

ment is in order. If we insist upon our amendment, the Assembly will accept it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment insisted on.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. today.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 12.35 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 17th December, 1947.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAYS.

As to Conversion of Engines to Oil-burning.

Mr. MAY (on notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Will he declare the Government's policy in regard to the conversion of locomotives engines from coal to oil fuel?

(2) Is the Railway Department now receiving sufficient supplies of Collie coal to ensure continued running of all coal-burning locomotives?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is the policy of the Government to use local coal, provided a sufficiency of the necessary quality can be obtained.

The conversion of some locomotives to oil burning has been rendered necessary through an insufficient supply of coal being available.

(2) No.

SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

(a) As to Cost of Stock, etc.

Mr. MAY (on notice) asked the Minister for Lands: Will he state in regard to the following:—

(1) Rate of cost of landing stock on to soldier settlement holdings?

(2) Estimated cost of feeding stock on such holdings?

(3) In the case of heifers, are these credited to the cost account of soldier settlers?

The MINISTER replied:

As this question requires a great deal of research, it is impossible to answer it today.

(b) As to Departmental Committee's Report.

Hon. A. H. PANTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands:

Has he received a reply from the Departmental Committee in regard to land settlement? If so, how does he propose to give publicity to it?

The MINISTER replied:

The committee has not yet finished its inquiries. It expects to finish very soon. That is the position at present.

TRAFFIC OBSTRUCTION CHARGES.

As to Disparity Between Town and Country.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL (on notice) asked the Minister for Police:

In view of the reply to my question respecting number of traffic obstruction offences and the disparity of same in towns of comparable population, will he instruct that the law in this respect be enforced unreservedly?

The MINISTER replied:

There should, as far as practicable, be equality in the enforcement of any law, and the matters referred to by the hon. member will be examined.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Erection of Workers' Homes.

Mr. HEGNEY (on notice) asked the Minister for the North-West:

(1) Has any action been taken by the Government in connection with the erection of workers' homes in North-West towns?

(2) If not, will he indicate the intentions of the Government in the matter?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. A survey has been made of North-West towns. Arrangements have been made with a contractor for the building of a home at Carnarvon and Roebourne.

Transport difficulties may delay commencement of construction.

Consideration is being given to the erection of homes in other towns.

(2) Answered by No. 1.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to Handicraft Materials for Backward Children.

Mr. GRAYDEN (on notice) asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the known need for handicrafts in the education of backward children in special classes, has any sum been allocated in the Education Estimates for the supply of materials to these classes?

The MINISTER replied:

No. The Government has the matter under consideration at the present time.

(b) As to Site for Brunswick School.

Mr. REYNOLDS (without notice) asked the Minister for Education: Has anything further been done with regard to selecting a site for a new school at Brunswick.

The MINISTER replied:

The report reached me today and I have not had an opportunity to go into it. I shall acquaint the hon. member in that regard as soon as I can.

GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.*As to Meter Rents and Charges.*

Mr. STYANTS (on notice) asked the Minister for Water Supply:

On 21st August, 1947, in answer to questions asked by me if the Government would consider the abolition of water meter rents and reduce the price of water to private householders to a flat rate of 2s. 6d. per thousand on the Eastern Goldfields the Minister stated, "The Government is already giving consideration to the joint questions of abolition of meter rents and reduction in price of water on the Goldfields."

(1) Has the Government concluded its inquiries, and if so, what is its decision?

(2) If no decision has been arrived at, when is it likely that an announcement will be made on this matter?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Enquiries not complete.

(2) No date can yet be given.

CANNING BRIDGE JETTY.*As to Renovating, etc.*

Mr. KELLY (on notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is he aware that works are now in progress on the waterfront adjacent to the Canning Bridge jetty?

(2) Is it intended to link this work up with the existing jetty?

(3) If not, for what purpose is the work being carried out?

(4) Is he of the opinion that these works are likely to prove a danger to children playing in this locality, and an eyesore to the natural river foreshore?

(5) Is it the intention of the Government to renovate the Canning Bridge jetty while labour and plant are in this locality?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes, but this is not a Government work.

(2) No.

(3) Temporary jetty for use by Swan Portland Cement Co.

(4) No. The works are a temporary necessity (until the channel under the new Causeway is open for traffic).

(5) No. The Government has no labour or plant in this locality.

SWAN RIVER CRABS.*As to Policing Regulations.*

Mr. KELLY (on notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What steps are the Fisheries Department taking in the policing of recent regulations gazetted in connection with the minimum carapace measurement of crabs permitted to be caught in the Swan River?

(2) Is it intended to exhibit warnings in suitable and appropriate places?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Continuous patrols of the Swan River and other estuaries are made by Fisheries Inspectors, of whom there are five located in the metropolitan area.

(2) Yes.

INDETERMINATE SENTENCES.*As to Number Imposed and Releases.*

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Minister for Police:

(1) How many indeterminate sentences were imposed in W.A.—

(a) During the 10 years ended the 30th June, 1937?

(b) During the 10 years ended the 30th June, 1947?

(2) What number of the above have been released?

(3) What is the nature of the offences committed by each person who is still detained?

(4) What is the total period of detention in each individual case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Police) replied:

(1) (a) 34; (b) 57.

(2) 56.

(3) and (4)—

| | yrs. | mths. |
|--|------|-------|
| Writing threatening letters .. | 15 | 8 |
| Attempted robbery in company .. | 4 | 3 |
| Indecent dealing | 2 | 7 |
| Breach of parole | 1 | 0 |
| Gross indecency | 2 | 3 |
| Indecent dealing | 5 | 7 |
| Indecent dealing | 4 | 0 |
| Receiving | 3 | 0 |
| Breach of parole | 1 | 11 |
| Breaking and entering | 1 | 9 |
| Entering a dwelling house | 3 | 0 |
| Indecent dealing | 5 | 4 |
| Stealing | 4 | 0 |
| Sodomy | 4 | 8 |
| Gross indecency | 1 | 0 |
| Carnal knowledge | 5 | 2 |
| Breaking and entering | 3 | 3 |
| Breaking, entering and stealing .. | 5 | 7 |
| Assault occasioning bodily harm | 1 | 2 |
| Gross indecency | 1 | 0 |
| Breaking, entering and stealing .. | 4 | 6 |
| Breaking and entering | 1 | 1 |
| Breaking, entering and stealing .. | 1 | 7 |
| Stealing | 1 | 8 |
| Breaking, entering and stealing .. | 3 | 3 |
| Breaking, entering and stealing .. | 3 | 3 |
| Indecent dealing | 0 | 5 |
| Unlawful wounding with intent to disfigure | 3 | 5 |
| Indecent dealing | 4 | 2 |
| Breaking and entering | 0 | 10 |
| Breaking and entering | 0 | 10 |
| Attempted rape | 4 | 10 |
| Breaking and entering | 1 | 3 |
| Rape, robbery and breaking and entering | 4 | 9 |
| Indecent dealing | 2 | 0 |

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REFORM.

(a) *As to Franchise for Flat-Dwellers.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Does he recall, in the course of his policy speech, saying "We intend a review of the constitution of the Legislative Council including the extension of the franchise to dwellers in self-contained flats, and under our policy all wives of Legislative Council electors will be added to the number of those entitled to vote at elections for the Legislative Council"?

The PREMIER replied: Yes. The Government will re-introduce the Bill at the next session of Parliament.

(b) *As to Candidates' Pledges of Support.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Does he recall the assistance of his candidates and those of the Country Party by members of his party in the Upper House who were pledged to support the Premier in his policy and who voted against the Government's policy on the Legislative Council franchise Bill last evening?

The PREMIER replied:

I cannot recall the names of any particular members who supported candidates and pledged themselves to this legislation.

(c) *As to Council Members' Support of Government Policy.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (without notice) asked the Premier:

I went through the advertisements appearing in "The West Australian" before the last general election and I take it the Premier will recall that Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, M.L.C., helped the member for Claremont and the member for Mt. Hawthorn in their campaigns. Does he also recall that Hon. W. J. Mann, M.L.C. assisted South-West candidates in support of the Government policy?

The PREMIER replied:

I do remember that quite a number of members of the Legislative Council assisted in the last election, but at the present moment I cannot recall any particular ones. I have no doubt that what the Leader of the Opposition says is quite correct.

(d) *As to Obligation to Support Policy.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Are members of the Liberal Party in the Legislative Council, like members of the Liberal Party in the Legislative Assembly, obliged and in honour bound to support the Liberal pre-election policy?

The PREMIER replied:

Generally speaking, members there are expected to support the policy of the party.

(e) *As to Defeated Bill and Government Policy.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Does he consider that the Bill defeated in the Legislative Council yesterday in connection with the franchise of the Legislative Council to be a matter of general Liberal Party policy?

The PREMIER replied:

Yes. The Bill as introduced in the Legislative Council represented part of the policy of the Liberal Party. As I have already informed the Leader of the Opposition, in order to implement that part of the policy of the Party the Bill will be re-introduced in the Legislative Council next session.

BILL—GAS (STANDARDS)

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Ferkins in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 9, (1), page 5—Delete the words "five hundred" in lines 7 and 8 and substitute the words "four hundred and seventy-five."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: What is all this about?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I suggest I may adopt my own method in dealing with this matter, may I not?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The Minister is certainly entitled to adopt any method he likes, but the usual practice when a message is received from the Council is for the Minister to explain what it is all about. At least as a matter of courtesy, the Minister might adopt that course and inform members of the difference between 500 and 475.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: On matters, particularly of courtesy, I am pleased to take my tip from the hon. member.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Thank you, very much.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the Bill was first introduced it provided for a range of B.T.U. from 450 to 550. In Committee it was amended so that the range was 500 to 550. In the Council it was further altered from 475 to 550. Lest it should be thought that there was any bias in the matter, I sought information not only from those who might be considered to be biased—I refer to the staffs of the gas concerns that are involved—but also of a well-known technician unconnected with trading bodies. About a week ago at the request of certain interests, a meeting was held at which representatives of those interests attended. Mr. Donnelly, the State Fuel Technologist, who is known to have a lengthy experience in regard to the control of gas was also present, and I took the opportunity of obtaining his opinion on this matter. I might save time by quoting Mr. Donnelly upon the subjects on which, in the main, we have been disputing in this Chamber.

After referring to his extensive experience in England, Mr. Donnelly said that while it might appear that gas of 500 B.T.U. was better than 450 B.T.U., it was not necessarily so, because the higher quality gas had to be mixed with more air to obtain combustion. This sort of problem, he goes on to say, had been tackled by him and his associates, times out of number, particularly during the blitz—in the Old Country, I presume. Industrial concerns there had to be kept going. The intensity of heat had very little to do with the calorific value. Just as good results could be obtained from 450 B.T.U. as from 500 to 550 B.T.U. This is different from what we had been led to believe, but we must bear in mind that this comes from an expert who, other than Mr. Edmondson, knows more than anyone else in the State about the matter. We should therefore give closer attention to the advice of these gentlemen than to the advice of any other person. Mr. Donnelly goes on to say—

The question was why did people get into difficulties with regard to gas supplies? The most common cause was lack of pressure, or there might be a natural deficiency from the normal calorific value which, with works like those at Fremantle (which should, he presumed, have been renovated before the war ended)

would tend to grow, particularly with the quality of coal received from the Eastern States at present.

A little later he says—

The trouble at Fremantle was not the calorific value, but the variations that came about in the course of the manufacture of the gas due to difficulties with plant and coal. In England, the calorific value of most gas undertakings was 450 to 475, notable examples being—the large industrial city of Birmingham and the city of Coventry . . . 450.

Those towns are the centre of the industrial life in the Old Country, and I should imagine that what suits them ought to suit Western Australia. I shall quote Reading in particular, because that is a town known, more perhaps than any other town in the world, for its production of biscuits. It is where Huntley & Palmer, the biscuit manufacturers, carry on their business. They are supplied with gas of a declared value of 460 B.T.U. London, says Mr. Donnelly, did have a gas supply of 500 B.T.U. I inquired as to why it had been increased, if it had been increased. I am told that recently it was increased to 520 B.T.U., for the reason that it was desired to supply a large coke market, but there was no good coke market in Australia. That point is beyond dispute. It therefore paid better to keep to the lower limits. The general reason for the range of 450 to 475 B.T.U. was that that was the most economic calorific value to manufacture, giving more gas for a given quantity of coal. This had been proved by the Fuel Research Board in England. He considered the 475 B.T.U. should not be increased, except for adequate technical reasons. I quote from a little further down—

Mr. Donnelly said he had recently been informed that the Melbourne Gas Company were hoping for a new gas Act soon when the calorific value would be deleted altogether. The figure in Adelaide was 550 B.T.U., but there they had considerable difficulty in maintaining 520 B.T.U.

I quote this because it has been a matter of considerable debate in Parliament that the Adelaide figure, supposedly of a declared standard of 550 B.T.U., actually does not deliver to users more than 520. I hope that will be taken notice of, as indicating that it does not matter a toss what we declare the minimum limit to be. If we cannot rise to it, we might just as well put in one figure as another.

Western Australia was following a method that had been outmoded. The Hayworth report set out gas standards of 400 to 450, 450 to 500 and 500 to 550, with a five per cent. variation in each direction. In the interests of clarity we might just as well say that those who have been pressing for 500 B.T.U. at Fremantle have done so in the interests of the district manufacturers there. I readily agree that if 500 B.T.U. could be attained, those manufacturers might just as well have it as not; but if it cannot be attained, then I point out it is futile to insist on that standard.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It will not be futile when the company has its new plant.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I can easily overcome that point if the hon. member will submit his view in due course. During the debate here, it transpired that the Fremantle company which, as everyone knows, turns out biscuits of a particularly good quality, can compete easily and successfully with the companies in Victoria. I need not mention their names, for obvious reasons, but we probably know the company there to which I am referring. In Victoria there is a declared output to the manufacturers of 500 B.T.U., but here, as I have made plain, with 464 B.T.U. the biscuit company at Fremantle has been able to compete successfully with the Victorian company. That, if nothing else, should surely rule out the need for any increase in the number of B.T.U. required to turn out a good biscuit.

Mr. Donnelly thought that the firm's troubles were due not to low calorific value but to variation in the quality of the gas. No member would care to dispute that opinion. He said there was no variability in the supply of gas by the City of Perth Gas Department, which could not get better coal than Fremantle got. He thought the reason was that Perth had a large storage capacity and therefore any temporary variations were ironed out. Here we are getting into the realm of technique and I am not prepared to argue the point; but I can see that there is some sense in the claim that if gas can be stored, its quality will be a little higher or a little less, and so an f.a.q. quality could be arrived at, consequent upon there being fewer variations. Mr. Taylor, the manager of the Fremantle company, explained that

his big problem with the different grades of coal was to blend the gas, but that when the company commenced operations at Spearwood it would be in a better position to blend the gas, because then it would have more holding capacity. That really supports the experience of the Perth works. Mr. Donnelly gave evidence in regard to the standard of 520 B.T.U. and said that the coal in South Australia was so bad that they could not get 550. He went on to say that Melbourne gas was so bad that it had to be cut off at times, and they used a lot of gas oil in Victoria. The Fremantle firm contends that the only feasible strength is 500. We are not in a position to demonstrate that because it has never had 500. But it has been demonstrated that if that firm got burners appropriate to 475 B.T.U. its best interests would be served. Mr. Donnelly submitted this question to the gentleman we all have in mind—

Why do you not get burners for 475?

The reply was that they had acted more or less in the dark and had learned in the expensive school of experience. That, no doubt, is quite correct, but it does not say that 475 B.T.U. burners are not the best in the circumstances existing and which are likely to exist. Mr. Donnelly stressed that Perth would have difficulty in getting up to 500, and would certainly be unable to maintain 500 as it had been able to maintain an even 478. A better quality coal would be required and more oil would have to be used, which would involve a substantial rise in costs to the people. A factor that did not come into the previous discussion is that oil comes from a dollar country, and we are very short of dollars in America. Irrespective of what we may wish to secure from the United States, it is quite likely that the imports of oil will be heavily cut.

Mr. Marshall: Why cannot we get oil from within the Empire?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not pretend this is the actual reason, but I do know that many oil deposits in British countries are, nevertheless, owned by American interests. There is no get-out that way. Mr. Donnelly thought that the colonies tended to lag behind the Old Country. Actually Western Australia, he said, was in advance of the Eastern States

because they sought to follow England with a standard of 475. England had the benefit of the experience and technical advice of many leading engineers, and it would be well for Australia to follow her lead. The plant belonging to the City of Perth gas undertaking was the most modern in Australia and it works on a standard of 475 or 478 B.T.U. At the present time the gas undertakers of the Eastern States, as a result of certain meetings, have expressed a wish to come down to a considerably lower level than they are on at present. I contacted Mr. Edmondson, who is regarded as the leading gas man in this State, and he had this to say—

(1) All leading technical gas men in the Eastern States have recently decided that the trend will be from 550 and 500 B.T.U.'s. down to 475 B.T.U.'s. In fact, lack of high grade coal and restrictions on the use of fuel oil will force the position.

(2) Thousands of housewives would be inconvenienced if they were forced to use 500 B.T.U.'s. gas in the metropolitan area, because the higher calorific gas would burn their scones and cakes and it would take a considerable time to educate the housewife to the new conditions, when she has been cooking with the old gas for so many years.

(3) It is an irrefutable fact that any manufacturing process whatever can be done as fast, economically and efficiently with a 475 B.T.U.'s. gas as with a 500 B.T.U.'s. gas.

He says—

I, F. C. Edmondson, am a full member of the Institute of Gas Engineers, England, the only one in this State, and I make this statement authoritatively and with knowledge.

I submit that by these references I have put before the Committee a sound case for agreeing with the amendment of another place.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister has given a striking example of how to go to extremes. When he moved that the amendment be agreed to, he gave no explanation whatever. Apparently we were simply to accept it because the Legislative Council made it. When the member for Leederville made it clear to the Minister that he was not going to get away with that, he went to the other extreme and made a second reading speech. Had he given us a quarter of the information when the Bill was going through, as he has now, he would not have had any difficulty about the proposal. The original suggestion caused concern to the users of industrial gas. At present they are supposed to get 475 B.T.U.

They say, without hesitation, the gas they are getting is unsatisfactory for their purposes and therefore they view with alarm the proposal that the standard is to be reduced by 25 B.T.U. Because they became alarmed about it, they took steps to inform Parliament of the position. Their alarm was genuine. A suggestion of reduction in the quality of gas was the reason for their anxiety because they knew, as producers, that the supply they were already receiving was unsatisfactory. Industrial users of gas at Fremantle had no hesitation in saying that a minimum value of 475 B.T.U. would be unsuitable for their purposes.

In view of the fact that under the Bill a proper system of testing the gas is provided for and there will be no doubt that the declared calorific value of the gas will mean that there will not be the margin as formerly and that the users can expect to get gas of the declared quality, I am prepared to accept the assurance of Mr. Edmondson that 475 gas will do all that 500 gas will accomplish. If the provisions of this legislation are properly enforced, we shall be certain that the declared value of the gas will be the quality of the gas supplied. In view of the explanation by the Minister and of the advice received from his technical officers, together with the safeguards embodied in the Bill, I am prepared to accept the Council's amendment.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not know why we should agree to reduce the quality of the gas supplied. In South Australia where they have no local coal deposits they use gas of a value of 550. I think we should insist upon the higher value gas here. The company is putting in a new plant and the Minister has power to allow it to use a lower quality gas in the meantime. I hope the Council's amendment will not be agreed to.

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

No. 2. The Schedule—Delete the whole of the second subparagraph of paragraph (3) on page 9.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The paragraph that the Council seeks to strike out should not find a place in the Schedule seeing that it does not deal with such mat-

ters. I think that at the time this was included, it was treated in a spirit of levity and the general understanding was that it would be deleted in another place. Certainly, the paragraph might find a place beneficially elsewhere. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have no objection to the Council's amendment. The inclusion of the paragraph in the Schedule was a last desperate attempt to make some provision somewhere that would ensure that people using gas meters did not have to pay rent for them. As the necessary provision has been made in another Bill that has already passed both Houses, there is no necessity for the paragraph in the Schedule.

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

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

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Labour in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4. Insert at the commencement of proposed new Section 12a the words "within that portion of the State referred to in Subsection (1) of Section twelve of this Act."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The object of the Council's amendment is to make more specific the application of Subsection (1) of Section 12. I have consulted the Chief Inspector of Factories who considers the amendment is quite satisfactory, and I hope the Committee will agree to it. The section deals with the baking and delivery of Vienna bread and the amendment proposes to confine it to a radius of 25 miles from the G.P.O., Perth, and eight miles from the post office at Kalgoorlie. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is a good idea to have this confined to the prescribed areas. In the metropolitan area the question of zoning is causing concern. In

answer to the Housewives' Association, the Minister said he was giving consideration to a solution of the problem. Can he enlighten us upon the Government's plans in that connection?

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I had hoped that the matter of bread zoning would right itself. I have been receiving reports regularly and an analysis shows that over 50 per cent. of the zoning has broken down. I have endeavoured to encourage the breaking-down of zoning and was hopeful that this would be brought about without legislation. In every instance where bakers have applied for bricks to build extra ovens, I have done my best to help them and the Housing Commission has granted the material. Many bakers are playing a part in the breaking-down of zoning, but it is still holding firmly at Fremantle and Midland Junction. If we are not successful in breaking it down by next session, legislation will probably be necessary.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You think it should be broken down.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: Yes. Queensland has introduced a measure—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the Minister should proceed to discuss that.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I am just as concerned as are other members to break down this zoning. It is not right that the master bakers should take it unto themselves to force this on the people after the National Security Regulation has been dropped. This is a matter that the master bakers have taken into their own hands.

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

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

BILL—THE FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 29th October, of the debate on the Second Reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—Agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 6:

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: On the second reading there was no objection to the provisions of the Bill, but we thought it would not be right to authorise the company to extend its borrowing from £60,000 to £125,000 and its capital from £120,000 to £250,000 without first of all being subjected to certain restrictions, which were proposed in the Gas (Standards) Bill and the Gas Undertakings Bill. As this Bill was initiated in the Council, we had no guarantee that that House would approve of any measure imposing restrictions on the company once it had obtained this right to increase its borrowing powers and capital, and so we prudently delayed the passage of this Bill until the other measures had been passed. They have now been passed by the Council and we can, without hesitation, give the company the rights sought under this measure. The company proposes to enlarge its works considerably and will need urgently a large sum of money for the purpose. I think members are in agreement that the amounts mentioned are not excessive in view of the controls now imposed by the other gas Bills. Therefore I support Clauses 3 and 4.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1947-48.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Medical, £63,927:

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. A. F. G. Cardell-Oliver—Subiaco) [3.13]: I have pleasure in introducing the Estimates of the Medical and Health Department on behalf of the Minister for Health and those of the homes and mental hospitals. The Government has taken a keen interest in these ameliorative activities and has instituted improvements and given approval which, viewed in the light of its short term

of office, must be regarded as most satisfactory.

Touching first on medical services, much has been heard of the intention of the Commonwealth to establish free medical attention for all. Very little, if anything, has emerged from this spate of promises, but, in the meantime, much has remained to be done. The State medical services apply to the establishment in suitable areas of doctors paid by the Government, especially in the North and North-West of the State. When the Government took office, several of the Government medical practices in the North and North-West were vacant, there being doctors established only at Carnarvon—a private practitioner—the flying doctor at Marble Bar, at Onslow and Derby, while there was a temporary arrangement at Wyndham. Very soon after the Government assumed office, the position deteriorated further, and the greatest difficulty was experienced in maintaining even those limited services.

Extensive advertising in the Eastern States which had been conducted during the former Government's term was continued by this Government with very limited success. It was realised that to attract doctors either from the Eastern States or from abroad, very much improved conditions of service must be offered. One of the inducements offered was the opportunity, after three years' service, to undertake an approved course of post-graduate study extending over six months, during which full salary will be paid. It was felt that this would be a greater attraction to ambitious young practitioners and, in fact, to older practitioners of quality than a straight-out increase of salary. Medical officers in England had recently been released from wartime controls and energetic measures were taken to seek additional recruits there. It appears that this offer has been a cogent factor in securing a gratifying result.

Five additional officers have been selected and the first three of them have arrived and are located, one at Broome, one at Port Hedland, and one at Wyndham. The other two will arrive within the next few weeks. All five doctors will be or have been allotted to suitable posts in the North, and it is expected that a service will be available to the northern residents superior

to anything which has been given in past years. Notwithstanding these appointments, there is still a shortage of practitioners for smaller country towns and the Government will continue to grant assistance wherever there is the prospect of securing additional practitioners from outside the State.

