, there are a number of demerits which will have bad consequences.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: You are flogging a defunct feline.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am not touching the hon. member!

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I said you are flogging a defunct feline.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I repeat, I am not touching the hon. member! There are so many laudatory comments about B.H.P. that I would like to point out that there is another company operating in

Western Australia. It is doing an excellent job and doing it in a part of the State where good works are necessary. I refer to the Western Mining Corporation. Look at what that company is spending in a town like Bullfinch!

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You do not have to present it with the Golden Mile, either.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Look at the work it is carrying out in Coolgardie and other parts.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is it doing? It is only after gold.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It is doing a very good job. It is engaged in an industry that badly needs good leadership at the present time. It is assisting the development of parts of the State which are very much in need of that development.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is not the same permanency in its work as there is in this.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Finally, I put it to members that when they vote on this Bill they are in effect signing their names to the agreement. I think it is the obligation of every member to consider all aspects of the agreement very carefully. It looks most alluring as it is, but let us look for flaws in it. That is our obligation; let us look for weaknesses and I think there are plenty to be found.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [6.7]: I rise to support the second reading of the Bill. I would like to point out to members who have opposed it that we are living in a fast-moving age, when chemistry is progressing at a tremendous rate. Different types of alloys and materials are being evolved week by week. What guarantee have we that if these huge iron-ore deposits were left for ages to come, they would still be wanted. The world supply position of iron-ore is reaching such a stage now that industrial chemists are looking for a substitute.

Hon. G. Fraser: And, as in the case of wool, they will not find it.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Perhaps so, but they have been extremely successful so far and they have hardly started on their job. They have turned out many tremendously strong light metals recently, and the point I want to make is that it is no good sitting on the egg we have until Mr. Barker's eggs of the North go rotten. We must look after them.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I should keep this one; it will keep.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is a roc's egg.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: B.H.P. is an organisation that is prepared to take huge deposits.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: To take, not to buy.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: It will pay 6d. royalty. I will not quarrel with the hon. member, but if that applies today, I do not know what word he would have used when the Labour Government did a similar thing.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That has nothing to do with the agreement. Let us keep to the agreement.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Yes, let us discuss the agreement. We have heard a constant vamp from Mr. Barker. He has said that it is a rotten agreement, and that there is nothing constructive whatever in it.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I am only doing my job.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: We realise that some people have not had an opportunity of negotiating business deals and their experience regarding business agreements is limited. Consequently, when an agreement like this is placed before them, they are a little timid and frightened to take the necessary step. I realise I am the representative of a rural constituency that will be greatly affected by this agreement. But we have to take the long view as rural people, as well as the short view. I will deal further with that later on. Let us now stick to B.H.P., an organisation which, whenever it has entered into an agreement, has not only abided by that agreement but has greatly exceeded its terms in some cases. I met a retired employee of that firm; he is a retired farmer and has followed B.H.P.'s progress and development throughout Australia. This man said to me that prosperity has always followed in the steps of this organisation. He said, "Have no fear; it may seem that you are making a concession to B.H.P. today, but history will record achievement."

Those were the words spoken by a gentleman who has taken a keen interest in this organisation. He is not looking at this one venture of B.H.P.'s; this one business proposition. He was quoting the various phases of the life and existence of B.H.P. I say we should take the long view and give the company these facilities, even if we might desire something else written into the agreement. Who knows but that in time to come the chemists, making their discoveries from day to day, will not evolve some method, without coke for the heating of blast furnaces? We do not know what the heat processes of the future will be.

A tremendous organisation like B.H.P. that can, as has been said, at any time produce the entire domestic requirements of Australia from its existing works, does not have its activities encompassed by the coastline of Australia; it has an export business. If another process were evolved for the heating of blast furnaces, is it not natural that the company would place these furnaces in Western Australia to

build up its oversea trade? Is it not natural that it would install them in a port that is much closer to the world's markets than its existing establishments? I think it is very obvious. If members who oppose the Bill could only look into the future and have some faith in the future, they would have no hesitation in supporting the Bill. I have had faith in the future of this country, and I have done all right. I do not know why other people will not have that faith and do the necessary work.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I have faith in the country; we all have faith in it.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: That is probably so.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Apart from the deposits of iron-ore in Western Australia that have been mentioned so far, there are many more deposits. Certainly they are not of such a high quality as those dealt with in the Bill, but the quality is considerably higher than that of deposits that are being economically worked in other parts of the world. I would ask members who take exception to the selling of iron-ore at Yampi Sound, to consider that aspect.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Not selling, but giving it away!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: It is given to us to live but a short span in this world, and let us make use of the elements in our lifetime. We need have no fear of the future. History tells of the wonderful scientific developments that have taken place during the last hundred years, and I say without fear of substantial contradiction that the future will look after itself in that respect. Having dealt with B.H.P. as an organisation and the iron-ore deposits, let us look at what the rural dweller will have to say on this subject.

There are two points of view. One is short termed and has regard to an agreement that has been signed and sealed. It was dealt with when this House passed legislation agreeing to hand over certain concessions at Kwinana to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. Substantial public facilities that will be required in that area were covered in that legislation. The Bill under discussion relating to B.H.P. represents merely the dotting of the "i's" and crossing of the "t's" of that agreement. The country people felt very keenly the signing of that agreement, for they realised that, temporarily at least, they had lost the opportunity to secure any substantial proportion of loan funds that would be available.

Even if this Bill were to be thrown out neck and crop, that action would not bring redress to the country people respecting their requirements in the near future. The long-term viewpoint has re-

gard to the steel that will be transported from Newcastle to Western Australia. Not only will the ships that come here with steel as ballast, proceed to the iron-ore deposits, but they will ship here the steel required for the huge undertakings necessary for water supplies throughout the country areas. B.H.P. turns out the cheapest plate steel in the world, and it is this concern to which we desire to give every facility in order to encourage it to bring as much plate steel to Western Australia as quickly as possible, as soon as we can finance the undertakings. That encouragement should be extended in order that the water schemes in the rural areas can be proceeded with. Water is the keynote of the development of Western Australia, and particularly of domestic water supplies.

With the ships coming to Western Australia, they will not only call at Kwinana to discharge their cargoes of steel, but they will take to the islands in Yampi Sound the vegetables, stores and water necessary for those working on the deposits and will then pick up their iron-ore consignments for shipment to the East. As Mr. Barker pointed out, those conditions do not apply now, and in future there will be no excuse for the company not providing those requirements. With encouragement from the State, it will doubtless do all that. In summing up the position, I would say to those who are in opposition to the Bill, that I do not think in their hearts they have meant what they have said.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not cast reflections!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I am not casting reflections at all. I am sorry for the position in which those hon. members have been placed. I realise they have to put up a certain amount of opposition to the legislation. It is one of those sorry positions into which democracy has worked itself.

