

The Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I know I am getting on ticklish ground so far as this debate is concerned, but if proper consideration were given to the expenditure of this State, there would be no necessity whatsoever to impose further taxation.

So far as the second aspect is concerned I speak very feelingly. It has been said on more than one occasion that metropolitan representatives are concerned only with the metropolitan area and have no concern at all for the primary producing section of the community. I say that is quite unfair and that our concern is for the people in the whole of the State and not for those in one particular section, nor in any particular political group. Therefore let us look at the State as a whole. It is principally a primary producing State. No one can deny that. It is something that is accepted by the Grants Commission and must be accepted by any sane-thinking person. We cannot hope to be a secondary producing country as our distances from materials and our home consumption markets, principally in the Eastern States, are such that the freight factor alone is a sufficient bar against competitive trading with producers in the Eastern States.

Therefore, let us pay greater attention to the primary producer. We all know quite well that the selling prices of his commodities are restricted beyond his control. Therefore, if the industry is going to prosper there is only one way to do this; decrease production costs. I therefore say in all sincerity that a move to impose an additional tax—something new—on the primary producer, no matter how small it may be, is a step in the wrong direction, and one I hope to which this House will not agree.

I am not saying, for one moment, that the farming community in this State is in such a sorry plight financially that it cannot bear the tax that is proposed by this measure. Farmers who have been operating over the past decade must, or should be, on a sound financial footing at the present time, through their own industry and the encouragement given in the form of taxation concessions. They should have built up the values of their properties to such an extent that they can now function very efficiently, despite the falling prices of wheat and wool. But that is not the point.

I maintain we should further expand the primary production of this State. With the knowledge gained in recent years regarding the benefits to be derived by the use of trace elements, further large tracts of land in the State are available.

The PRESIDENT: You are getting away from land tax.

The Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I am sorry if I appear to be getting away from the direct question of land tax, but as it is a tax applicable to primary producers I felt it would give me an opportunity to refer to the financial conditions obtaining in the primary production field. Every encouragement must be given, not only to those primary producers already established in this State, but to others who come here for that purpose.

We know what has happened with the Chase Syndicate, but despite the fact that it may have used methods not entirely orthodox, or against the better judgment of others operating in the Esperance area, I feel it has done a considerable amount of good in that it has at least focused attention on that area, and others have been attracted there. I feel that by giving every encouragement to our primary industries, we need not go overseas looking for secondary industries. It would be better for the Government to give a little encouragement to people in the Eastern States who are starved for suitable land. If it did this, there would be a great deal of additional capital coming into this State for primary producing purposes.

I apologise if I have strayed from the narrow path, but these two aspects are extremely important. For those reasons I will vote against the second reading of this Bill.

On motion by the Hon. J. M. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 23rd September, 1958.

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

FACTORIES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Increase in Fixed Assets.

1. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

As the value of factory fixed assets in this State increased for land and buildings by £14,560,031 and for plant and machinery by £39,233,371 between the period the 30th June, 1953, to the 30th June, 1957, will he—

- (1) name the local authorities in whose areas the respective amounts mentioned above were expended;
- (2) advise the amount and year in which the respective sums were expended in each such local authority?

The MINISTER replied:

The information requested by the hon. member in questions Nos. (1) and (2) is not available in the form he desires. I have obtained from the Bureau of Census and Statistics the following information for his assistance:—

The increases in the capital value of fixed assets in Western Australian factories as shown on the attached table for each year of the period, the 30th June, 1953, to the 30th June, 1957, are those revealed by the book values of all factories submitting statistical returns and relate to the statistical divisions of the State.

It should be especially noted that they represent, not only the fixed assets of new factories which commenced operations during the period, but also the capital expenditure on additions and alterations to existing factories, revaluation of assets, and depreciation.

EDUCATION.*Provision of Classrooms in Country Areas.*

2. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware that only approximately 50 new classrooms were built in country areas out of the total of 214 new classrooms built in this State during the financial year ended the 30th June, 1958?

(2) In view of the fact that there are, approximately, 62,600 school children attending State metropolitan schools and 47,800 school children attending State country schools, why was there such a disparity in the number of new classrooms built in country areas as against the metropolitan area?

(3) Will the percentage of new classrooms to be built in country areas during the year ending the 30th June, 1959, be increased in relation to those to be built in the metropolitan area?

(4) If not, why not?

(5) If so, what are the proposed numbers of new classrooms to be built in the financial year ending the 30th June, 1959, in—

(a) country areas;

(b) metropolitan area?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Classrooms are built where it is considered the need is greatest.

(3) Not necessarily, having regard to the reply to question No. (2).

(4) Kindly refer to No. (3).

(5) This is under consideration.

WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON INDUSTRY.*Financial Position.*

3. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) In respect of the profit and loss account for the Wundowie Wood Distillation Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry, what was the net balance as at—

(a) the 30th June, 1957;

(b) the 30th June, 1958?

(2) What was the net balance of the profit and loss account in regard to sawn timber operations as at—

(a) the 30th June, 1957;

(b) the 30th June, 1958?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Profit £72,503, including interest £60,971.

(b) Profit £81,376, including interest £68,939.

(2) (a) and (b) Segregated costs are confidential and not for publication.

TIMBER.*Charges by State Saw Mills.*

4. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

(1) What prices per 100 super feet are charged by the State Saw Mills for—

(a) (i) up to 15 ft. unspecified lengths;

(ii) up to 15 ft. specified lengths;

(b) (i) 16 ft. to 20 ft. unspecified lengths;

(ii) 16 ft. to 20 ft. specified lengths;

(c) (i) 21 ft. to 25 ft. unspecified lengths;

(ii) 21 ft. to 25 ft. specified lengths;

(d) 4 in. x 4 in. stumps;

(e) under 7 ft. lengths?

(2) What trade discounts are offered?

(3) What additional charges are made for dressing and gauging?

(4) What is the cartage charged for—

(a) up to 5 miles;

(b) 5 to 10 miles;

(c) 10 to 15 miles;

(d) 15 to 20 miles?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The question is not specific but the information requested as applying to sale of all sections of sawn hardwood scantling in the metropolitan area is set out in timber price list issued by State Building Supplies, numbered 64, and operating from the 1st January, 1958, copy of which is tabled, with particular reference to Page 2 of the list.

(2) Trade discounts are 5 per cent. on the list as published with a further 2½ per cent. for prompt settlement of accounts.

(3) and (4) The charges are set out on Page 8 of the list as tabled, the price for gauging being as shown under the heading of "Sawing."

Charges by Wundowie Sawmill Section.

5. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) What prices per 100 super feet are charged by the saw mill section of Wundowie for—

(a) (i) up to 15 ft. unspecified lengths;

(ii) up to 15 ft. specified lengths;

(b) (i) 16 ft. to 20 ft. unspecified lengths;

(ii) 16 ft. to 20 ft. specified lengths;

(c) (i) 21 ft. to 25 ft. unspecified

(ii) 21 ft. to 25 ft. specified lengths;

Western Australia.

FACTORIES : INCREASES* IN ESTIMATED CAPITAL VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS.

30th June, 1953, to 30th June, 1957.

Statistical Division	Period									
	30th June, 1953, to 30th June, 1954		30th June, 1954, to 30th June, 1955		30th June, 1955, to 30th June, 1956		30th June, 1956, to 30th June, 1957		Total, 30th June, 1953, to 30th June, 1957	
	Land and Buildings	Plant and Machinery	Land and Buildings	Plant and Machinery	Land and Buildings	Plant and Machinery	Land and Buildings	Plant and Machinery	Land and Buildings	Plant and Machinery
Metropolitan	£ 3,146,017	£ 3,022,621	£ 3,061,050	£ 1,885,528	£ 1,220,771	£ 2,850,830	£ 1,788,621	£ 1,694,097	£ 9,223,350	£ 9,463,076
Swan			1,887,080	23,286,079	1,324,078	<i>-1,353,479</i>	44,182	1,214,234		
South-West			257,175	36,248	34,552	278,630	992,721	3,640,973		
Southern Agricultural			506,150	1,049,439	23,350	<i>-41,534</i>	<i>-82,097</i>	54,539		
Central Agricultural			105,872	79,455	20,320	<i>-16,186</i>	34,903	3,965		
Northern Agricultural	(a) 633,319	1,137,548	44,534	18,938	21,043	27,586	30,405	3,207	5,339,672	29,784,295
Eastern Goldfields			69,593	204,987	<i>-3,382</i>	15,875	24,094	<i>-987</i>		
Central			6,483	8,545	<i>-6,493</i>	<i>-14,032</i>	7,722	48,051		
North-West			675	<i>-25,384</i>	<i>-6,024</i>	10,160	<i>-189,812</i>	69,413		
Pilbara			9,832	49,252	<i>-1,933</i>	<i>-139,775</i>	<i>-1,019</i>	6,550		
Kimberley			744	81,255	<i>-4,248</i>	<i>-12,605</i>	1,953	4,457		
Total	3,770,336	4,160,169	5,400,974	26,703,222	2,620,038	1,575,470	2,660,683	6,738,510	14,560,031	39,237,371

* Figures in italics represent decreases which are mainly due to revaluations and/or depreciation.

(a) Separate information is not available.

Bureau of Census and Statistics,
Perth, W.A.

18th September, 1958.

	1956-57 £	1957-58 £
(c) Off-course racing in W.A.	104,918	119,135
(e) Off course racing in other States	114,532	164,225
(f) Off - course trotting in other States	—	709
(2) Betting tax—amount paid to—		
	£	£
(a) Metropolitan racing Clubs	38,265	47,120
(b) Country racing clubs	11,095	13,906
(c) Metropolitan trot- ting clubs	15,371	20,697
(d) Country trotting clubs	7,082	10,855

An amount of detail work is involved to obtain the total amount of betting tax received by each country club. If the hon. member will give the name of the club concerning which he desires information, the particulars can be obtained.

PRICE CONTROL RECORDS.

Availability to Unfair Trading Commissioner.

15. Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Labour:

Is it proposed to continue the practice of making price control records available to the Unfair Trading Control Commissioner?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes, if required. However, I am advised that the records have proved of little value to the commissioner for the purposes of his investigations, and it is doubtful whether they would be required in the future.

ALBANY POWER HOUSE.

Construction.

16. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Works:

Does the State Electricity Commission envisage the construction of a power house at the port of Albany to feed into the inter-connected system?

The MINISTER FOR MINES (for the Minister for Works) replied:

Not at present.

GERALDTON HIGH SCHOOL.

Provision of Boarding Accommodation.

17. The Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has he been approached regarding lack of boarding facilities for country children attending the high school in Geraldton?

(2) What plan has his department for providing such accommodation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, by the member for Geraldton (Mr. W. Sewell, M.L.A.)

(2) The matter is receiving consideration.

TROLLEY-BUSES AND MOTOR-BUSES.

Perth-Swanbourne Route.

18. Mr. CROMMELIN asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) How many passengers were carried on trolley-buses on the Perth-Swanbourne route during the years ended the 30th June, 1956, 1957, 1958?

(2) What were the financial results of these operations for each of the years mentioned?

(3) How many passengers were carried by the one-man motor buses over the same route during each of the three separate years mentioned?

(4) What were the financial results of the operations of the one-man buses for each of the years mentioned?

(5) What is the present-day cost per mile of running these trolley-buses?

(6) What is the cost per mile of running the one-man buses?

(7) Is it intended to dispense with trolley-buses on this route now that Metro buses have been taken over by the transport trust?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) to (4) Detailed particulars of individual routes are not kept, but tests are carried out on certain days. The most recent of these on the Perth-Swanbourne service revealed that trolley-buses and omnibuses together on that day travelled 1,590 miles and carried 5,762 passengers, who paid £230 16s. 1d. in fares.

(5) The cost of running trolley-buses is 70.2 pence per mile, including interest and depreciation.

(6) The cost of running one-man omnibuses is 39.27 pence per mile, including interest and depreciation.

(7) No final decision has yet been made.

ROTTNEST.

Development Plan, Finance and Tenancies.

19. Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is it correct that there is a five-year development plan for Rottneest?

(2) If so, what are the main features of it; what finance is involved; and how is it to be provided?

(3) (a) Has the Government been approached by the board or the Minister for a sum to enable a worth-while master scheme to be progressively implemented?

- (b) If so, for how much and over what period?
- (4) (a) What is the duration of tenancies given to Rottneest business proprietors?
- (b) Are there rights of renewal?
- (c) (i) Are there any provisions regarding capital improvements?
- (ii) If so, at whose responsibility and what is the position in respect of same on the expiry of tenancies?
- (d) When is renewal or review of tenancies undertaken; that is, how long before expiry of tenancies to give tenants fair warning of renewal or cancellation?
- (5) (a) Are transfers of leases permitted?
- (b) If not, what is the procedure if a tenant wants to cancel a lease?
- (c) If transfers are permitted, what conditions or restrictions does the board impose on goodwill and other considerations?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) No. The board had a preliminary discussion on a suggested five-year plan, and members have been asked to submit their ideas at the next meeting for consideration.

- (4) (a) Three to five years at the board's discretion.
- (b) In cases where requested consideration is given.
- (c) (i) and (ii) Not in the lease agreement although individual business owners have on occasions negotiated with the board on a mutually arranged basis.
- (d) Each lessee has a copy of the agreement. Before the expiry of all leases, fresh applications are called and notices appear in the Press.
- (5) (a) and (b) In cases where a transfer is desired, discussions take place between the board and the lessee, and a mutual agreement is reached. Several transfers have been negotiated in recent years.
- (c) The board will not permit exploitation and requires an audited balance sheet to be produced by the lessee. If some goodwill is justified the board does not raise any objection. The board reserves the right of approval in the case of a transferee.

EGGS.

Receivals from Narrogin, Bunbury and Geraldton.

20. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What quantity of eggs received at the egg grading floors at Narrogin, Bunbury and Geraldton, was forwarded to the metropolitan grading floor for disposal during each of the past five years?