Dealing with homes available for the care of old people, the provision for these folk at the date the Government came into power left much to be desired. "Sunset" had reached a deplorable state of disrepair owing to 25 years' neglect of normal maintenance. During the whole of this period, no comprehensive repairs or repainting had been undertaken and services such as sanitation and drainage had been little, if at all, improved during that period. The Government has taken steps to improve this situation. One of the results of the increase in old-age and invalid pensions has been the larger proportion of old people who have been able to care for themselves outside the institutions with their families, either with their children or on their own premises. Consequently the proportion of sick, feeble and senile inmates has increased a great deal.

To meet the needs arising from this cause and to provide some relief for hospitals where beds needed for acute cases are occupied by patients suitable for "Sunset," two existing wards are to be remodelled and re-equipped as hospital wards. It is hoped that this will make provision for 50 patients, all more or less bedridden. Additional nursing staff will be required and this will involve an extension to the nurses' quarters. With the assistance of the Lotteries Commission a bedside locker is being provided for each man. This provision is very necessary. Through all the years the clothing and personal belongings of the men have had to be stacked under the beds or hung upon the walls. The lockers will therefore be very much appreciated.

There has been an increase in the amount paid to the State for the maintenance of the inmates of both institutions from old-age or invalid pensions. Substantially this increase in contribution has been absorbed by increases in costs of provisions and supplies, but an endeavour has been made to add something on this account to the comforts that existed previously. A better dietary has been made available to the inmates both in the direction of a wider range of supply

and improved equipment for cooking and by the appointment of additional staff in the kitchen to provide greater variety and to supply the soft diets required by many of the more feeble inmates. Improvements will be made to the kitchen and to the accommodation for the preparation of food and the insanitary and objectionable practice by which a large proportion of the men are required to take their meals at long tables placed between rows of beds will be terminated by the allocation of existing buildings as dining and social rooms, after renovation. There are at present 428 inmates at "Sunset." This is the lowest number for many years. I will read a portion of the report of the visiting committee. It is as follows:—

We saw served an appetising meal consisting of soup, braized chops with potatoes and pumpkin, and a honey pudding, or for those who desired it, a milk rice pudding.

We inspected the various wards, including the hospital, all of which were clean and tidy and presented a very attractive appearance. There were no complaints.

For several years since the transfer of the inmates from the old home at Fremantle, the aged women have been housed at "Woodbridge," Guildford. This accommodation was inadequate in quality and still more so with regard to capacity. To its credit, the previous Government had taken the first steps to improve the situation by setting aside buildings at Shenton Park in which to house some who are practically bed-ridden. This Government has pursued the proposal and a large proportion of the accommodation is now occupied, the limitations being imposed by the difficulty of recruiting sufficient suitable staff. In addition, improved facilities are being provided at Woodbridge to make the work easier for the slender staff which maintains the institution. These provisions, however, are of a temporary nature, and the occupancy of both homes will be terminated as soon as possible.

A new home on the Canning River, which will embody all necessary facilities for the care of the aged women, is making progress. This was commenced early this year and it is hoped that it will be completed and ready for occupation by the end of next year. It will provide for 100 walking patients and 40 hospital patients. One new feature not previously available in State institutions is the provision for aged couples to live together in premises associated with the women's

home. These small flats consist of a bedroom, sitting room, tiny kitchenette and porch. Meals will be taken at the institution. But in the flats the couples will be able to look after themselves and entertain their friends. Four flats are included in the first section now in progress.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Who is putting them up? Who is finding the money?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I suppose the State is.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I thought the Lotteries Commission was.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Partly. Dealing with mental hospitals and the care of inebriates, in these institutions an endeavour has been made to improve the living conditions of the inmates. An extensive programme of renovation has been proceeding for two years or so, which has now achieved a tremendous improvement upon the conditions which existed formerly. This programme of renovation will continue. The Claremont Mental Hospital, and particularly the women's portion of it, is grievously overcrowded and additional buildings cannot long be delayed. It is hoped we shall be able in the very near future to construct an additional ward for 75 women patients, and an isolation ward for 36 sufferers from tuberculosis (not necessarily active). As a matter of fact, since the Estimates were given to me, sanction has been given for the erection of such wards. Improvements are contemplated in the antiquated kitchen which, in fact, will amount to rebuilding and re-equipping to meet the increased requirements of these institutions. It is felt that after the completion of these buildings, Claremont Hospital should be regarded as having reached its maximum size and that any further requirements should be made by the provision of entirely separate accommodation for special classes of inmates, such as mental deficients, in a suitable farm colony. Preliminary consideration is also being given to the possibility of providing accommodation at "Sunset," where old men now housed at Claremont, whose mental state is such that they may be safely transferred to another institution, might be cared for adequately and without the aversion with which frequently, but improperly, it is regarded.

An additional psychiatrist with special experience in the care of children has been appointed to the staff of the Claremont Mental Hospital. He arrived from England a few weeks ago. It is hoped that his presence on this staff will permit important advances in the outpatient treatment of both adults and children, in accordance with a plan approved by the former Government and endorsed by this one. Dr. Wyatt, the psychiatrist referred to, has already arranged to give two half days a week to the Children's Hospital to extend the facilities for child guidance at the hospital. It is hoped that that experience will be available in supplementing the services which the Children's Hospital already provides and that it may be instrumental in meeting in this State the need for a child guidance clinic on broader lines—a need so greatly felt.

With the assistance of the Lotteries Commission a great improvement is being made in the library available to the patients. Some hundreds of new books are in course of purchase. Other amenities for patients to assist in the maintenance of morale, which has an important effect on mental health, are being provided, including facilities for hairdressing and improvements in laundry facilities for pressing clothes, to assist patients to preserve their individuality. The division of inmates in mental institutions at the 31st October was as follows:

| | | | |
|------------|----|----|-------|
| Claremont | .. | .. | 1,318 |
| Heathcote | .. | .. | 105 |
| Greenplace | .. | .. | 21 |
| Lemnos | .. | .. | 74 |
| Whitby | .. | .. | 31 |
| Total | | | 1,549 |

During the year just concluded, hospitals have passed through a very difficult period. Staffs have been very short and remained so. The reduction of working hours from 48 to 44, which was put into effect last year, and the prospect of a reduction to 40 hours, has the effect of increasing the number of nurses required for the staffing of each hospital. The reduction from 48 to 44 hours represented a demand for more than 21 per cent. of additional nurses, while the reduction to 40 hours suggests even greater demands to meet the requirements of shift work. Not only is there the increase in requirements represented by the reduction of hours, but hospitals have had to face an increase in

the demand for accommodation arising out of the operation of the Hospital Benefits Act. This has involved an increase of more than seven per cent. as compared with 1943-44. Various steps have been taken to meet the staff position and in particular the numbers of nursing trainees has been increased considerably. Various country hospitals are being developed to become full-time training schools and a new class of tuberculosis nurses, male and female, for which a lower standard of examination is required, may attract trainees.

Arrangements for the training of male general nurses have been undertaken. Some of these improvements were commenced during the term of office of the previous Government. A few nurses have migrated to Western Australia from England, while others have come from the Eastern States. The traffic in nurses is about equal from West to East and East to West. The cost of hospitals has increased enormously. During the last 12 years it has risen from 9s. 2d. per bed day, in 1934-35, to 20s. 7.72d. in 1946-47. The main causes of this increase include the increase in wages, improved conditions and allowances for staff, additional staff required because of the shorter hours, increased cost of supplies, increased use of expensive drugs such as penicillin, the fall in donations and contributions and the transfer of patients from paying to non-paying beds, because of the Commonwealth Government's free treatment scheme. In comparison with 1943-44 this transfer from paying to non-paying beds represents a total of 34,471 bed days, or 38.7 per cent. A great deal has been heard of the Commonwealth's assistance to hospitals, but much of it has the character of the mirage; appearance without effect. The Commonwealth's assistance is to the patients, not to the hospitals.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It was never supposed to be anything else.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Amounts are received by hospitals from the Commonwealth only in exchange for amounts which the hospitals previously collected from the patients. The financial position of the hospitals is unaltered, in theory. The expenditure upon Government and board hospitals is made from funds supplied from various sources. These are the State Hospital Fund, additional State subsidies, the Commonwealth Hospital Benefits Fund

and collections from patients. The State Hospital Fund stands at a fixed amount of £275,750, which is the estimated 'proceeds of the taxation upon wages provided for in the Hospital Funds Act, which was merged in the uniform taxation. The additional State subsidies are made available from time to time in varying amounts to meet requirements, and this year will total £262,000. The amount received from the Commonwealth Hospital Benefits Fund varies with the number of patients, and the amount collected from patients is also variable, and tending to reduce. The expenditure last year of Government and board hospitals totalled £768,139, and the estimate for this year's total expenditure is £832,004. Subsidies paid to board hospitals have been greatly increased, and where last year they cost £235,347, this year the estimate is £308,996. A heavy building programme is necessary if hospitals are to be brought up to a reasonable standard. The Government has approved plans, which are substantially similar to those mooted by the previous Government. The demands of housing, schools and other urgent building requirements have prevented the performance of the work to the extent which the Government desires. It is hoped that a good deal of constructional work, towards which plans have been prepared and approved, will be commenced during the present year. It is also expected that hot water services and septic tank installations will be established at various hospitals, as a matter of some urgency, where adequate and dependable supplies of suitable water are available.

The Government has decided to relieve local boards of the responsibility of raising portion of the cost of building construction. The old arrangement was illogical and unjust, and could not be continued because of the crying up of local charities owing to the pressure of heavy taxation and the social services contributions. It is hoped that the boards will still maintain their responsibility and interest in the conducting of the hospitals, and that they will continue to provide a substantial proportion of the cost of maintenance, and contributions towards the improvement of equipment and facilities and amenities for patients and staff. As hitherto, the Lotteries Commission will be prepared to assist to the utmost of its ability. It is interesting to mention the

effect of the operation of the Commonwealth Hospital Benefits Act, which came into force on the 1st January, 1946. It was expected that the offer of free treatment in hospitals would have the effect of causing a transfer of patients from paying to non-paying beds, and the results have proved the correctness of that expectation.

The number of paying patient days in the second of the basic years used for fixing the principles of the hospital benefits scheme—1943-44—was 84,487. In 1946-47, the number was 51,765, indicating a transfer—as I have already said—of 38.7 per cent. For these, the State Government receives from the Commonwealth an average of 6s. per day, instead of the normal hospital charge. As the average cost of each hospital bed in Western Australia in 1946-47 was 20s. 7.72d. per day, as against 14s. 11d. in 1943-44, the charges should have been increased. Because of the Hospital Benefits Act, however, an increase was impossible. No increase could be made for free beds, because the Commonwealth made the whole payment for these, 6s. per day and no increase could be made in the paying beds, because the effect would have been only to increase the flow of paying patients to non-paying beds, and the financial result would have been worse rather than better. The department estimates that the increased cost to the State arising directly or indirectly from the operation of the Commonwealth Hospital Benefits Act is not less than £148,000 for the year 1946-47. That estimate includes the transfer of paying patients to free beds, inability to increase fees to meet rising costs, and additional collections which it is considered could have been made above the 5s. 9d. collected in the basic year from the public wards.

Towards the loss arising from the transfer of patients from paying to free beds, the Commonwealth has offered an increase in payment which would provide an additional £9,975. In all the institutions associated with this department—as has been the case in almost every other walk of life,—salaries and wages have been increased, while hours have been reduced. Allowances and emoluments have been increased, with the inevitable result that costs have tended to rise very steeply. The effect of this will be illustrated in almost every figure embodied in the estimated expenditure. The

cost of all the equipment, supplies and clothing required has likewise increased greatly, but there appears little opportunity, at least within the operations of the Medical and Health Departments, of increasing revenue to balance the increased expenditure. I have pleasure in submitting these Estimates to the Committee.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [3.40]: This is an appropriate time to refer to the scheme inaugurated a few months ago by the Commonwealth Government for the treatment of sufferers from tuberculosis. I asked a series of questions regarding this matter early in the session. On the 20th August I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health—

- (1) What progress is being made with the x-ray anti-T.B. examination?
- (2) How many people have been x-rayed—
(a) Males; (b) females?
- (3) With what results?

and the answer was—

(1) Clinics have been opened at the following hospitals:—Perth, Fremantle, Children's, Kalgoorlie, Northam, Collie and Bunbury. In Perth, Cathedral Hall has been purchased and reconstruction and adaptation are proceeding. Tenders have been called and close tomorrow for suitable x-ray plant. Additional staff has been appointed and others are being sought.

(2) and (3) Information desired is not available.

Later on I asked the following question—

(1) Will the Minister representing the Minister for Health take into consideration the fact that many people will not offer themselves for X-ray examination because, if found to be suffering from, or susceptible to, pulmonary tuberculosis, they could not afford to undergo treatment under the rates of compensation recently fixed?

(2) Will he favourably consider joint action by the State and Federal Governments making provision for the payment of a weekly sum, to the breadwinner, of not less than the basic wage while undergoing treatment for pulmonary tuberculosis, without applying the means test?

And the answer was—

(1) Yes.

(2) The present payment of a weekly sum is made by the Commonwealth and is experimental. The Commonwealth Minister for Health has stated it will be reconsidered after three months.

More than three months have elapsed since I asked those questions, and I do not think any alteration has been made in the amount of compensation paid to sufferers from

tuberculosis. I realise that the scheme is in its embryonic stage.

I was prompted to ask these questions after reading the report of the committee of Commonwealth and State officials on tuberculosis. That committee met at the Australian Institute of Anatomy in Canberra in July, 1947. It recommended certain rates of compensation to be paid by the Commonwealth Government for T.B. patients. It asked that the amount payable from the Commonwealth grants should be increased from 15s. to 22s. 6d. per week in the case of a married man suffering from tuberculosis. It also recommended in the case of a single man suffering from tuberculosis that the amount should be unaltered at 10s. a week, and that the tuberculosis allowance for dependent children under 16 years of a sufferer be unaltered at 5s. a week. The allowance for a wife suffering from T.B. was recommended to be unaltered at the rate for a single person. The recommendations continue—

After the operation of the payment of this allowance for a period of three months, the State authorities will each advise the Acting Director General of Health whether the rate of distribution of the grant warrants the increase of the allowance for a man and wife to 25s. per week.

It was agreed that the senior rate for a man and wife, where the wife is the sufferer from T.B., should be increased to £4 17s. 6d., similar to the ceiling for a married man with wife where the man is the sufferer. The ceiling rates are therefore—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|---|----|----|
| Single person who is a sufferer | 2 | 17 | 6 |
| Married couple when either the husband or wife is the sufferer | 4 | 17 | 6 |
| Man and wife and one child .. | 5 | 7 | 6 |

The rates I read out from the beginning of the committee's report are fixed in connection with the means test. According to the man and his wealth, so is the allowance paid. When I asked the questions which I have just read out, I realised and still believe that there are many unfortunate people in this country suffering from T.B., who naturally would avail themselves of the scheme were it not for the fear that their dependants would suffer during the time they were under treatment. I am convinced that the scheme will not be successful until a proper financial allowance is made for the breadwinner so that he will not suffer the anxiety he would otherwise feel con-

cerning the welfare of his dependants while he is being treated. The committee whose report I have quoted from realised the necessity for giving greater financial consideration to T.B. sufferers. Here is an extract from the committee's views on the matter—

In considering the question of T.B. allowances, two objectives may be presented: 1, the relief of financial distress, and 2, the control of T.B., which is an infectious disease in the community.

Then it goes on to say —

Thus, the case of the remediable disease with a positive sputum should be given preference in hospital treatment to an advanced positive sputum case with irremediable disease, and the latter may be discharged from a sanatorium in order to make way for the former. The case with minimal disease should be given a priority equal to the more advanced, as there is a greater prospect of healing his disease and so preventing his becoming worse in the future.

Another paragraph is worthy of being quoted—

If all patients, whether in an institution or at home, are where they are on the advice of and with the approval of the T.B. branch of the Public Health Department, it seems difficult to justify the use of any priorities at all. This might mean that £250,000 will be inadequate for the payment of allowances to all sufferers who carry out the advice of the Public Health Department, but it would not be equitable to penalise some when all are involved in the one public health problem, and are disposed of in a general strategic plan. Under the therapeutic difficulties mentioned in Appendix "D," it is essential that medical attendant and public health authority be untrammelled by economic considerations in reaching a decision re disposal of individual.

The committee appointed to inquire into the matter realised the difficulty it would have to face as medical men when advising on certain cases. The economic consideration is there. There are, unfortunately, very many cases in Australia as is evidenced by Press reports. I notice from the Press dated the 18th November, a telegram from Sydney, as follows:—

SYDNEY, Tues.—Fifteen thousand people in Sydney have tuberculosis but do not know it. Among them are 2,500 who have the disease actively and are capable of infecting others.

These conclusions are based on results released today of the first large-scale X-ray conducted in N.S.W.

The survey made by the Anti-Tuberculosis Association of N.S.W. between February and September, according to a spokesman for the association, showed that of 19,550 Sydney

people examined 1,074 per cent. had some form of T.B. About 6.6 per cent. suffered from active T.B. capable of infecting others.

On this basis in a population of 1,500,000, about 15,000 people would have the disease, 2,500 of them in active form.

The survey had included 36 different groups of workers, all apparently healthy. Those who had the disease actively, needed immediate hospital attention, although they appeared perfectly healthy.

More than 75 per cent. of infected people had T.B. only in a limited and early stage; 20 per cent. had moderately advanced T.B. Only five people of those examined had advanced T.B.

That shows the extent of this dread disease and the necessity for active work to combat it. I have perused the report of the Public Health Department for 1944-45 and wish to refer to some of the statements contained therein—

The end of the war has brought us face to face with many problems, and in public health work that of tuberculosis control occupies a high priority. In submitting my report for the years 1944-45, the opportunity has been taken to present, in addition to routine activities, a brief survey of what is being done now and recommendations of what is considered necessary to be done.

In this State about 173 deaths are caused every year by tuberculosis (average for the years 1941-45), the death rate being 35 per 100,000.

It has been estimated that there are approximately 11 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis in active form requiring treatment in existence at any one time for each annual death. On this estimation there could be $11 \times 173 = 1,903$ active cases requiring treatment in W.A. today.

Within recent years, the mass radiography employed on recruits for the fighting forces in all belligerent countries has revealed that one person in every 300 of military age (18-45 years) has been found to have active pulmonary tuberculosis. This age group represents about four-sevenths of the total population: $\frac{4}{7} \times 490,000 = 280,000$; 0.33 per cent. of $280,000 = 933$. If the previous figure of total cases is correct, approximately an equal number of cases exists in the balance of the population (of age groups 0-15 years and above 45 years).

The report also deals with the economic loss to the community due to the prevalence of T.B.—

The economic loss to the community is considerable. It has been calculated that a human life was worth approximately £2,000 before the war. Without allowing for increased earning capacity in post-war years, the annual loss of real wealth to the State in its most valuable form, human life, may be put at $183 \times 2,000 = 5,346,000$. To this must be added the loss of earning capacity, partial and total, of the sur-

viving sufferers from the disease. If it is assumed that only 500 are basic wage earners, the loss may be estimated at £500x250=£125,000 annually. The cost of treating cases in hospital may be estimated at say £60,000. These three estimates produce a total of £531,000 annually.

It will be seen that our own public health officer realises the seriousness of this disease in our midst. The report goes on to say—

At the meeting of the National Health and Medical Research Council held in November, 1945, at Canberra, the eradication of T.B. was described as the most important problem in public health confronting the country today.

The report also deals with rehabilitation and states—

The aims of treatment are (a) to heal the disease and render the patient non-infectious, and so prevent further spread of the infection; and (b) to restore, if possible, his working capacity. This restoration of working capacity, or education of the patient to a new occupation more suited to his condition, should begin while his treatment is in progress, i.e., in the sanatorium. In other cases his disease may be so advanced that it is impossible to render him non-infectious or to restore fully his working capacity. For such a case it is inhuman and uneconomic to expect him to exist on an inadequate pension.

There are several other paragraphs in the report dealing with the question of tuberculosis and the necessity for its effective treatment, also emphasising the necessity for giving a proper living allowance to the sufferer. This matter can be looked at in two ways; first, from the humanitarian, and secondly from the economic angle. I realise that it is the desire of both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government to do everything possible to eradicate the disease. Eminent members of the medical profession have stated that the disease of tuberculosis can be eradicated from the Commonwealth in 20 years. According to the report from which I have just quoted, it is quite evident that the medical profession realises it is up against the economic difficulty and I think it necessary for those in authority to realise that also.

We often heard, before and during the recent war—in fact, it was repeated ad nauseam—that whilst we could spend millions to destroy human life we were indifferent or careless about or declined to spend £1,000 or £2,000 for the preservation of human life. The question of tuberculosis should be looked at from the economic as well as from the humanitarian angle. If the scheme is to be successful

something more will have to be done than is being done at present so far as compensation is concerned. I have already said that the man who feels he is suffering from the disease will not yield himself up for treatment if he thinks that those dependent on him will be in want as a result. I suggested in my question that at least the basic wage should be assured to the sufferer, but I go as far as to say that even that is not enough.

We know that artisans today earn more than the basic wage, and if an artisan suffering from the disease were to leave his occupation to go into a sanatorium under present conditions, and with the means test, knowing that his family will suffer, he will not have that peace of mind so essential to a complete recovery. That is particularly so in the case of this disease. This question is one that could well be discussed again at the next Premiers' Conference. I suggest to the Honorary Minister and the Minister responsible for the department that they get in touch with the Premier with a view to seeing what progress has been made since the initiation of this scheme in the provision of the necessary plant and the necessary staff and to discover how many people have submitted themselves to x-ray examination. Having done that, they should then go into the question of compensation. The matter could then be discussed at the next Premiers' Conference and afterwards brought under the notice of the Commonwealth Minister for Health. I contend that the scheme will not be successful unless either one of two things occur—a proper monetary allowance so that the sufferer will be relieved of the fear of want; or compulsion, making this a notifiable disease. It would not be equitable to make notification compulsory unless provision were made for the necessary finance for the family dependent on the sufferer.

I realise that the free hospitalisation scheme now in existence and the free medicine that will be provided early next year when the scheme comes into operation will be of considerable help, but these will not go far enough. As I have said, the matter should be brought up at the next Premiers' Conference and a set sum of money, much in excess of the £250,000 already allocated, should be earmarked for this purpose. It is of such importance to the people of the Commonwealth from the economic angle,

apart altogether from the humanitarian angle, that I would not have the slightest hesitation in suggesting that a sum of at least £1,000,000 should be set aside to test the question thoroughly and effectively. If that were done I have every reason to believe that there would be a much better chance of success than there is at present, because no matter how desirous the Commonwealth health authorities are of eradicating this dread disease, and no matter how confident the medical profession is that it can be eradicated in 20 years, the scheme must be accompanied by economic security. I submit the suggestion to the Minister for reference to the Premier in the hope that the matter will be discussed at the next Premiers' Conference.

HON. A. H. PANTON (Leederville) [4.7]: I appreciate the Honorary Minister's difficulty in submitting this important set of Estimates, representing, as she did, another Minister. It is obvious to me, after having had 8 years' association with the Health Department, that it is exceedingly difficult for anybody to become au fait with the department unless he is continually dealing with health matters. So I shall not blame the Honorary Minister for many things she did not say. I shall simply express my regret that some better explanation was not given to the Honorary Minister for submission to this Committee. One matter that was not mentioned at all is regional hospitals. I am rather disappointed at that. The Honorary Minister said that the Government had plans for the erection of hospitals throughout the State when it was possible to build them. I can readily believe that, but with the housing position as it is, I doubt very much whether there will be much opportunity to build hospitals for a long time.

I hope, however, that the present Government has not just cast aside the scheme for regional hospitals for the State. I am not suggesting that the Government should adopt it in its entirety, but it was well thought out by practical men of the Health Department. They made a comprehensive report which was adopted by the previous Government. It was to have been put into operation when it was possible to obtain men and materials to build the hospitals. I travelled round the State with that com-

mittee a great deal and heard the viewpoint of various people on the scheme. I was more than satisfied that any tinkering with the present system of hospitalisation in this State would be only a farce. We must have some scheme of regional and sub-regional hospitals in a huge State like this, particularly as we have aeroplane services that can be brought into operation for regional hospitals at Kalgoorlie, Geraldton and other towns. I shall not deal extensively with the scheme, as it is in the hands of the present Government; but I repeat that I hope it will not be lightly dropped. It is the nucleus of a good system, particularly if coupled with the comprehensive report which Dr. LeSoeuf made on hospitalisation in America. I should say it would take some considerable time to couple the two reports and go carefully through them.