Hon. G. Fraser: Who told you that?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I am telling the hon. member! It certainly is one of those sorry positions.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Who is sorry?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: They know that if B.H.P., as it undoubtedly will, establishes itself in Western Australia, a lot of good unionists will come to the State. They will have their own organisation and will enjoy working conditions equal to the best offered in any part of the Commonwealth. The company will provide recreation facilities for the workers and their employees have invariably lived as a happy family. Very likely it will set in motion schemes of employment in Western Australia that will provide an example for other employers of labour to follow.

Although some members may take exception to the legislation, I think they will live to say that it was the finest day's

work the Legislative Council of Western Australia ever did when it passed the Bill. I ask members to have the greatest faith possible in this piece of legislation and to have faith in the future of Western Australia. I have no fear that most of them in their lifetime will see the fruits of this enactment.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Henning, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

#### **BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

##### *Assembly's Message.*

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 2 and 3 made by the Council and had agreed to No. 1 subject to a further amendment.

#### **BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 22nd October.

**HON. L. CRAIG** (South-West) [7.42]: It is some time since the Bill was introduced by Mr. Strickland and probably the implications of the measure have been more or less forgotten by the House. It is an effort on Mr. Strickland's part to make it easier for applicants for land under c.p. conditions in the North-West Division, to take up that land on pastoral leases. That is the main purpose. The hon. member claimed that today it is a complicated and lengthy process and that because of prolonged delays, applicants are liable to let their proposals go and not proceed with their desire to take up such land. I think that expresses Mr. Strickland's desire. There is something in what he said.

The Bill will make it easier for applicants to take from pastoral leases land that they may require for agricultural purposes. I ask members not to forget that I am dealing entirely with the North-West Division. While it will make it easier for the applicants for land, it will make it very difficult for the lessees—that is, the owners of the leases. Today any pastoral lessee who has one head of cattle or 10 sheep per thousand acres can himself take up land under c.p. conditions within his own pastoral lease. That holding of one head of cattle or 10 sheep applies anywhere on land held in the North-West Division and will enable the owner to take up a conditional purchase holding. Mr. Strickland says that under his Bill a lessee will be enabled to take up a c.p. area, but the cattle and sheep must be depastured

on the actual lease itself from which it is proposed to take up the c.p. holding. That is correct.

**Hon. H. K. Watson:** Not necessarily in the actual part to be taken up under c.p. conditions?

**Hon. L. CRAIG:** No. Do not forget that very few of these holdings in the North would be under a quarter of a million acres and most of them would be very much bigger. They may be composed of several leases. Some would have many leases and some only a few. The point I want to make is that the lessee may have six, seven or eight leases and, through seasonal conditions, stock may be depastured at a particular time on one of the leases in the north or in the south.

**Hon. H. C. Strickland:** They would be run as one station.

**Hon. L. CRAIG:** There may be six, seven or eight leases, and at certain times of the year stock are removed, especially in the Kimberleys. They have to be removed from the rivers because of floods, and they would not be depastured on particular leases. They may be on two of the eight leases, the remaining six being unoccupied. But later on, they would be depastured somewhere else. So the amendment proposed by the hon. member would preclude a lessee from taking up any of his leases unless the stock were actually depastured on those particular leases, which is contrary to anything that happens on pastoral stations. Never are the cattle always on one lease; they move from place to place.

I want to point out that anybody can take up any portion of a pastoral lease without any complications at all, if the Minister approves. If, in his wisdom, the Minister thinks that some of the land is suitable for closer settlement or is desired for any purpose at all in the interests of a section of the people, he can dispense with all the formalities as set out in the Bill and in the Act. The taking up of this land from lessees is a slow process only if the Minister is unwilling to help the applicant. If the Minister thinks it desirable, he can dispense with all these formalities, as happened at Carnarvon where a good deal of banana land was summarily taken. The Minister advised the Governor that the land was required for banana-growing and I believe it was just taken, and rightly so.

**Hon. H. C. Strickland:** That was before these provisions were in the Act.

**Hon. L. CRAIG:** They were in the Act.

**Hon. H. C. Strickland:** Not in this Act.

**Hon. L. CRAIG:** There is a provision that all the formalities can be dispensed with.

**Hon. H. C. Strickland:** The banana land resumption was before that.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I did not know that. I was told the Minister just took it; and he can do that—that is, where an applicant desires to take up land from a lessee and the lessee is unwilling to let him do so. The Bill helps to make it easier for the applicant to take up such land against an unwilling pastoral lessee.

This is a complicated Bill. I have made a few notes about it and had better refer to them. When an application is made for the taking up of a lease, the Minister must notify the lessee that somebody has applied for some of his land and a lessee in the North-West Division has 12 months in which to decide whether he objects and whether he will try to take it up himself. The Bill proposes that that period shall be reduced to three months. The hon. member says that a delay of 12 months is too long; that it is not fair to the applicant, who gets tired in that time. But it must be remembered that the lessee may not be there at the time—there are vast distances to be covered—and he requires a good deal of time to make up his mind; though I admit that, with aeroplanes, it is easier to get in touch with people in the far-distant Kimberleys than it used to be.