(2) By what means are the eggs forwarded and how many times per week are they despatched?

The MINISTER replied:

(1)

	Narrogin.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.
	Doz.	Doz.	Doz.
1953-54	382,013	173,256	16,453
1954-55	400,259	111,400	67,721
1955-56	404,460	76,415	106,062
1956-57	408,628	78,979	99,856
1957-58	283,719	72,809	131,411

(2) Narrogin and Bunbury by train. Geraldton by road bus. Both services are daily and used five days per week as and when required.

NATIVE WELFARE.

Approach to Prime Minister for Funds.

21. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Premier:

(1) Has he considered the suggestion made by me in my speech on the Natives (Status as Citizens) Bill—that he should in person support the written request made to the Prime Minister for special funds to carry out the recommendations of the committee on native matters?

(2) If so, what is his decision?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) The hon. member's speech was made on the 2nd September, 1958. I sent a letter to the Prime Minister dealing with this matter on the 30th July, 1958.

(2) No decision has yet been received. I think the hon. member for Narrogin, in regard to this question, wanted to know precisely whether I would personally visit Canberra and talk this matter over with the Prime Minister.

Mr. Watts: That was the idea.

The PREMIER: I shall give further consideration to the suggestion. Should an opportunity present itself, I will certainly do as the hon. member suggests.

COLLIE COAL.

Comparative Costs and Government Action.

22. Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Has he studied the comments made by Dr. Cyril Kent, Chief Chemical Engineer, N.S.W. Electricity Commission,

in Perth, on the 17th September, 1958, regarding the relative coal costs in Western Australia and New South Wales?

(2) Does he agree with his assessment?

(3) What action does the Government propose to offset higher Western Australian coal costs in view of the impact on power costs?

(4) What is his reaction to the evidence given before the Tariff Board by the President of the Collie Coal Miners' Union that present Western Australian coal prices are below economic level?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Only those published in "The West Australian" dated the 16th September, 1958, and for which Dr. Kent has, in "The West Australian" of the 19th September, disclaimed responsibility, have been seen.

(2) In view of Dr. Kent's disclaimer, no further consideration has been given to them.

(3) Action has already been taken. Prior to the contracts signed between the Government and the companies on the 13th September, 1957, average coal prices were as follows:

	s.	d.
Western Collieries	65	0
Griffin Coal Mines	65	0
Amalgamated Collieries	65	1

Average prices at present paid are:—

	s.	d.
Western Collieries	53	0
Griffin Coal Mines	45	0
Amalgamated Collieries	53	3

(4) I have no knowledge on what information Mr. Latter based his opinion. The price paid for Collie coal by the Government was fixed by tenders submitted by the coal companies and incorporated in contracts signed by them, and, presumably, considered as a satisfactory price by them.

DENMARK RAILWAY STATION.

Revenue Collected.

23. The Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What were the actual collections of railway revenue at the Denmark station for each of the years ended the 30th June, 1954, to the 30th June, 1955, the 30th June, 1956, to the 30th June, 1957?

(2) How much of this sum, in each case, was represented by passenger fares?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) The 30th June—

	£
1954	30,052
1955	27,219
1956	25,284
1957	48,588

(2) The 30th June—	£
1954	1,022
1955	1,221
1956	1,246
1957	985

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

DIVISION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Statement by Minister for Justice, and Government Policy.

1. Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

(1) Does the statement of the Hon. Minister for Justice, at the South-West Conference on Friday last, that Western Australia should be divided into three States represent Government policy?

(2) If so, what are the approximate divisions that would be suggested for the three States; and is a move, in the near future, contemplated?

The PREMIER replied:

No.

COLLIE COAL.

Supplies to Government and Cost.

2. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to my question—No. 6 on the notice paper—about the prices of Collie coal, do the ambiguous answers that the Minister has given to parts (4) and (5) mean that he does not know the answers to the questions; or is he definitely avoiding the issue?

The MINISTER replied:

The position is not as suggested by the hon. member for Dale. Different suggestions were made during negotiations, on various percentage bases for deep-mine coal and open-cut coal; and the figures supplied to the hon. member were the result of working out the various figures that had been talked of and discussed.

3. Mr. WILD: In view of the Minister's answers, I want to ask this: Does he not consider that this is reasonably plain English—

What was the lowest price tendered for—

- (a) Open-cut coal;
- (b) Deep-mine coal;
- (c) Which companies tendered as in (a) and (b)?

Is that question not clear enough? What was the lowest price tendered for (a) open-cut coal? That does not entail anything else. It is a straight-out question.

The MINISTER replied: The hon. member for Dale evidently cannot comprehend my answer. Some prices were on a dual basis; some of them for open-cut coal and deep-mine coal were not segregated and were on various quantities.

Griffin Company's Offer.

4. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Mines:

Is it not a fact that the Griffin Coal Mining Company offered to supply all the coal requirements of the Government from open-cut at approximately 30s. per ton.

The MINISTER replied: I am not aware of that.

TEACHERS' ACCOMMODATION.*Provision in Country Centres.*

5. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

Arising out of his answer to part (4) of my question No. 9, when I asked him—

What centres, which were listed for provision of teachers' quarters in the last financial year, did not have them built?

and to which he replied:

The building programme for the last financial year did not provide for the erection of any quarters—

I would like to ask the Minister why it is that that answer so blatantly contradicts an answer he gave just over 12 months ago, when, in answer to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition, as follows:—

Will the Minister state what centres have been listed for the provision of teachers' quarters during the present financial year?—

he gave a list of some score or more country centres. I find it most difficult to put the two answers together in any way. They so blatantly contradict each other and I—

The Premier: Allow the Minister to put them together.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —would like the Minister to give some explanation of this contradiction.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

There is a very simple explanation for it. Without being critical, I think sometimes the hon. member for Cottesloe is a little bit too meticulous, and wants to be too particular in regard to terms. This is the simple explanation: It is true that 12 months ago, there was quite a list of headmasters' quarters required. There is still a long list, the same as with the development of playing fields. The actual position is that although all those requirements are listed, loan funds are concentrated on the erection of classrooms and actually no approval was given for headmasters' quarters, although they were on the original list. That is just a matter of terms. If the hon. member for Cottesloe wants the list at the present time, it can

be tabled. But, as I understand the question, it is, in effect, "What accommodation has been approved for which finance has been earmarked?" and the answer is "None." There is nothing sinister about it.

6. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I know that much. But does the Minister really believe that there is no contradiction in the two answers that were put forth?

The MINISTER: The hon. member is just splitting straws, as I explained.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We are just trying to comprehend the answers.

The MINISTER: There it is again! It is the same, only different, when it is put that way. If the hon. member wants the full list, he can have it. The interpretation that was placed on the question—what financial provision has been made for the erection of headmasters' quarters in the building programme—makes the answer "None," because of our anxiety to provide classrooms. That is all, and it is plain enough.

7. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: In the interests of a better understanding of ministerial answers to questions, and in regard to the same topic as my two previous questions without notice, will the Minister endeavour to ensure that misunderstandings due to contradictions such as have been made apparent by answers given 12 months apart do not occur again; and does he not think that this particular answer to a question asked last year absolutely contradicts the answer he gave today?

I refer again to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition, the first part of which referred to the centres listed for the provision of teachers' quarters, and in answer to which a list was given; and the second question regarding the sum set aside for the purpose, to which the answer was that an amount of £8,500 had been set aside for the provision of quarters at two centres. Then in answer to my question asked as to what centres were listed for the provision of teachers' quarters, the Minister said the building programme for the last financial year did not provide for the erection of any quarters. Is there not an absolute difference between the answers given 12 months ago and today; and will the Minister endeavour to ensure that such contradictions do not occur in the future?

The MINISTER: I am amazed that a man like the hon. member for Cottesloe, who is the holder of a teacher's certificate, would be so confused. All I desire to say in regard to the first part of this question is that the answer is "No"; and the answer to the second part is the same.

RAILWAY CLOSURES.

Statement by the Minister for Justice.

8. Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

Is the statement by the Minister for Justice at the South-West conference on Friday, that the closing of country railways had been a retrograde step and one which he had strongly opposed and hoped that the Legislative Council would reject, the personal opinion of the Minister or does it reflect the attitude of the Government?

The PREMIER replied:

In the first place, I would say that the Minister for Justice is, this week, carrying out an engagement which he made several weeks ago, to attend a field day or something of the kind at Salmon Gums, for the purpose of trying to make the Eyre electorate even more safe for Emil Nulsen. That is why he is not in the House today. He will not be in the House at all this week. I understand from the Minister that the main burden of what he said at Bunbury in connection with this issue was a severe criticism of Liberal Party members of Parliament, particularly in the Legislative Council.

Mr. Roberts: He said nothing of the kind!

Mr. Court: You must admit the bit about the Council has a quaint twist.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The point in his criticism is that the Legislative Council had a majority of Country Party and Liberal Party members—mostly, I think, Liberal Party members. Therefore, had the Liberal Party members been dinkum in the opposition which they later on developed to the aspect of traffic on those lines, the Bill which brought about the suspension of traffic would never have passed through the Legislative Council. Unfortunately, this very salient and appropriate criticism by the Minister for Justice, of the Liberal Party members concerned in the Legislative Council, was suppressed by the newspapers.

Government's View.

9. Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

Arising from the answer the Premier has just given to my previous question, I would comment that the question of the railway closures was dealt with by a motion, and not by a Bill. The Premier has still not answered my question as to whether the comments by the Minister for Justice, which I am assured were reported in accordance with the general tenor of his comments at the conference, are a reflection of the Minister's personal views or those of the Government. Will the Premier please advise me accordingly?

The PREMIER replied:

Clearly, beyond any shadow of doubt—I should have thought that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would have known this, and it is surprising to think that he does not know it—the decision of the Government was that the motion in question should be introduced into Parliament. Therefore it was introduced by the Government, and was supported by the Government; and under the principle of collective responsibility in the Government of a State or a country, every Minister carries a collective responsibility regarding any motion or Bill brought into Parliament by a Government, or any action of an executive character by a Government; and therefore all Ministers of the Government were equally responsible in regard to the motion in question.

10. Mr. COURT: While I appreciate the explanation the Premier gave as to the collective responsibility of Cabinet members, I still have not received a straight-out answer as to whether I am to accept the comments of the Minister for Justice as his personal views in the matter or whether I am to take them to be the views of the Government. Am I to interpret the Premier's answer as saying that the views expressed were the personal views of the Minister for Justice and not those of the Government?

The PREMIER: I have not any opportunity—nor do I desire opportunity—to dictate the manner in which any question should be asked. As hon. members of Parliament have an absolute right to choose the wording of their questions, I hope they will not deny me the right of giving answers in such words and in such manner as I think fit. The answer which I gave previously is now confirmed by me.

BILLS (5)—ASSENT.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

- 1, Constitution Acts Amendment.
- 2, Housing Loan Guarantee Act Amendment.
- 3, Legal Practitioners Act Amendment.
- 4, Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act Amendment.
- 5, Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment.

BILLS (5)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Local Courts Act Amendment.
Received from the Council; the Premier in charge.
- 2, Electoral Act Amendment.
Received from the Council; Mr. Roberts in charge.

3. Loan, £16,742,000.

Introduced by the Treasurer.

4. State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Nalder.

5. Licensing Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Ross Hutchinson.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Further report of Committee adopted.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN AGED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' RELIEF FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Premier—Northam) [5.13] in moving the second reading said: This is a simple Bill which aims to bring the Western Australian Aged Sailors and Soldiers' Relief Fund into line with the new title and constitution of what is generally known as the Returned Soldiers' League. The Act which was passed in 1932 in connection with the sailors and soldiers' relief fund was passed at a time when the name of the league covered only sailors and soldiers. In more recent times, the name and constitution of the league have been altered to take in the word "airmen"; and, as a result, airmen should now be eligible to participate in the benefits of this fund. However, because the word "airmen" does not appear anywhere in the parent Act, they are not eligible to participate.

The fund, which is raised under this Act of Parliament to provide relief for aged and invalid sailors and soldiers, at present, is raised by three main methods. The first is to pay into the fund one half of the net proceeds of the annual Poppy Day appeal; the second method is to pay into the fund such other moneys as may be set aside for the purpose of this Act by the annual State congress of the league; and the third method is by way of donations and bequests.

The only purpose of this amending Bill is to include in the name of the fund the word "airmen," and to make airmen who would qualify under the provisions of the Act eligible for such assistance as the trust, which manages the fund, may decide to make available to any of them from time to time. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Wild, debate adjourned.

LICENSED SURVEYORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th September.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [5.16]: This simple Bill, which seeks to clarify a legal point, is supported by the Opposition. The Minister, when introducing it, explained its significance; it is purely a formality and to make sure that the United Kingdom is included in the reciprocal rights. As I understood from his explanation, at the moment, on a legal interpretation of the parent Act the United Kingdom could perhaps be denied inclusion. We support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

NATIVES (STATUS AS CITIZENS) BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th September.

MR. GAFFY (Canning) [5.19]: During the temporary absence from the Chamber of my colleague, the hon. member for Kimberley, I should like to take this opportunity of saying a few words in support of the measure brought down by the Minister for Native Welfare. It is a matter of amazement to me that when anything new is introduced or suggested, people in the main endeavour to find many reasons why it will not work. In the majority of cases they are against the adoption of anything new; and a certain amount of criticism has been levelled by hon. members against this Bill.

I think that criticism stems really from a too liberal interpretation of the wording of the Bill. When referring to a caption that appeared in a newspaper in the Eastern States, the hon. member for South Perth said that in Western Australia it was not the dawn, but the light before the dawn. When he used that expression, the hon. member spoke more truly than he knew. I think this measure could well be the light before the dawn.

On the other hand, the hon. member for Narrogin said he thought it was a mirage, and we should wait another 10 years. In this he was supported by the hon. member for Murray. That was their opinion. They felt we should wait another 10 years before doing something for the natives to make them worthy citizens; or words to that effect.