The Attorney General: I agree. I made some attempt to do so. Dr. LeSoeuf's is a wonderful report.

HON. A. H. PANTON: It is well worth the £1,000 or whatever the amount is that was expended on it. Another question that I am sorry was not explained more fully was one in which every member—in fact, every person—should be interested. It is the training of our nurses. During the period I was Minister for Health, and since, there has been much criticism by people who know little or nothing about the matter of the method of training nurses, their salaries, quarters and so on. The training of nurses is in the hands of the Nurses' Registration Board. A set of regulations was tabled on the 4th August which provides ample scope for the training of nurses; but I understand, as the Honorary Minister briefly mentioned, that smaller hospitals are now being utilised for the training of nurses.

After 19 years' association with the Perth Hospital Board and eight years' experience as Minister for Health, I say definitely that no nurse can be thoroughly and properly trained in a small hospital, because it has not the facilities for training nurses, nor can the nurse have the advantage of medical lectures, which are a most important factor. It would be necessary for the matron to be a particularly good lecturer. But the nurses cannot get experience of the multiplicity of diseases that are treated in the large hospitals. Consequently the Perth Hospital, the Children's Hospital

and the Fremantle Hospital were regarded as excellent hospitals for training purposes. Although for many years the Children's Hospital was looked upon as the aristocracy of training, somebody eventually found that the nurses were trained only in children's diseases. Before nurses trained there could reap the advantage of reciprocity with Great Britain, they had to undergo at least another six months' training in the nursing of adults. That was arranged for many years ago.

If nurses could not be properly trained in a hospital such as the Children's Hospital, I am quite sure they cannot be properly trained in a small hospital. A scheme was adopted, prior to this new scheme, about which I am sorry we have not more information, under which nurses start at Wooroloo, where they got 6 to 9 months' training, and then go to various small hospitals for six months each, finally going to Kalgoorlie for 18 months to 2 years. The Kalgoorlie hospital could be made into an excellent training school provided the medical men there were prepared to do the lecturing. We had some difficulty about that in times gone by. We want to be particularly careful to see that we do not in any way lower our standard of nursing. While I was Minister some of the medical men complained that the standard of education was not sufficiently high. That may have been so, but my experience was that the girls who came within the first half dozen in the examination results did not even have their Junior, and certainly were not university trained. They were conscientious girls who were anxious to complete their training.

The practical experience is the main thing. Without a great number of cases—surgical, medical, children and others—we cannot train the girls properly. It would be disastrous to turn out improperly trained girls simply for the sake of getting nurses quickly. The Western Australian trained nurses—particularly those trained at the Royal Perth Hospital—are able to get a situation anywhere in the world. The girls who went to England were looked upon as the best trained from Australia. I am anxious that this matter be thoroughly examined and that we do not try to train nurses too quickly. I do not agree with the Honorary Minister with regard to the alleged free hospital treatment. I had a great deal to do with this

question from as far back as 1942 until I handed over to my successor.

Never, from the inception, was there any idea of free hospital treatment, except in a public ward. The Honorary Minister used the words "paying and non-paying wards." That was the first time I had heard the expression. It was not used previously. The 6s. per day was not a static amount. It was agreed that it could be increased in accordance with rising costs by a conference of Ministers and other people concerned. The whole idea was that any person going into a ward—and the Royal Perth Hospital was typical because there were only public wards there—

The Premier: That applies to a large number of hospitals in this State.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: What does?

The Premier: The free public wards.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: No. Outside of the Royal Perth Hospital, which is purely a public hospital, I do not know of any where a person can go and say, "I want a bed and you will be paid 6s. per day."

The Premier: They can pay it to any of the country hospitals.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Yes, but the country hospitals need not accept it.

The Premier: They do.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Well, they have done it on their own initiative. Prior to this scheme there were no public wards, to my knowledge. There may have been one or two indigent beds. As far as I know there was no public ward at Kalgoorlie. People who went into hospital and were unable to pay, did not pay. The hospitals did their best to collect any money owing. I, as Minister for Health, received letters from all over the State asking me to remit certain payments because the people concerned could not meet them. The Royal Perth Hospital was always looked upon as a public hospital, where the medical men acted in an honorary capacity except the superintendent and the junior medical officers.

I have seen as many as 63 honorary medical men there doing a particularly wonderful job. They did the work in an honorary capacity because they knew that the patients, as the result of interrogation, were all indigent cases. When a patient left that hospital he got an account for so many

days at, say, 10s. 6d. a day. He paid what he could and finally the collectors—and there were three or four of them—would recommend that the remainder be written off because it was impossible for the patient to pay. The outcome was that although everyone was debited with 10s. 6d. a day in, say, 1942, the actual collections amounted to 5s. 10d. per patient per day, when the scheme was first discussed. The average collection in Victoria was 4s. 9d. per day. We in Western Australia had with our 5s. 10d. the highest average collection, and it was put down to our methods of collection. With the advent of the 6s., the Perth Hospital gained 2d. per day per patient, and there were many of them, but that does not apply today. That 2d. a day—and it applied all over Australia—had to be put into a trust fund for building purposes.

We, in Western Australia, came out of the scheme very badly from that point of view. The estimated amount per year here was £5,000 whereas it was £200,000 in Victoria owing to the huge population there, and to the fact that the collections were previously 4s. 9d. If small country hospitals are taking in patients for 6s. per day, they are doing it on their own initiative and not because they have public wards. It is difficult for me to understand how a six bed hospital could have a public ward. A patient in a private hospital is allowed 6s. a day off the amount he has to pay. As the Honorary Minister said, this was not a scheme intended to help hospitals, but to help patients, and outside of a public ward everyone who went into hospital received 6s. a day to help with the hospital bill.

The Premier: In the country hospitals they all demand a public ward bed.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: There is no authority for that. I pointed out on more than one occasion, at the conferences, that irrespective of how much the Commonwealth Government desired to have public wards, there would be only a certain number of beds available.

The Minister for Education: Suppose Jones and Smith arrive at a hospital on the same day and there is one public bed, how can you discriminate?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: What would be done if we did not have this scheme?

The Minister for Education: They would both be taken in.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: In the one bed?

The Minister for Education: No.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: If the country hospitals are putting in temporary beds, they have started something that was never intended.

The Minister for Education: They could not help it.

The Premier: The impression is that there is free hospitalisation up to 6s. per day.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I pointed out that that is what would happen. We should have been strong enough to say that the scheme was only for a public hospital or ward. We cannot have a public ward in a six bed hospital. If the Medical Department has got into that position, then it is going to be a costly business. It costs from 17s. 6d. in the metropolitan area to about 30s. in Marble Bar to run a hospital.

The Minister for Education: It is another half-baked Commonwealth scheme. With a little more baking it would be all right.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I agree with that. Another matter I would like to deal with is that of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. I visited that institution on many occasions and I never came away without a heartache. It is terrible to see young children there. Some considerable time ago the previous Government bought a property of about 3,500 acres at Wokalup for the purpose of establishing a mental home. The project, unfortunately, was stopped by the war. The property was a cheap one, having been bought from an organisation which had mortgaged it for £5,000. I would like to know whether Wokalup has been forgotten.

The Honorary Minister talks about renovations and buildings to be erected on the present Claremont site. In my opinion it is just a waste of money to go on spending large amounts at Claremont. If I prayed for anything when the war was on it was that if any bombs were dropped one would fall on that place. It is old, and renovations will do it no good. I suppose we will be told that Wokalup is too far away from the relatives. My experience is that once people go into these places they are soon forgotten by their relatives and everyone else. The Government would be well

advised to look at the Wokalup property and, if possible, transfer the patients there by degrees because they will be much happier out in the open than they are behind stone walls. So far as Sunset is concerned, I will be down there tomorrow as a member of the Padbury Trust. I visit the home quite often, and I must say that the Honorary Minister is quite wrong about the sanitation. It took us a long time to get anything done but the matter was fixed up before I left the job.

Hon. N. Keenan: What was?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The lavatories in the men's wards. It is a dilapidated place, and I do not know that much can be done outside of rebuilding it. We want to make the best use of it until a new place is built by the Lotteries Commission. The sooner the women's home is completed and the old women are transferred, the better I will be pleased. They were sent to Guildford only because we thought a bomb might drop on their home at Fremantle. I shall never forget, nor I am sure will the matron, the extraordinary circumstances in which we transferred some of the old ladies to Guildford. Now it looks as though the new institution will be built, and I hope that some of those who faced the hardships at Guildford will live to enjoy the new surroundings in the salubrious suburb represented by the member for Canning.

HON. E. NULSEN (Kanowna) [4.31]: I listened attentively to the speech delivered by the Honorary Minister and I cannot say that I admired it. I do not blame her in consequence, because I know it was a task beyond the ability of any organisation or any Parliament in view of the criticism we have heard from time to time, particularly the criticism indulged in by members now on the Government side of the House when they were attacking the Labour Government just before the last election. The Wise Government had planned for the construction of seven new hospitals and I have not heard anything about them. We have not been told what the present Government intends to do particularly with regard to the hospitals at Albany, Bunbury, Broome, Geraldton, Lake Grace, Leonora and Pinjarra. We recognised that something had to be done promptly, but the Honorary Minister did not mention anything

about the hospital at either Lake Grace or Leonora. Had the Labour Government remained in office those two hospitals in particular would have received prompt attention.

We all know that Leonora is a very hot centre and the present hospital buildings are not at all satisfactory for the staff or for patients, with the exception of one ward. The kitchen is just like a small hell, and certainly something should be done about it. The Lake Grace institution serves a very big area and the conditions there are far from tolerable. I hope the Honorary Minister will see that something is done about them as soon as possible. I am sure members of the present Administration realise that the Labour Government did its best when in power and certainly that the then Ministers weaved no cobwebs. The Labour Government intended to embark upon a lot of work with other hospitals including the Royal Perth Hospital. I am certain not much has been done there, otherwise we would have been told about it. There are 34 hospitals in various centres and we have not heard anything about them. We had provided for improved ward and staff accommodation in 30 or 40 important centres, and yet nothing has been heard about them.

Plans had been prepared by the former Government and we were anxious to get on with the work. I do not know that the present Government has made any attempt to do anything along those lines. As a matter of fact, the Government realises that Labour Ministers were hampered on account of the shortage of materials and labour. Substantial improvements have been effected in both directions, yet I cannot see any advance in connection with improving hospital conditions commensurate with the improvement in the availability of materials and labour. The Honorary Minister is also Minister for Shipping. She is therefore in a position to do something towards securing relief respecting urgent works that require materials and labour. Will the Honorary Minister explain the position regarding the Royal Perth Hospital? What progress has been made? I am afraid nothing much has been done, otherwise the hospital would be open by now. Something is missing, especially in view of the fact that the Honorary Minister has another portfolio and should be in a posit-

ion to demand the supply of materials from the Eastern States, because we did not have that portfolio in the Labour Cabinet.

The Minister for Railways: That is a new ore!

The Minister for Education: If your people did not stop the ships from loading so often, we might have more.

Hon. E. NULSEN: When we were in office, the hon. member inferred that we were not doing our best.

The Minister for Education: We certainly did not suggest you were not doing your best!

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister said there were cobwebs.

The Honorary Minister: It was you who talked about the cobwebs, and I reminded you that you must be the spiders who weaved them.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Honorary Minister must know more about cobwebs now, because she realises they must have a lot of filth in them. Then again the previous Government made provision for air-conditioning in connection with various hospitals in the outer and hotter areas. What has been done about that? Surely she must know something about it—if any progress has been made. Then there is the question of water supplies at the various hospitals. They have not been improved to any great extent. Septic tanks have not been put in, despite the fact that provision for the work was made. Now we are told there are no materials. More are available now than when we were on the Government side of the House. Extensive work should have been undertaken at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, but what has been done?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Nothing.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No materials.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Provision was made for improvements for the nurses on the Goldfields and at outer centres, but I have not heard of anything being done.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No, nothing—no materials.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do not know what the Honorary Minister and her colleagues have been doing with regard to hospital accommodation throughout the State. As

Minister for Shipping, the Honorary Minister should have been able to get more materials.

Mr. Marshall: Too many social functions and no sincere effort, that is all.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Take the position regarding x-rays, which are so important in connection with tuberculosis. The doctors tell us that if they can get a proper system installed, they can practically eradicate T.B. in 25 years.

Mr. Leslie: The trouble is the present Government is too modest about its achievements.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We would hear all about them, if there were any.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Honorary Minister could tell us about the Government's achievements with regard to health matters. Take the Claremont Mental Hospital. Has the kitchen been finished?

The Honorary Minister: If you have been down there, you must know it has been attended to.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I have been down there, and I know it has not been finished. I want to emphasise that that work was started before we left office.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Still no materials!

Mr. Marshall: Have they done anything at all?

Hon. E. NULSEN: The achievements of the present Government have been very small indeed compared with the big programme that the Labour Government had drawn up. We were going to spend something like £3,000,000. How much of that money has been spent so far? I venture to say very little.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No materials.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No labour.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Why are there still no materials?

The Honorary Minister: You will find out in due course.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I have not seen anything about it in the papers. We had a programme of work in connection with Heathcote, but nothing has been done.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No materials.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No labour.

The Honorary Minister: Have you been there?

Hon. E. NULSEN: No, I am not wanted there! Then we have the provision of disability allowances for the staff and nurses. Has that allowance been discontinued or is it still operating? If it is still being paid, the position regarding staff and nurses must still be very bad. Mr. Stitfold, the Under Secretary, made a great effort when the Labour Government was in office and wrote to over 800 ex-nurses asking them to return to the profession. I would like to know what were the results. He also made application for 250 nurses from the Old Country. I had not heard anything about that, nor what results were achieved. Then there was the question of regional hospitals. The Labour Government gave a lot of consideration to that, and I do not know that the present Government has given any attention to the project at all. It was a good scheme and I would like to know what progress has been made with it. It has just dawned upon me that, when I was visiting the hospitals, I found that sterilising facilities were in demand. I have since made inquiries and have been informed that there has been no improvement in that position.

The Honorary Minister: No material.

Hon. E. NULSEN: We had quite a number of complaints about hospital kitchens and the former Treasurer decided that improvements to them should be amongst the first works to be put in hand, but I have letters stating that nothing has been done.

The Honorary Minister: No material.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: No Minister.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister is doing nothing. Perhaps the Government is trying to do something, but it seems necessary for us to get back into office fairly soon in order that things might be done. With regard to general hospitals, we had an extensive programme. I should like to know what has been done under the hospital agreement. No material and no labour again, I suppose.

The Chief Secretary: You know that there have been strikes in the Eastern States and that the Commonwealth Government could not do a thing about them.

Hon. E. NULSEN: No initiative, no material, no labour. Am I to conclude that there is no nous on the Government side?

There is one thing for which I can give the Government some credit; I believe in giving credit where credit is due. Something has been done for the Alexandra Home, which looks after 40 babies and undertakes mothercraft training which will be of great assistance. Population is what the State needs, and I give full credit for what has been done at that home. With regard to the health clinics, I should like to know what has been done.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Nothing; no material.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No sisters; the Northam clinic has been closed for eight months.

Hon. F. NULSEN: The Honorary Minister might be able to tell us about that when she replies. I am sure she has a great enthusiast in Dr. Stang, who does not miss any opportunity of furthering this work. I feel that nothing tangible has been done about the hospitals. When we look around we hear plenty of words but see no action. If there were action, the situation would not be what it is today. Even if the Government had taken the action promised, more than that amount would have been spent on the hospitals and the medical service would have been on a sound basis. I wish to allude to the method of payment by quoting a statement published in "The West Australian" of the 20th December, 1945, as follows:—

The Hospital Benefit scheme which the State will operate on behalf of the Commonwealth, will come into force on January 1, 1946.

The Minister for Health (Mr. Nulsen) said yesterday that there had been some misunderstanding concerning the operations of the scheme particularly in regard to the amount which committee hospitals would receive.

"It is fairly well-known that the Commonwealth Government will contribute 6/- per patient per day for every patient in a public ward of any hospital," Mr. Nulsen continued, "and those patients will be charged nothing for their bed in the hospital. Where they occupy an intermediate or private bed, the Commonwealth will subsidise the hospital costs to the extent of 6/- per day.

"This amount of 6/- was decided on by the Commonwealth after a consideration of the average collections from the public wards in all the hospitals in each of the States. The rates of collection were found to differ widely, but were highest in Western Australia, being approximately 5/9 per head. The Commonwealth, therefore, fixed the amount of 6/- as a convenient figure.

"As from January 1, no patient in a public bed will pay for his accommodation, but the Commonwealth, through the State, will recoup the hospital for public beds, not the average State amount of 6/-, but the exact amount which the hospital had succeeded in collecting during the basic years, 1942-43 and 1943-44. This has varied within a range from 2/2 to 13/- per patient per day.

Whatever the average was for the basic years, the hospitals will receive a contribution accordingly from the fund. If the collections at Wooroloo were 2s. 2d. it would receive 2s. 2d. per day for every patient and if the collections at Leonora were 13s. it would receive 13s.

The Chief Secretary: Economy did not pay.

Hon. E. NULSEN: In comparison with the other States, it did not pay, and neither did good administration.

The Chief Secretary: That is so.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The report continued—

"The hospitals will also receive a subsidy from the State on the same basis as previously, and consequently, will be in exactly the same financial position after the commencement of the new scheme, as it had been before. The scheme is not designed for the benefit of the hospitals, but for the benefit of the patients."

"As I have mentioned," said Mr. Nulsen, "the rate of 6/- was fixed because Western Australia's fee collection amounted to 5/9, which was the highest in Australia. The amounts of collection in other States ranged from approximately 3/2 to 4/-, comparing with Western Australia's 5/9.

TRUST FUND TO BE ESTABLISHED.

"It is a requirement of the Commonwealth that the difference between the average rate of collection and the rate of 6/- shall be paid into a trust fund, to be used for the benefit of hospitals under the direct approval of the Commonwealth. This means that because Western Australia, to a far greater extent than any other State, has endeavoured to make its hospitals self-supporting, the Trust Fund for hospital projects in Western Australia will amount to little over £5,000 per annum, while in other States they will vary from New South Wales, with almost £300,000, to Tasmania, with £32,000.

"The total sum available in the Trust Fund will approximate £750,000. Upon a population basis, this State would expect to receive approximately £50,000, but because of the facts outlined, there will be little over £5,000 available, of which some is likely to be absorbed in accounting adjustments, and other allowances.

"There are, however, assurances from both the late Prime Minister and his successor, that the Federal Government will assist in hospital construction in suitable cases. The Com-

monwealth Government, therefore, should be able, by this means, to adjust the discrepancy which is otherwise so unfair to Western Australia."

I have read that report because I did not want any misunderstanding to prevail regarding the fund. Any person can demand a public bed in any hospital in the State.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Suppose the public bed is not there, what is the demand worth?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I suppose he could not have it. If any hospital turned all its beds into intermediate wards, a patient could still demand a bed, but he could only demand accommodation and not medical attention. If he entered the Royal Perth Hospital, he could demand free treatment, because patients of that hospital received free treatment prior to this scheme coming into operation. Thus the status quo was to be preserved.

I thought the Honorary Minister would give us a number of surprises when delivering her Estimates. I thought that as she had the portfolio of Minister for Shipping, she would get the required material and do something as was promised to the people before her Party took office. I shall look forward eagerly to her reply and I hope she will give good reasons why the programme of the Wise Government has not been carried out or why something has not been done considering the amount of money that was provided for the hospitals.

MR. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [4.57]: I wish to submit a few comments for the consideration of the Honorary Minister in the hope that certain requirements of the North-West and particularly the Pilbara district will not be lost sight of when Parliament rises. I have referred to a number of medical and health matters affecting the people of the Pilbara district on previous occasions and I find it necessary to refer to them again. I do not propose to draw any comparison between what the previous Government did and what the present Government hoped to do. Suffice it to say that the statements I propose to make are quite justified, and I hope that, as my suggestions will be of a practical nature, they will be implemented.

I have referred previously to the flying doctor service, which has done such a great work for the people of the North-West. I consider that the people in the back country cannot have too high a regard for the man

who was the founder of that service, the Rev. John Flynn, of the Inland Mission. The doctors who have filled the role of flying doctor in the Pilbara district have been of very high standing, and I am pleased to learn from reports received that the young English doctors are men of very fine calibre. The thought strikes me, however, that if we are going to retain the services of young doctors in the North-West, consideration must be given to the questions of the amenities available and the salaries the Government will pay them. I have no hesitation in reiterating that the sum of £1,000 for a doctor in the North-West is entirely inadequate. The doctor who flew his own plane, Dr. Dick, was being paid £1,000 during the war period. Actually he saved the services of a pilot and operated not only in the Port Hedland-Marble Bar district, but covered also Roebourne, Wittenoom Gorge, Nullagine and the stations in the surrounding country. It was only after negotiations with the department that he was paid an additional salary of £250 a year.

I am not offering any criticism, but suggest it may be necessary for the Government to give consideration to increasing the allowance to the Government doctors who may be stationed in the North-West. I understand that three of the five doctors coming from England have arrived and they are being posted to various centres in the North-West. The Flying Doctor is stationed at Port Hedland; but from the information I have, the people in the Marble Bar area desire a doctor to be stationed in the township itself. Unfortunately the Government has no adequate accommodation for a resident medical practitioner at Marble Bar at present. The manager of the Comet Gold Mines Ltd. made arrangements with the previous doctor to use a home at the mine six miles distant. But there are only half-a-dozen men working there at present and the position is somewhat different from what it was 12 months or two years ago.

I would like the Honorary Minister to take into account the wishes of the people at Marble Bar in regard to stationing a doctor in the townsite. I have previously, by correspondence and questions in this Chamber, brought under notice of the department the necessity for establishing a small hospital at Nullagine, or what may be termed a nursing cottage. In justification of that

request, I may explain that Nullagine is approximately 85 miles from Marble Bar. The Blue Spec Mine, on which there are 65 men employed, with a total population in the vicinity of 90, is 14 miles eastwards and there are quite a number of prospectors along the Nullagine belt. We find it is necessary not only in the interests of the mining industry, but in the interests of the women and children, that a nursing cottage should be established at Nullagine for the use of the people in the district.

I am not criticising the doctor or anybody connected with the Flying Doctor Service, because I know how difficult their position is; but the people of Nullagine do not know when the doctor is going to visit the district. A man or a woman might be suffering from some complaint and awaiting the arrival of the doctor. Such a person might be under the impression that the doctor was to arrive on a certain date. At some inconvenience and in face of considerable difficulty at times, he would reach the aerodrome or the townsite only to find that the doctor had arrived a couple of days before and would not be visiting the district for another month. I know that one doctor operating from Port Hedland and visiting Marble Bar, Roebourne, Wittenoom Gorge and other centres in the district, would find it impossible to cover the whole area adequately. That is why continued requests have been submitted for the appointment of additional doctors. I appreciate also that there is a shortage of nurses and if a nursing cottage were established at Nullagine tomorrow, the Government might find difficulty in obtaining nurses to look after the patients. But in order to encourage people to remain in the district and to ensure reasonable medical attention for them, special efforts should be made along those lines.

A few moments ago I heard a chorus to the effect that, "There is no material." I think the Honorary Minister will agree that the argument cannot seriously be advanced that material is unobtainable for the erection of a nursing cottage at a place like Nullagine. If the Minister decides that a hospital is warranted when the extra doctor is stationed in the district, material will be found. Material is being made available for the erection of homes and other buildings in the metropolitan area

and it is only reasonable that a certain quantity should be provided for the erection of such a desirable cottage at Nullagine. My next suggestion is in connection with travelling dentists. Two years ago the then Minister for Health arranged for two dentists to visit the North-West towns. An itinerary was drawn up and occupied approximately six months. The result was very beneficial to the people of the North-West—not only children, but many adults also.