The important provision is the one dealing with land on which improvements exist or, worse still, land that may be resumed which affects improvements that are not actually on the land proposed to be resumed. Is that clear? It sounds cock-eyed! Somebody may wish to take up 100 acres of a pastoral lease of 20,000 acres, but he chooses to take the only waterhole on the 20,000 acres and the remainder of the land becomes useless.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: He would not get it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Do not make any mistake about that! I know a station that was completely ruined by people taking up the wells on the property under c.p. conditions. That was on the Lower Murchison.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was agricultural land.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, and it was all abandoned afterwards. There is nothing to prevent an applicant applying for and taking any land on which there may be improvements and completely ruining the lease.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Minister must approve in any case.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not know how the Minister could object, particularly if the applicant took up some of the land and the improvements were not actually on the land applied for. It could be a waterhole, not an improvement put there by the lessee but a natural improvement, and the land around the waterhole could be applied for.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: He would not get it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Do not say, "He would not get it." We must see that the law says he cannot get it unless he complies with certain conditions. Under the Act, before a lessee has to make up his mind, a survey must be made. That is so that the lessee can see where the survey pegs are and where the applicant really does intend to take up the land. That is what the Act provides. The Bill stipulates that where the improvements are not actually on the land applied for, although they may be made completely useless by the alienation of the land, a survey is not necessary before the land can be granted.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: Before compensation can be paid.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think I am right in what I said. Land may be applied for on which the improvements are not actually situated; and, by the taking up of the land, the improvements on the rest of the property are rendered useless. Under the Act, a survey must be made before the land is taken up or before compensation is paid. The Bill obviates that and provides that a survey is necessary only if the improvements are on the land itself. To me that is the worst feature of the Bill, because the lease could be completely ruined and the owner would not know anything about it. The property could be alienated before he really knew which land was to be taken from him.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: He must be given a description.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, but it is very hard to give a description of 100,000 acres, especially if it is in small areas. I really cannot see the objective of this Bill. I do not think it will help an applicant. It is quite useless for one individual in the North-West Division, especially in the Kimberleys, to take up land unless a settlement is made, a Government sponsored settlement. I do not think there is much use taking up small, isolated places. Here I have photographs of what happened along the rivers in the Kimberley area. One might be looking across a sea. These pictures are of the Liveringa Station homestead. One looks at it as if one was looking across an ocean. That was in 1950 when the floods came down, and all these picked spots along the river are subject to tremendous flooding. The only way they can grow vegetables at Liveringa is to have two natives, a man and his gin, sitting in the garden from daylight to dark, keeping off the crows and the galahs and the white cockatoos and a few million locusts. It is a permanent job from daylight till dark.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: The irrigation patch is doing very well.



Hon. L. CRAIG: They do not grow vegetables.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They grow onions and beans.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am not saying things will not grow. The difficulty is marketing. Things can be grown all over the world.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And the pests.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The difficulty arises from pests in the first place, and, secondly from marketing. I am reminded of a story which was told by Lord Bruce, who was Prime Minister at the time. Members may recall that the late Mr. Hughes made some arrangement with the British Government during World War I for the selling of our wheat. He sold the whole of the Australian wheat at a price below world levels and there was a terrific outcry about it. But the point of the sale was that Britain undertook to lift the wheat and, without a contract to lift the wheat and take it away, a sale was completely useless to us. So Britain said, "You sell us all you have at 5s. a bushel—the world market price was about 6s. or 7s.—and we will undertake to lift every bushel."

I am reminded of a visitor to Ireland from England, and the same trouble there was transport. He saw an Irishman in Killarney driving along the street a small herd of beautiful young cattle and he said, "My word, Pat, they are nice cattle you have there!" Pat replied, "They are good ones." The man asked, "What would they be worth?" and Pat said, "They would be worth £12 or £13." "Good Heavens!" said the man, "£12 or £13? In Liverpool you could get £20 for them." "Yes," replied Pat, "but if I took the Lakes of Killarney to Hell I could get my own price for them." It is a question of getting the produce to market.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: All the difficulties will have to be overcome.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, but they will be overcome only by closer settlement, with a consequent increase in population. I have here another photograph showing a very large heap of kangaroos poisoned in one day at one trough. In areas such as this nature holds the balance among the pests and when something new is introduced nothing can protect it from them. I am trying to point out that the Bill, if passed, would not be of much value to anyone. It is a worthy objective to reduce the delay from 12 to three months, but I doubt if it would help anyone. Unless better arguments can be brought forward than have so far been adduced, I propose to vote against the second reading.

HON. F. R. WELSH (North) [8.21: I agree with what Mr. Craig has said and I will vote against the Bill because I think it is entirely unnecessary. The land could be obtained in the same way at Broome as was done in the case of the banana plantations at Carnarvon. This Bill would affect the whole of the North-West Division and if we were to make it easy for anyone to come along and take up land, willynilly, we would be doing a great injustice to the pastoral industry. The pastoralists took up and maintained all the land from Carnarvon to Wyndham in the old days and suffered untold hardships.

We should take our hats off to those old pioneers who hewed out of the North places for themselves and their successors. They were the men who made that country safe for the others who followed them there. Often they could barely make ends meet but they had the grit to stick there in spite of all their difficulties. This Bill, if agreed to, would mean that someone could go to any station in that division and take up a bit of land containing a waterhole, or something of that sort, making it impossible for the holder of the lease to carry on.

There is more in the measure than meets the eye and, as the late J. J. Holmes would say, there is a nigger in the woodpile somewhere. The land required could be obtained, as Mr. Craig has said, without any amendment to this Act, which will bear comparison with any other Land Act in Australia. With the exception of the pearling industry, the pastoral industry is the mainstay of the North and this Bill, if agreed to, could kill it and destroy the whole economy of that part of the State.

I have been associated with the pastoral industry in the North-West Division for fifty odd years. For long periods the people there hung on only by the skin of their teeth and for further periods they existed on very low margins of profit, but now that the prices of cattle, sheep and wool have increased, there are those who desire to come along and take away the land from the people who have done all the work. The late Mr. Wood told me last year that the Government was contemplating the surveying and throwing open for selection of an area of land in the Kimberley Division. There is the chance for these men who seek land to carve out places for themselves without suffering any of the hardships that were the lot of the pioneers. I think the area referred to was somewhere between Derby and Wyndham.

Any land required could be obtained by the method used in the case of the banana plantations at Carnarvon. That land was taken over, and rightly so, and I know the move has paid dividends. What was done there shows that it is not necessary to amend this Act which has stood the

test of the years. The people of the North have handed their land down from father to son and for us to make it possible for someone else to walk in and pick the eyes out of it would be absolutely wrong. Mr. Craig referred to some land in the Murchison area, and I know that part very well. There they even took the corner of a horse paddock—

Hon. L. Craig: Those blocks were later abandoned.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: The land would then revert to the station under this provision.

Hon. F. R. WELSH: I repeat that few people know what the pioneers went through while building up their properties in the North without any assistance at all. To take the land from them at this stage would be completely wrong. I oppose the Bill.

On motion by Hon. L. C. Diver, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 13th November.

**HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [8.10]: I am glad to see that the University is to be given some means by which it can raise finance in order to continue the work it is doing and also provide extra accommodation as may from time to time be required. There are one or two points of interest in the Bill about which I am somewhat concerned and on which I would like some explanation from the Minister. I propose later to say something about the value of universities and express my hopes about the medical school, but first of all I will confine my remarks strictly to the Bill and what it means.