Mr. Andrew: If we waited another 100 years they would say the same thing.

Mr. GAFFY: That is so. I am sure that if we waited another 10 years, the same question would arise, and the same thing would probably be said—and so we would go on waiting another 10 years on each occasion. I feel the time is now opportune, and I commend the Minister for bringing down this Bill. In itself, I do not think the measure is perfect; but, of course, no legislation that is introduced is perfect. If it were, it would have been brought down—or should have been brought down—long ago.

This measure could well be the foundation on which we build up, rehabilitate, and stabilise the welfare of the natives. It may not be the complete answer; it will take a considerable time to get the native to the point of advancement we would like. I am sure education will play a big part in stabilising the natives. I feel constrained to say, however, that irrespective of any action this Bill may produce, the adults will not gain very much by it.

In this respect we have an object lesson in the new Australians, if I may use that term. We know that the parents rarely absorb the conditions of our country; while their children, on the other hand, very rapidly become Australians—at least, judging by some of the language we hear from time to time. In connection with a further remark made by the hon. member for Narrogin, I would say that it would be a great achievement if we could educate young children, or teenagers, to a high standard and then send them back to their own people as instructors. It would go a long way to achieving our objective.

Mr. W. A. Manning: You are doing that now.

Mr. GAFFY: There is not enough of it.

Mr. W. A. Manning: That is my case.

Mr. GAFFY: It has been suggested that we should teach the natives; but by the time the white man has become sufficiently educated in the native legends, the opportunity for teaching them is gone. Those people who have a sufficient knowledge of native legend would be able to draw a parallel between their way of life and ours, and thus help them along in their thinking and improve their way of life. I have always held the opinion that the native is an intelligent person. The fact that he does not think along the same lines as we do, does not mean he is unintelligent. It merely indicates he has not had the opportunity to study those things we consider important.

This Bill has been criticised for two reasons. The first point of criticism is that it gives persons power to act on behalf of the natives. Anybody giving thought to this matter would realise that

that is very necessary. We do not suggest for one moment that the native would be able to act off his own bat, as we think he should; and as we feel he would, were he given the opportunity to study.

Mr. W. A. Manning: That proves it is unwarranted.

Mr. GAFFY: I do not agree. Two further objections have been raised. One is that he will not be pressed to vote. He will not be pressed to assume the responsibility until he becomes acclimatised. The other objection is that this measure will give the native opportunities for consuming alcohol, and that he may indulge in it far too freely. But, of course, we do not have to go to the aboriginal to draw an analogy in this respect. There is no reason to suggest that, given the opportunity, the native will indulge too freely in liquor. It is possible it will help him to resist the temptation and thus raise himself above the undesirable company he keeps at the present time.

By and large, I think the proposals contained in this measure constitute a very progressive step. We consider it the starting point. It could be amended as time goes on; and from time to time we could continue to build up the proper training of the aboriginal. I feel sure we all desire that state of affairs. I am rather surprised that members of the Opposition should say in one breath that they support something being done for the aborigines; and then, in the other, oppose a measure that seeks to achieve that objective.

Mr. W. A. Manning: This Bill does not do anything for them.

Mr. GAFFY: If the hon. member looks at it more closely, he will see it seeks to do more for them now than would be done if we waited another 10 years.

MR. OLDFIELD (Mt. Lawley) (5281: As hon. members know, this Bill is identical to that which was introduced by the Minister last session. When that measure was before the House, I was one of those who gave it my support; and I outlined my reasons for doing so. At that time, however, I also indicated to the Minister in charge of the Bill that, when the measure reached the Committee stages, we would seek to amend it; and the amendments moved by the hon. member for South Perth early in the Committee stages of the Bill were successful.

In other words, the members of the Government supported the position in accepting amendments to the Bill. This session, however, we find that the Bill has been introduced not in the form in which it lapsed last session, but in the original form in which it was introduced last session. In other words, the department has seen fit to defy the wishes of Parliament—and of course the Minister must accept

the responsibility for that, because he represents the department in this House. In effect, the department has said, "Parliament has amended our Bill, but we do not want it that way; and we will have it in the original form in which it was introduced." However, as I said last year, I have reached the stage where I am prepared to support almost anything which will give the people with whom we are dealing in this Bill a better go, or a fair go—something which they have never yet been accustomed to in the history of Australia.

In fact, I think that at this present time the aborigines of Australia are far worse off than they were a hundred years ago. I am not going to say that it is altogether our fault; it is the fault of civilisation and progress generally. It is one of the unavoidable things which must occur, and is possibly the price of progress. But, unfortunately, in this instance the native is paying the whole price, and the people who are benefiting from progress—that is the white section of the community—are content to allow the native to pay that price and do nothing whatsoever about ameliorating his trouble.

The reason the native is worse off today than he was many years ago is that at that time there was good grazing land. However, the best of the land, which carried the greatest amount of game and water, has been fenced by white settlers who have cleared, cropped and stocked it; and the native has been deprived of his food. In addition to doing these things, we have passed legislation declaring certain native game in some areas as vermin. We have put a royalty on the head of that native game which is the inherent food of the native population in the far outback.

Worse still, not only did we replace the native game with stock such as sheep and cattle, but we forbade the native the right to hunt the stock which was introduced into this country. Therefore, we virtually left him without natural resources for his livelihood. We left him to become a rouseabout on a station, and a mendicant.

Within the white population of Australia today there has grown up a type of colour bar. White people generally are distrustful of the natives. In some instances, they like to look down with smug superiority on the aboriginal or native and frequently refer to him as a "nigger." They do not regard him as a human being. Therefore, the natives find it very hard—in fact it is almost impossible—to secure regular and steady work, unless it is of a menial nature, such as on stations. Even then they can find work only in the type of country where white people are loth to go to earn their livelihood.

Those natives who are resident within the metropolitan area and within the townships in the South-West Land Division are reduced almost to seasonal work

such as fruit picking, shearing, chaff cutting and so on. When they attempt to seek permanent work, they are overlooked for their white brothers.

Mr. Perkins: Do you think they would take it?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Of course they would take it! There are plenty of men working around the city of Perth—I should have said a few men—who have been in their jobs for many years. They obtained them early in the post-war years when labour was scarce and they have been able to hang on to the jobs. However, in my opinion, pressure is being brought to bear on the boss to sack them now that unemployment is prevalent.

Mr. Thorn: You are out of touch.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am not out of touch.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Who puts the pressure on?

Mr. OLDFIELD: It is put on by the white men.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Who is the pressure put on by?

Mr. OLDFIELD: By the white population. It has happened, and it is happening. I can quote one instance of a native, employed by the Railway Department, who cannot get any promotion because of the colour bar which exists.

Mr. Graham: He lives in East Perth.

Mr. OLDFIELD: He does, too.

Mr. Thorn: What is the hon. member doing about it?

Mr. Graham: Plenty.

Mr. Court: It must be Government policy.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Things have reached a stage where it is our responsibility to attempt to do something to make these people a part of the community so that they can take their proper place in it. When this question has been brought before the House, during the eight years I have been here, I have heard all the arguments for and against. Arguments have been submitted that the native is not ready or that it is not yet the time. For 60 or 70 years that has been said and we are now no further advanced. We will never reach the time, and the native will never be ready until we do something about getting him ready.

It has been said that we must forget the older population and start with the children; that we should take the children away from the parents. That is not much use in itself. We take the children away from the parents, put them in the mission, and take them out again at the age of 14. However, instead of our accepting them as part of society, they are returned to the older people in the camps.

It has been said on many occasions that if a person is given responsibility he will live up to it. The natives have never been allowed to have the responsibility of citizenship; but if it were given to them, although there would be some casualties, they would face up to it and it would be a worth-while effort on our part in trying to do something for these people.

These people are the grandchildren of those who were ill-treated by the early settlers of Australia. They were shot, beaten, and exploited. I know that was necessary in some cases for the survival of white people. However, these people have grown up with a natural hatred of whites. They are a peaceful people, but they hold the white population in well-deserved hatred and contempt.

The native community in Australia has nothing whatsoever to live for. The native does not care what crimes he commits, because he has no respect for the white man's law; he respects his inherent tribal laws. Today, the native is better off in gaol than he is out of it; and a lot of white people would rather see him in gaol all the time, because they adopt the attitude that whilst he is there he cannot propagate.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Is that the Mt. Lawley attitude?

Mr. OLDFIELD: The belief of the hon. member for Narrogin is that if white people continue shooting the natives we will have got rid of our problem.

Points of Order.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Mr. Speaker, I object to those remarks as the hon. members knows they are not true. I ask that they be withdrawn.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. Oldfield: I will withdraw, but I still have said them. The argument goes on.

Mr. Thorn: I think you would do the same thing. You are talking to the electors of Mt. Lawley, you squib!

Mr. Oldfield: Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a withdrawal of that remark.

The Speaker: I did not hear the remark. What was it?

Mr. Oldfield: I would like the hon. member for Toodyay to withdraw his remark, which was most offensive. I would like him to repeat it.

Mr. Thorn: I won't.

The Speaker: If the hon. member for Toodyay made a remark which the member for Mt. Lawley considers offensive, he must unreservedly withdraw.

Mr. Thorn: He asked me to repeat it, but I cannot remember back that far.

The Speaker: I am going to enforce the Standing Orders. If an hon. member considers any remark to be offensive, the hon.

member who made the remark should withdraw unreservedly. I did not hear the remark; but if the hon. member for Mt. Lawley considered it offensive, the hon. member for Toodyay must withdraw.

Mr. Thorn: I withdraw unreservedly; not like the squib—

The Speaker: Order! the hon. member for Mt. Lawley may proceed.

Debate Resumed.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We see the old campaigner again—

The SPEAKER: I would point out that the hon. member for Mt. Lawley speaks from a back bench; and there are other members in front of him and the Chair; and it is easy for hon. members to interject. Whilst I do not want to be too hard on interjections, I suggest that hon. members allow the hon. member for Mt. Lawley to proceed, as he is entitled to state his case. Most interjectors are between the hon. member and myself, which makes it difficult to maintain order. Therefore, I ask hon. members to hold their interjections. The hon. member for Mt. Lawley may proceed.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel that this Bill in its present form will not do a great amount of good. Likewise, it will not do a great amount of harm. We are dealing with the vital principle of whether we are to regard the natives of this country as human beings or as a lesser form of life. I have heard them referred to as second-class citizens. However, they cannot be regarded as such in my mind, because they have no citizenship rights whatsoever.

They receive less consideration than a migrant. From the day a migrant sets foot in this country he is entitled to social services; and after a period of 25 years, to the age pension. The native is never entitled to these benefits until he applies for and is granted citizenship rights.

When this Bill lapsed last year, certain amendments had been carried by the House against the wishes of the Minister; and he has brought forward the same Bill again without those amendments being included. I shall support the second reading with this reservation: That if the amendments which appear on the notice paper in the name of the hon. member for South Perth are not carried or not accepted by the Minister, I and my colleague will oppose the third reading; and this Bill, which requires a constitutional majority, may therefore be defeated on the third reading. I will tell the Minister now that if he is not prepared to accept the amendments that were carried last year, the Bill may not pass the third reading.

This problem can be tackled in many ways. At present, the quadroon is exempt under the Act; he does not come under it in any way. However, we find that people with a dark skin and who are exempt from

the Act—they are not natives—have to carry a certificate from the department stating that they are not natives. Over a period of years, we have exempted the quadroon, and perhaps we could start now by giving half-castes complete exemption. This proposition could be given a few years' trial, and we could gradually bring in the full-bloods at a later stage.

But we must now consider the class of native in the metropolitan area; the native who has grown up in the South-West Land Division; the native who has attended schools with white children; the native who has learned to read and write; the native who has no knowledge of bush lore and very little knowledge of his own people's folk lore and who, in fact, cannot speak his native tongue—and neither can his parents in most instances. To all intents and purposes these fellows are born the same as we are except they have a dark-coloured skin. Some consideration should immediately be given to these people to enable them to be entitled, at least, to social service benefits.

The unfortunate position is that when they are in employment, they are taxed by the Federal Treasurer. They also pay the indirect taxes that we pay, when they make their weekly purchases, or when they seek entertainment at the local picture theatre. But when they become unemployed, they are not entitled to social service benefits.

Mr. Watts: A great number get social services.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Only those who are citizens or who have an exemption; otherwise they receive only 17s. 6d. per week, I think, from the Department of Native Welfare. They are also entitled to child endowment.

Mr. Watts: They are entitled to social services, too.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am given to understand that they are not, and that they do not receive it.

Mr. Watts: Read the report of the Department of Native Welfare.

Mr. Rhatigan: They do not receive social services unless they have citizenship rights or exemption certificates.

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is true. Many white people do not contribute more by way of taxes, than do these people during their working lives, but the natives are not entitled to social service benefits when they come to the end of their working days, whereas their white brethren, in the same circumstances, are. The natives also suffer in the same way in regard to social service benefits in the case of sickness. They get no sickness benefit whatsoever.

Just recently we read the report of a committee which was set up by the Government to inquire into this question and make recommendations for the purpose of

obtaining Federal financial aid to meet this problem. We ourselves can solve the problem, from the financial aspect, by granting the natives full citizenship rights. They will then become the responsibility of the Social Services Department when they are either unemployed, in ill-health, or aged. If they are capable of working, and work is offering and they decline to accept it, they will be treated in the same way as are the white people who do likewise. If an unemployed white person refuses to accept work when it is offered to him, he does not receive social services in respect to unemployment.

I shall refer only briefly to the amendments on the notice paper. I know that some argument may be advanced in respect of one of these amendments, and it is to the effect, "Why should not the department have the right to take a child from these people, because under the Child Welfare Act, the Child Welfare Department has the right to take a child before the court and, if it is neglected, have it committed to an institution." The same thing would obtain here. If the right was removed from the Department of Native Welfare to deal with native children without the consent of the parents, they could be dealt with, under the Child Welfare Act, by being brought before a magistrate.