I understand the Government has in mind the appointment of a responsible dentist to be stationed in some township in the North-West and to operate over the whole of the area. I know that difficulty may be experienced in obtaining the right man for the position, but I hope that when Parliament rises the Honorary Minister will pay special attention to the desirability of having a dentist appointed as soon as possible, because anyone who knows the circumstances, will appreciate that it is most undesirable that parents and children should be obliged to travel hundreds of miles to receive dental attention. It is something which subjects them to heavy expenditure. There is a matter that has a direct relationship to the medical and health department. I do not know whether it would come directly within the jurisdiction of the department, but I refer to it because it is of interest to that part of the State. I refer to the expense to which people are subjected when they are obliged to travel from districts like Port Hedland, Marble Bar, Nullagine and other places, to the metropolitan area for specialist treatment. At times people are put on the plane and flown to Perth for medical attention and for operations, and the expense involved is enormous. Members will realise that it is sometimes beyond the capacity of the average person to meet. Again, a person may be brought from outlying centres to Port Hedland or Marble Bar for treatment and when discharged they are obliged to pay their expenses back home. It is an entirely different proposition for people who travel, from, say, Chidlow's Wells to Perth where the fare is about 3s.

When people have to travel by air, a fair sum of money is required and I think that attention might be directed to the desirability of paying the return travelling expenses of persons treated in North-West

hospitals. I wish also to make reference to workers' compensation cases. I understand that an injured worker north of the 26th parallel has debited against him medical fees which are the equivalent of 33.1/3rd per cent. over and above those operating in the South-West and the metropolitan area. If there is any foundation for that statement, I think the position should be rectified. A very important problem requiring solution by the department is the prevalence of sandflies, particularly in Port Hedland. Anyone who has been there will know that, given an adequate water supply and with the abolition of sandflies, it would be a most desirable place in which to live for many months of the year. If those things were attended to, the Tourist Bureau could well pay special attention to arranging for people to spend holidays in or make visits to that district.

As a result of bites from sandflies, a number of children and adults have had their legs or arms poisoned and have had to spend weeks in the Port Hedland hospital. At certain times of the year, sandflies are more prevalent than at others. During the war, I understand that the Army adopted certain measures in New Guinea and various parts of the tropics for the destruction of sandflies. I would like the Minister to state what action it is proposed to take to combat this menace. I know that for many years past sandflies have been an objectionable feature of life for people in the district. I referred just now to the water supply position. I propose to reserve further remarks on that subject until the Minister for Works has introduced his estimates. I appeal to the Honorary Minister to pay attention to the matters I have mentioned because she has expressed her concern for the people of the North on a number of occasions. I hope that the matters I have mentioned during the session, in correspondence and by way of questions in the House, will receive her very serious consideration. If she can do anything to grant the requests which I have submitted, the people of the North will be very appreciative.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [5.14]: In common with other members, I am anxious to assist the Government to bring this session to an end as early as possible. But I would be remiss in my duty to the people who are

responsible for my being here, if I did not take advantage of this opportunity—the only one afforded us during the session—to air a grievance on a subject of vital interest to those people and to the State in general, because it indicates the departmental policy, if not Governmental policy, in connection with health matters. The people in my district, and in other districts also, have expressed—and are continuing to express—the strongest disagreement with the proposals of the Commissioner of Public Health regarding the appointment of health inspectors to local governing authorities. Most of us have ideas or phobias that we wish to implement, and Dr. Cook is no different from anyone else in this regard. He has a phobia in connection with health matters, which he wishes to implement.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is what he is there for.

Mr. LESLIE: In order to implement his idea, I think he will go to the extent of endeavouring to enforce a set of conditions that are unnecessary and that he could only attempt to enforce owing to his lack of understanding of the conditions in country districts today. I agree that every reasonable endeavour should be made to maintain the health of the community at least at its present level, and if possible to improve it. I do not think the health of the people generally in this State is anything that the present or past Governments, or the medical fraternity, need be ashamed of. Before any vital departure is made from the existing state of affairs—which has given a considerable measure of satisfaction—it is necessary that evidence be adduced in support of the necessity for that departure. Up to the present, Dr. Cook has not given that justification. If he can produce evidence of a serious decline in the health of our people, because health inspectors are not employed in certain areas, I will agree with him, but until then I do not think he should adopt a totalitarian attitude in this matter. A considerable time ago the Commissioner of Public Health evidently decided that it was necessary for every local authority to have a full-time health inspector, regardless of the size or revenue of the area concerned. He sees the position from one viewpoint only.

Hon. A. H. Panton: He suggested the amalgamation of some local governing authorities.

Mr. LESLIE: Representations were eventually made to Dr. Cook, suggesting that the employment of a full-time health inspector in every centre was not practicable. He then suggested that local governing authorities should be grouped, and that health inspectors be appointed, each to cover a number of districts. At the outset, that scheme had some appeal—because of the desire of local health boards to co-operate—to the country people. When the scheme was analysed, it took on another aspect. It was found that unless it was considerably modified, the scheme would be uneconomic in practice, and that its benefits to the people concerned would be doubtful. I became interested in Dr. Cook's idea when it was suggested that about 12 road boards should be grouped in one area and one health inspector appointed to cover them all. I asked how 12 road boards could be served satisfactorily by the one officer. A full-time officer could have given at most one month in 12 to each of the districts concerned, whereas local part-time health inspectors could give a far greater time than that to their work in the course of the year. If the Commissioner did not actually decline to consider the suggestion as to part-time health officers, he did discourage any local governing authority from attempting to secure the services of such an officer.

A full-time health inspector covering a group of road boards would involve a considerable sum in travelling expenses. An analysis of costs showed that some road boards would be paying as much as £200 per year each for the services—for a part of the year—of a full-time health inspector, whereas a part-time health inspector would cost them about £400 a year, for which they would be able to get his services throughout the 12 months. As a practical scheme, the full-time health inspector to cover a group of road boards could not appeal to local governing authorities concerned about their financial position. If the Government is prepared to meet the travelling costs involved in the grouping of local Authorities, those bodies will have no objection except that they cannot expect the same service from such an officer as they could from a local part-time inspector constantly in the district concerned. Many people might be unaware of when the full-time inspector would make his visit, but it might coincide with the time when people guilty of committing nuisances under the

health laws had decided to have a clean-up. He would then find everything in order and might not return for four or five months, during which time nuisances would recur. That would not be satisfactory, and would not occur if there were a part-time man on the job in the district.

It might be the Commissioner's idea that every district in the State should be rated as a health district, and that the job of the inspectors should be to inspect conditions on every farm. If that was made part of the task of the inspector—to inspect the living conditions of farmers and their employees, and the sanitary arrangements and conditions regarding stock, sheds and so on—one man could not possibly compass the work involved in each district. I understand that Dr. Cook wishes to control flies. If he went to central Australia where there is no human population at all, he would still find plenty of flies.

Mr. Marshall: He could find plenty within 200 yards of his own office.

Mr. LESLIE: If he desires to clean up the flies in country areas, he will have to employ men to follow the stock around the fields with pans and brushes to pick up the droppings. I agree that flies should be controlled, but to do it effectively would require extreme measures. I think Dr. Cook's ideas are born of a lack of knowledge of the conditions obtaining in country areas. Flies exist where there are no humans and, as far as I know, no animals. There is room for improvement in the administration of our health laws and at times the local administration of those laws is not satisfactory. At present, the Public Health Department has overriding powers to see that the necessary work is done by local authorities.

I know of a case where a local governing authority conveyed to Dr. Cook the fact that it was not in favour of his ideas, and was literally put on the mat. It was informed that its health inspector was not carrying out his job satisfactorily and that the Commissioner intended to appoint a full-time inspector to that area. The Commissioner has power to do that, regardless of the Government or Government policy, but when we come to the payment of the health inspector, the boot is on the other foot. Dr. Cook has not power to mulct the people of any district in the pay-

ment of the salary of such an officer. If he pursues such a high-handed course, the Government will be forced to foot the bill. In this case, three specific failures on the part of the local governing authority in the administration of the health laws were mentioned. One was that in April the health inspector from the department visited a town and saw that the bakehouse had not been whitewashed. He ordered that to be done. He also found that the lavatory seat was an inch or so too high above the pan, and he ordered it to be lowered. He went to the slaughter yard and found there some blood in the blood pool and arranged for the pool to be emptied. That was in April.

In July he re-visited the centre and reported that the bakehouse had not been whitewashed. The baker whitewashes his bakehouse two or three times a year. I would like to see how the ceiling of this Chamber would look if we had wood fires burning in it all the time. It would be difficult to estimate within a week or two how long a bakehouse had been whitewashed. So far as the lavatory seat is concerned, arrangements were made by the owner of the premises with the local governing authority to have the seat altered in such a way as to prevent the fly nuisance. As regards the slaughter yard, of course the health inspector would find blood in the pool. As soon as the average country butcher slaughters, he gets the meat into the refrigerator with the least possible delay. He generally has to travel two or three miles. When he returns he attends to such matters as the blood pool. In any case, the health inspector could not say that the blood that was there in July was the same blood as was there in April.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Why?

Mr. LESLIE: I leave it to the hon. member to decide. Dr. Cook says that we ought to have a fulltime inspector. He knows damn well what will happen if we are asked to make such an appointment.

Hon. A. H. Panton: He could order it.

Mr. LESLIE: That is so. I ask the Honorary Minister to convey to the Minister for Health the information that in such an event the Treasurer will certainly have a headache before the year is out, be-

cause to saddle local authorities with such an expense is entirely unjustifiable. Part-time inspectors are carrying out their duties every day. It is not enough to make an inspection once a month or once a week; inspections should be made daily and at unexpected times. In that way we shall get some control over the health of the people of a district. I wish to refer to a meeting in my electorate which was attended by the Commissioner of Public Health. It was also attended by representatives of road boards which were included in the group which I mentioned. The Commissioner was trying to induce the meeting to adopt his scheme for group health inspectors. I said at the outset that if he hoped to convince the people that the scheme was necessary and desirable, he would have to submit evidence in support. However, he addressed the meeting and pointed out the horror of cholera. Cholera in Western Australia! I do not know whether it is likely that we shall get the disease here, but that is the only thing he could mention in support of his scheme for full-time inspectors. It is time the Government and the Minister had a serious conference with the Commissioner of Public Health and brought him down to earth. It might do no harm to suggest to him that he should go into the out-back parts of the State and find out whether he can control the flies there. If he can, he should be able to control flies inside a building.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Where do flies go in wintertime?

Mr. LESLIE: The hon. member should be able to answer that question himself.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You are blaming the Commissioner of Public Health for what is this Government's policy.

Mr. LESLIE: I point out to the member for Northam that the Commissioner of Public Health is literally an authority unto himself, except when it comes to the question of finance.

Hon. A. H. Panton: This Parliament gave the Commissioner control.

Mr. LESLIE: Parliament is responsible but nevertheless the Commissioner is the beginning and the end of health matters. I suggest the first thing he should do is to convince the Minister of the absolute neces-

sity for his scheme. If it is practicable, I am prepared to help and encourage him in every way I can, but we should not be asked to adopt fantastic ideas because there might be an outbreak of cholera. That, according to the newspaper report of the meeting to which I referred, was the only reason which the Commissioner had to advance in favour of his scheme. There may have been others, but that appeared to be the most impressive one. I ask the Honorary Minister to convey to the Minister the complete disapproval of the local governing authorities in my electorate and of local governing authorities in other districts, of the Commissioner's proposal for the appointment of full-time inspectors. These authorities are prepared, however, to co-operate with him, provided the scheme is reasonable.

I wish to refer to the hospital benefit fund and the financial position of country hospitals. Most of our country hospitals are in an unhappy financial position today. That is due entirely to the operation of the Commonwealth Hospital Benefit Scheme. I remind the Committee that when the scheme was before the House I protested against it. I said it was wrong and that we would regret adopting it. The Commonwealth's contribution was based on the average collections, instead of being based on the average cost per patient. The Honorary Minister told us tonight that the average cost per patient was 20s. 7d. per day. What we receive from the Commonwealth is 6s. per patient per day. The local communities are disinclined to make up the difference in the cost of the maintenance of the hospital, especially when they are told that they are receiving free hospital treatment. They are receiving nothing of the sort. The people should have the right to free hospital treatment without demanding it. I encourage people to avail themselves of free hospital treatment. I certainly have an objection to keeping a dog and barking myself.

Mr. Triat: Have you got a radio?

Mr. LESLIE: No, but I have a pretty good voice.

Mr. Triat: You have a voice.

Mr. LESLIE: I suggest to the Honorary Minister that she consult with the Treasurer with a view to having this agreement brought under review. Unless that is done

and the basis of contribution by the Commonwealth Government considerably altered, the State will be burdened with a cost out of all proportion to that which it has been obliged to bear in the past.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Would you vote against a referendum to deal with it?

Mr. LESLIE: I do not think it requires a referendum. I have had experience of local hospital boards, having served on one for 20 years. I say that no Government official, no Government department, can devote the same attention to a local hospital as is given to it by the local community. The capital cost of the hospital that I was connected with has, over a period of years, amounted to £13,000 or £14,000. It was £13,000 three years ago, and of that amount the local people contributed £8,000 because of their desire to provide themselves with hospital accommodation. That is more than all the people of Perth have contributed to the Royal Perth Hospital. I fear that if the country hospitals are handed over to the Government, the local people would lose their interest in maintaining them and providing amenities and facilities for the treatment of country people.

The financial relationship between the State and the Commonwealth with respect to hospitals must be reviewed. I want to know why it is we are still receiving £275,000 as compensation for sacrificing our right to tax under the Hospital Fund Tax Act. At the time that arrangement was made the earnings of the people were lower than they are today. I have not had the opportunity to ascertain the figures of the taxable income in Western Australia in order to arrive at the amount which the tax of $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound would produce today. It would be considerably more than £275,000. If we were to get, not the whole of that amount, but a substantial increase on the £275,000, many of the financial troubles of our hospitals would disappear. I suggest it is the duty of the Premier and the Minister to press the State's claim in this regard. It is a disgrace to any community that prides itself on being humanitarian to speak of an old women's home and an old men's home.

Mr. Graham: Yes, look what they have done with most of the Bills from this place!

Mr. LESLIE: Many people who live together all their lives are now torn apart in their old age and put into separate homes. I suggest to the Honorary Minister—and this might appeal to her because being a woman she should have a greater spark of sentiment than the male, and I believe she has—that it is time we considered setting up aged people's homes.

Mr. Fox: That has been started.

Mr. Styants: The Lotteries Commission started it two years ago.

Mr. LESLIE: It is time it was more than commenced. It is an urgent and necessary work. The least the State can do for those who contribute to its welfare over the years is to see that they enjoy, in the last days of their lives, in addition to being well fed and well clothed, the right to live happily together as they did in their early years. I hate to speak of the old men's home—

Hon. A. H. Panton: It is called "Sunset." They named it themselves.

Mr. LESLIE: It is still an old men's home and not an aged people's home.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There are young people there.

Mr. LESLIE: It is sinful to part old people who have spent 60 years together.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Do you know how many, if any, have been parted?

Mr. LESLIE: Yes, I know of two.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is one couple.

Mr. LESLIE: I mean, two men. One man feels his position keenly. What worries him is the fact that circumstances compel him to live apart from his life's mate. I feel sure that she, too, is just as worried as he is. My last point is that I appeal to the Minister to intensify the efforts that have been made to increase the facilities available for the medical and dental examinations of our school children. I know that this is being carried out, and it is a difficult job, but it is an important part of the department's work. I would be far more content to see an additional doctor, dentist or eye-specialist—and the last named represents a department of health which we seem to have overlooked in connection with our children—plus travelling facilities, than to see the Perth Hospital completed. If we can correct ill health in our children it is possible that in later life they may not need to use the

hospital facilities we are providing. It is, therefore, possible that we are starting at the wrong end by providing hospitals for them to use when they are grown up instead of remedying the ills in their childhood at far less trouble and expense. I support the Vote.

MR. WILD (Swan) [5.51]: I would not have spoken on these Estimates but for the vitriolic outburst of the member for Mt. Marshall against the Commissioner of Public Health. Dr. Cook may have the shortcomings of being a man of few words and going straight to the point. The member for Mt. Marshall mentioned facts of which I know nothing when he said that Dr. Cook had been to his electorate in an endeavour, apparently, to clean up some of the health matters there. I rise to defend this man because he has no right of reply here. Furthermore, during the war years I had the opportunity of serving alongside him, and I say, without fear of contradiction, that there was no man in the A.I.F. who did more than he did in the Islands to clean up dengue, malaria, dysentery and other diseases that beset the Australian troops.

I was Commanding Officer of a unit, and Dr. Cook was the Deputy Assistant Director of Hygiene. As a result he was responsible to me for administration, but I was responsible to him for the health of the troops. We had many hot words and I do not mind saying that on all occasions I had to take second place to him. I therefore do not rise to my feet as a friend of his, but because I know he did one of the most efficient jobs in the Islands. Dr. Cook came up against many people because he does not beat about the bush, but calls a spade a spade. I have no doubt that when he went into the hon. member's electorate he saw something not in keeping with the operations of his department. The day that the member for Mt. Marshall does his job as efficiently as Dr. Cook does his I will give £50 to the Royal Perth Hospital.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [5.55]: I wish to deal with two or three small matters on these Estimates. I consider the residents of the Eastern Goldfields are not getting treatment comparable with that given the citizens in other portions of the

State. I want to refer firstly to the question of dental attention for the indigent people, particularly the old age pensioners. In the metropolitan area there is a special hospital where indigent people and pensioners can have their dental requirements attended to. At the Kalgoorlie hospital, until about the commencement of this year, there was a half-baked dental service under which a pensioner, whilst he could not have extractions done, could get a new plate. The arrangement was that the local dentists gave a certain amount of honorary service in connection with these pensioners and they would take impressions which would be sent to the Dental Hospital in Perth where the necessary work was done. I was given the information, in answer to a question I asked here, that the Dentists' Association had withdrawn that service at Kalgoorlie. Unless that position has since been remedied, the pensioners and other indigent people on the Goldfields can get no attention at their local hospital. I was informed that the dentists of the Eastern Goldfields, through their association, notified the Health Department that they were not prepared to do any honorary work in connection with these people, but required full rates for any work they did.

I understand that some negotiations have been held between the Health Department and the Dentists' Association. It is to be hoped that some progress has been made so that some service can be given these people. What has happened here is quite characteristic of a number of other services rendered by Government departments. They have a metropolitan outlook so that outside of the city area very little in the way of services is available to the people although they have to pay their unit of tax for them. If agreement has not been arrived at, I hope that further negotiations will proceed to achieve that object. If that is not done then the Eastern Goldfields, with a population of 25,000 people, will have a fairly good claim to have a branch of the Dental Hospital established at the Kalgoorlie Hospital to do this work. It is true that if a pensioner on the Goldfields requires a number of extractions so that he may get a dental plate, the Premier's department will issue him with a free railway pass to Perth where the Dental Hospital will do the necessary work. But the pensioner then has to return to Kal-

goorlie because it takes two or three months to have the plate made ready for fitting.

The patients in the Kalgoorlie hospital are not getting fair treatment in that when it is necessary to send them to the Commonwealth laboratory to be x-rayed, they are charged the full price for the plates. That is entirely different from the manner in which the Commonwealth free hospitalisation scheme operates in other portions of the State. In the metropolitan area if a patient goes to the Royal Perth Hospital he can have an x-ray taken and no charge is levied against him, as the work comes under the hospitalisation scheme. I have a letter from one of my constituents, written a few months ago, in which he states that while a patient at the Kalgoorlie hospital he had been taken to the Commonwealth laboratory, which is in the hospital grounds, in order to have an x-ray photograph taken, and he had received a bill for six guineas. The man is not in very good financial circumstances, but being very conscientious and honest was worried as to how he could pay the account. I put the matter before the Minister for Health and I received back from him a rambling letter to the effect that free treatment was given to people in Kalgoorlie as well as anywhere else under the Commonwealth free hospitalisation scheme, but that if an individual at the Kalgoorlie hospital was the private patient of a doctor, then any work done at the Commonwealth laboratory for him would have to be paid for by the man. Anyone who knows the set-up at Kalgoorlie will appreciate how unfair that is.

The Kalgoorlie hospital is not run on the same lines as the Royal Perth Hospital. If a patient enters the Royal Perth Hospital he can obtain the services of the honorary staff, which is made up of the best surgical and medical men that can be obtained in the State and no charge is raised. The reason for that is that a patient entering the Royal Perth Hospital is not regarded as a private patient but in Kalgoorlie there is no such honorary staff to give such services and the private doctor follows his patient into the hospital. I asked the hospital authorities the reason for sending patients to the Commonwealth laboratory for an x-ray and if such a thing was a frequent occurrence. They replied that the x-ray plant at the hospital was capable of taking most of the x-ray

films, but when a more comprehensive x-ray photo was required, the patient was sent to the Commonwealth Health Laboratory. I have no objection to that because it is probably done on the score of efficiency. What I do object to is that whilst a patient is in the Kalgoorlie hospital and under the Commonwealth free hospital scheme, a doctor can order the hospital authorities to take the patient to the corner of the grounds for the purpose of having an x-ray film taken when there is a machine in the hospital itself capable of taking a film that would be sufficient for the doctor's purpose. My main objection is that a charge is made for such service.

I ask the Minister to make overtures to the Commonwealth Government to request that no charge be made for the x-ray photograph as the Commonwealth conducts the health laboratory and such film is used on the advice of the doctor who is treating the patient under the Commonwealth scheme. I suggest to the Minister that such x-ray services be included under the Commonwealth free hospital provisions. I was told that it was thought that such a move was the next step in the Commonwealth Government's hospitalisation scheme, but on making inquiries I find that that is not the case. I believe now that if the Minister for Public Health will make the overtures that I have suggested, the Commonwealth will not raise a charge. I was informed by the Minister for Health that only indigent persons being treated in an honorary capacity by the medical practitioners on the Goldfields, are entitled to have an x-ray photo taken free of charge. Even that is not the case, because I have a letter from one of my constituents who is an invalid pensioner and in it he stated that he had received an account for two guineas for an x-ray film that had been taken. That proves again that there is discrimination against the citizens of the Goldfields under certain circumstances as far as the taking of an x-ray photo that has been ordered by the medical practitioner is concerned. I sincerely trust that the Minister for Health will approach the Commonwealth Department of Health because I am given to understand that if representations are made, any charge for the taking of an x-ray film will be waived.

Another item I wish to deal with is the long standing question of the closing down of the intermediate ward of the Kalgoorlie hospital because of staff shortage. This ward as a building for the purposes of nursing sick people back to health is the best portion of the hospital, but it has been closed down for approximately two years. Whilst I do not wish to hark back to election promises, and the metaphorical cobwebs on our hospitals, I do wish to say that whilst visiting the Kalgoorlie hospital I saw actual cobwebs all over this particular ward because it had not been used for any purpose whatsoever for a long time. I understand that in the last few weeks they have had a school of trainees at the Kalgoorlie hospital. It was the intention of the matron to re-open the intermediate ward but because many of those trainees would not serve on the Goldfields, when they became qualified and free agents they left the Goldfields. Therefore the ward was not re-opened. I am hopeful that the Minister for Health will be able to carry out the proposals outlined in his Party's election promises and ensure that the intermediate portion of the Kalgoorlie hospital is re-opened at a very early date.

Another matter I wish to mention is the pro rata long-service leave for trainee nurses, but as the time is so short I will conclude by saying again that I think there is discrimination made between the residents in the metropolitan area at the seat of government, and in many other portions of the State. Many of the State departmental officials have what I term a metropolitan complex. It is a very difficult matter to convince those officials that the people in the outlying districts are not receiving the same treatment as the people in the metropolitan area. Nevertheless, that is a fact which can be substantiated by myself and many other country members.

Progress reported till a later stage of the sitting.

BILLS (4)—RETURNED.

- 1, Censorship of Films.
- 2, Reserves.
- 3, Commonwealth Powers Act, 1945-47, Amendment (Continuance).

With an amendment.

4, Government Railways Act Amendment (No. 2).

Without amendment.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council and had appointed Hon. W. J. Mann, Hon. E. M. Davies and the Minister for Mines as managers for the Council, the Chairman of Committees' room as the place of meeting and the time 7.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 8.40 p.m.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Conference Managers' Report.

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: I beg to report that the managers met in conference and reached the following agreement:—

The Legislative Council will not insist on its amendment. Clause 5 of the Bill is to be amended by deleting the word "fifty-two" in line 3 of page 3 and inserting in lieu the word "fifty-one."