The measure states that "Building" means "(a) a building; and (b) the whole or part of its furnishings, fittings and equipment." That might be interpreted to mean that if the University borrowed money on its investments it would be entitled to erect a building and equip it, but I am not at all sure that it could not be construed to mean that they could also replace equipment and I do not know whether that would be a wise provision to agree to when dealing with borrowed money. The replacement of equipment could be expensive and the equipment might be short lived. It might be of the kind that would deteriorate rapidly, thus calling for frequent replacement.

It is no use telling the University that it can borrow money to erect a building but not to equip it. We must grant the University sufficient power to erect a building and equip it for use in its ordinary university routine of teaching in the various faculties, but I am not at all

certain that, with the present wording of the provision, they would not be allowed to replace equipment that had once been purchased. I would stress that the replacement of equipment should be a matter of maintenance and should not be done out of borrowed moneys.

The Minister for Transport: I do not think that has been suggested.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I believe the present wording might allow it.

The Minister for Transport: The expenditure must be passed by the Treasurer.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It could become the practice of the Government or the University to replace equipment out of these moneys and I would like the Minister to tell us whether or not that could be done under Clause 4, which reads—

The Senate may raise money it is so authorised to spend,

(a) by borrowing the whole or part of the money on the security of trust funds and investments;

(b) by selling all or some of the investments; or

(c) by both of those means.

The Minister for Agriculture: That would not be borrowing, would it? That would be transferring.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: No, the Senate may raise money and the whole Bill looks to me like an arrangement to get an overdraft from the bank which is guaranteed by the Government and repaid within a minimum period of 50 years, or sooner, depending on how much the Government has. It does seem strange that the Bill, which is simply a measure to permit the University to borrow and to have the money replaced by the Government, also permits it to purchase or sell all its investments.

The Minister for Transport: It has quite a number of investments that it could dispose of.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I realise that, but the Bill says "all".

The Minister for Transport: Could it not be that it might have some amount of money from the Government by way of grant and require only the balance to erect and equip a building?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: But the wording of the Bill empowers the Senate to sell all or some of its investments.

The Minister for Transport: That is all right.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am not at all certain that it is. It is governed by its previous Act, but I have a feeling that this will override that legislation. The Bill is a plain statement that the University may sell all or some of its investments.

Hon. L. Craig: The investments may be bonds, or something similar.

The Minister for Transport: Its main holdings are bonds.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: A good deal of money has been left to the University for specific purposes.

Hon. L. Craig: That cannot be touched; that comes under the heading of trust funds.

Hon. A. R. Jones: It may be in bonds.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, it may be, and I have an idea that Miss Alice Cumming left approximately £100,000 for the establishment of a future medical school. I think also that Dr. Saw left something like £30,000 for the specific purpose of having research made into diabetes and other ailments. I will not believe that that money has not been invested.

Hon. L. Craig: If the University authorities sell their investments, they can reinvest the money in Commonwealth or State bonds.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I want to be certain these benefactions are kept for the purposes for which they were made available.

Hon. L. Craig: Investments are not trust funds; they will all be subject to the trust.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That is all right. What I am asking is that the Minister explain this provision because to an ordinary person like myself, it is not very satisfying. The whole wording of the clause could be made clearer. If we are to continue to have a University, we must rely on people leaving large sums of money for specific purposes. If one leaves a loophole in the Bill by which these benefactions can be accepted but which later for some reason can be sold to save or assist Government expenditure for building purposes, we might destroy this principle of benefaction. I would not mind it being allowed to mortgage its investments, but to permit them to be sold seems rather stupid to me.

Hon. L. Craig: The Minister, in using those words, separated trust funds from investments.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think we can also apply this to investments. I had an idea of inserting a safeguard in this provision by using such words as "by selling all or some of the investments excluding those that have been left by benefactions for specific purposes." But I found that if I did that I would prevent the University from using the Hackett bequest, so apparently that bequest is covered by this provision. That is the explanation that was given to me. I want to be perfectly satisfied that these bequests are protected.

Hon. L. Craig: It was done before.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not care what was done before; I was not here then.

The Minister for Transport: It was done in 1937.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am not interested in what happened then. This Bill belongs to the present, and I am here to see that such bequests are protected. Throughout Australia today there is a growing tendency to regard educational matters such as this as Government affairs, and people are not very interested in leaving large portions of their estates for University purposes. To a great extent that has been accentuated by the crippling taxation that is being imposed today. However, that will not always be so, and people will eventually regard it as their duty to leave some of their money to universities and hospitals. Unless there is a complete assurance that such money cannot, and will not, be diverted into other channels by the wording of this Bill, we will destroy that spirit.

The large universities of the world have become the famous institutions they are not by Government assistance but by private citizens putting their hands into their pockets and saying, "We owe something to this State of ours and we are going to leave some money to the University." I want to see that continued without any possible risk of discouragement but, from inquiries I have made, I am a little uncertain about the prospects. Another investment that I do not like the University to sell is land. I would debar any university land from being sold without some safeguard being provided by Parliament or the Governor-in-Council. I would not like to see the indiscriminate sale of land by the University. Western Australia is going to grow into a big State and university land will have a high value in the future. What is more, the University will need a large acreage for its own purposes.

Hon. L. A. Logan: What is its acreage now?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have no idea, but the land on which the University is situated is only about 100 acres.

Hon. L. Craig: It has land all over the place.

The Minister for Transport: It has a great deal of endowment land. I tried to get a block for a sporting ground, but was unsuccessful.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We should have some system by which, if the University does sell land, it will acquire other blocks, because land away from the city will grow in value in the same way as the land it holds today. Some system should be instituted to protect university land in the future.

Hon. L. Craig: You do not suggest that the University should be allowed to hold unimproved land in the city?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: No, but I do not want it to sell valuable land which, when the city grows, will be needed by it, as long as it is not being held against the interests of the city itself.

The Minister for Transport: Do you not think that the University would watch such matters itself?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am not interested in what the present Senate will do, because its members will change. I am interested in what the Bill aims to do, which is to permit the University to sell any or all of its investments. The principal intention of the Bill is to give the University Senate the right to borrow money on a bank overdraft guaranteed by the State Government because, for the moment, it does not want to sell its assets. But why should that entail a provision which allows the Senate to sell all or any of the University investments? I want an assurance from the Minister before I agree to that provision. I am quite happy to see the University in a position to raise money, because otherwise its progress will be impeded. Our University population is going to grow considerably, and we cannot be happy, as a State, if there is a rapidly growing request for increased University education which cannot be met because of an absence of proper facilities. That would be ludicrous in a young State, because a university holds a very important position in the life of a country.