With the reservations I have outlined, I support the second reading.

MR. RHATIGAN (Kimberley) [5.52]: Whilst I support the second reading of the Bill, I cannot say that I am over happy with it. When introducing the measure, the Minister gave me the impression that it was framed on the report of the Select Committee which sat for some weeks and took evidence from various people in different walks of life. But, to my way of thinking, the Bill is identical with the one introduced last year. Therefore, it does not have much bearing on the Select Committee's report.

The measure, I feel, merely works in reverse to our present legislation. At the moment any native can apply for citizenship rights, and have his children included on the certificate until they are of the age of 21, when they, themselves, can apply for citizenship rights. A study of the Bill gives me the impression that it is our present law in reverse inasmuch as natives are to be declared citizens. Proposed new Section 3B provides—

(1) Application to a Stipendiary Magistrate to declare a native to be a protected native, or to cancel the operation of declaration by which a native was declared to be a protected native, may be made—

- (a) by the Commissioner;
- (b) by a Protector with the consent of the Commissioner; or
- (c) by the native personally.

(2) An application, objection to the granting of an application, and proceedings on the hearing of, or otherwise relating to, an application or objection or both, shall be in the manner and form prescribed by the regulations.

It would be interesting to know what those regulations will be. It appears to me that the Bill, if passed, will make the commissioner all-powerful. To my way of thinking, it gives too much power to any individual in our present democratic world, irrespective of how sincere that individual may be.

When the Minister replies, I would like him to give some indication in regard to who may be declared a protected native. Will it be Long Jim, or Big-Toe Charley? And is he to wear a badge to show that he is a protected native? Are natives on stations to be declared citizens, wholly and solely; or which persons are to be declared protected natives? This is the portion of the Bill I am not very happy about.

I pay tribute to the Minister for his sincerity and his efforts to better the lot of the native. There is no more sincere person, dealing with this legislation, than the Minister, but I feel that the provision I have just dealt with is not necessary. I do not claim to have the answer, but I think a study of the Bill will show that it contains a lot of loop-holes which may cause considerable bother in the administering of the Act.

During my first year in the House, I advocated the complete abolition of the Department of Native Welfare. I formed that opinion by virtue of the fact that I was born amongst natives, and my playmates were natives. In the land where I lived in those days, there were no white children other than myself. I lived among natives, and I worked with them until I joined the Department of Native Welfare in 1946. I had just on seven years' experience with the department. I see no reason to alter my original suggestion that there should be the complete abolition of the Department of Native Welfare and, set up in its place, a department of social services; or it could be called by whatever title hon. members liked. It should include the Child Welfare Department.

The department I envisage would cater for all humans, irrespective of colour or creed. It would look to the wants of every person in need of assistance. When the Department of Native Welfare was first formed, it catered for the health of the natives. The department employed a travelling doctor, Dr. Davis—and later Dr. Musso—who travelled through the length and breadth of Western Australia attending to the health of the natives. The department has handed this function over to the Department of Health so that

now the health of the natives is entirely the responsibility of the Department of Health.

The Department of Native Welfare also ran institutions which catered for the education of the natives. This section of the department's work has been abolished, and rightly so. The education of the native is now the responsibility of the Education Department. The general care of native children and of indigent natives is handled by the missions, which do a worthy and meritorious job, irrespective of their religious creed.

Therefore I consider the Department of Native Welfare is now an allocation department. A certain amount of money is granted to it by the Treasury, and the heads of the department sit down in Perth and say, "We will give the Health Department so much; the Education Department so much; and each individual mission so much." I cannot see any necessity for this department to continue. The very fact that a particular race of people requires a department to administer it is a stigma on those who purport to represent the natives.

I support the second reading of the Bill, and I give full credit to the Minister for sincerity in his efforts to better the lot of the natives; but I think legislation which would be an improvement on this could be provided.

MR. PERKINS (Roe) [5.59]: If an impartial observer from some outside country could listen to the debate in this Chamber, I think he could be forgiven if he formed the opinion that those who were in favour of the Bill were supposed to have the welfare of the natives at heart, and those against it were aiming to push the native further into the mire. Anyone who knows the position of the natives in this State is aware that that is far from the truth.

I give credit to all hon. members for doing their best for the natives. But unfortunately many of us in this Chamber, and also many in the general community, although their hearts are in the right place, have not had the necessary experience, nor have they the knowledge of all the facts, to sum up properly the position in its true light and so arrive at a reasoned decision.

Mr. Sleeman: That would not apply to the previous speaker.

Mr. PERKINS: I pay full tribute to the hon. member for Kimberley, because I know he represents a part of the State where probably there are more natives than in any other district of Western Australia. I respect his opinion. Nevertheless, if members listened to him they must have realised that he has some misgivings about this Bill. I, too, have many misgivings. I think the Minister could be

accused of pandering to those people who are reasoning with their emotions and who, in the long run, can do a great disservice to the natives of Western Australia.

Anyone who has had much contact with natives will realise—as does the hon. member for Kimberley—that the problem is not a simple one. Some speakers had a great deal to say about the living conditions of natives in Western Australia and in other parts of the Commonwealth, too. I agree that their conditions are deplorable and that their outlook is not very good. In fact, in many instances, their mode of living is not even equal to the lowest standard of living recognised by the white population.

However, we must take care, when dealing with this problem, that we do not make it worse instead of better. I doubt very much whether this legislation is going to improve materially the natives' position. Those who have had much to do with our Australian natives realise that the kind of civilization that they had in the past—if one can call it such—was vastly different from ours. They constitute one of the most primitive people in the world; and I do not think any surprise can be felt when people who follow that mode of life are placed side by side with whites who are living in what we are pleased to call our 20th century civilisation.

I think it was the hon. member for Mt. Lawley who said that we have taken away from the natives their game reserves and destroyed their game; and the implication was—if I understood him aright—that if we could set the clock back and re-allocate the game reserves to them to enable them to live the same sort of life that they did 200 or 300 years ago, we would be doing something towards solving the problem.

Mr. Rowberry: That is only your inference.

Mr. PERKINS: Well, all right, it is my inference. But it would be impossible to do that, because I feel sure that the natives would not want to revert to that way of life. We have to accept the fact that wherever they contact our white civilisation and learn to enjoy what we are pleased to call the advances that we have made and the modern amenities that we have provided, they will demand them as their right if they are in a position to attain and enjoy them.

So we find that adjacent to most of the towns in the agricultural areas of the South-West Land Division a considerable number of natives seem to be living under better conditions than they were; yet there are still a great many whose standard of living is very poor indeed. With other members, I deplore the fact that so many live under these poor conditions. Efforts have been made to improve the lot of many

natives, and there are some who are now housed in State Housing Commission homes. There are some who are living according to our health and other standards; but unfortunately they comprise a very small percentage.

In many towns, warm-hearted citizens have co-operated with the local authorities; and in some cases, have tried to do even far more for the natives than they would for any family of whites. I know of one case where a man was prepared to donate all the building materials to provide a house for a native family on the condition that the native would carry out the labour to erect the house. For some time that native showed considerable enthusiasm; but it gradually waned, and the unfortunate result was that the house was never built.

Mr. Sleeman: Was it started?

Mr. PERKINS: Some bricks were made, but that is about as far as it got. It was only natural that that particular well-wisher became very critical of natives. Subsequently, that native family was housed in one of the homes provided by the State Government. Even when houses are allocated to natives, the problem is not solved by any means. I am of the opinion that if the best of the native families could be allowed to live their lives without other natives, with a lower standard of living, joining them and making their house a sort of community home for 15 or 20 people, some improvement possibly could be effected in the living standards of those families.

However, I think hon. members who represent country districts realise that only too often many of the natives who live in humpies in the bush adjacent to the towns or villages join a native family who are resident in a State Housing Commission home, and before long there are complaints from neighbouring white residents about their poor living conditions and the noise that they make. I am also aware of some instances of where the Native Welfare Department, in co-operation with the local authority concerned, have had to evict native families from the homes that were specially provided for them. I think the Minister for Native Welfare knows of some of those cases.

Nevertheless, I am not going to condemn the natives as a whole because of such instances. Although these disappointments are encountered, I still think we could make a better effort to improve their living conditions as much as we possibly can. Even though they may not appreciate what is being done for them, it still does not absolve us from our duty to make an effort to do something better for them. Other instances can, of course, be cited where native families are living in houses provided either by the State Housing Commission or by the Native Welfare Department,

and they are leading a civilised and normal life as we understand it. All credit to such native families for improving their living standards; but, unfortunately, there are far too few of them.

I do not know the actual figures, but I think only a very small percentage of natives are actually in contact with the white population of this State. All that I have been saying only highlights the problem. The question we have to ask ourselves is whether this legislation is going to improve the overall position. As I have already said, like the hon. member for Kimberley I have very grave misgivings as to whether this Bill will effect an improvement.

If we pass through this Parliament legislation which is only a sham, it will not reflect much credit on hon. members, and it will certainly do nothing to fulfil the high hopes of some of those people in the community to whom I give full credit for their good intentions, but who I fear are not putting forward any concrete suggestion to improve the lot of the native people.

As previous speakers have indicated, this legislation represents a new approach to the problem because it is seeking to provide that all natives in Western Australia shall automatically become full citizens; and then the Native Welfare Department or some other body or person will be able to take action to reduce the living standards of certain of those natives to a status similar to that under which they had been living previously. As I read the legislation, there is provision for other means to be adopted as well in order to make them protected natives.

The point I want to make is that this measure seeks to provide for the making of a new class of protected native, who will be in a similar position to that great number—in fact the vast majority—of natives who, at present, do not enjoy citizenship rights. Presumably, all natives will be entitled to have their names placed on the roll and to obtain a vote for the Legislative Assembly elections if they so desire it; and I am afraid there will be some difficulties in regard to that provision. I do not know that that privilege matters a great deal one way or the other.

Mr. May: They will have to go on the roll; otherwise they will be fined.

Mr. PERKINS: I understood from the Minister's speech that that portion of the legislation was not going to be enforced very rigidly. In replying to the interjection by the hon. member for Collie, many complications will arise if the electoral officers take action through the courts against all natives who should be enrolled, but who fail to enrol on the Legislative Assembly roll.

Mr. PERKINS: I was dealing with the interjection by the hon. member for Collie relating to compulsory enrolment of natives if this Bill becomes law. Obviously the Minister must have some thought in mind about amending the existing law in relation to enrolment. Before tea, I said it was impossible to apply compulsory enrolment to many of the natives in Western Australia, and I can only assume that some action will be taken in this regard by the promulgation of regulations. The Minister should clarify that point; otherwise hon. members will have to use their imagination as to the method which will be adopted.

Even natives who are in contact with civilization will experience difficulties in enrolling and in exercising their vote. As hon. members representing pastoral electorates know, a great many of them have no proper names. The two most responsible native employees at one station are known as Whale Bone, and as Long Whale Bone. So far as the manager of the station is aware, those two natives have no other names. As long as the manager can remember, they have been known by those names. With the inclusion of such names, if the Bill is passed, the electoral rolls will be somewhat different in the future and there will appear some very colourful names.

Many natives do not attach that importance to being on the roll and having the right to vote, which some hon. members have implied. From my experience, I would say that most of the natives will attach very little significance to such a privilege. I agree that where natives desire to vote, they should be given the right to do so. Everyone will agree that under the existing legislation, natives who are intelligent and civilised enough have full opportunity to cast a vote if they so desire. At present such a type of native has no difficulty in obtaining citizenship rights and in being placed on the State electoral roll. It is untrue to say that any native, able to cast an intelligent vote at elections for the Legislative Assembly, is debarred from doing so by statute. I make the statement again that it is possible for natives to be enrolled if they desire.

Some people assume that if all natives were to be enrolled and many voted, they would vote for the Labour Party.

Mr. Sleeman: If they had any sense they would.

Mr. PERKINS: The hon. member must realise that many thoughtful people in this community do not vote Labour. He will also find many natives who will not vote Labour. The fact is that natives are very easily influenced. If the native vote were a very vital factor in an electorate, it could happen that political parties would be tempted to employ special agents to influence that vote.

It does not need very much imagination to realise that such a practice could lead to all sorts of political skulduggery, for want of a better term to describe what might result. The fact is that natives are very easily influenced. I have very little doubt that the native vote will be dealt with by political parties in the same manner as they deal with many other classes of voters. Perhaps I might illustrate the manner in which the native vote could be influenced.

During the period when the postal vote regulations applied and most station managers were appointed postal vote officers, one station manager told me that on one occasion there were two natives employed at his station. The natives had citizenship rights and had been enrolled. The station manager had a very high sense of his duties as a postal officer. His political beliefs were certainly not Labour. He informed the two natives that an election was due and that they had a right to vote.

The natives asked him to take their vote. He produced the necessary forms to enable them to do so, and at the same time told them who were the respective candidates and how the forms were to be completed. Obviously neither of these natives had an accurate idea of what party the candidates stood for. As anyone who is familiar with natives can well imagine, those two natives asked the station manager who was the best candidate.

Mr. Sleeman: You know who the station manager will consider the best.

Mr. PERKINS: For the information of the hon. member, the station manager informed me that he was unable to tell the natives who was the best candidate; and that, as a postal officer, it was his duty to see that they were not influenced and that they cast their votes impartially.

Mr. Lawrence: What the station manager should have said was, "I should not tell you."

Mr. PERKINS: In fact, he did not tell them. The natives became non-plussed. They knew the two candidates. As one can imagine, the next move of the natives was to ask the station manager for whom he was going to vote. The station manager told me that he would not give them that information either. He put his duties as a postal officer on a high plane, and he refused to tell the natives for whom he was going to vote. I am pointing out that a person who does not take his responsibilities as seriously as this station manager could influence the native vote.