The question was that municipal councils should not be permitted to enforce provisions regarding the removal of balconies and verandahs supported by posts until 1952. It has been decided to make the year 1951, that is, three years instead of four. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—CENSORSHIP OF FILMS.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 19—Delete this clause:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The clause reads—

No exhibitor shall admit or permit or suffer the admission of any child apparently under the age of 16 years when the child is not accompanied by an adult to any picture theatre where a film approved by the censor as being not suitable for exhibition before children is being or is intended to be exhibited.

If we insist upon the clause, I am afraid that the Bill will be lost. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. LESLIE: I have been informed that a one-time Prime Minister of Australia lost his seat because he had the temerity to attack the film interests. If I am to become a political martyr in the same way, I cannot help it. I moved the insertion of this clause and am prepared to defend the welfare of our young people rather than the interests of a greedy, grasping monopoly, and can produce messages from parents and citizens' associations and country women's organisations in support of the clause. In spite of what the Minister has said, if the Bill goes through without this clause there will be no difference in the future as compared with the present except that the present position will be legalised. The Bill will do nothing to improve the standards of pictures or prevent our children from viewing unsatisfactory films. I have a letter from the Parents and Citizens' Association at Wyalkatchem which reads—

The above association recently received a copy of a circular issued by the Narrogin Municipal Council through the local road board, dealing with the types of films shown in picture theatres. Quite a number of these films are of the horror type, which we are of the strong opinion that they are detrimental to our children.

Our wish is that you will do your utmost in helping to tighten up film censorship of these films shown, and to prevent children from attending theatres where films to be shown are marked "Not Suitable for General Exhibition."

That is what my amendment provides. It will impose no hardship except on the producer of films, who is not in this country, but who evidently has a considerable influence. Such producers will ultimately have to produce films which will bear the censorship tag, "Suitable for General Exhibition." Reference has been made to the fact that another clause in the Bill provides that unsuitable pictures are not to be exhibited at certain times of the day. That can apply

only in the metropolitan area. Country shows are held once a fortnight in the evening and children go with their parents, who have complained about the bad films exhibited. All this Bill will do, without my amendment, is to preclude unsatisfactory films from being shown for a few days of the year in half-a-dozen theatres in the metropolitan area.

Mr. TRIAT: I support the member for Mt. Marshall. The Bill will be of no use without the amendment. Unless the measure can prevent children from going to see unsuitable pictures it is of no use. The Council thinks that it has the right, whenever it desires, to throw Bills out; but we should stand on our dignity and say that we intend to retain this amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has been asserted that this Bill will be of no advantage. That is not so. It was very carefully thought out by the Commonwealth Censorship authorities who requested the States to pass such a measure so there would be a uniform law throughout Australia. The Commonwealth considered that this was necessary so that it would be possible to police the very matter about which the member for Mt. Marshall is concerned, and so that additional protection would be given not only to the children but to the people at large. As the law exists today, there is no power in Western Australia to deal with a picture produced anywhere in Australia. There is nothing to stop anyone from exhibiting an indecent picture so produced.

Mr. Leslie: There is nothing in the Bill to stop it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is every power in the Bill to stop it. I accept the fact that the Committee would prefer to have the additional clause retained, but it was struck out in another place in an emphatic manner, and there is no possibility of its being included by that Chamber. In the circumstances, I do not feel inclined to sacrifice the Bill.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Without the amendment the Bill is not worth tuppence. The additional clause is to prevent small children from seeing pictures that are not fit for them to see. The Minister says that we should accept the fact that the Council has struck out the clause and say nothing about it; but I think we should take these people on. This is not the first measure the

Council has thrown out this session. Last night it rejected a Bill that was framed in accordance with Liberal Party policy. I hope that the Committee will insist on the clause being inserted.

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

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Ayes | 28 |
| Noes | 14 |
| | — |
| Majority for | 14 |
| | — |

AYES.

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Mr. Abbott | Mr. Nimmo |
| Mr. Bovell | Mr. Nulsen |
| Mrs. Cardell-Oliver | Mr. Panton |
| Mr. Cornell | Mr. Read |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. Rodoreda |
| Mr. Doney | Mr. Seward |
| Mr. Fox | Mr. Shearn |
| Mr. Graham | Mr. Smith |
| Mr. Hill | Mr. Thorn |
| Mr. Marshall | Mr. Tomkin |
| Mr. McDonald | Mr. Watts |
| Mr. McLarty | Mr. Wild |
| Mr. Murray | Mr. Wise |
| Mr. Needham | Mr. Grayden |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Mr. Ackland | Mr. May |
| Mr. Hall | Mr. Nalder |
| Mr. Hawke | Mr. Reynolds |
| Mr. Hegney | Mr. Sleeman |
| Mr. Hoar | Mr. Styants |
| Mr. Kelly | Mr. Triat |
| Mr. Leslie | Mr. Brand |

(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the conference manager's report.

BILL—RESERVES.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Triat in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The Council's amendment is as follows:—

Clause 12:—In line 3 after the word "hereby" insert the words "for a period of five years commencing from the first day of January, 1948."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will be remembered that provision was made in Clause 12 for declaring that piece of land on the Esplanade bordered by the Repatriation Department, the Botanical Gardens and Christian Brothers' College, a Class A reserve. The Legislative Council has moved to limit that control to five years. I have no objection to the amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

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

BILL—COMMONWEALTH POWERS ACT, 1945-1947, AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The Council's amendment is as follows:—

Clause 1, line 5, strike out the word "and."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It will be recalled that during this session two amendments have already been passed, the first relating to the fixation of the price of wheat and the second relating to the fixation of the price of milk. In the continuance Bill it was proper that the short Title should refer to the parent Act and to the two amendments made this session. The first amendment, relating to wheat, had already been numbered 31. The second had not yet received a number. A blank was left in line 10 for the insertion by the Clerk of that number in the ordinary way. The Legislative Council has passed the continuance Bill, subject to an amendment which seeks to strike out the word "and" in line 5. I believe the amendment is due to a misapprehension.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Did not your Minister know all about it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I cannot answer that. The majority may have carried the amendment, against him.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He probably led the majority.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the Council's amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Hon. F. J. S. Wise, Mr. Read and the Attorney General, drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendment.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1947-48.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Medical, £63,927 (partly considered):

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.15]: I have a few remarks to make on this Division. The House will very shortly be going into recess and there will be no opportunity to remind the Premier and the Government of some of the promises they made but have not yet fulfilled.

The Premier: Why are you in such a hurry?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It is just as well to make sure that the Premier does not forget these things, because I am afraid there is danger that he will. The Premier will recognise the copy of the "Liberal News" which I have. It is the issue of February last, when the people who read it were reminded of a policy of action. It contains the Premier's Policy Speech. In it he mentions, "Training of nurses in excess of requirements." That makes one laugh. The Government has not been able to train nurses to meet requirements and will have extreme difficulty in doing so. The important part of this publication, however, and the part which I do not wish the Premier to forget is the statement which appears on the back page. Referring

to the previous Government, the paper says this—

It has made a shocking mess of the nursing and hospital needs of the State and has allowed the education system to fall below the standards of most countries in the world, because it refuses to make the nursing and teaching professions attractive, while at the same time it engaged pushing up wages and conditions for unskilled workers.

Having heard the Honorary Minister, who outlined the activities of the department, and also having heard the member for Kanowna, the member for Leederville and the member for Kalgoorlie refer to the condition of the hospitals and the staff shortages still existing, one must realise that the Government has not done much to effect any alteration in the condition which existed previously. I was struck particularly by the number of things which the Minister had hoped would come to pass and the number of expectations which she outlined. In fact, one could say that her speech tonight was merely one of hope and expectation—nothing else.

The Premier: She told you there was a greater intake of trainees.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Where are they being trained?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: As the member for Leederville asks, where are they being trained? How many in excess of those who were being trained before are being trained now? Very shortly after the election was over, a committee decided to approach the Minister for Health on the matter of the closing of hospitals in Fremantle, in order to request that the Government should make good its promises made during the election campaign. Great play was made at that time of the fact that hospitals were closed, and the people were given an undertaking that, if the Government were changed, the hospitals would be re-opened. The members for Fremantle and South Fremantle and I accompanied the deputation to the Minister for Health and requested that steps be taken to re-open a hospital that had been closed in the Fremantle district. I subsequently heard that it was considered to be a remarkable thing that a Minister of the previous Government should go to the new Government with the expectation that it would re-open hospitals. I did not go, there expecting the Government to do so, as I knew very well it could not.

I want to remind the Minister that the Government of which he was a member had promised to do it. The Minister was somewhat surprised when he was reminded of the promises that had been made and that the Government was expected to fulfil them. But the Government is expected to do these things, after having made such a fine show and having referred to the shocking mess which it said the previous Government had allowed the position to fall into. Surely there is some obligation on the Government to make the effort. But when the deputation requested the Minister to take the necessary steps, his attitude was one of incredulity. Why should the Government be expected to succeed where the previous Government had failed? But the Government led the people to believe that there was an excellent chance of doing all these things if it were returned to power. The Government will be away from the criticism of the Opposition for six months because the House will not be sitting, and it is well that it should be reminded of these things. The Government will not be able to say when the next session starts that we expected it to move too quickly and that it did not have sufficient time. This is one matter in respect of which the Government can expect very severe criticism unless it can accomplish what I would regard as next door to impossible in the circumstances, and that is to take some big step towards making good the promises it made.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [9.22]: The member for Mt. Marshall took Dr. Cook, the Commissioner of Public Health, to task for the way in which he is carrying out his duties. I disagree entirely with the member for Mt. Marshall. I also disagree with the member for Swan for castigating the member for Mt. Marshall, because Parliament is the place where members are entitled to criticise anybody without being haled before the courts. This is the proper place for us to criticise any person. It is all "hooy" to say that the man criticised is not here to defend himself. I must therefore agree with the member for Mt. Marshall for voicing his displeasure with Dr. Cook. I think, however, that Dr. Cook has set high ideals. He is a reasonable man and if he finds that his requests cannot be complied with, he modifies them. In many municipalities and road board dis-

tricts there is need for great improvement in health conditions.

Mr. Rodoreda: Especially in Wyalkatchem.

Mr. FOX: Yes, in Mukinbudin and Wyalkatchem. Perhaps Dr. Cook paid special attention to that area. I have had experience of Dr. Cook and find that where his recommendation could not be accepted he was very reasonable and did the next best thing. It is hard to get things done at the present time, owing to shortage of labour and materials. The member for Perth spoke about the necessity for trying to stamp out tuberculosis. Victoria has x-ray plants in various centres of the State and the whole of the population has the opportunity to be x-rayed in order to determine whether persons are affected by the disease. The authorities are thus able to keep a check on the people. In this State, some 12 months ago, a movement of that description was started. There was an x-ray plant at Fremantle for a time and I believe it was also in some of the other suburbs. I do not know what progress is being made with that movement, but the Government ought to give every encouragement to those who initiated it so that the best results will accrue.

Twelve months ago, or a little longer, I spoke about a drug discovered in America called streptomycin. The discoverers claim for it that it will cure tuberculosis. I know several sufferers from tuberculosis who are anxious that the drug should be brought to this State. I understand it is being used in hospitals in New South Wales and that the treatment of a patient costs about £135. I also know that some of the drug was flown from America to treat a child in Victoria, with good results. The drug should not be available only to rich people, and I hope the Government will make some inquiries with a view to obtaining supplies for use in Western Australia. I agree with all that the member for North-East Fremantle said about hospitals. These are still in the same state as they were when the present Government took office. We know that the Government made promises on the hustings that it has no possible chance of keeping. Of course, the public will catch up with the Government after a time and will realise that the promises were made in order to gain possession of the Treasury

benches. "You can fool some of the people some of the time, but not all of the people all the time."

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.26]: In all probability I would have made no contribution to these Estimates, but having regard to some of the contentions advanced by members who have preceded me, I feel it obligatory upon me to make some contribution. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. I want to warn some of the Ministers.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There is only one present.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want to warn some of the Ministers who temporarily have the right to occupy the front Government bench.

The Minister for Works: That is the better way of putting it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Ministers have had a lengthy Parliamentary experience. I warn them that they are making a habit of reading their speeches. That practice will have to be discontinued. They will be obliged to make speeches in the same way as private members must, in their own language, voicing their own convictions, instead of borrowing them from someone else. Parliamentary procedure does not permit of the reading of speeches and the greatest offenders in this respect, I am sorry to say, are the Ministers.

The Honorary Minister: The Ministers in the last Government did so.

The Minister for Railways: The Speaker will determine that matter.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not one sentence which has been uttered by Ministers has been in their own language. I am warning them that this session will end that particular privilege of reading speeches. They must learn in recess to make their own speeches.

The Honorary Minister: We will reiterate all night, like you do.

Mr. MARSHALL: Evidently the Honorary Minister feels guilty. Her conscience is pricking her.

The Honorary Minister: I have a conscience.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Honorary Minister is not guilty she need not be concerned

about my remarks. Very early in my Parliamentary career, I was prevented even from reading briefs, which I had to commit to memory. This is the last session that we shall have the experience of Ministers reading speeches.

The Minister for Railways: You will not determine it, anyway.

Mr. MARSHALL: A certain gentleman has come in for much criticism this evening. He may be a very competent and enthusiastic officer, but I feel that he has had insufficient experience of Western Australia. I disagree with the member for South Fremantle when he argues that the Commissioner of Public Health is one who, when he finds that his dictum is imposing a hardship upon some individual or some section of the community, is always prepared to compromise.

Mr. Fox: I did not use the word hardship.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member said that the Commissioner was reasonable.

Mr. Fox: I said "when it was impossible."

Mr. MARSHALL: I disagree with the member for South Fremantle even on that point.

Mr. Fox: I speak of him as I find him.

Mr. MARSHALL: And I speak of him as I find him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MARSHALL: This particular gentleman is not at all considerate. He is more or less dictatorial. We have recently had some experience of his administration and his capacity to direct. His attitude was the subject of a deputation to the Minister to get relief from his autocratic instruction. It would practically have closed down the picture show at Meekatharra, and it has been there for years. Suddenly, however, we find it is necessary for something to be done to it, and that at a time in the history of the town when it has less population than ever before. The halls are able to accommodate three times as many people as attend. I do not mind the Commissioner of Public Health setting high standards and doing all that is essential for the health of the people, but his administration should be reasonable.

If I were the Commissioner and wanted to show a good example I would clean up the surroundings within a couple of hundred yards of my own office. If members want to see something in the heart of the city that is injurious to the health of the people they should look there. There are many examples of a similar attitude on the part of the civic authorities. We had the spectacle a little while ago of a building owned by the Perth City Council being placed out of bounds by the Army and Navy because of its filthy condition. I could enumerate many more such cases. If people use their powers with fairness and justice I offer no criticism, but when their actions are justly criticised something must be wrong.

I am getting tired of seeing the community pushed, regimented, and coerced by authority. I think this attitude has resulted from the war. Some individuals during the war had a great deal of power over their fellow creatures. In the case of orders being disobeyed the offender could be charged with mutiny and, perhaps, shot. These people still want to impose the same rules on the ordinary citizen. I protest against that. We are getting to a totalitarian style of administration. Meekatharra is one of the healthiest towns in the State and does not require dictatorial directions from people outside. The health inspector of the town does his job well. When we seek concessions from those in authority, no response is forthcoming. It is hard to induce people to go to the Goldfields, and those who are there want to be left alone.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Public Health, £85,805:

Item, Salaries and allowances, £33,002.

Mr. STYANTS: The matter I want to bring up is another instance of unfair treatment being meted out to those in the country as compared with the people working in the metropolitan area, and is in connection with pro rata long-service leave for female workers. For many years no provision has been made for the taking of pro rata long-service leave in the case of a person leaving the employ of the Government of his own free will; it only operated when his services were dispensed with.

But in 1946—last year—the then Government decided it would extend the privilege of pro rata long-service leave to female employees who left of their own volition to get married after three years' service. Upon production of their marriage certificate, after having left the department, they were paid the pro rata leave. An exclusion was made, however, in the case of trainee-nurses, and I think it most unfair. It brings about the position that the general trainee-nurse who starts at 18 years of age must have a training period of three years in the metropolitan area and four years in the country before commencing to qualify for pro rata long-service leave.

At the same time, the female who starts in any other Government department, at any age, after completing three years' service is entitled to pro rata long-service leave if she resigns to get married. I find that in the Railway Department and in the Public Service, if a girl starts at 15 or 16 years of age, she does not commence to qualify for her long-service leave until she is 18. But the trainee-nurse starts at 18 years of age—and this is the unfair part—and the metropolitan trainee commences to qualify for her pro rata long-service leave when she becomes a qualified nurse, which is at the end of three years, provided she passes her examinations. But the girl who does her training in the country does not start to qualify until the end of four years. So, the nurse at the Wooroloo Sanatorium starts to qualify for her long service leave two years after commencing work in the department because she has a training period of only two years.

But if we take the position of two trainees, of 18 years of age, both residents of the metropolitan area, we see just how unfair the regulation is. Let us assume that one of these girls is sent to the country to do her training and the other retained in the metropolitan area to train at the Royal Perth Hospital. The latter has the advantage of being in the city and of all its amenities, and is probably in proximity to her home. Her pro rata leave commences at the end of three years. On the other hand, the girl who, to suit the requirements of the department, was sent to the country, far from her home and probably in a district where there are no amenities such as are to be found in the metropolitan area,

does not start to qualify for her pro rata long-service leave until a period of four years has elapsed, because the period of training in the country is four years as compared with three in the metropolitan area. Long-service leave is not granted on the basis of qualification, but on the length of service. Although I put these cases up to the Minister he wrote back to say that the previous Government, which had introduced this regulation, had considered the matter from all angles, and thought it was quite a fair proposition.

I am satisfied, as the ex-Minister for Health has stated, that that particular point never occurred to the Government when the regulation was brought down. Now that it has been brought under notice I believe it would be fair to alter it so as not to discriminate between the trainees. I put three cases before the Minister in an endeavour to persuade him to make the alteration. One showed that of two girls who commenced training, one started in the metropolitan area and the other went to Collie or Bunbury and was then sent to Kalgoorlie. After a period of six years and ten months' service with the department, the girl who had trained in the country left to get married. Because she was two months short of the seven years' service she did not get the pro rata long-service leave. Yet her friend and colleague who started on the same day at the Royal Perth Hospital, and served three years before becoming a qualified nurse, and who left when she had only had six years and four months' service, received pro rata long-service leave.

I request that the matter be reconsidered, in view of the fact that the regulation was promulgated only as far back as 1946, to bring trainee nurses into uniformity in the matter of long-service leave. There should be a uniform period of three years training, which is generally recognised as the period necessary in order to become a general nurse. The provision should be made retrospective, as it is only 12 or 15 months since the regulation came into operation. Such matters create a great deal of dissatisfaction among country workers. Trainee nurses in Kalgoorlie and in all country training centres are placed at a disadvantage compared with their colleagues who train in the metropolitan area. I hope the Minister will bring the matter

before the Government, and that a decision will be reached along the lines I have suggested.

Mr. LESLIE: I would like the Minister to let me know whether the mental hospitals and inebriates' homes come under the Commissioner of Public Health.

The CHAIRMAN: With which division does the hon. member wish to deal?

Mr. LESLIE: I am dealing with the Commissioner of Public Health, and want to know whether he has jurisdiction over the mental hospitals and inebriates' homes, or whether they come solely under the Inspector General of the Insane. Referring to remarks made earlier, in connection with departmental officers, I repeat that nothing I say is directed against such officers personally. Merely because they occupy such positions I do not necessarily feel disposed to accept their word as the ultimate in connection with any matters dealt with by their departments. I pay tribute to the loyalty and feeling of the member for Swan towards the Commissioner of Public Health.

Mr. Graham: Why do not you and the member for Swan settle it quietly outside, without wasting our time here?

Mr. LESLIE: The remarks of the member for Swan confirm what I wished to convey to the Committee, that the Commissioner of Public Health has a phobia in some directions. He is endeavouring to carry out his duties as he sees them, but experience gained elsewhere does not necessarily mean that methods adopted in New Guinea should be applied to the backblocks of this State. His knowledge of local circumstances is not great. When Dr. Cook was in the islands he endeavoured to meet circumstances brought to his personal knowledge as they came before him, but his plans for the outback country here were formulated without personal knowledge of the prevailing circumstances.

Mr. Bovell: Have you given Dr. Cook the benefit of your knowledge?

Mr. LESLIE: No, but it is available to him whenever he wants it.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I was hoping the Honorary Minister would reply to the general debate. I wish to refer to a question of great public interest, the examination

of sufferers from T.B. Can the Honorary Minister inform the Committee of the number of males that have undergone x-ray examination since the inception of the scheme, and the number of females, together with the results? If the Honorary Minister cannot supply that information now I would like it to be obtained as soon as possible. As she did not reply to the general debate, I wish to ask her to bring under the notice of the Premier my suggestion that this matter be considered at the next Premiers' Conference, with a view to seeing that a better scale of compensation is provided for those suffering from tuberculosis, in order that their dependents may be well cared for while they are undergoing treatment.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Mental Hospitals and Inebriates, £185,018—agreed to.

Vote—Public Works and Buildings, £302,675:

The CHAIRMAN: No provision is made elsewhere in this year's Estimates for a debate on the State Electricity Commission. If that subject is not dealt with on this Vote there will be no further opportunity of discussing it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. V. Doney—Williams-Narrogin) [9.55]: I have pleasure in submitting the Estimates of my department to the Committee. They will necessarily be abridged, owing to the circumstances of the moment. The Public Works Department faces an exceptionally heavy programme of works, which might be claimed to be the largest ever, not only because we must overtake the seven or eight years' lag occasioned during the war, but also because it is essential that we relate our structural needs to the new ideas taught us by war experience. I believe the order of progress in Western Australia should be first of all to provide extended wharfage facilities and modern handling equipment at the major ports, thereafter moving inland to the production centres, improving road and rail facilities as we go.

I will deal first with changes at the port of Fremantle, as the whole State is interested in seeing what development of Fremantle Harbour is intended. It will be re-

membered that the development of Fremantle Harbour has in the past been reported on by such men as C. Y. O'Connor, Mr. Ramsbottom, Mr. Stileman and Sir George Buchanan. Certain of those men in their reports dealt with the complete development of the port, while the reports of others were sectional. It is apparent that those reports were based on conditions obtaining up to 20 and even 40 years ago. Since that time the whole system of road transport has changed.

Mr. Marshall called attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It should be recognised now by all parties that, before any major steps in the development of Fremantle Harbour are taken, it is necessary to have an up-to-date report by a highly qualified harbour engineer. To that end the services of Colonel F. W. E. Tydeman have been secured. He is an able engineer with considerable oversea experience, and has been conducting investigations at the port of Fremantle. He has completed his investigations and is now in the course of preparing his report. I, like everyone else, will be interested in reading that report when it is submitted. While we are awaiting that report, it must not be imagined that we are holding up the general improvement work of the State. That is not so. We still are proceeding with the extensive and general strengthening of the wharves. That work is continuing at a rate quick enough to enable the demands of such shipping as call at the port to be met.

Mr. Marshall: Is the engineer you mentioned the Mr. Stileman who was formerly here?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not refer to Mr. Stileman but to Mr. Tydeman, an entirely different engineer.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He is the officer that our Government employed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and I must give credit where credit is due, and I admit to the member for Northam that the credit such as it may be—it was a highly creditable action on the part of the hon. member—belongs to my predecessor in office.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No; to your predecessor's Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is the policy of the Government, while actively increasing the development of the rural areas, to decentralise industrial development as far as practicable, and to allocate to regional ports the production from the areas affected. In keeping with that policy, the Government proposes to develop the ports of Bunbury and Albany to a degree that will enable them to accommodate oversea ships of a deeper draught than is possible now, and that applies particularly so far as Bunbury is concerned.

Mr. May: Are you going to do anything at Busselton?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I shall mention Busselton in a few minutes, but to accommodate the wishes of the hon. member for the moment, I may say that when the ports of Bunbury and Albany have been built up, that will be the time to look around and give necessary attention to ports other than those two. I have not mentioned Geraldton for the reason that it has had more recent attention than the other ports I have just referred to. It is well known, and certainly to the Government, that the port of Albany over the past 20 years or so has had spent upon it—I am given to understand this, although I have not checked up on it—no greater sum than £132. No-one could complain at this stage when it is mentioned that it is the intention of the Government to spend at Albany something running into several hundred thousand pounds on work there before it is finally completed.