It is interesting to read the definition of the functions of universities as set out at a meeting of the Australian vice-chancellors. It gives one an idea of the breadth of coverage of university functions over the whole State. The university vice-chancellors say the functions are—

(1) The provision of facilities in which learning and scholarship in the various arts and sciences may be fostered to the highest possible degree.

(2) The provision of specialist training for the architects, engineers, scientists, doctors, dentists, lawyers, teachers, economists, etc., necessary for a modern community.

(3) The conduct of research which has the threefold advantage of:

- (a) leading to the advancement of knowledge;
- (b) indirectly maintaining the interest and vigour of the staff with benefit to teaching standards; and
- (c) providing trained research workers for applied research conducted by such bodies as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and by industrial concerns.

(4) The preservation of our cultural heritage and of our democratic traditions of freedom of thought and speech and the development and exchange of new ideas.

I applaud the present Government for the way it has increased the University grant by a large amount, which has allowed the University to continue its work without any undue struggle. However, the relative amounts which we in Australia are prepared to contribute per student are very small compared with that contributed by the people in the United Kingdom which today is suffering very great financial stress. The following figures are of interest:—

Expenditure per student in the Australian Universities has been markedly lower than in the United Kingdom. Whereas in 1950-1 the United Kingdom Universities spent approximately £A324 per student, the Australian figure, despite increased funds, was still only £A179 per student. Yet expenditure on Universities in the United Kingdom is not regarded as being unduly high.

Grants to the Universities in the United Kingdom are increasing tremendously. Much as I may be criticised for saying it, I believe that under present conditions we should consider whether we are able, as a State, to continue with a so-called free University.

I am concerned about the student whose parents have not the finance to send him to the University, and I think such students could quite well be covered by an ample system of bursaries. I believe that in a free University a wise use should be made of the education available there. It should not be used by students as a means for filling in certain years without any thought of applying it in the interests of the State afterwards. Not that it does not do students the world of good and make better citizens of them, but it is a question whether we as a people can afford it.

We have been told that we should have a medical school in Western Australia. I frankly believe that we cannot afford not to have a medical school. We adhere to the principal of a free University for all other faculties and then say we cannot afford what is, in my opinion, the main factor which can contribute so much to the cultural and scientific life of the University. There is no doubt that the standard of medical practice in this State would be increased immensely if we had a medical school and those who work in the profession realise how much we miss by not having one and by the inability to live right alongside the most recent progress in medical science.

It is possible to develop living by rule of thumb rather than to demand the latest and most efficient in medical science.

There is no question that a medical school would make a big difference to the profession and would do much to aid in the teaching of dentistry. It would provide additional facilities which the Dental School could quite well use and would facilitate an increase in the study of physiology, bio-chemistry and physics, and would to a large extent revolutionise some of the other sciences as they are being taught. Consequently, when we say that we cannot afford a medical school and at the same time can afford a free University, I wonder whether we are doing what is right and just.

I think the time is ripe when we might turn to Mr. Justice Wolff's report on the University and adopt some of the suggestions he made. He was not greatly impressed with the idea of the free University, but he did make adequate provision for any boy or girl of ability to pass through the University. I believe that nobody should be debarred from University education provided he possesses the necessary qualifications.

Personally, I appreciate that the Bill is necessary. All I am asking is that questions I have raised be answered by the Minister, because I consider that equipment should not be replaced out of these funds. They should be regarded as maintenance to be paid for out of revenue. I wish to ensure also that the benefactions to the University are not only protected, but also that it is made clear that any money given to the University for specific purposes will be properly safeguarded for all time. I support the second reading.

On motion by the Minister for Transport, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 25th November.

**HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [8.35]:** This Bill is really a duplicate of the measure with which we dealt a few nights ago. As it relates merely to the regulations under the Act, I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

## **BILL—BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central) [8.39]** in moving the second reading said: This is really a Committee measure be-

cause it consists of a series of small amendments to existing sections. The object is to facilitate administration, rectify anomalies and enable ready enforcement of the Act.

It is proposed to alter the definition of "brand" to include flock marking and use of identification marks for stock disease control purposes. The Chief Inspector of Stock has found it necessary to be able to identify stock that have received preventive treatment or others that may have reacted to a test, such as the tuberculin test—reactors to which must be destroyed. Under the Milk Act, such cattle are branded with an arrow over the letter "T" which is the condemnation mark. Cattle inoculated with strain 19 vaccine for the prevention of contagious abortion are identified by a mark on the ear.

An amendment to the definition of "stud" proposes to make this apply to sheep. Previously "stud" included only horses and cattle, but, as members are aware, there are stud sheep as well. It is obvious that this was intended originally as the parent Act refers to the flock book. It is desired to provide for the use of only proved types of materials for the wool brand. For this purpose provision is being made to prescribe by regulation the type of material that may be used.

Originally the fees, forms, etc. were provided for in the schedules to the Act, and it is now proposed to delete those schedules and provide for these fees and forms to be prescribed by regulation. The registration fee of 7s. 6d. has not been changed since 1904. The proposal is to make this fee 10s. and to make further alterations by regulation. Costs have risen considerably and the increase to 10s. is considered to be very reasonable. A fee of 2s. 6d. is charged for replacing a lost certificate. No alteration to this fee is proposed, but an amendment provides for this fee to be altered in future by regulation. At present the fee for transferring a brand is 2s. 6d. It is proposed to increase the charge to 5s. and to provide for future alterations to be made by regulation.

Owing to the high cost and other difficulties such as the amount of work involved, it is not possible to publish the directory annually. An amendment in the Bill provides for one to be published every 10 years with annual supplements. In order to prevent the accumulation of large numbers of disused and obsolete brands, a new section provides for re-registration every 10 years, and a nominal charge of 1s. will be made and a new certificate issued. This will remind owners of the correct characters of the brand. In the event of a person not re-registering, a registered notice will be posted. After three months,

the brand will be cancelled if no reason is given within the period to show why such action should not be taken.

At present the only way to remove obsolete brands is by the slow and expensive method of serving written notices and then following these with a newspaper notice. A little while ago there was a series of long advertisements in the newspapers to check on the brands that had been issued. To publish those advertisements was very costly. In going through the brands, it was found that there were frequent duplications, while a lot were obsolete and did not comply with the requirements of the Act, namely, that they should consist of two letters and one numeral. Under the amendment, re-registration will be due in 1965 and each 10-year period thereafter.