Members who live in country districts are aware only too well that the natives respect certain people and are very easily influenced by them. I hope that we do not add to the complex situation by enabling special agents to be appointed by political parties to cajole the natives into voting for a particular candidate, and taking questionable steps in the process. The

illustration I have given highlights the difficulties which inevitably will arise if people who are not fitted into our mode of civilisation are given the right or are compelled to vote. In order to make these Australian citizens fit to exercise a vote, a great deal more spade work needs to be done. I suggest that steps in that direction are very much more worth while than any flamboyant talk which one hears in support of this Bill.

Another portion of the Bill affects to a major extent the lives of the native population; that is the portion relating to the Licensing Act. As has been stated by hon. members earlier in this debate, the Bill provides for free access to hotels being given to the natives, and for purchase of intoxicating liquor. It has been pointed out that the principal reason why natives are affected to such a great degree by liquor is that they have only occasional access to it; and that when given the opportunity to obtain liquor, they make the most of the opportunity. There is no doubt at all that intoxicating liquor has a much greater effect on the native than on the average white citizen.

Mr. Evans: One reason could be the quality of the liquor that is available to natives.

Mr. PERKINS: That could be the reason. Giving natives access to hotels will not bring about much difference in the quality of liquor which they obtain. If natives desire to become intoxicated, they invariably purchase the cheapest liquor available. I doubt very much whether the quality of liquor which will be obtainable under the new set-up will be very much different from the quality of liquor that is now available to them.

Hon. members may have read in the Press in recent weeks about the difficulties that have arisen in Alice Springs. The native painter Namatjira, hon. members will recall, was taken to task by the resident magistrate as the result of a brawl which developed near his camp, where apparently liquor had been supplied through Mr. Namatjira. There is another Press cutting taken from "The West Australian," with the Alice Springs dateline and reading as follows:—

Namatjira To Face Court Over Liquor.

Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira has been summonsed on four counts of supplying liquor to wards of the State. The summonses were served on him in Alice Springs late this afternoon.

If a charge of supplying is proved against Namatjira he is liable to a minimum penalty of six months' imprisonment without option of a fine.

Namatjira, because he has full citizenship rights, can buy and drink intoxicating liquor, but he cannot give it to any native who is a ward of the State.

That is the legal position, as it applies in the Northern Territory. I would say that Mr. Namatjira and the other members of his family have had much more contact with our civilisation than the vast majority of the natives in the pastoral areas of this State, and probably more than most of the natives in the agricultural areas. But I think the difficulties that have arisen in Alice Springs with Mr. Namatjira, his relatives, and his friends amongst the native population, highlight the kind of difficulties which we might easily find developing in Western Australia if this Bill is passed in its present form.

The set-up, as I understand it, will be that if the Bill passes in its present form the native will have the right to enter hotels or any other place that sells intoxicating liquor and drink such liquor on the premises, and may also take away whatever quantities he chooses for consumption by himself or friends. Any hon. members who have seen some of the brawls which have developed in adjacent country towns as a result of the native population obtaining liquor and getting themselves into a state in which they are not responsible for their actions, would hope that that development will not spread in Western Australia. I do not think there is any doubt whatever that the effect of intoxicating liquor on our native population is more violent than on the average white. Of course, that has been the reason why, in the past, we have made provision for only those natives who we have thought are able to drink without getting themselves into serious trouble to be given the right to obtain it legally.

I know that the law as it stands has caused some difficulties for the Police Department, and a number of police officers have told me that they think it would be easier for them if the law were amended to give all natives the right of access to liquor. Responsible officers in the Police Department in a great many centres have told me that. The difficulty in which they find themselves at present is they do not know which natives have citizenship rights, and the right to obtain liquor; and as a result, their administration of the law is made very difficult, and they can never be quite sure to whom to sheet the blame home; whereas if all natives were given the right to obtain liquor, the police would deal with any of those who cause a brawl or any upset of the peace, the same as they would with any members of the white population.

Police officers have also told me that they think it would be necessary to strengthen the police force in each centre so that there would be sufficient manpower to deal with the increased disorder which is likely to result. That may come as something of a shock to some of those people who support the amendments contained in the Bill before us.

Mr. Watts: And police will be needed where now there are none.

Mr. PERKINS: That could be another development. New stations may be necessary as well.

Mr. Grayden: What about the North-West towns? No additional police are required there?

Mr. PERKINS: Well, I suggest that the member for South Perth should have a closer look at some of the North-West towns. I have been up there in very recent weeks; and all the officers of the Police Department who make contact with natives—and I contacted them in regard to all phases—say that if the natives are given free access to liquor they will need further assistance, and they felt that they would have some increased disorder to deal with. I pass this information on to the House.

Mr. Grayden: The hotels in the North are often full of natives, but there is no drunkenness to speak of.

Mr. PERKINS: I think the hon. member for South Perth will be in for a great shock if this Bill is passed. The result of its passage could be, of course, that brawls will develop; and if the Police Department applies the same law to the natives as to the white population, we are going to see many natives before the court for breaches of the peace; and it could be that there will be a considerable increase in the number of natives in our prisons.

Personally, I do not think placing a native in prison does him any good. He does not like it, contrary to what someone has said. I know something of natives, because I have employed some, and have helped natives whenever I could. The Minister for Native Welfare knows that. The fact remains that a native does not like going to prison; and when he is put there, he associates with the least desirable types and is a much more difficult person to deal with, and therefore is not helped at all by being in prison.

I am afraid that if we are going to put the responsibility on the Police Force of enforcing the law after the natives are given greater access to intoxicating liquor, that must be the result. If any hon. members have any special information on that point, I would be very interested to have it, because those are the opinions I hold; and I have contacted many responsible people to ascertain what they think.

As I have said, the police say that it would be easier for them if the law were amended, and all natives were given the right of access to liquor. On the other hand, they state also that they would need increased assistance, and that they anticipate that there would be many more breaches of the peace to cope with.

The Bill deals with many other Acts on the Western Australian statute book. It deals with the Dog Act, Electoral Act,

Evidence Act, Fauna Protection Act, Firearms and Guns Act, Land Act, Mining Act, and so on. I do not propose to go through those in detail, because I do not think the implication of the amendment of those other Acts is of such significance as the provisions relating to the two Acts which I have already dealt with at some length. Those will certainly have the biggest effect on the life of our native population.

I quite agree with the hon. member for Kimberley that probably the Native Welfare Department is very largely superfluous, once one gets into the North-West areas of the State. I believe that if the jurisdiction of the Native Welfare Department were stopped short at Carnarvon, and the work which is entrusted to it at present were handed over to the Health and Education Departments, in particular, the officers of those departments would do all that is being done at the present time, and do it much more efficiently.

I think that the Native Welfare Department in itself is limited in its effectiveness, but the other departments I have mentioned are in much closer touch with the native population; and in my opinion, provided those departments were staffed with suitable officers, they would deal with the natives in the northern areas of the State very much more effectively than does the Native Welfare Department at the present time.

I do not know about the implications in the southern areas of the State. I am afraid that I have not the details as yet. It would probably be unfair to push all the responsibilities of the Native Welfare Department on to officers of any other single department. There is work to be done in many of our country towns—for instance, in improving the living conditions of our natives adjacent to those towns—and the Native Welfare Department could do very much better work than at present if it approached the job in a more realistic manner.

One finds instances in recent years where there have been difficulties about the health of the natives. There has been a lot of trouble with trachoma in natives. That trouble has been diagnosed by either the officers of the central Health Department or the local health authorities. The native welfare officers have certainly taken some action to round the natives up; but in most instances they have left the actual work of control to other officers on the spot—in many cases, the local health authorities.

I quoted a case last year in which an officer of the Native Welfare Department was pressing the health authorities to take action, but he was unwilling to stay on the spot and actually help with the giving of sulphanilamide pills, or whatever pills had to be taken and it was left to local public-spirited citizens—the local schoolmaster and another lady in the township—to go out to the native camps and give these pills

to the children who were not attending school. As I say, the Native Welfare Department does not endear itself to the local rural communities when it is found that its patrol officers are not willing to do the actual spade work which is necessary to improve the health of the natives living adjacent to these towns.

In conclusion, I do not believe there is any colour bar; the real bar is the health bar. I know what I am talking about in this regard, as I have lived in country areas all my life and have seen a great number of natives. My own children have gone to school with native children, and I say that the colour bar is not important in Australia. The real problem, I repeat, is the health bar; and if the Minister for Native Welfare took action along that line, he would do more to improve the standards of the native population and would fit them better into the local communities wherever they may be.

MR. POTTER (Subiaco) [8.11]: The word "misgiving" has been bandied about this Chamber, in relation to the measure before us; but I feel that the Bill is of such momentous nature that it would be bound to give rise to certain misgivings, as must all legislation dealing with human relationships. As we have probably the greatest native population of any State in Australia, this is a very vexed question, inasmuch as we have so many degrees of variation among our natives—physically, mentally and in regard to their contact with our society.

I understand that there are 70 odd dialects spoken by the natives throughout this State. I have a fair amount of knowledge of our natives, as I have travelled and have lived among them and have had contact with them, though not to the extent of the experience of some other hon. members of this Chamber. The conditions and contacts of the natives in the South-West differ greatly from those in the North-West of the State, where the natives are physically bigger specimens and have not been in close contact with the white population over such a long period. Again, in the interior, there are many natives who are entirely nomadic.

The problem with which we are dealing has been tackled by various means, over a long period, and the Minister should be commended for bringing this Bill forward. In fact, he has been commended in this regard, not only by the local Press, but also by the Eastern States Press and the Minister for Territories.

The measure with which we are dealing represents a positive step forward, in place of the gradual progress on which emphasis has been placed over the past hundred years in this State. It must be remembered that we took this country from its original citizens, and now we have the temerity to talk about offering them citizenship. No

wonder, in view of the way the difficulty has been approached in the past, we have not yet achieved the desired results!

Where any law is enacted it is found, from time to time, that certain modifications are necessary; and the modifications required to the present Native Welfare Act are contained in the contentious clauses of the Bill—the protected native provision, under which the Director of Native Welfare may declare natives protected, and that which continues the Department of Native Welfare.

In the laws dealing with our own community there are statutes affecting specific sections of our people, such as those dealing with farmers or repatriation or soldier land settlement, the rehabilitation of servicemen, and so on. I believe it is necessary that for the time being we have some department to look after our native population, no matter whether it is called the Department of Native Welfare or something else, and its purpose should be the rehabilitation of our natives who, for over a century, have been to a degree looked upon as something less than ourselves. All too often in our dealings with the natives, and in the legislation we have passed regarding them, we have considered them as being less than ourselves, and we have been prone to think we are better than they.

I repeat that we must have some department to rehabilitate the natives and advise them in regard to land settlement, mining, industrial matters, legal questions and things of that nature. I can visualise this department withering away, in the course of years, as the need for it becomes less. It is no wonder, in view of our treatment of them over the past century, that many natives have a certain inferiority complex, and for that reason I believe our approach to them now should be on a psychological basis. In their native state these people were primitive communists, and by that I mean that they were communists in the most natural sense. If one gave them a hat, or some other article of clothing, for instance, they would all share it.

Mr. Moir: Socialism!

Mr. POTTER: One could call it that, but I would prefer to say they were communists in a community sense.

Mr. Hawke: Does that mean that if there were four of them they would each take one quarter of the hat or the shirt?

Mr. POTTER: Yes. If one gave them a hat today one would probably find Maggie wearing it tomorrow, instead of Jimmie, and so it would go around the whole show. I believe that some of the natives could not care less whether they are granted full citizenship rights, whereas the granting of such rights will to others be an incentive to become worthy and honourable citizens. Others might have feelings of arrogance.

But all things considered, I believe that the Bill is a most worthy measure and that it will result in our natives becoming citizens, with few exceptions—

Mr. Nalder: It is the few exceptions that are so important.

Mr. POTTER: I have mentioned a number of Acts that give protection to certain sections of our own people, and in this regard I might mention the Lunacy Act, the Criminal Code and other laws. This Bill seeks at least to make citizens of our natives and therefore it must tend to reduce overseas criticism of our treatment of them. It is well known that certain people make a great feature of what we do in regard to our natives, and such news is bandied about from here to Moscow and to the ends of the earth, with the result that we come in for international criticism in this connection. Criticism of that kind brings not only this State, but also the whole of the Commonwealth into disrepute, but this measure will show the world that we are at least striving to achieve something for our natives.

There has been mention of liquor and voting in regard to our natives, but I think what has been said can be largely discounted, because many natives could not care less about voting. In this connection I might add that many of our own people do not really care whether or not they vote. It has been alleged that there will be a lot of skulduggery in regard to natives voting; but how often in the past have we had to amend our electoral laws to avoid malpractices by our own people?

In regard to liquor, the reaction of the police is—as the hon. member for Roe said—that they would prefer that there were no Native Welfare Act, so that they could take action under their own statutes against natives who consume liquor. Some natives do become rowdy under the influence of beer, but a great many of our own people are affected in a similar manner. Sometimes when we see our own people mentioned in the social columns or meet them close at hand on ships and in other places, in all their glamour, we are forced to think how degenerate some of them become under the influence of liquor.

No native could be any more degenerate, if the stories I have heard are true. Some of these film stars, and socialites, who frequent the Riviera, in the south of France, with all their glamour, become degenerate with liquor. Some mention has been made of hooliganism and brawls. Brawls start among our own people, too.

Mr. Hawke: Sometimes at the football matches.

Mr. POTTER: There are plenty of brawls there. We have the Teddy boys and the bodgies and widgees among the white people. In the last three years we have had to pass legislation to stop these people from carrying lethal weapons, such

as knives, bike chains and so on. I know of one unsuspecting fellow, who was using a knife for some purpose, and who was arrested by the police because he put his knife on a bar counter. This man was about 40 years of age and he was able to explain his position; he got away with it on a plea of ignorance.

The SPEAKER: Is the hon. member connecting up his speech with natives and citizenship rights?