With regard to the requirements of the North-West, I think members generally recognise that the water supplies available there are entirely inadequate. They seem to have got into a state of disrepair and general insufficiency, particularly during the war years. Again, do not let it be thought that I am blaming the past Government for that. During the period I refer to, on account of the extremely low availability of materials and manpower, the Government of the day was not in a position to do anything in that regard. However, the task is there and it is a very big one. At the moment we are commencing to do what is necessary in the way of providing water supplies and attending to repairs to buildings. At present we have an organisation working at Broome, and when their task is done there, they will go to Derby, then to Port Hedland, and ulti-

imately I have no doubt down to Carnarvon. It has to be recognised that the whole of these operations will be a slow process.

A great deal of money has been spent upon irrigation and drainage. With special reference to irrigation, I may say it is essential that the primary production of the State should not be limited purely to wheat and other cereals, as well as wool. The quality of the land, the long dry summer and the existence of numerous rivers constantly discharging useful waters into the sea also make it possible for the State, by storing that water, to supply the benefits of irrigation to all that very fine area of land that runs from Waroona in the north probably down to near Dardanup in the far South-West. It may be recognised that this policy was first initiated by Sir James Mitchell with the erection of the weir close to the town of Harvey. That was later followed by the raising of the weir and the construction of additional dams at Drakesbrook and later the erection of the Wellington Dam.

An additional source of supply has become available this year with the completion of the Stirling Dam, which is situated some 11 miles west of the township of Harvey. The Premier and I were there the other day on the occasion of the opening of the dam, which has been described as the highest earthen dam in Australia. I think, too, as far as its holding capacity is concerned, it is second only to the big Canning Dam. That dam will, from now onwards, enable the areas between Waroona and Dardanup, with the exception of a small area of swamp land around Benger, to be effectively irrigated, and it will quite naturally lead to a big up-lift in production in that part of the State.

I want to make it plain that with the completion of the Stirling Dam, the State has not reached the end of its irrigation development, which seems to be the conception held by some people, but which is by no means correct. The next work to be undertaken after the raising of the Mundaring Weir will be to raise the Wellington Dam on the Collie River. There is a great deal I might say about that but, upon reflection, I think much was said during the period we were debating the comprehensive water supply scheme.

Mr. May: Have you any information with regard to the levels if you should do that? What will happen to the farmers there?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Evidently the hon. member has some fears with regard to that phase. It would be but an elementary precaution on the part of the engineers to provide for what the hon. member obviously fears, which is, I take it, the flooding of certain areas with the waters in the dam. Is that the matter that is concerning the hon. member?

Mr. May: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot give the hon. member any actual assurance, but he can surely see that no engineer worthy of the name would run any risks but rather would take steps to provide against anything of that sort. If the hon. member feels really concerned, I can get him information which no doubt will set his fears at rest.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The department might have to buy out some of those farmers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The member for Collie, by reflecting on the capacity of the engineers, was really reflecting upon the member for Northam, who was responsible for initiating this project.

Mr. May: I did not intend to cast any reflection.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: However, the matter is not of any great consequence at the moment. Other dams will be constructed on the Collie River in addition to the one which is already there, and also on the Brunswick River, the North and South Dandalup Rivers and at Logue's Brook. This will be in course of time and not for immediate implementation. The department is closely watching the matter of the salinity tendency in the Murray River. If those waters can be completely cleared of the saline content, there would be sufficient water to serve a population some three or four times the size of the present one. There are, as members know, all round the coast other useable streams, so it need not be imagined that we have reached the end of possibilities or probabilities in that direction. I had thought of saying something with regard to drainage. Since to say a little would be to say a lot, I will let that matter pass and, if any member has questions on the subject, I shall be glad to answer them in due course.

I have a word to say about the capacity of Mundaring catchment to meet the present pull upon it. It is well known that, owing

to the increased demands of the Goldfields area and the expansion of industry and settlement in the areas west of Merredin, the pull upon Mundaring has become so heavy that it has been necessary to take steps to stave off any further users of water from that source. It must be generally recognised that a sequence of two dry years would create such a state of affairs regarding the impoundment at Mundaring that very severe rationing might have to be resorted to. That is a distinct possibility because not so long ago, when we had two successive bad years although rationing was not actually resorted to, it was certainly considered.

As to water supplies in rural areas, separate from those referred to and with special reference to the Lakes areas, the department proposes to construct four drought reserve tanks, one each in the Pingrup, Ongerup, Lake Grace and Newdegate areas. Each of these dams is designed to hold something like 2,000,000 gallons of water, and will be roofed, thereby providing for users of the water a quantity that would not otherwise be available to them. Those tanks will be provided with an artificial catchment area and will not be drawn upon except for reserve purposes, so that should a drought occur—and droughts occur rather more frequently down there than we like to have them—there will always be a reserve supply.

Investigations are being made in the Lake Biddy and Newdegate areas with the object of having further dams of a similar holding capacity sunk in those districts. It is the intention of the department, when sufficient equipment becomes available, to undertake—if there is a general request from farmers—the sinking of farmers' dams throughout the wheatbelt and to some degree, although not so great a degree, in the pastoral areas.

I have a note about the sewerage of country towns, but this is hardly what might be called a live topic yet, so it can be set aside for the time being. With reference to the Royal Perth Hospital, I consider that sufficient has been said on other sections of the Estimates so that that matter may be set aside.

Considerable inquiries have been received, and a good deal of pressure has been put upon the department with regard to the North-West, in addition to the matters referred to a few moments ago. There is the

question of the maintenance of hospitals and other buildings and various public works in the North-West, which has been continued since the beginning of the year, and there is also the neglect during the war period to be overtaken. The department is constructing a storage shed at Point Sampson for the purpose of handling the asbestos from Wittenoom Gorge. We are also investigating the matter of the provision of a water supply for the township to be established adjacent to the Wittenoom Gorge mines.

Mr. Reynolds: What are you doing for Donnybrook?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is a far call from Wittenoom Gorge and I cannot understand how reference to Wittenoom Gorge brought Donnybrook to the hon. member's mind. If I gave him a list of the towns where the question of a separate water supply is being probed at the moment, Donnybrook would be in the list, but how far we have progressed in that direction, I cannot say.

Mr. Smith: What about reducing the price of water on the Goldfields?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There might be a more appropriate occasion than the present to deal with that question and, if the hon. member cares to bring it up, I shall be pleased to supply him with the information. I can tell him that the matter is receiving close consideration. By saying that, I am not trying to side-step the question. It really and truly is being given close consideration and within one, two or three months, I shall be able to tell the hon. member to what extent we shall be in a position to reduce at least the higher prices that are being charged.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister is not in order in dealing with the Goldfields Water Scheme.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Are you quite sure?

The CHAIRMAN: It does not appear to be in this Vote. Is the Minister covering the Utilities as well?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I admit that was not my intention.

Mr. Hoar: Are you replying to a debate or introducing Estimates?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was attempting to oblige members on the cross

benches. I admit the item does not come under this Vote, although commonly it has been dealt with here.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Minister is covering it now, there will not be a general debate on the later items.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In that case, it might lead to confusion if I continued to deal with it here. I may perhaps be permitted to recur to the North-West and say that the provision of refrigeration facilities at the towns of Onslow, Roebourne, Derby and Port Hedland is proceeding. The unit at Onslow is already in operation. It will be of interest to members from that part of the State to learn that a survey is being made of the principal stock routes throughout the North-West with the object of providing additional water points where required and re-conditioning existing wells. The water supply systems at Port Hedland and Broome are receiving consideration at the moment. There certainly is some delay in bringing water to Port Hedland, but members from that part of the State have little ground for their complaint when they recall that the state Port Hedland is in at the moment is obviously the state—no better and no worse—than it has been in for the past 13 or 14 years, probably longer. A price has been assessed for the work there and I must admit it is exorbitant. The work when completed will serve, I understand, about 300 people, whereas the price of the scheme, and it is the only feasible scheme—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister is getting on to Division No. 59. Apparently he is covering those other Divisions.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am a little uncertain whether the Ord River proposal would come under this Vote.

The CHAIRMAN: It would appear to come under Hydraulic Undertakings.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is an hydraulic undertaking. On second thoughts, perhaps I am not permitted to discuss it on this particular Vote, so I shall sidestep it. Perhaps I shall be in order in referring to the heavy equipment being used by the department in the South-West. If it does not come under this Vote, I cannot think of any other that it does come under. The Plant Engineer, Mr. Henderson, under the Chief Engineer and the Director of Works, has got together quite a fleet of bulldozers

which, with other heavy plant, is doing extraordinarily good work in the South-West, not only in the easy, cheap and quick moving of earth for dams, but in particular the clearing of the relatively heavy timber in that part of the State. As an indication of what the bulldozers can do, I might say that what previously cost £20 or £25—the cost of clearing one acre of timber country—can now be done for £5. The Committee can take it from me that the bulldozer, plus clover, will revolutionise the South-West and give to it a future undreamt of without such aid. I had intended giving the figures relating to the Causeway, but here again I am a trifle dubious as to whether I can do so under this Vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I think so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It certainly is a public work, although it is more closely linked up with the Main Roads Department. If it is to be mentioned at all, I think it should be mentioned under this Vote. I wish to quote a few figures, because these have been specifically asked for by two or three members. The estimated cost is £518,000; that is without the straight-out approach, excluding reclamation. The sum of £518,000 is made up thus—

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Main Roads Department's share | £ 421,000 |
| Amount contributed by Electricity and Gas Department, Postmaster General's Department, Metropolitan Water Supply Department and other services for removals etc. | 97,000 |
| | <hr/> 518,000 |

The work was commenced on the 14th May, 1947. The cost to date is £18,500 and the amount allotted to the work for the current year is £70,000. Completion is expected during the financial year 1950-51, subject, of course, to availability of materials. I am glad to report that materials seem to be coming to hand with reasonable quickness; certainly the department has made no complaint in that respect. I have been asked to state the yearly expenditure. It is as follows.—

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| | £ |
| 1947-48 | 70,000 |
| 1948-49 | 110,000 |
| 1949-50 | 120,000 |
| 1950-51 | 120,000 |

The total is £421,000. Obviously there is a discrepancy between that sum and the sum of £518,000, but there are certain additions not provided for in the amounts. I have a

note that the expenditure of £97,000 for the supply services will be distributed over the period of construction. The Main Roads Department's contribution is provided from the Commonwealth petrol tax and from the 22½ per cent. of metropolitan traffic fees. I might complete my remarks with that reference, but would like to add that anyone going to the Causeway must be struck by the fact that the work there is moving ahead with considerable speed. What I think is also worthy of mention is the fact that the workmen on the job are always working. I pass by quite frequently and always find them working. I cannot help but be struck by the fact and think it desirable to mention it here, particularly as so many other people have made the same comment. I submit the Estimates.

MR. BOVELL (Sussex) [10.28]: I am grateful to the member for Collie for drawing the Minister's attention to the fact that he omitted to mention Busselton in connection with the Estimates. I am deeply concerned about the port facilities at Busselton, and I mentioned them when speaking to the debate on the Address-in-reply on the 31st July. We have on the register now in Busselton 96 waterside workers. These men are in urgent need of work, yet we have the spectacle during recent months of timber produced south of Busselton by-passing the port of Busselton to other ports. I ask that the Government give consideration to these men; the position is embarrassing to me and humiliating to them. We see the actual products of the immediate hinterland of Busselton passing by the port while these men are almost starving for lack of work. I want something to be done immediately to keep these men in Busselton happily occupied in the employment for which they are registered.

The member for Collie has had a wide experience in industrial matters in the South-West and he was approached on many occasions before he and I became members of Parliament, and knows the position thoroughly. Since the 31st July, we have lost from Busselton three waterside workers, who have, through necessity, transferred to Fremantle. It has been a matter of necessity so far as finance is concerned. In one instance the man's family has had to remain in Busselton. He has been living in Fremantle for several months and his wife

and family are still in Busselton because there is no accommodation in Fremantle for them. I would ask the Government to give consideration to some measure that will provide these men with work. We are only asking that the actual products of the hinterland of Busselton be sent from the port to provide work for those 96 men who are registered as waterside workers at Busselton.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [10.32]: When the present Minister for Works was concerned last February or March with the question of trying to persuade people, particularly in his own district, that there should be a change of Government in Western Australia, he stated in a pamphlet that certain proposals put forward from time to time by the previous Government had been heralded with considerable trumpeting, with Press exaggeration and, in some cases, with top-heavy-controlled departments and large Governmental expenditure. This evening, the Minister did not give us any idea whether the Public Works Department or the Metropolitan Water Supply Department or the Main Roads Department or any department now under his control would come under this heading of top-heavy-controlled departments. When he is replying to the debate, I would like him to clear up that point, because those who have read his pamphlet, and some outside his own electorate have read it, are in some confusion as to what departments the member for Williams-Narrogin, as he was at that time, was referring in the pamphlet he issued. If his remarks were not then intended to apply to any of those departments he now controls, I think it would clear the air considerably if he would indicate the departments he had in mind at that time and the departments he was convinced were top-heavy with control and which were being extravagantly administered and using up a great deal more public money than was necessary.

The Minister for Works: I think I would have to refresh my mind with a sight of the pamphlet.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE: To assist the Minister to refresh his mind, I will have the pamphlet delivered to him. I was hoping that the Minister, in the recital of the work of his department, would have

brought forward something new that the Government and the Minister had developed during the eight months they have been in office. Every item the Minister discussed tonight was an old item. It had relationship to plans and proposals devised many months ago, and there was nothing whatsoever that was new. I am sure that was disappointing to all members of the Committee, and especially members on the Government side. I would therefore particularly ask of the Minister that, when replying to the debate, he would indicate to the Committee, and to the country, any new project which he and the new Government have developed during the time they have been in office. The information he gave about the different projects under way was interesting; and it indicated clearly that the present Minister and the present Government were apparently 100 per cent. behind all the proposals and projects developed by the previous Government and were losing no time in seeing that those projects, in broad outline at any rate, were put into operation.

I was hoping that the Minister would give us a little more detailed information about the Stirling Dam. This big and important work was completed some weeks ago. I would have been interested myself to have had the final cost of the work and information of that description in connection with the undertaking. I would also like to know what has happened to the plant and equipment used in the construction of the Dam. The Government purchased a large amount of suitable, modern plant and equipment to carry out the work done there. For instance, there was one machine which, with the aid of only one man, used to pick up, deliver and spread to the required height or depth, dirt and earth material at the rate of a ton per minute.

The Minister for Works: Practically all that plant has either gone to Mundaring or will go there.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am interested to have that information, because I know the work of raising the Mundaring is well under way and has been for over a year; and if the major plant and equipment used in connection with Stirling Dam are now located at Mundaring Weir, the work of raising the retaining wall there will be

pushed ahead at a much greater rate than would otherwise have been possible. There was a proposal to establish a water supply in the Mullewa district, to serve the urgent needs of a number of farmers in that area. I would be interested to know—as the member for Greenough would be, I am sure—whether a start has yet been made with that proposed work. It is a water supply for a dry district; and, according to the representations made to the previous Government, is a scheme that should be carried out as soon as practicable.

The Minister did not, as far as I can recollect, place any information before the Committee in connection with improvements required to the Metropolitan Water Supply system. The laying of a second main from Cannington to Victoria Park was well under way. That was being put down in order that additional water might be brought from the Canning Dam to provide for the full needs of the metropolitan area in the summer months. As members probably know, there is and has been, since the Canning Dam has been completed and filled with water, sufficient there at all times to supply more than fully all the needs of the metropolitan area. But because the mains running from the dam to the city have not been sufficient to bring all the necessary water down in the summer time we have had to have, on occasions, a system of rationing in some of the worst summers, and at other times warnings have had to be issued to make sure that people did not use more water than was necessary. The 42-inch main from Cannington to Victoria Park should, by now, be just about completed, and when it is it will, of course, make it possible for the additional water required for the city to be made available.

Improvements were under way in districts such as Scarborough, Osborne Park and others. I take it for granted that those improvements have been either completed or are nearing completion. When they are finished the water supplies in each of the districts concerned will be ample. I would like to have had some information from the Minister about the progress being made in connection with extensions of the sewerage system in metropolitan districts, and also the progress made with proposals to install sewerage systems in the larger country towns. When the Government of

which I was a member left office, a scheme for a sewerage system for Midland Junction, or part of it, was under way. I would like to know how that is progressing.

Similar schemes were being carried out in the Bassendean and Bayswater areas and also at North Fremantle. I would like the Minister to say how they are developing. If he is not able to make the information available tonight, I would be glad to have it some other time. I agree with him as to the vital importance of the Public Works Department and those connected with it in the carrying out of the public works of this State. It is a department of which the people of Western Australia should be proud, and to which the State owes a great deal of its past and present development. I feel sure it will continue to play an increasingly important part in the further development of Western Australia, even though it will not have the assistance—if assistance it could be called—of the public works parliamentary standing committee which the Minister tried so hard to have established.

Point of Order.

Mr. Grayden: Am I in order in dealing with the Goldfields Water Scheme, generally, on this Estimate?

The Chairman: No. The Goldfields Water Scheme is included in Public Utilities.

Mr. Grayden: I am referring to the multiplicity of pumping stations.

The Chairman: I think that would be covered under the general debate on the scheme. I have already prevented the Minister from speaking on it.

Mr. Grayden: Is it division 55 or 59?

The Chairman: It is division 55.

Debate Resumed.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.45]: I would like to know from the Minister why it is that public buildings are allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that the health authorities are obliged to prohibit the children from attending the schools in some of our outer country towns because of the dilapidated nature of the urinals and toilet facilities. Recently the Health Department prevented the children from going to the Meekatharra school because of

the repairs needed to the outbuildings. The same thing happened to the children attending the school at Big Bell. There must be some carelessness or neglect on the part of someone.

Mr. Leslie: There is no material.

Mr. MARSHALL: The remarkable thing is that when a crisis arises and the Health Department takes action, we get the material. I also know it is difficult to get labour, but the buildings at Meekatharra have been deteriorating for years. Before the war I complained bitterly about the state of the Meekatharra school buildings.

Mr. Leslie: Some of the cobwebs we spoke of.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, and they are still there. I would like the Minister to find out why his inspectors do not precede the crises and get the work done so that the children will not have to lose part of their school time.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. V. Doney—Williams-Narrogin—in reply) [10.47]: The necessary instructions have been given for the effectuation of the Scarborough water supply. I cannot say precisely when the job will start, but it will be, I believe, within a very few weeks. The member for Northam asked about the proposals in connection with the sewerage of certain of our country towns. The intention of the Government is to be responsible for 33½ of the cost provided, of course, that the balance—66½—can be borne by the appropriate municipal or road board authority. The question was asked as to what was happening at Midland Junction. The sewerage scheme for that district has been approved. Here again I cannot say just when sufficient material will be available to go ahead with the work, but the job will be proceeded with as soon as possible.

The Minister for Lands: It is going ahead now.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Minister for Lands has assisted me to answer that question. The member for Sussex asked about Busselton. I might say that we cannot do everything at once. We are giving attention now to Fremantle, Bunbury and Albany. I do not think there are any other ports in need of more attention than they are. Busselton is one in

connection with which the harbours engineer, Colonel Tydeman, will submit a report, and after that we will know precisely what we can do.

The member for Northam wanted to know the final cost figure for the Stirling Dam, and how we were disposing of the plant and men from that project. I have not yet the final cost. The plant and men have either gone to Mundaring or will shortly go there. I do not say that every item of plant and every man will go to that job, but in the main that will be the case. I do not know what departments were referred to as top-heavy departments, or even that that question would properly come up during the debate on these Estimates. The contract for the big dam designed to impound water for the country south of Mullewa has not yet been started. I have an undertaking from the contractor that the job will be finished before the rains come. Tenders were slow in coming in, and at first they were too high and had therefore to be turned down.

The member for Murchison asked why so much time was lost before attention was given to the condition of schools that needed repairs in goldfields areas. He knows, as well as I do, of the slowness with which material and manpower become available. Seldom are there suitable men on the spot, capable of doing the work. A contract was let for the Meekatharra job and, although the contractor has left Perth, he has apparently not yet arrived in the area concerned. Frequently tenders are advertised for and perhaps for a couple of months none are received. We might advertise time and time again, still without result, and might then have to approach private builders and try to coax them to do the job. Sometimes their prices are extremely high, beyond the actual value of the job, and then their tenders must be turned down. I think I have answered all the questions raised.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Chief Secretary, £29,085:

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth) [10.55]: The Estimates of the Chief Secretary's Department include the Votes for the head office of the department, the Registry and Friendly Societies, Prisons, Observatory,

Tourist Bureau, Harbour and Light and Jetties, and Fisheries. The Vote asked for for the head office is £29,085 which, as against last year's expenditure of £25,988, shows an increase of £3,097, due mainly to increases in salaries and wages. One of the chief functions of this department is to administer charitable appeals, and these now include war and patriotic funds. A final reckoning of the money collected for war fund purposes shows a total of £2,500,000, most of which was spent on comforts and amenities for men and women of the Services. Of the total funds raised, £133,133 remains unexpended, over half of which is held by the Red Cross Society in Western Australia, and the remainder by various continuing war fund organisations. Distribution of these funds is supervised under the provisions of the Charitable Collections Act, 1946.

Dealing with the Estimates of the Registry and Friendly Societies, which include also the Statistical Office, the Vote asked for is £23,016, while last year's expenditure was £20,121. The increase of £2,895 is mainly required for salaries, basic wage adjustments, grade increases and the like. This office, which has now been functioning for over 100 years, had its origin in an Act of Council providing for the registration of births, deaths and marriages, which came into force as early as twelve years after the establishment of the colony, and at a time when the population was only about 2,500. Until 1897, when a separate statistical staff was appointed, the Registrar General was the statistical authority, and under his supervision the first systematic census of the colony was undertaken in 1848. His report, as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 19th December, 1848, states that—

"The returns were restricted to a few questions calculated to throw light on the moral and physical condition of the people." and was—

"to ascertain the ages, conditions, religion, employment, stock and crops of the colonists with a view to developing the resources of the Colony in such a manner that the tasks of the Government and the legislature might be simplified; laying it down as an inalienable axiom that legislature can only be beneficial to the community in proportion as it is based on indubitable facts."

I think you will agree with me, Mr. Chairman, that the words of our early Registrar

contained a good deal of wisdom. The present-day statistics compiled by the department are very comprehensive and play an important part in our industrial life, as it is from statistics supplied by the department that the Court of Arbitration determines the figures for the basic wage. Portion of the staff is paid for by the Commonwealth in order to expedite the collection and compilation of statistics of the agricultural and pastoral industries, and other matters in which the Commonwealth is concerned. The Registry Branch is concerned with the administration of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, and relevant sections of the Adoption of Children, Legitimation and Cremation Acts. It is interesting to note that the legislation of 1841, which established the office, became law only four years after the introduction of civil registration in England. During the past year the volume of registration work has been maintained at a high level. There have been extensions in this particular work in the furnishing of information to the Department of Social Services, this being reflected in the figures of departmental revenue.

Friendly Societies: This branch is concerned with the registration of friendly societies, co-operative societies and building societies. In this State there are 13 friendly societies, which at the 30th June, 1946, had 35,000 members and a total capital of over three-quarters of a million pounds.

Referring to the Prison Estimates, these provide for an increased vote of £5,042. Last year's expenditure was £53,741, and therefore the total requirements for this year are estimated to be £58,783. Of the increased amount asked for, £3,523 is for salaries and wages generally. Contingency services will require an extra £1,519 to finance operations. These services include provisions, tools and machinery, motor vehicles, repairs, freight and miscellaneous items, most of the latter being listed in the tables. During the war replacements were impossible, and the department is now endeavouring gradually to build up this side of the establishment. At Barton's Mill, where the main activity is firewood cutting for metropolitan hospitals, homes and Government departments, reasonable expenditure on vehicles and other plant is unavoidable and has been provided for.

At the Pardelup Prison Farm an extensive programme of development is being put into operation. Suitable virgin areas are being cleared, burnt and sown under pasture. In addition to the department's own livestock, 400 head of young cattle belonging to the Department of Agriculture are on agistment. The building up of a first-class dairy herd is proceeding gradually, and it is to be hoped that within a couple of years this important section will contain nothing short of first-class stock.

There is a small increase in the Observatory Vote. The amount asked for this year is £1,593, an increase of £29 over last year's expenditure. The work performed by the Observatory includes the supply of time signals to the Applecross Wireless Station, broadcasting stations, the G.P.O., the Railway Department and various firms; also time checks to the R.A.A.F. and aviation companies and others. Continuous records are kept of all earth movements, complete information being despatched to 38 different stations throughout the world. A function of the Observatory is the supplying of tide tables for the North-West coast. These are fundamentally important in arranging shipping schedules. With the termination of the war and the removal of air bases, etc., the Observatory has reverted to its normal peacetime work. During the war, its functions were largely availed of by all the Armed Services. The Americans paid a fine tribute to the Observatory for the assistance given to ships, submarines and planes operating in and over the Indian Ocean.