The Bill provides for differentiation in the branding of cattle. At the request of the Farmers' Union, it is to be compulsory for cattle to be branded before the age of 12 months. The Pastoralists' Association desires that the present age of 18 months be retained in the pastoral areas and the amendment in the Bill will meet both requests.

At present no provision is made in the Act for earmarking sheep. There are several inferences, but the Bill provides definitely for earmarking and exempts stud sheep which previously were only exempt from the woolbrand. Previously stud sheep were exempted from woolbranding, and the Act did not mention earmarking. This provision enables stud sheep to be either tattooed on the ear or firebranded on the horns or face with either registered woolbrand, in the first case or registered sheep firebrand in the latter instance. In order to bring the relevant section into line with an earlier amendment in the Bill, which sets out the agricultural areas for cattle branding, an amendment is included to cover the area in which sheep must be woolbranded. The present area is very difficult to define as it follows an imaginary line drawn from the rabbit proof fence through the towns of Karalee and Mt. Ragged to the coast.

Following numerous complaints of unbranded cattle in sale yards the Bill proposes to increase powers of inspectors, and enable them to order the return of unbranded stock to the owners' property. Because of the added power to inspectors it will be an offence against the Act if an order to return stock is not complied with. As the Act stands, sheep cannot be offered for sale unless bearing a registered woolbrand. It is anomalous that no mention is made of registered earmark; and the branding of horses and cattle is not covered. The Bill corrects this position.

If an owner is found to have unbranded stock on his property, he is not guilty of an offence against the Act provided he

claims them by notice in writing. This completely nullifies the section, and it is therefore amended so that it is an offence if an owner has unbranded stock in his possession. He will still be able to claim unbranded stock by written notice but it will be obligatory for him to get them branded. Section 49 is to be repealed. In an indirect manner it provided that stock must be branded. Other amendments specifically state that branding must take place so that this section is no longer necessary.

Under the present Act the Registrar of Brands must be notified when a bill of sale is taken out over stock, so that the register can be marked accordingly. Such notice stands forever unless it is specifically withdrawn or cancelled by the mortgagee. A bill of sale must be registered with the Bills of Sale office at the Crown Law Department, and the mortgagee must renew it every three years. The proposed amendment provides for the Registrar of Brands to be notified by the mortgagee each time it is renewed at the Crown Law Department. Therefore, if no advice is received by the registrar of the renewal of the bill of sale, the notice can be removed from the brands register. I think I have covered all the amendments. When the Bill is in Committee I shall be glad to clear up any points that are raised. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. Jones, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [8.48] in moving the second reading said: This Bill contains several amendments, which it is considered are advisable, to the principal Act and it includes two consequential amendments that were overlooked last year. The first of these seeks to place the Act on a par with similar legislation in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland by providing that a worker shall be entitled to compensation if he is injured while travelling between his place of residence and place of employment, provided that such injury was not due to any default or wilful act of his own.

It is estimated that the additional cost of granting this concession will not exceed 4 per cent. or 5 per cent. I am aware that this proposal is one that has been discussed on previous occasions in this Chamber and rejected, on the ground that travelling risks between work and home should be borne by the worker. However, the proposal is once again submitted for the consideration of the House, it being, as

I have said, included in the legislation of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

The second amendment refers to Section 30 of the principal Act. This section authorises the Premium Rates Committee to determine, from time to time, the maximum premium rates to be charged for all types of insurable risks. The Premium Rates Committee comprises the Auditor General, who is chairman, the manager of the State Government Insurance Office, the three members of the Workers' Compensation Board, and representatives of the non-tariff and other insurance companies.

Representations have been made to the Premium Rates Committee that it should reduce the premiums charged to cover miners suffering from silicosis, pneumoconiosis or miner's phthisis. The present rate was determined by a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries, and, it is felt, therefore, that great care should be taken before attempting to alter the actuary's decision. I understand that any such alteration, to be sound actuarially, would require specialised knowledge which might be beyond the capacity of a body of laymen. The Bill therefore provides that no such alteration shall be made except upon the recommendation of a qualified actuary following an actuarial investigation by him or with the approval of the Minister.

As members will readily realise, the gold-mining industry represents a very substantial potential liability to the Workers' Compensation Board Fund, and that, should, for some reason, men drift away from the industry and/or wages be reduced, the result could be a substantial decline in the amount of premiums paid by the industry, while there might still be a considerable claim on the fund by incapacitated miners. The result could be a most difficult situation with the possibility of a serious drain upon the depleted funds of the State Government Insurance Office.

The next amendment deals with the weekly rate of compensation allowable under the principal Act. This rate was increased from £6 per week to its present amount of £8 by an amendment last year to the parent Act, the reason for the increase being the reduction in money values. As the inflationary trend has not ceased, it is felt that a further increase in the weekly rate is warranted, so far as injured persons with dependants are concerned. At the present time the maximum rate of £8 per week is paid whether the injured worker has or has not dependants. The Bill therefore proposes that the present maximum of £8 shall apply to persons without dependants and that those with dependants shall be entitled to a maximum weekly payment of £10.

In discussing the next amendment, I would inform the House that the hospitalisation of workers' compensation cases

has presented some serious difficulties over a period of many years—so much so that many private hospitals refuse to admit these cases. In an effort to overcome this problem, hospital fees payable by insurers were recently increased by the Workers Compensation Board from a flat rate of £1 per day throughout the State to 27s. per day in the metropolitan area and 22s. daily beyond that area. It seems very possible that these fees may have to be increased still further.

At present the Act provides that a maximum amount of £200 can be paid on behalf of an injured worker for expenses which include medical attention, hospitalisation, physiotherapy, artificial aids, etc. To give effect to the recent increase in hospital fees to which I have referred, it is proposed, in the Bill, to increase this amount to £250, of which £150 will be allotted to hospital treatment and maintenance only, and the balance of £100 to other items. This is an alteration of the present system whereby £200 covers all expenses, including hospitalisation.

The last two amendments are of a consequential nature and are the result of amendments made last year to the principal Act. The first of these increased from 10s. to 13s. per day, and from £3 to £4 per week, the maximum payments that can be made to cover the expenses of an injured worker travelling from his home for treatment, massage or medical attention. At the time a necessary similar amendment to paragraph (b) of Clause 4 of the First Schedule to the Act was overlooked. This paragraph deals with the expenses allowable to an injured worker who is required to travel from his residence to undergo a medical examination. The Bill seeks to rectify this omission and place these travelling expenses on a par with those increased last year.