Mr. POTTER: Yes. I am showing how some of our legislation, passed for certain purposes, is often misconstrued, particularly by our administration.

Mr. Roberts: He was leading up to the *Ma Mau*.

Mr. POTTER: I think the Minister is to be commended for bringing down this legislation. It is something that is wanted; it is something that has been spoken about for 100 years; and it is of no use people talking sanctimoniously and preaching to this House of how our natives are not ready to accept the benefits proposed by this Bill.

We have only to look at the British Commonwealth. The British Parliament has allowed nations in the British Commonwealth to have the right to govern themselves. If one travels through those countries, and looks at conditions there, one wonders how on earth they could possibly govern themselves. I will say for some of our native people that they are intelligent, and many of them have contributed a good deal towards the development of this country. They have helped the white people, and many white men have taken natives with them on trips as true and trusted friends.

Mr. O'Brien: That is quite true.

Mr. POTTER: Those natives have done everything asked of them, on many occasions more than whites, who claim citizenship as a birthright, would have done in the same circumstances. It is of no use hon. members saying that the natives should not be given a vote. This right has been given to native peoples overseas, in India, Malaya and Africa; and there is no reason why our natives should not be given the same benefits.

Natives make good mechanics. They drive their own vehicles, even if they do rob the squatter of his windmill oil to keep the engines going. That is Australian initiative—Australian ingenuity. So I commend the Bill to the House, and I would remind hon. members that there is nothing significant about giving natives votes or allowing them to buy liquor. That is the last thing we should consider when looking at a Bill of this nature.

At some future time the contentious clauses can be amended, if they need amending. But let us give the Bill a trial; let us see what happens. There may be some people who are opposed to the

present administration; but let us see how the administration gets on if this Bill is passed. Give the officers a fair go to see if they do the right thing. In time I can visualise the department, as such, fading and withering away. I support the measure.

MR. WILD (Dale) [8.21]: I have been a member of this Assembly for 12 years; and this is one of those subjects which, in the main, I have left to those who are in close contact with the natives. On this question I think everyone listens to members like the hon. member for Kimberley, the hon. member for Murray and the hon. member for Narrogin because they are men who have been in close touch with this problem for many years; and we must be guided to a large extent by their experience. I suppose we who live in the city could say that we really know nothing about it. But over the years I have taken a keen interest in the problem and I have wondered on many occasions how we could overcome this difficult question.

I do not want the Minister to think that because I am going to criticise the attempts he is making to overcome the problem I am completely anti to him—far from it. I think this is one of those problems on which none of us knows the right way to jump. Not for one moment do I believe that the existing set-up is right; yet when I ask myself what alternative there is, I frankly admit that I do not know of one.

When I first came into this Chamber, I visited the Moore River mission station with the hon. member for South Perth—who for the last three or four years has taken a tremendous interest in the native problem—and the late member for Moore, Mr. Ackland. When we returned to this House we all spoke of what we had seen on that particular occasion; and this evening I have been looking through *Hansards* for August and November of 1947 to see what we said.

The late Mr. Ackland was rather inclined to the view expressed by the hon. member for North Perth; he felt that we must do something with the children from birth. I think I am right in saying that he felt it would be in the interests of the children if they were taken away from their parents at birth. That was the late Mr. Ackland's view after his visit to the Moore River mission station in August, 1947.

That may or may not be right; but my memory takes me back—and I am sure the hon. member for South Perth will recall this, too—to the visit we made to the New Norcia station after our Moore River trip. I remember Father Ubeck saying to us, after we had looked over the institution—and it was magnificent; I have never seen a cleaner or a better-kept place—that even though the missionaries took the children from birth, reared them, and educated them, and found jobs for them

when they were 14 or 15 years of age, in many instances they finished up by going back to their old native haunts. He indicated that he felt that the life-long work of the missionaries, in this regard, had been a failure. That was said by a man who has had many years' experience in this work.

But still I am not going to say that such a policy is wrong. It seems to me that if this Bill becomes law it will be a complete volte face of what has been done in the past. If it is agreed to in its present form a native will be automatically granted citizenship rights instead of his having to prove that he is worthy of them. If he loses his citizenship rights he becomes a protected person. Although I do not intend to deal with the sob stuff, mentioned by the hon. member for Subiaco, we must face cold, hard facts.

My memory takes me back to four or five years ago when I had the opportunity of visiting Derby; and, while there, I spent a week-end with Mr. Hughes at Yeda Station. We discussed this native problem at some length during the evening and he said to me, "Tomorrow morning I will take you out and show you what we have tried to do with the natives, and you will be able to see for yourself exactly what their reactions have been."

At that time there was a move afoot—I take it through the Native Welfare Department—to provide natives working on the stations with some small private accommodation of their own. At this station the management had erected six or seven what looked to be Air Force huts about 14 feet by 20 feet; outside the huts were erected nice ablution benches and latrines.

In each of these small huts there was a little stove, a bed, and so on. This was done to try to get the natives to live as white people do. When we went to this little native compound the next morning—it was only about 100 to 150 yards from the back of the station homestead—there were 60 or 70 natives all congregated around a fire which was burning underneath half-a-dozen pieces of old tin.

Bill Hughes said to me, "There you are! We went to considerable expense to put up those huts and to give them the opportunity to try to live like white people. Go in and have a look at the ablution block and latrines. Although I employ about 16 natives on the station I am keeping the whole of this crowd. They are all relations, aunts, uncles and so on, and they simply refuse to sleep inside the huts that we have provided. They prefer to gather around these two or three fires underneath four or five sheets of tin." As I said, there were about 70 natives there.

As best I could, I got into conversation with one or two of these people. There were two native cooks at the homestead, and I also tried to talk with them. All I can say is that if under this legislation

we give these people the right to vote—I do not care whether they vote Labour, Liberal or anything else—they will not have the intelligence, unfortunately, to recognise what they are doing.

I would now like to touch on the question of liquor as it affects natives. Again I would like to recount to the House an experience I had some time ago. My mind again goes back to the time when, in company with the Leader of the Opposition, I visited a town in his electorate. It would not be fair to mention the name of the officer, but a new sergeant of police had been recently appointed in a country town where natives abound. He was an idealist. I remember that the Leader of the Opposition and I spoke to him, and he more or less said, "Well, I am perfectly satisfied that the attitude of the people towards the natives has been all wrong". I came away from my conversation with him convinced that even though he had just arrived in the town he felt he was going to settle all the native problems in that town.

I did not meet that officer again for four or five years. But when I had a yarn with him over a glass of beer, and broached the question of natives he said, "I must confess that it has been an absolute failure, and if they give these people the right to get liquor and enter hotels when they desire, I will not be responsible for what is likely to happen in this town". That was the opinion of a man who went to that town as an idealist and who, after four or five years, had suffered a complete volte face in regard to what he considered should be done for these people.

As I have said, Father Ubeck did tell us in 1947 that he felt the practice of taking children and trying to look after them when very young was a failure. In spite of that I still feel that the only possibility we have of doing anything for these people is to educate them from birth. I remember living alongside Sister Kate's Home in Kenwick for nearly three years, after which I moved to my present place of abode, which is only a few hundred yards further away; and although most of the children there are not full bloods—most of them are quadroons—the home has produced some fine citizens. One only has to consider the history of football in this State to find men like Polly Farmer and Square Kilmurray; both of whom have won Sandover medals, to see just what these people are capable of. They certainly give us a lead in sport, and are very fine types indeed. I have known some of these men enter the trades. They have turned out excellent citizens. I am inclined to the view, however, that we must try to get these children from birth.

Whilst I would not be prepared to support this legislation—because I do not think the native, as we know him today, is in a fit condition to either have the

right to obtain liquor when he wants, or to have a vote—I would be prepared to subscribe to a policy of setting a deadline date—say, from birth—at which all natives would obtain citizenship rights. We should then see if we could not do something from that date onwards.

When we hear members like the hon. member for Roe and others who have employed these old hard-bitten individuals—some of them hard-bitten sinners like ourselves—we must appreciate the difficulty that confronts us. It is impossible for a leopard to change his spots. If, however, we could get them from birth and inculcate into them their duties as citizens, and tell them of the laws they must obey, I feel it would be a forward step.

I, too, feel that the best people to handle this problem, without doubt, are the respective churches we have in this country. The churches have done magnificent work under trying circumstances; and I feel that if we could get this extra money from the Commonwealth, we should feed it to the church organisations and let them carry on with the great work they are doing today. I do not think the time is opportune for me to support the present legislation; but if some Government—no matter which Government it might be—set a deadline date giving all native-born children citizenship rights, it would be a forward step in the uplift of natives in this country.

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [8.37]: I know very little of natives, except what I have learned over the last ten years or so visiting places like Roebourne and Wittenoom Gorge in the North-West of our State. It is entirely wrong for a Government to bring down legislation if it is not prepared to go to the full extent. If the Government were prepared to say, "We will give all the natives citizenship rights" it would be a different proposition. But the suggestion is that they would be given citizenship rights and then these rights would be taken away from certain of them.

Most of us know that we have different types of natives throughout the State. We have the nomadic tribes, of which I know nothing. Then there is the type of faithful native who has worked on some of the sheep and cattle stations of the North for a great number of years; and the native who has with his family drifted into the vicinity of the towns, mostly on the North-West coast. Then again, there are the natives who have been educated by the missions.

To my way of thinking there is a great difference between these natives. Had the Government been able, with the help of the Department of Native Welfare, to send its officers to these different places, and different stations with a view to saying to some of these natives, "We propose to give you citizenship rights. Do you want them or

do you not?", I venture to suggest he would be a very good officer who could have explained to those natives what he meant. Yet we are asked to support a Bill which will give these rights to natives automatically.

When one goes to the Northern Territory, and to Melville Island and Bathurst Island, which are very big missions where children are educated from childhood, one finds a very good result. Even though that is so, are they prepared to turn these educated natives loose on the mainland? No; they want them to stay where they have been educated, under supervision. I feel that the crux of the situation is as suggested by the hon. member for Dale. If the Government can obtain funds from the Commonwealth Government, by all means let us give that money to the churches, no matter what their denomination might be, because they have been the greatest factor in educating the natives.

I have heard people say that liquor is not a very serious problem for the native to solve. I have seen natives under the influence of liquor, and I have seen white men under the influence of liquor. It is possible that the white man will go somewhat haywire, but at least he does not get hold of a spear and stick it into his wife; nor does he get a club and club her to death. That is the difference in the effect which liquor has on the white man and the native.

It has been suggested that the natives will get used to liquor. But how long will it take them to get used to it? Are they to be educated to the stage where they can become drunk and yet not want to kill, as a lot of them do at present? I spoke to every parish priest from Geraldton to Darwin and asked their views on native citizenship. They all said it was their firm opinion that every man born in this country was entitled to citizenship rights; but at the same time they asked, "Can you not make them citizens and at the same time prohibit them from having alcohol?" So we can appreciate that a big fear among the parish priests along the coast was what would result from making liquor available to the natives.

Mr. Brady: Would you vote for the Bill if that were not in it?

Mr. CROMMELIN: Does the Minister mean if they had no right to obtain liquor? Is it practicable?

Mr. Brady: I am asking you the question.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I will ask the Minister a question: Is he prepared to put it in the Bill? We must respect the wishes of those men who are in control of the natives. If it is their opinion that the effect of alcohol on natives is so damaging that we should legislate to prohibit them from obtaining liquor, I cannot see how we can arrive at any solution in that respect.

I heard the hon. member for Subiaco say that the natives did not have the rights of new Australians. He is right inasmuch as when new Australians come here they are not citizens of Australia. A native is not a citizen either. But the new arrival is made to serve an apprenticeship of five years and during that period he must prove himself. If he does everything right, then at the end of five years, if he so desires, he can become an Australian citizen.

If that is all right for him, surely we can insist on some such provision for the natives. If that were put forward, I am sure a lot of people would support it. Let us educate the native to such a stage that he can take over the rights that could be his. I went to the trouble of visiting natives of different ages in different towns, and it is unquestionable that they are for the most part very adaptable, especially so in such things as mechanics—the repairing of motorcars and trucks—which I think is somewhat amazing, because it is not a thing that anyone can learn, even a white man. Yet these men, through their training, were able to absorb such complicated knowledge.

That proves my point that education is the solution to the granting of citizenship rights. I do not think this is a question of colour. The Australian native—so far as I am given to understand—can inter-marry with a white person and for some generations they will never throw back to black, and we do not have that fear here as they do in South Africa. There is no doubt that it is a fear in South Africa. I would not like to see conditions in Australia similar to those in South Africa; and, thank goodness we know that that is not possible, on account of the lineage of the Australian aboriginal.

By talking to different natives, it is possible to get a slight idea of their point of view. They are superstitious, and are even educated to a certain degree to be so. Look at the natives at Port Hedland with Mr. McLeod! What power has he over a native? He has a lot. He can persuade these men to work; but what man could persuade the ordinary native to do so if that native had the right to get liquor? No man could, because he could not control him. That is still the problem which we have to overcome.

I favour very much helping the missions and the churches by giving them more funds to enable them to educate the children to such a standard that they might be taught, by perseverance, different trades. I do not think it would take a great number of years before the natives would become useful citizens. But unless the Government is prepared to give them citizenship rights without any strings, I cannot see how it will work.

It must take a lot of courage and perseverance on the part of those in the missions to stick at the work year after

year; but they are content to do so because they can see they are getting results. I do not know what would happen if all natives become citizens automatically. They would not have to stay at the missions; they could do as they liked. Possibly they do not have to stay at the missions now; but most do so because they are better off there. They are better fed and are being educated. They are better off than if they were living on the outskirts of country towns and North-West ports, where there does not seem to be any future for them.