Turning now to the Estimates for the Tourist Bureau, the amount asked for this year is £13,278, which represents an increase of £1,757 on last year's expenditure. A reference to the tables will disclose that the incidental and publicity estimates are the same as last year, and that an increase of £1,223 is asked for in respect of salaries. This comprises the major increase in the Tourist Bureau Estimates and provides for basic wage adjustments and increased staff due to the expansion of the bureau's activities. It is pleasing indeed to be able to report good progress in the work of the bureau. Its activities were drastically curtailed from the end of 1941 to March, 1946, so that the last financial year was really the first complete year of the bureau's post-war operations. At the present time, the bureau

acts as booking agent for the principal Australian air companies, road travel organisations, shipping and rail services, as well as for insurance companies dealing with travellers' personal, accident and baggage insurance. Commission earned by the bureau for these services for the year 1946-47 amounted to £2,337. Road, rail, sea and air travel have improved over the past six months, but sea travel is still far from normal. Embarrassments still arise regarding hotel accommodation, and travel is thereby restricted. Every State of the Commonwealth has experienced the same difficulties and has been unable to cope with the unprecedented demand for travel.

The film house of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has accepted three short films produced by the bureau relating to W.A. tourist resorts, and these are now being screened as a unit of entertainment and free of any cost in all Australian capital cities and New Zealand. The fact that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has three Sydney and two Melbourne theatres screening three or four times daily for six to ten-week seasons gives some idea of the number of people reached by this medium of publicity.

Road tours of a week or more and those of day and half-day duration have afforded hundreds of visitors and local residents an opportunity to see the tourist attractions of the State. Tours of a week's duration are being maintained in the South-West, taking in Bunbury, Donnybrook, Balingup, Bridgetown, Manjimup, Pemberton and Collie; in the Great Southern, taking in Narrogin, Katanning, Albany, Denmark and Kojonup; on the Goldfields, taking in the main Eastern Highway towns on the way to Kalgoorlie and Bruce Rock, Beverley and York on the return journey. It is hoped to make arrangements for tours in the Geraldton and Carnarvon districts next year. Prospects in the tourist field for the next few years are particularly bright, and there is no doubt that this industry should be an important one in our State, which has so many natural features of great interest.

It is estimated that the Harbour and Light Department will require £43,750 for the year's operations. This is an increase of £887 on last year's expenditure, all mainly concerned with wages for wharfingers and

other workers on the jetties and tramways at the various ports. The department is charged with administering the State Navigation Act, the Boat Licensing Act, the Shipping and Pilotage Act, and the Jetties Act, and also controls all navigable waters of the State other than the areas under the control of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the Bunbury Harbour Board. The department's duties include the working of the jetties and tramways at the ports of Carnarvon, Onslow, Point Samson, Broome and Derby, and the maintenance of pilot services at Albany, Bunbury, Esperance, Geraldton and Wyndham. Revenue and expenditure fluctuate in accordance with the volume of shipping and tonnage of cargo handled. On the whole, the revenue figures have been fairly well maintained in spite of a decline in jetty receipts arising from the cessation of the flow of defence stores to the north-West ports. The estimate of £52,000 for 1947-48 is comparable with pre-war years.

Increased expenditure in connection with the maintenance of buoys will be necessary for the next few years. This work had to be neglected during the war, but a programme is being carried out to put these important navigation aids in proper order. Maintenance of pilot launches at the various ports will also result in increased expenditure. Much of this work had to be deferred because materials were not available.

The last responsibility of the department that I would like to mention is that of keeping a register of all shipping arriving at and departing from Fremantle. It commenced to carry out these duties in the very early days of the history of the State, for I find that the first entry in the register of shipping now in the possession of the department shows that on the 31st day of December, 1833, the barque "Australian" (264 tons) arrived from Sydney at the Port of Swan River, under the command of Captain Gourmard. The Port of Swan River was not very busy in those days, because the next two arrivals were the schooner "Thistle" (58 tons) on the 26th January, 1834, from Launceston under Captain Liddell, and later the schooner "Fanny" (36 tons) from Launceston on the 20th February, 1834, under Captain F. G. Henty. The first time a ship is recorded as arriving at the Port of Fremantle was in the entry relating to the ship "Lonach" (391 tons)

from London, under Captain Driscoll on the 1st May, 1834. Very much later, the register shows that the R.M.S. "Stratheden" (23,732 tons) arrived from London on the 28th October, 1947. It will be seen that the type of vessel using the port has improved very much from the time when it first came into being.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Most profound!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I now propose to deal with another item in the Estimates.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Why?

Mr. Marshall: Is the Minister going to speak or is he to continue reading his speech?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the member for Murchison wants me to occupy an hour or more by speaking I will do so.

Point of Order.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I must ask you whether it is permissible for the Minister or any other member to read his speech.

The Chairman: The accepted custom over the years since I have been a member has been for Ministers to read speeches.

The Premier: And it has been ever since I have been a member.

The Chief Secretary: And since the member for Murchison has been a member.

The Chairman: I do not propose to disturb the usual practice. If it is desired that any alteration be made, the matter should be referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. Marshall: I would draw attention to "May" on the point, and also indicate that where our Standing Orders do not specifically deal with the matter, the situation is governed by the Parliamentary practice set out in "May." The proper procedure is that a member shall not read his speech, but must use his own language. That is the procedure that we have always followed.

The Honorary Minister: Then why did you read your speeches?

Mr. Marshall: The present Ministers have constantly read their speeches.

The Chairman: I do not propose to prevent the Minister from continuing.

Mr. Marshall: In the past, the custom has been for Ministers to deliver their own utterances, but we have not had a real speech from present-day Ministers along those lines.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Apparently they are not concerned about it.

Mr. Marshall: Are we to take it that the reading of speeches is permissible?

The Premier: Take no notice of him.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Move that the question be put.

The Chairman: I do not propose to alter the custom that has been observed in this Chamber for a long time. Any alteration desired should be referred to the Standing Orders Committee. I propose to allow the Minister to proceed.

Mr. Marshall: Standing Order No. 1 distinctly provides that where our Standing Orders are silent, we shall take as a guide "May," the Parliamentary authority. I want you to quote what "May" has to say regarding members reading their speeches.

The Chairman: I can find nothing in "May" without making a careful perusal.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The member for Murchison is rather hard because it has been the custom of Ministers over the years to read their speeches, especially when introducing the Estimates. I consider that the Minister is quite in order in reading his speech. It would be very difficult for any Minister to introduce his Estimates without reading quite a lot and the rule referred to by the member for Murchison has been more honoured in the breach than the observance since I have been in the Chamber.

The Chairman: The Chief Secretary may proceed.

Committee Resumed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I now propose to refer to the Fisheries. The Fisheries Department administers general fishing, pearling, whaling and native game. The Vote asked for this year is £13,300, an increase of £2,271 on last year's expenditure. Most of this is made up in the estimate of £9,350 for salaries, wages and allowances, which is £1,962 more than last year's expenditure on this item. Important progress has been made in the fishing industry during the last few years as the following figures will illustrate:—In 1942 the total fish caught

amounted to 21,859 cwts., while in 1946 the catch totalled 45,318 cwts., an increase over the period of more than 100 per cent. In 1942 the crayfish catch amounted to 18,938 dozen, and in 1946 to 106,496 dozen, an increase of over 400 per cent. Out of the 1946 catch, 380,952 tins of crayfish were marketed and several large shipments of frozen crayfish tails were exported. A large oversea market exists for frozen crayfish, both in America and Great Britain, and this demand is providing additional food for Great Britain and valuable dollar credits from America.

The canned salmon industry is established at Albany, Hopetoun and Perth, the salmon being caught at Albany and Hopetoun. The utilisation of the large resources of salmon, which are available on the south coast of Western Australia, has given a great uplift to the fishing industry. The canning of salmon was first commenced in 1944 as a war industry, but it is now considered that, with good organisation by local companies and with the technical and other assistance rendered by the Fisheries Department, the industry will survive peace-time conditions. Although the quality of the salmon is not equal to the first grade of the imported article, it is considered that it will be able to compete with the lower grades, and is now finding a ready market within the Commonwealth. Deep-sea fishing has made rapid progress during the last two or three years. A number of suitable vessels are now being operated off the coast, largely by ex-Service personnel.

There are eight Government-assisted fishing vessels operating satisfactorily. During last year their aggregate catch amounted to 995,243 lbs. of fish, inclusive of crayfish. This catch would be valued at approximately £42,000. It will be seen, therefore, that the financial operations of these boats are entirely successful. These vessels are fitted with modern refrigeration, which has become a feature of present-day commercial sea fishing. It is the Government's policy to assist this aspect of the industry in every way. A company has been formed to carry out trawling off the South-West coast, with Albany as its base. It was anticipated that one trawler belonging to the company would be ready to commence operations about the beginning of December this year, and there is also a possibility of other trawling com-

panies operating in Western Australia. It is thought that the operation of the trawling industry will largely augment the fish supply in Western Australia. It is considered that edible oysters can be satisfactorily grown on a commercial scale in our northern waters, and negotiations are at present taking place with a view to oyster beds being established.

Trout fishing at Pemberton is now fully established and has become a tourist attraction. Trout Acclimatisation Societies are operating in the Pemberton-Warren, Collicie, Murray, and Serpentine-Jarrahdale districts. These societies are being assisted by the Government and are doing good work.

The pearling industry has revived considerably during the year. Twenty-seven boats are licensed, as against 15 last year and compared with 54 licensed in 1939. The price of pearlshell continues to remain high, about £750 per ton being offered at present for first-grade shell, compared with £100 per ton in 1939. As an offset, of course, against the high price being received for shell is the cost of production, which is very much higher than in pre-war years. This is contributed to by the tremendous rise in wage rates for divers, tenders and crew members, brought about by keen competition for labour, resulting from the prohibition by the Commonwealth Government of further indentured labour from overseas. The possibility of reviving the pearling industry in Shark Bay is being examined, and an investigation has recently been made into this aspect by the department. The Shark Bay shell, while not nearly so valuable as the Broome shell, may yet prove an important item of production.

Shore-based whaling operations commenced at Albany last year, and the company concerned secured two hump-backed whales in King George Sound during the season, and others were attacked but not secured. Considerable experience was gained by the company's personnel this season, and it is expected that it will be more successful next season. The value of the product of the two whales caught this year was conservatively estimated at £800, so it can be seen how important this industry may become.

The department has under constant consideration the preservation of the fishing

resources of the State, and close touch in this connection is kept with the local branch of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Fishing Division). The Commonwealth Fisheries research vessel "Warreen" is now based at Fremantle, and data have been obtained as a result of researches conducted by it, which will be of material assistance to fishing vessels operating off the coast. The C.S.I.R. is at present making a careful investigation of the principal crayfish grounds situated at the Abrolhos Islands, and has had a departmental officer stationed in that district for a considerable period. This officer has also been exploring the waters north of the Abrolhos Islands with a view to discovering new fishing grounds, and the results of investigations so far have been favourable. A survey is made by the department from month to month of all fish caught and the localities from where they are taken.

Regulations now in operation to ensure that our fishing grounds are not over-fished comprise, amongst others—

1. Total prohibition of net fishing in certain areas;
2. Closed seasons in others;
3. Restriction of length and mesh of net;
4. Fixation of the minimum legal size of fish permitted to be caught.

In order that the Abrolhos grounds should not be over-exploited, the department has limited the number of licenses for fishing in the area, and also the localities in which the boats are permitted to work. These fishing grounds have been closed as from the 1st October until the 15th February of next year, in order to afford protection to the crayfish during the breeding season. The department is at all times watchful that all necessary action is taken for the preservation of our fishing grounds and to ensure that the fishing industry is established on a permanent basis. Present indications are that this industry in Western Australia has a rosy future.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [11.19]: I propose to occupy the time of the Committee for only a few minutes. I was interested to hear the Minister's remarks about the intention of the department to take steps for the preservation of fish in our waters, but I am not satisfied that the department has a full realisation

of the necessity for taking the right steps. I followed very carefully what the Minister said with regard to the various steps being taken, but nobody can read of the very large catches of crayfish and other fish which are being taken without feeling that, so far, very little is being done to ensure that at least there shall be one cycle of reproduction for the fish. From time to time I have had data supplied to me by men who know something about fishing. They say that in their opinion the regulations are such as to permit of under-sized fish being caught, with the result that a first cycle of reproduction is not certain. They mention herring and mullet as an example.

I do not know whether the Minister has seen any reports of the Fisheries Board of Scotland; but he will, of course, know that a great deal of wealth from the sea is obtained by Scottish fishermen and that the continuance of the fishing industry is of extreme importance to Scotland. I propose to read a paragraph from a report of that Board dealing with the question of the taking of small fish. It is an aspect which should receive far greater consideration than it has received so far in this State, and indeed in the other States, because we seem to be more concerned about the quantity of fish that we can get out of the water and how quickly we can dispose of it rather than face up to our obligations to posterity by taking steps to see that a supply of fish will be available to those who will follow after us. The paragraph I mentioned reads:—

With regard to the effect on the haddock stock of the continued destruction of large quantities of small fish, reference may be made to a resolution adopted at the meeting of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea in June, 1932. The Council have been considering this question for some years and at that meeting they reached these conclusions—

- (1) That in the interests of the upkeep of stock, the present extent of capture of the younger year classes was extremely undesirable.
- (2) That a considerable saving of these year classes could be effected by the use of trawl nets of larger mesh.

The Board concur in the conclusions of the International Council and are of the opinion that the time has come when steps require to be taken to reduce the destruction of small fish. The Board recognise that the necessary measures will for a short time affect the earnings of the smaller trawlers and the operations of curers and others who, in the absence of better

fish, have developed a trade in small fish, but they are satisfied that the ultimate result will justify the action proposed.

I feel that what was said there applies equally to Western Australia. While such action might immediately affect the earnings of the fishermen engaged in the industry now, it will be fully justified later on and a continuance of the industry will be assured. If, however, we permit fishermen to take as many small fish as they can catch now, irrespective of the size of the fish they catch, inevitably the time will come when very few fish will be left to be caught. We must see that we know the size at which the different species of fish are able to reproduce themselves and take steps to ensure that at least one cycle of reproduction is made possible. I hope the Minister and his department will give the closest attention to this aspect of the matter. It is just as important to do so as it is, with regard to our forests' products, to see that we take the steps necessary to ensure that there will be timber for those who follow after us.

HON. A. A. M. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [11.25]: I shall not delay the Committee at this late hour, but I wish to know from the Chief Secretary, when he replies, why an item headed "North-West Generally" comes under the Chief Secretary's Department. Of course, I know what the item is for, but I understand the Premier is the Minister controlling the whole of the North-West affairs. The Chief Secretary has nothing at all to do with the various items that apply to the North-West in general.

The Premier: It has got into the wrong place.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: I hope the Premier will see that this is altered in future.

Mr. Hegney: May I discuss water supplies for the North-West under this Vote, Mr. Chairman, or would you prefer that I should do so under the Vote for Public Utilities, Item No. 59, page 111?

The **CHAIRMAN**: It would be more appropriate to discuss it under Water Supplies. The hon. member will have that opportunity.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [11.27]: I have only one question to ask the Chief Secretary and I do not expect him to answer it tonight. There is a slipway and building in the fish market bay at Fremantle which several people have been trying to get for the past 12 months. There is need for something to be done with regard to servicing the fishing boats. I have discussed the matter with Mr. Forsaith, of the Department of Harbour and Lights, for well over 12 months and he is just as concerned as I am about it. There is another gentleman, however, Mr. Young, who does not seem to be able to make up his mind. Could the Minister help him to do so?

The Chief Secretary: Is that the place usually known as the fish market?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is alongside the market. It was built some years ago by a private company and subsequently was taken over by the department.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [11.28]: I would like to know whether the Minister intends to bring down a Bill—although it is rather late in the session now, but next session—a Bill to create a fishing board.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Another board?

Mr. FOX: Yes. The industry should have a board. Had the Labour Government remained in office a Bill would have been brought in. It was on the stocks.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. member is out of order in discussing legislation now.

Mr. FOX: I am discussing fish and the necessity for a board to control the fishing industry so as to provide better opportunities for those who earn their living by fishing. I would like the Chief Secretary to do what he can to give a little more encouragement to men who have gone to great expense in fitting out fishing boats, costing £7,000 or £8,000, to catch crayfish to export to America and England. Will he give them the opportunity to make a few more trips in order to enable them to recoup some of the money they have expended in fitting out these vessels?

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Registry and Friendly Societies, £23,016; Prisons, £58,783; Observatory,

£1,593; Tourist Bureau, £13,278; Harbour and Light and Jetties, £43,750; Fisheries, £13,300—agreed to.

Vote—North-West Generally £200:

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [11.35]: I feel that I should say something in regard to this Vote. I want to assure the member for Kimberley that the next time the Vote is introduced it will be in its proper place. In June of this year a committee known as the North-West Development Committee was appointed. The committee has had several meetings and has made recommendations to the Government, which are now under consideration. One important matter which has been considered is that of aerial transport of beef. In May last, an experimental flight of carcass beef from Mt. House Station to Perth was made. As a result of the experience gained from this trial flight, plans and specifications have been prepared for the establishment of a killing centre in the North-West, so that the economic possibility of flying beef from the outback stations direct to the Wyndham Meat Works for storage until shipment, can be tested. These plans and specifications will be submitted to the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Department of Supply and Shipping for his examination and license.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: How do they propose to deal with the by-products?

The PREMIER: That is a matter on which I have had some discussions with the committee, and it is hoped that something will be done in regard to by-products. It would be a very considerable waste to lose what is often known as the fifth quarter, and something will have to be done, if this scheme comes into operation, to deal with by-products. Following the receipt of the Chief Veterinary Officer's comments, the committee will be able to finalise its estimates, and then advise the Government as to any action it considers advisable. Should it be found that the flying of beef by air from outback stations to the coast is practicable this may have a marked influence on the economy of stations situated within a distance of 150 to 250 miles from the meatworks. The committee is also reviewing the possibility of the transport of live cattle by road from the station to the

meatworks on the coast. Some alternative to the existing wasteful method of droving must be developed. I understand that this transport of live cattle by road has been carried out successfully in a portion of the Northern Territory.

The North-West Development Committee acts as a direct link with the Northern Australian Development Committee. The maintenance of jetties and port facilities is receiving attention, and the leeway in maintenance caused by the war is gradually being overcome. Shortage of shipping and supplies has made it impossible to accomplish as much as had been hoped. A marine survey has been completed at Carnarvon and the question of improving the shipping facilities at this port has been investigated. Public buildings and hospitals throughout the North-West have been improved during the year. The construction of a storage shed at Point Samson for the handling of asbestos from Wittenoom Gorge mines is proceeding.

Investigations for the provision of a water supply for the township to be established adjacent to the Wittenoom Gorge mines are also proceeding. The cost of this water supply will greatly exceed the original estimate, but I suppose we will have to allow for a rise in costs and the difficulties in that part of the State generally. Refrigeration units of 1,000 cubic feet capacity have recently been opened at Onslow and Roebourne. At Port Hedland a larger unit is just coming into operation. The installation at Derby of a 1,000 cubic feet unit is also well in hand. Improvements to machinery and reticulation of the Derby water supply are nearing completion, and it is anticipated that the supply generally will be much improved. Approval has been given for the overhaul of the scheme at Marble Bar. This entails the provision of new pumping plant, storage tank, etc. A survey has been completed and plans and estimates prepared for a water supply to serve the town of Port Hedland.

The member for Pilbara has brought the urgency of this matter to my notice on a number of occasions, and we have made representations to the Commonwealth Government asking for some assistance in this direction. The scheme consists of bringing water from the Turner River by 6 in. piping for a distance of approximately 18 miles, and the provision of a concrete storage tank.

The scheme is estimated to cost £50,000, and provision of funds for this water supply is now receiving consideration. I have written to the Prime Minister on this matter, and I think I also wired him asking him to treat it as urgent and to let me have a reply as to what financial assistance we may expect. During the year a comprehensive survey of stock routes was made from Broome to Cue, covering all gazetted stock routes in the area. Following this report, funds were authorised for the rehabilitation of all wells on these routes. Sufficient materials have already been assembled in the north to commence operations. Surveys are now being undertaken in regard to the East Kimberley stock routes. So soon as this report is received and requirements are known, improvements and reconditioning work will be put in hand.

The State Government, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, has established a research station on the Ord River—this work was put in hand by the previous Government—for the testing out of various soils with a view to ascertaining their productive capacity under irrigation. Test plots of pastures, rice, cotton, tobacco, soya beans, peanuts, etc., will be established. It is hoped that within two years some indication will be found of the best types of plants to be grown in this area, and what plants can best be grown in the climate and soils available. This research station is under the direction of the Minister for Agriculture, acting in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. This department some time ago completed the preliminary investigations for the erection of a dam across the Ord River gorge with a reservoir capacity of approximately 2,000,000 acre feet.

The designs for this structure are being proceeded with so that, should the results of the research station prove favourable, the project may be submitted to the Commonwealth Government for its consideration. We know that in regard to the transport difficulties in the North last year, a deficit of £72,113 was the result of the operations of the State Shipping Service. Here again, a sparsely populated area must have transport, and we must expect to suffer financial losses in regard to that area. As the member for Kimberley and other North-West

members know, the Koolinda will be sent East very shortly for docking, and the new vessel, the Dulverton, is expected early in the new year. When the Koolinda gets back into service, and the Dulverton is also in operation there should be a considerable improvement in the transport position of the North. We have received many complaints from people who are unable to get much needed goods, and I have heard from North-West members of the absolute necessity for those goods. As the member for Kimberley knows, the shortage of shipping has made transport very difficult. I have here some notes dealing with shipping costs, but I will not read them unless members desire me to do so.

MR. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [11.41]: I propose to deal first of all with the question of the water supply at Marble Bar. I understand from the reply to a question recently asked in Parliament that the approximate cost of the new scheme is £1,700. The trouble in connection with the reticulation is due to shortage of piping. The secretary of the road board at Marble Bar was advised that if the board could obtain second-hand piping, the commencement of the work would be expedited. Arrangements were made with the Comet Gold Mine—which unfortunately closed down—to obtain second-hand piping. I understand it was the prerogative of the Public Works Department to call tenders. I do not know what will be the outcome, but there is no doubt that because of the temperature at Marble Bar in December and January, everything possible should be done, as I believe it will, to make a start with the new system at the earliest possible moment.

I want the Premier and the Minister for Works to understand that my remarks are not of a critical nature, but are submitted as constructive suggestions. The request for an adequate water supply for Port Hedland has been spread over many years. According to my information a scheme was practically approved in 1930 by the Collier Government, before it went out of office. I do not say it was officially approved; I understand it was all but agreed to. Tests have been made of the Turner River, approximately 19 miles from Port Hedland, and it was suggested that on account of the

salinity of the water it was not practical to proceed. I have had the honour of being the member for Pilbara only since just prior to the outbreak of the last war, but during that time I have done my utmost to have the scheme inaugurated.

The Minister for Works: Is this the same spot on the Turner River?

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes. Some time ago tests were made at Pipingarra, 12 miles from Port Hedland, from where the Air Force, during the war, was able to draw supplies, and pipes were laid from it to the aerodrome at the seven mile. I do not say that if there was a continuous draw on that water it would not turn salty. The engineers decided, after a very severe test, that the draw on the Turner River would not turn the water salty. I understand that the economic side is in order.

The previous Minister for Works, and the previous Premier led me to believe that the work would be proceeded with. Some time ago, after representations were made, I got the impression that the reason why the scheme had not been dealt with immediately was because of shortage of pipes. I have found, after negotiation with the Premier, that it was decided to communicate with the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of requesting it to meet the expenses on a £ for £ basis.

The Minister for Works: That communication has been sent.

Mr. HEGNEY: I know, and from the Premier's remarks, apparently no reply has yet been received. I have some wires from people at the hotels of Port Hedland. I will not read them all—they are not inspired—but here are some—

We the staff of the Esplanade Hotel owing to the complete lack of fresh water for washing have after due consideration given one month's notice.

Here is a second—

I am unable to obtain fresh water for bathing and laundry from Pier Hotel. Can you help me?