The other consequential amendment seeks to alter the amount "£1,250," in paragraph (i) of Clause 11 to the First Schedule, to "£1,750." This refers to the amount of lump sum payment that may be made to a permanently incapacitated person in lieu of weekly payments. This amendment also was omitted last year when the amount payable for total incapacity was increased to £1,750. I commend the Bill to the favourable consideration of the House, and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Boylen, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—THE FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COMPANYS ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [8.57] in moving the second reading said: This

Bill contains only one amendment—a proposal to repeal Section 28 of the principal Act. That section stipulates that the maximum price the Fremantle Gas and Coke Coy. may charge for gas supplied to its consumers is £1 per 1,000 cubic feet.

The chairman of the Fremantle Gas and Coke Coy. has drawn the Government's attention to this provision, which, he pointed out, was redundant in view of the fact that the price which may be charged for the sale of gas is fixed by Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Gas Undertakings Act, 1947-1951. Section 26 of this latter Act states that any provisions of the Gas Undertakings Act shall override provisions referring to the same matters which are contained in any other Act which refers to a gas undertaking. In view of this it is obvious that Section 28 of the Fremantle Gas and Coke Company's Act, which this Bill seeks to repeal, has no application. This opinion is supported by the Crown Solicitor in a lengthy opinion, which I can read at a later stage if any hon. member so desires.

Sections 4 and 5 of the Gas Undertakings Act set out that the basic price of gas supplied by any gas undertaking shall be determined from time to time by the State Electricity Commission, and that each gas undertaking shall charge for gas according to the number of British thermal units supplied, there being 3,412 British thermal units gross to each gas unit. This, too, conflicts with the section that the Bill seeks to repeal as this section specifies that the price of gas shall be based on the number of cubic feet of gas supplied.

Under the Gas Undertakings Act the State Electricity Commission, when assessing the basic price at which gas is to be sold by any undertaking, shall take certain matters into consideration. These include interest on loans raised by the undertaking, depreciation, renewals, contingencies, payment of dividends, etc. While not directly fixing a maximum price at which gas may be sold, the Gas Undertakings Act does so in an indirect manner by placing restrictions on the amount of profit an undertaking may credit to its reserve funds, pay in dividends or pay to any person with whom the undertaking has entered into an agreement regarding the division of surplus profits.

The Crown Solicitor concluded his opinion by advising that Section 28 of the Fremantle Gas and Coke Company's Act, which is the subject of the Bill, should be repealed. In asking members to agree to the measure, I might mention that it is pleasing to note that the chairman of the company, in a recent letter to the Premier, expressed his pleasure at the co-operative relationship between his company and the State Electricity Commission. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, debate adjourned.

# **BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.**

## *Second Reading.*

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [9.0] in moving the second reading said: This Bill provides for an alteration in the name of the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board, wherever that occurs in the Act, to the Fremantle Municipal Transport Board. Members will recall that in Fremantle they have ceased to use trams and the electricity undertaking has been sold to the State Electricity Commission. The board is now concerned only with the use of buses as a transport service. The Bill also provides for the deletion of the words "Tramways Electoral Roll (Freeholders)" wherever they occur and the substitution of the words "Transport Electoral Roll (Freeholders)." A similar amendment applies to the words "Tramways Electoral Roll (occupiers)" wherever they occur and the substitution of the words "Transport Electoral Roll (occupiers)." There are two sections of the community in Fremantle that have representatives on the board, the freeholders' representative and the occupiers' representative.

The Act is also amended by deleting the words "tramways electoral rolls" and inserting in lieu the words "transport electoral rolls". There is also provision as regards superannuation, and the proviso which relates to superannuation is to be deleted. The proviso to paragraph (f), which it is proposed to delete, reads as follows:—

Provided that the subscriptions or contributions of the board under the provisions of this paragraph shall not in any year ending the 31st August, exceed the total sum collected by way of subscriptions from the board's employees.

The deletion of this proviso means that the board could, if it so desired, contribute any amount to a superannuation fund.

There are further amendments in the measure to make the date of elections coincide with that of municipal elections. Members will know that according to the Municipal Corporations Act, some years ago polling day was on a Wednesday, but a subsequent amendment to that Act changed polling days to Saturdays. Elections for the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board are held on the same day as the local authority elections, but for some reason or other, the Act was not amended to bring it into line with the Municipal Corporations Act. The amendment in the Bill will bring the Act up to date and in conformity with



legislation for municipalities. Another amendment in this measure will also bring the parent Act up to date and into conformity with legislation for municipalities, and the words "seventh and eighth," referring to the numbers of the schedules for the printing of ballot papers will be altered to the words "eighth and tenth". By amendments to the Municipal Corporations Act the schedules for ballot papers are now referred to as Eighth and Tenth Schedules.

Section 38 of the Act refers to the appointment of a chairman and provides that he shall be appointed at the first meeting in December each year. The amendment in the Bill provides for the chairman to hold office until a successor is appointed. Those are the provisions that are set out in the Bill and most of them are necessary because of the change in the name and status of the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board. One or two other anomalies have also been corrected. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.  
Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### **BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).**

#### *Second Reading.*

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [9.11] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has only one provision, which relates to statements taken by police officers or traffic inspectors after accidents have occurred in which animals, persons or vehicles have been involved. Sections 31 and 32 of the principal Act deal with traffic regulations and this measure proposes to add a new section to be known as Section 32A, which reads as follows:—

On the hearing of a charge for an offence against any provision of this Act arising from the occurrence of an accident involving any vehicle or animal, no statement made subsequent to the occurrence of the accident by any person to a police officer or traffic inspector concerning the accident or any of the circumstances thereof, shall be admissible in evidence in any court, unless and until the court is satisfied—

- (a) that the statement was made freely and voluntarily; and
- (b) that the person making the statement was first informed by the police officer or traffic inspector, as the case may be, that he was not obliged to

make a statement but that if he did the statement may be used in evidence.

It has been the practice in criminal cases, or in dealing with suspected persons, to warn a person that it is not compulsory for him to make a statement and that if a statement is made, anything contained in it may be used in evidence. I understand that that is not contained in Western Australian statutes but it is an axiom of British law and I understand that it is part of the statutes in English law. The point we are endeavouring to cover by this proposed new section is that some people do not realise it is not compulsory for them to make statements to traffic police or traffic inspectors after accidents have occurred.