Therefore, I would suggest that the Minister do all he can for the missions, because I feel that in a few years' time they could be the biggest help we could have in achieving the result we desire.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) (8.50): I would like to mention a few points in connection with this Bill, although I do not intend to take up very much time of the House, seeing that the matter was debated last year and comments were made by hon. members on this side. However, there are one or two points which I would like the Minister to answer when he is replying to this debate.

First of all, I would like him to tell the House what he intends to do with native reserves if this Bill becomes law. Throughout the length and breadth of the State there are a number of reserves set aside which natives only may inhabit. No white person can go on to these reserves; they are wholly and solely reserved for the native people.

Mr. Lapham: That is only in theory.

Mr. NALDER: The hon. member for North Perth is entirely wrong there.

Mr. Lapham: You can get permission.

Mr. NALDER: Yes; but if a white person goes on to a native reserve without permission he is charged with being a prohibited person on that reserve. The reserve is for natives only and no-one else. What is going to happen if this Bill becomes law? That is the point I would like clarified, because the Minister is going to have some protected natives to deal with. It is not going to be long before he will have a number of men being considered natives in the protected class. Are they going to be entitled to go back to the reserve?

If so, are the members of their families, who still have citizenship rights going to be allowed to go there, too? This position is going to create quite a number of problems. I do not know whether the Minister has given thought to this problem or not, and I consider matters of this nature should be cleared up when a Bill of this kind is before the House.

Much has been said tonight, and on previous occasions, about what the native will do when he becomes a citizen, or when

this honour is conferred upon him. I do not think it will make any difference at all. I consider that the points put up by the hon. member for Narrogin when he was replying to the Minister, highlighted the position clearly. The points he said we should consider in connection with the native are those of education, housing, and health. They are more important at this stage than giving the natives citizenship rights.

No person believes more enthusiastically than I that the natives should have citizenship rights; but is the position as we find it today the right one in which to give such rights to these people? They are not in a position to accept citizenship.

I have talked with some of these people in the Great Southern towns, and the womenfolk are frightened of what is going to happen. Only during the last two or three weeks I have spoken to several native women and asked them their opinion, and they hate to think what might happen if their menfolk are given citizenship rights. They have had experience of their menfolk obtaining liquor.

Only this week I spoke to a justice of the peace, and he gave me some interesting information. He said that his experience in the Great Southern was that when natives came before the court for creating a disturbance—brawls, assaults and so on—it all stemmed back to one person; that is, the person who supplied the natives with the liquor. He said that if a census of the position were taken in the Great Southern, we would find that it is the supplier of the liquor who causes the trouble. He backed that statement up by saying that it could be proved correct by information obtained from the local courts.

We cannot ignore these facts. If the peace is to be kept by these people, then apparently the liquor problem is one of the greatest with which we will have to deal. I mention these points because I believe that the Minister should give some satisfactory reply as to what he intends to do, if this Bill becomes law. I would like to know what he intends to do with native reserves, and how he is going to handle protected natives under conditions that exist today. If he answers these questions, he will be giving to this House and to the people who are interested in the various towns on the Great Southern, information which they desire to have at this stage.

Mr. Brady: Would you vote for this Bill if it contained a direction against natives obtaining drink?

Mr. NALDER: I would give every consideration to it; and I make that statement without fear of any contradiction from anyone in this House. I believe it is one of the biggest problems we have to consider; and I would give consideration to it if that were included in the Bill.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Ask the Minister to withdraw and insert it in the Bill.

Mr. NALDER: He will probably have an opportunity before we get through the Committee stage to clarify these points. I am sure other speakers will have something to say on these lines, too. I feel that at this stage I cannot support the Bill.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [8.58]: We have heard many views expressed in this Chamber tonight, and on previous nights when this Bill was being discussed; and I am sure, no matter what the outcome of this measure might be a great deal of good will eventuate. Much has been contributed by hon. members of this Chamber to the native question as it affects our State at the present time. However, I would like to present the views I have gathered from notes which I have made after listening to various speakers, and hope I can contribute something original to the debate.

We speak of native welfare; but I believe that unless we do something really concrete, the topic we will be worrying about will not be native welfare, but native farewell. Statistics prove—and I am not going to indulge in statistics—that the native is a disappearing race; whereas the problem of the half-caste is a mounting one.

Hon. members who have debated this question complain that the Bill, in providing citizenship status for natives, is one which is 10 years too early. I say that if we hesitate, it is one which, in 10 years' time, will be 10 years too late; because it is an old adage which says, "One today is worth two tomorrows." I say the time is right, and action is imperative now.

The hon. member for Kimberley said that he could envisage a social welfare department that would have, as some of its wards, these people whom we know today as natives. At the present time, the Child Welfare Department not only caters for the problems of parents and their children, but also deals with matters of unemployment. That department exists as a social welfare department. I would like to see it widened; I would like to see the officers of the Native Welfare Department brought under the Child Welfare Department so they could take on a new form of work and become a social welfare department.

We have new Australians coming to this country; and a comparison has been made tonight between these new citizens and the original citizens of this country. We know that when a new Australian comes here he is not a citizen and is not allowed to vote; but there is no bar whatsoever against his drinking. Societies exist for the welfare of new Australians, and they are called Good Neighbour Councils. These Good Neighbour Councils are formed by a Commonwealth movement of the Good

Neighbour Council; but they are sponsored by interested persons, and nearly always with the help of local authorities.

With the envisaged social welfare department existing to help natives, and with similar societies formed in local authorities where the native problem is one that is causing some concern, or where the number of natives warrants such a society, I would advocate also that the interested persons—whites and natives—co-operate to form new neighbour councils for our native friends. We might call them not good neighbour councils but new neighbour councils, or aboriginal neighbour councils.

Mention has been made of natives causing trouble when they receive drink. I have no medical advice to back up what I am about to say, but I do wonder whether the problem is caused by the inferior or low-quality drink that is consumed by them. The natives who are forbidden to drink get liquor through what we call the low type of white man. They might give such a white man £1, and ask him to buy what they call yubadee or wine. Of course, the low type of Australian tries to get a few shillings from the native. He will buy the cheapest wine and keep the change, and the poor native is unaware of the quality and cost of the liquor. I have seen white Australians who drink this low-quality wine. We call them plonk fiends.

Mr. Sleeman: Some prefer methylated spirits.

Mr. EVANS: Yes. We are ashamed of these people, but we do not compare them with the poor Wongi. The question of accommodation in hotels will become important. When the natives become citizens, they will have the right to ask for accommodation in hotels. In the past, certain natives have had their requests for accommodation rejected. There was an instance—I am sure the hon. member for Victoria Park will elaborate on this—of a young native lady who was refused admission to a hotel at Pinjarra. I am certain this episode is fresh in the minds of all hon. members.

These natives, as citizens, will be controlled in a similar way to that in which white people are controlled today. The provisions of the Health Act could be exercised, but I am afraid that at present the appropriate sections of that measure are not used against white people. Human dignity demands human rights, or equal rights. Once equal rights are obtained, responsibility must follow in their wake.

The Bill seeks to give to our native friends citizenship rights—or equal rights. Once they have those rights, responsibility must come. It is our duty to help our friends shoulder their responsibilities; but we cannot do two things at once. Let us give them one thing first, and help them afterwards.

Mr. Nalder: Do you agree that there should be some protected natives?

Mr. EVANS: That is a difficult question. Are we giving them citizenship rights, or are we giving them a half-baked form of citizenship rights? If we give them full citizenship rights, there should be no protected natives, but protected citizens. We have some protected white people at the present time, and they are not far from here—about 12 miles away. I believe there should be protection for society from certain citizens, but I do not think there should be protected natives.

Tonight, the hon. member for Kimberley showed us that he has had a great deal of experience of natives. I do not say that I have had any great experience at all; but I mention that while I was attending school at Leonora, I was fortunate enough to have native friends. At one stage there were 15 natives attending the Leonora convent. At present most of them are scattered around Leonora or working on the mines; and one is working for the local authority. These young people, that I grew up with, are highly respected citizens of Kalgoorlie.

After leaving school at Leonora I attended St. Ildephonsus College at New Norcia—the home of the native mission there—and I saw these young people attended by the Spanish monks. We played sport against them, and sometimes we were bitter when we were beaten by them at cricket or football. However, they were, even then, being taught the rudiments of citizenship.

Later, I was teaching, early in my career, at Roelands—a place well-known to the hon. member for Bunbury. At that time—this was in 1949—the children from the native mission were attending the Roelands school. I claim that I introduced a new form of relationship with those children when I was teaching there. It was my experience that the native children were given equality with the white children, and freedom of thought.

Mr. Roberts: The mission at Roelands is an excellent one.

Mr. EVANS: It is. One hon. member mentioned that we do what we can for our native children in the well-conducted missions, but after they leave the missions they drift back to the ways of the native. This is definitely a problem. Are we to do something for the natives, or something for the white people? When the natives leave the missions, they are ready to take their place in society.

Should we do something to teach the white people to accept our native friends? I would like to pay tribute to a Mrs. Bennett, of Kalgoorlie, whose whole life has been a mission to the natives. Her very existence is a form of human citadel for the emancipation of the natives. If the Bill which gives to natives the status of citizenship, is passed, it will crown her life of unselfish devotion to the natives.

Let us look at the underlying effects of the Bill. The measure is a form of justice. Are we just in depriving the native of something that was his? Before the white person came to this great land of ours, the native, by virtue of his existence here, must have been a citizen of the native folklore. We came here, and now we are giving him something that is rightly his. Is it ours to give? By delaying this form of justice, we are denying him justice.

Hon. members have said that the measure is 10 years too early, but it could be 10 years too late. It might be too late altogether. I claim that justice is to be found in the Bill. But what is important is to face justice and not run away from it when we find it. That is a decision we have to make when we debate the future of the measure. The Bill faces up to justice and measures up, every inch, to the ideal of justice.

There are many Jeremiahs or preachers of the gospel of pessimism in connection with natives, and having given them citizenship rights they speak of the great wrongs that will be righted in our society. But I claim that life is never so bad, at its worst, that it is impossible for us to live; and in the past it has never been so good at its best that it has been easy for us to live.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to the courage and tenacity of purpose of the Minister who has brought down the Bill. We ask all Australians, no matter what colour or creed, who will determine the future of our State, to join us in this crusade for humanity. With their help we shall advance our native friends to the good life that is worth living for all of us.

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park) [9.10]: The hon. member for Claremont, in his concluding remarks, referred to courage. I consider that in regard to the Bill we should display a certain amount of courage with respect to the question of endeavouring to do justice to our native population. The colour question is not one that affects only us in Western Australia, or Australia; it is world-wide. This question has been in the news lately in regard to South Africa where matters seem to be going in reverse. I do not know whether the problem is progressing or going behind in America when we consider the position in Little Rock. Some of the people there are trying to go forward whilst others are trying to hold the clock back. Trouble is also being experienced in North Africa, and even in England. We also have the native problem in Western Australia and we are trying to deal with it now.

A great deal of the trouble, I think, arises because we, so-called whites, show a great deal of bias, prejudice and intolerance towards these people. When the

hon. member for Roe was speaking this afternoon he said he was concerned mainly with the health aspect—he did bring in the drink question later—when he pointed out that he was against the natives getting citizenship rights. He did say that their colour did not mean a thing.

Mr. Nalder: Not in the country.

Mr. ANDREW: I am saying that their colour does mean something; and I say that it means something in the country, too. It is rather a coincidence that a certain item of news concerning a country town should appear in the paper tonight. The hon. member for Katanning will say that the country town is not in Western Australia; but that makes no difference.

Mr. Nalder: It makes quite a difference.

Mr. ANDREW: Under the heading, "Vic. Township Objects to a Native Family," the "Daily News" has this so say—

Some Drouin residents are signing a petition to stop an aboriginal couple with seven children moving into the township.

The report later states—

The family: Sawmill worker Sydney Austin and his wife and seven children aged up to nine years.

The white people were endeavouring to prevent them from establishing a home in Drouin. The report continues—

Some are afraid that Drouin will be accused of starting a Victorian "Nambucca Heads" row . . . There would be no objection to aboriginal families living "out of town."

Mr. Sleeman: Send them bush.

Mr. ANDREW: Yes. In this place there are some whites who had a broader outlook than the narrow-minded section. Later the report states—

Said Jindivik store manager A. G. Pretty: It would be a wonderful thing if the Austins could move out of their humpy. Mrs. Austin is a wonderful little woman—honest and upright—trying hard to struggle along with all those young children. Sydney Austin was a good worker but, like so many whites, a bit reckless with his money.

It has been said there is no colour prejudice among the whites. Well, I point to the incident mentioned a moment ago by the hon. member for Kalgoorlie, when an educated, cultured native girl from a mission, was refused accommodation at a hotel in Pinjarra; and she was travelling with a party which included a minister. Yet hon. members say there is no colour prejudice in the country! I am not blaming the Pinjarra hotelkeeper, because

he was reported in the Press as saying, "I do not mind, but it will turn the white people away from the hotel."

Mr. Perkins: He was referring to the travelling public.

Mr. ANDREW: He was referring to the public generally. I do not think that any of these country towns rely only on the patronage of the travelling public. I have cited an instance in Victoria and also one in this State; but there are many more. Therefore, within our State a great deal of intolerance and prejudice is shown against coloured people.

Mr. Perkins: You have only given us a few instances.

Mr. ANDREW: I could quote many more if I so desired, but I think I would weary the House if I did so. We certainly have a responsibility towards these people; and I believe that if we can make this Bill workable, we will discharge some degree of responsibility towards them.

One Opposition member said that he did not see any difference between granting a native full citizenship rights as his birthright and granting such rights to him on application, as we do at present. He was referring to the fact that a native could be in possession of full citizenship rights, but have them taken from him and be declared a protected native. I would feel more satisfied if I were granted citizenship rights as a birthright than if I had to apply for them when I reached a certain age; and I am sure that the same would apply to natives. Under this measure, the natives will be granted citizenship rights as a birthright, and I am sure it will make a great deal of difference to them in the future if this is brought about.