This is another—

Impossible procure fresh water from Pier Hotel for bathing for wife, child and self. Please advise situation.

At the present time the people of Port Hedland are served with water from a couple of wells about a mile out of the town. The water is reticulated to the town—

snip, and without exaggeration it can be truly said that the water is as salt as the ocean. It cannot be used for drinking purposes or for washing clothes. It is only good for bathing purposes, and as a matter of fact in order to have a decent bath it is necessary for a person to get a jug of fresh water and pour it over himself afterwards. The fresh water is obtained from the Shaw River, 59 miles from Port Hedland—half-way to Marble Bar. It is brought in railway tanks and distributed to the people by the Public Works Department at a cost of 3s. 6d. per 100 gallons. On account of a certain practice over which the Railway Department has no control, the hotels which receive their water in tanks from the Public Works Department, run short of water. Anyone who has been in that country—particularly in the summer months—can appreciate the plight of the people when they are short of fresh water for washing and general domestic purposes.

I want to get something definite from the Government as to whether it is intended to proceed with the scheme if the Commonwealth Government decides not to assist on a £ for £ basis. I do not expect the Premier to reply now, but the Attorney General and others who have been in the North will know that I am not exaggerating. If the Commonwealth Government will not spend approximately £25,000 on a pound for pound basis, will the present Government proceed with the scheme?

The Premier: They will have to be supplied with water.

Mr. HEGNEY: I take that reply as being in the affirmative, and it is most encouraging. When that scheme is put into operation and the people of Port Hedland have an adequate water supply, it will be of great importance to the pearling industry, and will open up wider fields for the Director of the Tourist Bureau. During the winter months there should be an influx of tourists to the North-West, as I believe our people would rather go there than to the north of Queensland or other States of the Commonwealth. A tourist trade to our North would be of advantage to the State generally. I understand that another boat is to be put on the North-West run in April. With adequate shipping, and advertising by the tourist bureau, I believe a considerable tourist trade with

the North can be built up. I hope this water scheme will be proceeded with at the earliest possible moment, and that I will be able to accompany the Premier when he goes North officially to open it.

Vote put and passed.

Public Utilities: Nil.

Vote—Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking, £213,000:

MR. GRAYDEN (Middle Swan) [11.53]: I regret broaching the matter on which I intend to speak at this late hour, but if the authorities that I am prepared to quote are right, I am about to speak of the greatest blunder ever perpetrated in this State. In the Celebes, under Dutch control, engineers recently constructed an irrigation system to serve the rice fields. It carried water for many miles in great raised channels, and cost in the vicinity of £7,000,000. Having constructed that great system, at such tremendous cost, the engineers concerned found they had overlooked the fact that the water supplying the system was full of alkali and useless for irrigation purposes. The Dutch diverted a river, but, having done so, found that the water was so alkaline that the natives could not use it for irrigating their rice fields. I mentioned that to illustrate that the magnitude of a work is no criterion of its soundness.

In this State we have in our Goldfields Water Scheme—according to some eminent engineers that I intend to quote—made a blunder comparable in magnitude with that which the Dutch made in the construction of the work I have outlined. This concerns all members representing Goldfields electorates, and will affect all the people of the State, but I would mention it particularly to the member for Kanowna, who recently placed a great deal of stress on the necessity for supplying cheap water to the Goldfields, preferably at a flat rate. According to these authorities—they are the highest in the world—the rate should have been far less than it has been through all the years that have elapsed since the scheme was constructed. It is not yet too late, and we should still be able to institute a cheaper rate within a short space of time. The present-day Public Works Department engineers are in no way responsible for the

blunders made at the time when the scheme was constructed. Over a great proportion of its length the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme is doing the equivalent of pumping water down hill because, if the pumping stations were removed and the pipes connected, the water would flow by gravity.

We are pumping water, with costly pumping stations, when there never has been and never will be any necessity to pump it in the places to which I am referring. We have been doing that for the last 45 years, and because it is a Government undertaking, no-one has ever bothered about the matter. I ask members to learn and digest what was said before the Royal Commission that inquired into this scheme, and what has been said by the authorities that I will quote, in the interests of the State and the taxpayers and users of water all along the pipeline of the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme. As one engineer has put it, we have been pumping water down hill and into a hole, as it were. Water will always find its own level, but in this State we have ignored that principle. That is why the placing of the pumping stations is such a colossal blunder. The question immediately arises of to what extent we are pumping water down hill. Is it being done to a large extent, and to such a degree that the cost of water delivered to the Goldfields over all these years could have been reduced by nearly half. The answer is that we are pumping water down hill to such an extent and on such a scale that it would have an effect of that magnitude.

Let me establish the point in connection with the excessive number of pumping stations that were constructed on the pipeline. Mr. Traylen, in "Hansard" of 4th August, 1896, page 237, when speaking on the Coolgardie Water Supply Loan Bill said—

Indeed, the manager assured me not many days ago, that we did not need more than four pumping stations to lift the water from the height I gave him on the Darling Ranges to Coolgardie.

He was referring there to the manager of the concern that manufactured the pumps used in the scheme. According to Mr. Traylen, only four pumping stations would be required, yet we find that eight pumping stations were put in. Surely no-one would dismiss the advice of the manufacturers

themselves as being of no consequence. The Engineer-in-Chief of the day arranged for a consultation with specialists in England, and I shall read what he had to say before that consultation took place. What I shall quote from is an extract from a report by the Engineer-in-Chief which appeared in the "Western Argus" of the 13th August, 1896.

In that report he stated—

In conclusion (and in reference to observations by members of the Legislature on the subject) I would wish to mention that it has always been my intention, in the event of this pumping scheme being adopted, to recommend the Government to arrange for a consultation of high-class specialists in England, more particularly as regards the height and distance which it would be most desirable to adopt between the several pumping stations, and the consequent number and power of pumps, which it would be most desirable to adopt for each such station, and in evidence of this I attach hereto a letter which I addressed to our consulting engineer in England, Mr. Caruthers, dated the 3rd March last (Appendix H), and also extracts from his reply thereto (Appendix I.).

The advice of the oversea specialists was ultimately sought, even though there were engineers in the Colony at the time who had experience in connection with pumping water and were fully competent to advise the Government. In that regard, Mr. Fowler, quoted in "Hansard" of the 12th August, 1896, commenting on the simplicity of the scheme in reply to a letter from Sir John Forrest, had this to say—

I can confidently say, after a full examination, that there is not a single engineering difficulty in this scheme which has been presented to Parliament by the Government; in fact, the scheme, as an engineering one, is about as simple as it is possible to conceive any engineering scheme to be.

Despite this, the advice of oversea specialists was obtained at considerable cost. Next I want to point out briefly that the Engineer-in-Chief was a civil engineer, not a hydraulic engineer and he never claimed to be a hydraulic engineer. It is generally assumed that there is no difference between the two but that is quite wrong, because they represent two separate sections of engineering. What I shall quote represents no reflection upon the Engineer-in-Chief. The Engineer-in-Chief did not want the job; it was foisted upon him. That is made quite clear in "Hansard" of the 4th August, 1896, when Mr. Moran stated—

I say that the Engineer-in-Chief is no mining expert, or even no water expert, and that

he knows next to nothing about dry country. There is no-one in this House that has a greater respect for the Engineer-in-Chief than I have, but I say he has not been used to a country where there is a scarcity of water.

On the 8th March, 1905, a paper on the Coolgardie Water Supply Scheme was read before the Institution of Civil Engineers in London by Mr. C. S. R. Palmer, M.I.C.E., who was engineer-in-charge of the scheme in the later stages. The paper attracted the attention of notable engineers not only in Australia but in Britain, Canada, the United States of America and India. At that meeting, an English engineer named Hanssen raised the question of the multiplicity of pumping stations. I have a copy of the minutes of proceedings at that conference, and this is what he had to say—

Why had the lift been subdivided in that manner? With Worthington force pumps he did not see that there would be any mechanical difficulty in pumping the whole of the water in one lift. It would certainly cause a high pressure on the mains—say, about 940 lbs. per square inch against the pumping engines; but as the pressure in the hydraulic mains in London was 750 lbs. per square inch, and there was no difficulty in pumping against that pressure, he did not see why there should be any difficulty in pumping against 940 lbs. per square inch. That plant would have the advantage of not only excluding light from the water, but also of concentrating the whole of the pumping plant in a single station—or at most, in two stations, thus giving much higher efficiency and probably reduced cost for attendance. He therefore thought the engineers had been ill-advised in subdividing the lift to such an extent.

The reduction of the lifts from eight to one, or even to two, as suggested by Mr. Hanssen, may seem an extreme proposal. There is no doubt that at least half the pumping stations along the pipe-line should never have been erected. However, the eight pumping stations were put in possibly because the pumps and boilers had been ordered, and they had to be put somewhere or else consigned to the scrap-heap. As to who was responsible for ordering the pumps and boilers, I do not know, but it would appear that the most unfortunate part was that the stations have been retained there for the past 45 years, even though Mr. Traylen told Parliament on the basis of authority obtainable that four pumping stations were sufficient. A brochure entitled "The History of the Coolgardie Water Scheme" was published by the Worthington company, the manufacturers of the pumps that were installed. I have a

copy of it here and shall read just what the makers of the machinery had to say in connection with the pumps that were supplied—

From stations 1 to 4, in each station there are three complete sets of pumping machinery and boilers, any one of which is capable of pumping 2,800,000 gallons per 24 hours against a head of 450 feet, so that to get the full quantity of water two sets of engines and pumps are always pumping together into the main and one set is spare.

Thus, each of those units is capable of pumping against a head of 450 feet. Then the brochure goes on to say—

From stations 5 to 8 inclusive, there are at each station two sets of machinery, each set of machinery being capable of pumping 5,600,000 gallons per 24 hours against a head of 225 feet, so that while one set is pumping the other is "spare."

Members opposite may laugh if they so desire, but this is a matter that vitally concerns several members who have spoken on numerous occasions in support of a cheaper rate for water supplied to the Goldfields. Past Governments have tolerated this system in some cases, possibly because they were not aware of the facts. I am pointing out the position now.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Do not blame the Labour Party for what was done in 1894. We were not born then.

Mr. GRAYDEN: If members do not want to listen, I can only conclude that they are not genuinely interested in cutting down the price of water for the Goldfields.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: We do not want to take your opinion.

Mr. GRAYDEN: This is not my opinion. I am simply putting forward the opinion of the highest authorities in the world. I have told members what the makers of the pumps have said. That is in a brochure published by them. They have said exactly what their pumps are capable of, and I have been endeavouring to establish that the first four pumping stations are capable of pumping the water against a head of 450 feet. The hon. member will realise the significance of that in a few moments. This means that the first four pumping stations are capable of lifting the water 1,800 feet. The total rise from Mundaring to Bullabulling, which is the highest point on the line, is only 1,290 feet.

Mr. Styants: Who said Bullabulling was the highest point on the line?

Mr. GRAYDEN: It is, so far as the scheme is concerned.

Mr. Styants: The highest point is Koora-rawaljee.

Mr. GRAYDEN: On the railways, yes, but not as far as the scheme is concerned. I have a Public Works map marked "to accompany report of Royal Commission on Coolgardie water scheme." May I have this map hung on the wall of the Chamber, Mr. Chairman, for the information of members so that they may check the heights on it? I suggest that those who travel travel to and from Kalgoorlie frequently may also check the levels by the altitudes shown at the railway stations. It is obvious that these first four pumping stations could pump the water not only to Bullabulling but also another 510 feet higher, according to the specification. Yet we have eight pumping stations on the line. Is it any wonder that the cost of water to the Goldfields has been so terrific over all those years? We are maintaining eight pumping stations when, on the authority of the makers of the pumps, four would have been sufficient.

Midnight:

Mr. Triat: Are you sure that all are in operation?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Eight pumping stations were erected.

Mr. Triat: But are they in operation?

Mr. GRAYDEN: One has been cut out, I think; I do not know about the others. Lest members may think that the pressure in the pipes might have some bearing on the subject, I should like to reassure them on that point. I quote again from the booklet issued by the makers of the pumps, as follows:—

Each pipe was subjected to a hydraulic pressure test of 400 lbs. to the square inch, and was then immersed in a bath of hot Trinidad asphalt, and kept there until the steel rose to the same temperature as the bath itself.

This establishes that the pipes were tested to a pressure of 400 lbs. and would have been capable of standing a pressure of 800 feet static height, so the pressure in the pipes cannot be advanced as a reason why the lift was subdivided in the manner it was. As members are aware, the water is pumped

from the Mundaring Reservoir to Bakers Hill. Two stations pump the water to Bakers Hill. They lift the water 415 feet and 340 feet respectively. From Bakers Hill the water gravitates 238 feet to the pumping station at Cunderdin, which is a wicked waste, to put it mildly because thence the water is pumped up again to Merredin. This is the point: Merredin is 85 feet below the altitude of Bakers Hill. Water finds its own level, so the water would flow from Bakers Hill across the Avon Valley to Merredin and would still have 85 feet of pressure to spare. Yet a great costly pumping station has been placed at Cunderdin. The water is allowed to flow from Bakers Hill into the Avon Valley and then this great pumping station has been placed at Cunderdin to pump the water up again to Merredin. Yet the altitude at Merredin is 85 feet less than that at Bakers Hill.

The water is pumped 415 feet to No. 2 Station and No. 2 Station pumps it over Bakers Hill. No. 3 Station at Cunderdin picks up the water only 25 higher than the level of No. 2 Station. This has been going on for 45 years. No. 2 Station pumps the water 340 feet and the Cunderdin station picks up the water only 25 feet higher than when it leaves No. 2 Station. Yet No. 2 Station is capable of lifting the water 450 feet. It is a principle of hydraulic engineering to keep water up when it is up and when there is control of it until it reaches the point where it is to be used. Water is not being kept up in the Goldfields scheme. It is being taken down into the Avon Valley and then pumped up again to Merredin, the fact being completely ignored that if the pipes were intact, the water would gravitate from Bakers Hill to Merredin. Let me read an extract from "The West Australian" of the 15th September, 1938, as follows:—

The Minister for Water Supplies, Mr. Millington, informed Mr. Keenan that it was not a fact that the Goldfields scheme water was pumped to a height which was subsequently lost by gravitation, necessitating re-pumping of the same water. Not to his recollection had he been approached by Mr. Nat Harper regarding the desirability of reducing the cost of pumping by reducing the number of pumping stations and eliminating the loss of pressure due to gravity flow.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do you know that the No. 8 pumping station is not working now?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I believe that to be so. The then Minister for Works said it was not a fact that water was pumped to a height which was subsequently lost by gravitation, necessitating the re-pumping of the same water. That answer is inaccurate, as is proved by Simpson and Company's statement. Yet that was the answer given by the then Minister for Works. Simpson and Company, have this to say in their brochure—

The water runs from Bakers Hill by gravity to a second regulating 500,000 gallon concrete tank at Northam, eighteen miles further on, the Northam tank being 94 feet lower than Bakers Hill. Still falling, the water reaches the great tank at Cunderdin, which holds 10,000,000 gallons, and is seventy-eight miles from the Helena reservoir.

That is in flat contradiction to the reply of the then Minister for Works to a question asked by the member for Nedlands in this House some years ago. I wish to quote again from the minutes of proceedings of the Conference of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I regret detaining the Committee at this length but am convinced the matter is sufficiently urgent to warrant my doing so, especially as it is proposed to duplicate the line to Cunderdin. In those minutes, Palmer states—

The first pumping station is located on the right bank of the Helena River and 650 feet down-stream of the storage-reservoir. The pumps draw their water from a stand-pipe 4 feet in diameter, which is placed immediately in front of them and is fed by a 30-inch steel main, which, beginning at the outer valve-house, passes under the boiler-house before entering the stand-pipe. The pumps here lift the water a net height of 415 feet, through $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of pipe, and deliver it into a concrete receiving-tank having a capacity of 168,000 gallons and a depth of 15 feet of water. The pumps at Station No. 2 draw their water from this receiving-tank, the maximum suction-lift being $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and deliver it into a concrete regulating-tank at Bakers Hill, $22\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Station No. 2, the net lift being 340 feet. From the Bakers Hill regulating-tank which is 15 feet deep and has a capacity of 500,000 gallons, the water gravitates to the West Northam regulating-tank, 12 miles distant. This tank is similar in construction to that at Bakers Hill, having the same capacity and depth. The net fall is 94 feet from Bakers Hill to West Northam, whence the water gravitates to the Cunderdin reservoir, a further 41 miles, thus making a total length of $75\frac{1}{4}$ miles between Stations 2 and 3. The Cunderdin reservoir has an available capacity of 10 million gallons. No. 3 pumping-station is located about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from this reservoir, and the pumps draw their water from a stand-

pipe, similarly to those at No. 1. The section between Stations Nos. 3 and 4 is $62\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length, the net lift at No. 3 being 215 feet. The water is delivered into a circular concrete tank at No. 4, having a capacity of 1 million gallons and a depth of 15 feet. From Station No. 4 the water is lifted a net height of 333 feet, and delivered through a section $32\frac{1}{2}$ miles long into a rectangular concrete receiving-tank 20 feet deep, with a capacity of 1 million gallons. At Stations Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8, the arrangements are similar to those at Station No. 4, and the receiving-tanks at Nos. 6, 7 and 8 are similar in design to that of No. 5 having also the same capacity and depth. The net lifts at Stations Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 are respectively 52 feet, 106 feet, 56 feet and 183 feet, and the corresponding length of section 46 miles, $31\frac{1}{4}$ miles, 45 miles and $12\frac{1}{4}$ miles. From Station No. 8 the water is delivered into a main service-reservoir at Bullabulling, of 12 million gallons capacity. Thence the water gravitates to Coolgardie, and from Coolgardie to Kalgoorlie. These towns are provided with circular concrete service-reservoirs, that at Coolgardie having a capacity of 1 million gallons and that at Kalgoorlie of 2 million gallons.

I know members did not have the opportunity to take all that in, but they will at least get the opportunity to read it in "Hansard." I want to give a further illustration. To have a pumping station at Cunderdin under the present set-up would be similar to having a pumping station at the Causeway if it were desired to convey water from Canning Dam to King's Park. The same principle applies. There would be no need for a pumping station at the Causeway. Yet in this goldfields water scheme we are allowing water to gravitate from the Darling Ranges into the Avon Valley; then we break the pipes and pump water up to Merredin, which is 85 feet lower than Bakers Hill. If the Cunderdin station were to be removed and placed at No. 5 station in lieu of the one already there, all the stations from No. 5 station to Bullabulling could be abolished. The reason the change would have to be made is that the last four pumping stations have not the capacity of the first four. The first four are sufficient to pump the water, and so the last four could be abolished. I wish to clear up a point relating to friction, in case it is brought up. I quote Hanssen, from the minutes of proceedings of the Conference of Civil Engineers. The quotation is as follows:—

Mr. C. T. A. Hanssen had been somewhat astonished at the statement on page 41, as to the friction in the rising-main. The engineers had had excellent advice as to what

the friction would be, and, instead of that advice being followed, 50 per cent. had been added to the frictional resistance as calculated by the highest authorities.

So, through all these long years, the people of the Goldfields and others have been paying an unnecessarily excessive price for their water and so it will always be until this blunder is rectified. It is our obligation to end this waste. We have it on the authority of the independent engineer, Haanssen, that the waste is going on. We have it on the best authority in the world, the makers of the pumps, the Worthington Pumping Company. What more do we want? A Royal Commission has already made an inquiry into the scheme and its report shows that a very unsatisfactory state of affairs existed at the time. The report is available for all members who wish to read it; it certainly should be read by all interested in this matter. It would be unfair to ask the engineers of the Public Works Department to report on or condemn the work of their predecessors. We must have the opinions of independent engineers. Even Palmer who was the engineer in charge during the later stages of the construction of the scheme, had something to say which I propose to read. I quote from minutes of proceedings of the meeting of the Institution of Civil Engineers. The extract is as follows:—

He would ask for consideration when dealing with some of the comments, as his hands had not been altogether free in construction, owing to orders for material already placed. There were naturally features of the works in which he himself did not concur; and although he had altogether avoided showing this in the paper, he might not be able in reply to put the case on some points as favourably as his predecessor would have desired.

Reading between the lines, that was very significant indeed. It reflected very seriously on the number of pumping stations placed on this line by the gentleman's predecessor. In "The West Australian" of the 6th October, 1938, the facts I have put forward tonight were outlined in detail with plan, but no notice was taken of them. One main point I wish to emphasise particularly is that No. 2 Pumping Station is capable of pumping water to Merredin and the reservoir at Bakers Hill, and the pumping station at Cunderdin can be by-passed. Rather than let the water gravitate to Merredin, from Bakers Hill, it would be preferable—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member not indulge in tedious repetition.

Mr. GRAYDEN:—to leave the pipes intact and take it there under pressure from the pumps. The Goldfields scheme is here to stay as an integral part of the State, and the water will be permanent even if the mines cut out, because the soil is good and it only needs water to enable it to grow anything. This expensive method of pumping water to the Goldfields has been in vogue for 45 years, and the position should be remedied at the earliest date. The consumers have paid heavily in the past. That cannot be undone, but there is no reason why the burden should be borne indefinitely. We have it from the best authority in the world—the makers of the pumps—that four pumping stations are sufficient. And it should be the main concern of the Government to have the number reduced to that recommended by the makers of the pumps and thus lower costs. I submit that the matter should be the subject of an immediate and full inquiry.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—State Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £76,390; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £205,855—agreed to.

*Vote—Other Hydraulic Undertakings
£102,000:*

HON. E. NULSEN (Kanowna) [12.35]: I wish to refer to the need for a flat rate for water. I know I have the sympathy of the Premier and the Minister.

The Premier: The matter is under investigation.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I would reiterate what I said on a previous occasion when I introduced a Bill to deal with this matter—a Bill which was ruled out of order. I still hope that some consideration will be given to the imposition of a uniform water rate throughout the State for all water for domestic and gardening purposes. It is the policy of the Labour Party and of this side of the House. On listening to speeches from members on the other side and to remarks that have been made by the Premier and the Minister for Works, I feel I have supporters over there and that we will ob-

tain a scheme that will suit the whole State. It would be an equalisation scheme and would mean only a very small increase in the rate for the metropolitan area. All that would be needed would be an increase of about 9d. per thousand gallons, but it would lead to a tremendous reduction in the Goldfields rate. It would amount to a reduction of not less than 8s. 3d. per thousand gallons there, as against an increase of only 9d. in the metropolitan area. A flat rate of 1s. 9d. a thousand gallons would keep the finances on a similar basis to that existing at present, or would put them on an even better basis.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Especially if we could sell four of the pumping stations!

Hon. E. NULSEN: There might be something in that. I do not know. The member for Middle Swan presented the matter as being worthy of consideration and as being a means of reducing costs. I would point out that 80 per cent. of the water is consumed in the metropolitan area. Therefore—

The Chief Secretary: Is this not in "Hansard" already? Have we not been told it once before?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Whether that is so or not, I wish to emphasise that I want a flat rate for water throughout the State. I do not see why people in the metropolitan area should have all the amenities and that people in the country who produce essential commodities under adverse conditions should be deprived of them. The Minister who interjected lives in a nice comfortable home in North Perth with an ample water supply and he pays 1s. a thousand gallons for excess water, whereas people on the Goldfields pay 10s. per thousand gallons. There is a lot of discontent in the country and we should give consideration to the imposition of a flat rate. If we want to keep people outback we must do something to help them. There is a population in this State of a little over 500,000 and 272,000 are in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Hegney: Mr. Chairman, I cannot hear the speaker on account of the noise which members are making.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. E. NULSEN: If we do not do something to make the lot of people outback much easier, it will not be possible to

induce them to remain. These people are entitled to have gardens, lawns, and an occasional bath, but if they have to pay 10s. per 1,000 gallons for water, it is difficult for them to have these things, even though they might have the advantage of a higher basic wage than what applies in the metropolitan area. One amenity that the people in the country will never have is the ocean, in which the city dwellers can enjoy themselves. I conclude by asking the Premier for a flat rate for water. If he grants that the residents of the metropolitan area will be penalised by no more than 9d. per 1,000 gallons, but the rate will be reduced, in the case of some sections of the Goldfields, by 8s. 3d. a 1,000.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

BILL—BUILDING OPERATIONS AND BUILDING MATERIALS CONTROL AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—COMMONWEALTH POWERS ACT, 1945-1947, AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendment to which the Assembly had disagreed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. today.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 12.44 a.m. (Thursday).