Naturally people are upset and off their balance and they sometimes make statements. Months afterwards, when the cases are brought before the court those statements are used against them. It is felt that that is not fair because in criminal cases the suspected person is warned and told that if he makes a statement it can be used in evidence. As a rule in traffic cases, that warning is not given and a person, having met with an accident, is not usually capable of making a statement, but if he does so, it can be used in evidence. According to the law such a person is under no obligation to make a statement. It is that principle which it is desired to introduce into the Traffic Act.

As I have explained already, people who are involved in traffic accidents are, in many cases, upset, and are not in a proper frame of mind to be able to make a statement. If they wish to make a voluntary statement, they should first be warned that it is not compulsory for them to do so and that it can be used against them in evidence. In the case of traffic accidents it may be weeks before the cases are brought before the courts and the statements made would be used against the people concerned. People having made statements under circumstances I have recited, would not remember them exactly and would be placed at a disadvantage when the cases came before the court.

It is not suggested in any way that this new section would be used for parking offences or breaches of the Traffic Act but merely in cases of accident where people are involved. Under British law I believe it is considered that people should be warned that it is not necessary for them to make a statement, and if they do make one that it will be used in evidence against them. It might be said that this will cause a delay in cases being brought before the court. I believe that the trend of events today regarding traffic cases is that it is sometimes many months before the people know whether they are to be charged or not. I do not think the provisions of the

Bill would in any way cause delay in connection with the court proceedings. So I feel it would not affect the carrying out of the law nor would it be a disadvantage.

This is a rather simple Bill. I do not know that anybody can take any great objection to it. It merely seeks to give the person involved in an accident the same right as that accorded those charged with criminal offences or those who are suspect. I think it is usually agreed that anybody involved in breaches of the law should have a fair chance to be able to plead his case. I will content myself with those few remarks. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. A. R. JONES (Midland)** [9.20]: I would like to support the Bill, and in order to convince any hon. member who may have doubts as to whether he should support it or not, I would like, in support of what Mr. Davies has just said, to offer a personal experience I had. Some years ago I had the misfortune to be involved in an accident in which a person lost his life. At the time I made a statement to the police and, as suggested by Mr. Davies, I was not told it was not necessary for me to make one. The case did not come up—that is, the inquest was not held—before the court for some considerable time. From memory, I would say it was about eight weeks.

I was surprised when my statement was read out in court, which will go to prove what the hon. member has said, namely, that under certain stresses a person can make a statement which would appear to be quite truthful at the time. Many weeks later, however, he might inadvertently say something which would not line up with the statement he made previously. I submit this experience of mine in the hope that any member who is going to oppose the Bill will change his mind. I feel it is a necessary protection and I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

On motion by the Minister for Agriculture, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [9.22] in moving the second reading said: This Bill seeks to validate certain past actions of the State Government Insurance Office and to authorise the performance of similar action in future. When the State Insurance Office was established in 1938, possibly because its subsequent rapid expansion was not envisaged, no provision was made in the principal Act for the

transfer into reserves of surplus funds of the undertaking and for the investment of such reserve moneys.

What occurred was that a provision was inserted in the parent Act stating that the financial operations of the office should be conducted according to the methods laid down in the State Trading Concerns Act. Under these arrangements, all surplus funds were transferred to Consolidated Revenue, the total amount paid until the 30th June, 1947, from the general reserve of the State Insurance Office being £222,000, plus an amount of £395,000 which was paid to Consolidated Revenue from the State Insurance Office's silicosis reserve to offset Treasury payments under the old Miner's Phthisis Act.

All transfers to Consolidated Revenue ceased after the 30th June, 1947, on the instructions of the Treasurer, it being evident that the greatly increased business of the State Insurance Office necessitated the establishment of suitable financial reserves and the investment of those moneys. Since the Treasurer's decision, the sum of £1,505,494 has been invested, mainly in Commonwealth loans. No investment has been made without the approval of the Treasurer. However, there is no statutory authority for such action to be taken, although it has been carried out with Government approval, and the Bill seeks to provide such authority.

The Government considers that the general reserve and specific reserves created by the State Government Insurance Office should be retained as it is not possible for the office to function as a business undertaking unless it can depend upon the reserves created. For example, the extent of the office retentions in respect of any business underwritten depends very substantially on such reserves, as the greater the amount held in reserve, the greater can be the office retentions which must ultimately prove beneficial to the Government.

To follow the example of past years and transfer substantial amounts to Consolidated Revenue would not be wise and should not be countenanced, except with the approval of some independent person who would be qualified to determine to what extent reserves might prove excessive. The Bill therefore provides that such reserves shall not be used for any other purpose than that for which they are created, without the consent of the Auditor General. If he is satisfied that the reserves are more than adequate to meet the requirements of the office and sufficient to ensure that no substantial loss will create a charge against Consolidated Revenue, then with his consent, such surplus may be utilised by the Government. On the 30th June, 1952, the total reserves of the State Insurance Office amounted to £1,472,994.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Is not any of that money invested?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Yes. The reserves are made up as follows:—

General Reserve £415,631; and Specific reserves £1,057,363 which included—	
	£
Workers' Compensation Disaster Risk: .....	140,000
Potential Third Schedule (Silicosis) Claims: .....	767,476
Local Authorities Pools: .....	2,887
Proportion of Accumulated Loss by Motor Vehicle Trust: .....	45,000
New Building .....	100,000
Bad and doubtful debts: .....	2,000

In addition, the State Insurance Office owns freehold land and a building in St. George's Terrace to the value of £30,463. In due course, the office intends to erect a suitable building of its own on this site, in lieu of the present arrangement of leasing office accommodation. As there was no provision in the principal Act for the office to acquire property, although this, no doubt, could be done under other legislation, the Bill proposes that the office shall be regarded as always having had the authority to acquire and dispose of property.

As the Bill merely seeks to give statutory authority to action that has been taken with the approval of the Treasurer and which is essential to the successful operation of the State Government Insurance Office, I trust that it will receive the favourable consideration of the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

*House adjourned at 9.27 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 27th November, 1952.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### SWAN RIVER.

(a) As to Samples, Organisms, etc.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) If the living organisms stated in Public Works Department Plan No. 31431 from the Fremantle Harbour to Mill Point are not all B. Colli or B. Welch, what are they?

(2) In what salinity parts per million will the organisms stated in the plan live and multiply?

(3) Will he state the technical name, or names, of each of these living organisms?