Some hon. members are opposed to the Bill. I would point out that I do not agree with every clause in it, and I am hoping that some of the provisions will be amended. Other hon. members have pointed out that trouble will occur if natives are granted the privilege of being able to drink freely in hotels. I do not think any hon. member can expect that the transition period will be smooth when any change is sought. That is something that we will have to face when the time arrives; but I am sure the position will eventually level itself out and that some of the fears our friends opposite now hold will be abated.

Opposition members have also made great play about granting this privilege to natives. However, at the moment the majority of natives have nothing to do in the evening, and generally they make for the nearest town where their only pleasure is to drink wine. The reason they drink wine is that there are more drinks in a bottle of wine than there are

in a bottle of beer. Consequently, the native who has a drink of wine is forced to dodge the police and generally takes refuge in lavatories and other places where he consumes the liquor as fast as he can. He rapidly becomes intoxicated as a result, and then starts to cause trouble and create a rumpus.

I am not opposed to the provision which will grant to natives the privilege of being able to obtain alcoholic drink. I have seen natives drinking in a hotel bar at Mingenew and other towns. They were well behaved; and when closing time arrived, they went home. One of the reasons why drink affects natives so much is that, at the moment, they have to buy a more potent drink than beer and generally have to consume it rapidly. However, most of the natives that I have seen drinking as sensible men, generally drink beer. I feel quite sure that when natives are given free access to a hotel bar there will not be the same degree of drunkenness among them, and therefore we will not have the same trouble as we experience among them today! I am sure that, like most Australians, they will prefer to drink beer as an alcoholic beverage rather than wine.

The hon. member for Claremont and the hon. member for Katanning stated that this provision constituted their main objection to the Bill; but when the Minister asked them straight out if they would support the Bill if this clause were deleted, neither of them said he would. When asked if he would vote for the Bill if the ground for his objection were removed, the hon. member for Claremont made no comment. The hon. member for Katanning, when asked the same question, said he would consider it; but he has been considering it all night. There are a few features in the Bill which I think require amending.

Mr. Nalder: What are they? Let's have them!

Mr. ANDREW: If the hon. member were not so impatient, I would have told him before now.

Mr. Roberts: Are you going to vote against them?

Mr. ANDREW: I will do what I consider right, irrespective of what the hon. member for Bunbury does. When I am opposed to something, I make it quite clear that I am against it.

One of the provisions in the Bill empowers the Commissioner of Native Welfare to take over the property of a native without his consent. I think an amendment will overcome that difficulty. As the clause reads now, I cannot support it. The other clause I am opposed to is the one that grants to the commissioner power to take children away from their parents without the parents having an opportunity to object. No person should

be granted that authority without the parents concerned being given an opportunity to put up a defence.

As the clause reads at the moment, an inspector in any part of the State could submit a report to the Commissioner of Native Welfare to the effect that it was necessary for the children of any native to be sent to a mission; and if the commissioner agreed to such request, I understand that the children could be sent away. I will not agree to that clause unless there is a provision for such a case to be presented before a tribunal such as a magistrate, whereby the parents would be given the opportunity of presenting a case to show why the children should not be taken away from them.

I think the Bill is a step in the right direction. It is legislation we have been trying to get on the statute book for many years, but we have always been defeated by our friends opposite. I spoke in favour of similar legislation about five years ago when it was first brought before this House, and those in Opposition at that time spoke in much the same way as hon. members opposite have spoken in regard to this measure. I support the second reading.

THE HON. J. J. BRADY (Minister for Native Welfare—Guildford-Midland—in reply) [9.25]: I thank hon. members on both sides of the House for the contributions they have made to the debate on this Bill. From listening to the lines of thought that have been presented, I feel it is quite evident that hon. members have gone to a great deal of trouble and research in an effort to show that they are desirous of doing the right thing for the natives of this State. I compliment particularly the hon. member for Subiaco who, tonight, made an excellent address. I think he spoke not only from his heart but with sound reasoning in an effort to do the best he could for the native population of Western Australia.

The hon. members of the Opposition seem to be very divided in their line of thought on the Bill. One section seemed to consider that no benefit whatsoever could be derived from the passing of this measure, and the other section argued to the contrary and set out to explain why. Then again, some hon. members of the Opposition went so far as to take to task the committee which recently sat on this question for a period of three to four months because they considered that this committee went outside its powers or charter.

Two hon. members of the Opposition spoke in that vein; and because that appeared to be the most important argument advanced from the other side of the House, I will deal with that aspect first. The hon. member for Murray was the one who brought that point to light and the hon. member for Katanning supported his

contention. The following is the resolution which was passed by this House and this was the basis on which the committee worked:—

That in the opinion of this House an investigation should be made for the purpose of ascertaining the cost involved—

Note the words "the cost". Continuing—
—and providing adequately for the requirements of the natives in Western Australia, to what extent Commonwealth assistance is necessary to enable these requirements to be fully met and that representations be made to the Commonwealth and that such investigations shall be undertaken by a committee of five persons appointed by the Minister whereof not more than three shall be civil servants.

I feel the committee appointed interpreted the word "cost" as it should have been.

Everybody knows it cost a great deal of money to fight the second world war; but who is going to say that that was the only cost? There were dozens of costs involved in winning the second world war, and one of them was the necessity to maintain the human rights of individuals. In much the same way the committee that was appointed to investigate the conditions of natives in Western Australia recommended that these people should be granted full citizenship rights. In other words, the committee put first things first. It is no use granting natives rights if they have not the essentials; and one of the essentials for any human being—particularly if he is paying taxes—is to be granted the right to vote in order to get what he wants by right and not by charity.

Mr. Court: You are stretching the long bow in bringing costs into that argument.

Mr. BRADY: That may be the opinion of the hon. member, but the committee was a very learned committee.

Sir Ross McLarty: Why did you not appoint country representatives on the committee?

Mr. BRADY: I am glad the hon. member interjected along those lines. I shall give him the facts, and I can see him apologising to the House for what he said. Let me examine the background of the members of the committee. The first is Mr. F. Gare, the native welfare officer at Geraldton—not at Perth—who was the chairman of the committee. He was born and reared in Kojonup. With his family he lived on farms at Kojonup and Bruce Rock. He was educated at Albany. He owned and operated a banana plantation at Carnarvon, had experience of native welfare work in New Guinea and Rabaul, served nine years in the department in the Pilbara, Gascoyne and Murchison districts, and has travelled into the desert, particularly round Lake Kangara, on native welfare work.

Mr. Hawke: He is more of a "bushie" than the hon. member for Murray.

Mr. BRADY: The second member of the committee is Mr. G. F. Thornbury of the Education Department. He received his early education in the Great Southern. He has had 13 years' experience as senior assistant and headmaster in the Education Department. He has spent four years on the Eastern Goldfields and nine years in the South-West. He has been Superintendent of Primary Education since 1941. He has spent 16 years in country areas, including remote areas like the Warburton Ranges and the Kimberleys.

The third member is Dr. Snow, who was the Flying Doctor at Onslow, Derby, and Wyndham. For several years he had frequent and constant contact with natives in the towns and at stations. Since that time he has been intermittently in contact with natives as the result of outbreaks of disease in various parts of the State. In accordance with his normal duties in the prevention and control of diseases, he has visited most encampments throughout the South and South-West.

The fourth member is Mr. E. C. Gare, who was born in Katanning and lived there for 25 years. He went to school with a number of native children and knew many natives who were camped in and around Katanning township. Apart from that, he has made many trips to the North-West and Kimberley areas, visiting all missions except those at the Warburton Ranges and Esperance. His daughter is an Education Department teacher who spent two years on the Forrest River Mission, where she was the leader of the Girl Guide movement. Since 1952 Mr. Gare has been actively engaged in native welfare work, in his capacity as vice-president for four years and as president for two years of the W.A. Native Welfare Council.

The fifth member is Mrs. K. Wilson, the only woman on the committee, who has taken an active interest in native minority questions for a number of years. She is now in the concluding stage of a course in social anthropology at the University of Western Australia. In order to complete her knowledge of the subject she has spent considerable time in the company of natives living at Allawah Grove and elsewhere, making an objective study of them and their many social problems.

On the face of that, this House cannot say the Minister went out of his way to appoint metropolitan members to the special committee. All its members have had a very wide and long experience of native affairs. With all their experience, they recommended as a first essential the granting of citizenship rights to natives. Then they went on to bring in 63 other recommendations, many of which, if the Commonwealth Government made certain funds available, would be implemented. I am pleased to say that a number of the

recommendations are partially implemented already, or are well on the way to being implemented.

On the present basis of contribution, the implementation of the recommendations will cost the State Government £500,000 a year, or £2,000,000 in the next four years. The Commonwealth Government will therefore have to find about £1,500,000. Having regard to the money it has spent in the Northern Territory, and the money spent by the State Government, the amount of £1,500,000 is not unreasonable for the Commonwealth Government to provide.

I thought that the hon. member for Murray would conclude his speech by supporting the second reading. He seemed to go all the way with members on this side of the House when he said—

I agree in the past natives have not received the treatment and consideration that they should have been given. We are taking a very different outlook today. It is generally realised that we owe a debt to the natives and we should try to uplift them. We should remember that they are human beings and as far as possible they should be assimilated into the life of the community.

I felt those were the sentiments expressed by hon. members on this side of the House. I only hope the hon. member for Murray will see his way clear to support the second reading for that reason. He went on to say—

When my own Government was in office, Sir Ross McDonald, then Minister for Native Affairs, took a most active interest in these matters. Without trying to introduce party politics into this debate, I say that no previous Minister for Native Affairs took such an active interest and gave so much thought to the native problem as did Sir Ross McDonald. When he accompanied me to one Premiers' Conference he asked for permission to raise the question of native welfare. The Prime Minister at that time, the late Mr. Chifley, agreed to time being given to deal with the matter. Sir Ross made a very eloquent plea to the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance in order that the natives might be given the opportunity which he considered they deserved.

That is quite true. I do not want to detract from the work which was done by Sir Ross McDonald in the capacity of Minister for Native Welfare.

The hon. member for Roe was quite wrong when he said that hon. members on this side of the House were of the opinion that the Opposition was trying to keep the natives down and that we were the only ones uplifting the natives. Hon. members on this side have not

made such a statement. We realise that some members opposite are also trying to help the natives. I give the hon. member for Roe full credit for what he has been doing in this regard. He has discussed with me the question of help to the natives. Where we differ is as to the method.

We on this side say, "Give them citizenship rights from birth, to which they are entitled. Let them not have to beg for citizenship rights. Do not put them through a third degree test in order to prove that they are free from one disease or another. Do not ask them to prove that they have not associated with natives for two years. Do not ask them to prove that they are capable of living in the same type of dwelling as the whites. Do not put all the impossible obstacles in their way before giving them citizenship rights." These matters have to be looked at from a Christian point of view. The hon. member for Murray was quite wrong in his contention that hon. members on this side considered they were the only ones looking at these matters from a Christian point of view.

Sir Ross McLarty: I did not say that.

Mr. BRADY: The hon. member made a statement very close to that.

Sir Ross McLarty: I did not say anything about hon. members on your side of the House. I was referring to the members of the special committee.

Mr. BRADY: I agree that the hon. member referred to members of the special committee. We should practise more Christianity, and not talk so much about it, particularly the exhortation along these lines—"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

I would remind the House that the natives of this country are a conquered people. It would be a magnanimous gesture on the part of the Parliament of Western Australia to give them citizenship rights from birth. After all, they were the original inhabitants of this country, and they are entitled to at least that privilege. I point out that we are bringing into this State thousands of immigrants every year; and in many instances they cannot speak the English language. Yet they are given full citizenship rights. Our own natives, who make it economically possible for many industries in the North-West of the State to operate, are denied that very right. I feel the time is long overdue when the natives should be given that right.

One could go on speaking for a considerable time on the international repercussions of the native problem in the future, by virtue of the fact that the natives of this country have not been granted citizenship rights. At the last I.L.O. conference, it was reaffirmed by I think, 67 nations to nil that natives and indigent people should have citizenship rights. A conference of

Commonwealth and State Ministers, sitting in Canberra in 1951, at which meeting all Governments were represented, reaffirmed the desire that natives should be granted citizenship rights, although at that time the Minister from this State was not one from the Labour Party.

Contrary to what the hon. member for Kalgoorlie has said, the native population is increasing—both the full-bloods and the mixed bloods. That has been brought about by the influence of the missions. We realise that the full-blood natives at one time, in view of their traditional upbringing in regard to food supplies, used to do away with babies as they were born. As a result of the influence of the missions, these tribal customs have been abandoned. On most mission stations the native full-blood population is increasing, as is the mixed-blood population.

If we do not tackle the native problem as it should be tackled in this time and age, we will have a lot to answer for in the not-distant future. We should have regard to this fact. There are many millions of people, living close to Australia and within a few hours flying distance who would have the greatest pleasure in reminding Australia of the treatment that is given to the natives, if opportunity were afforded them to do so. We should resolve that problem at this juncture by giving the natives citizenship rights.

I shall refer to the speeches which have been made and which may have a bearing on the Committee stages of the Bill. I want to answer a few objections which have been raised. One, which seems to be of great importance to the hon. member for South Perth, concerns the ability of the department to take control of native children without the sanction of their parents. I would point out that any such powers possessed by the department were abolished in 1954 as a result of an amendment to the Act. For the benefit of the hon. member I shall quote the relevant section of the Act—

The Minister may cause any native to be removed to and kept within the boundaries of a reserve, district, institution, or hospital, or to be removed from one reserve, district, institution, or hospital to another reserve, district, institution, or hospital, and kept therein.

Any native who shall refuse to be so removed to or kept within such reserve, district, institution, or hospital shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

In every prosecution under this section an averment contained in the complaint that the Minister directed the defendant to be removed to or kept within a reserve, district, institution, or hospital shall be deemed to be proved in the absence of proof to the contrary.

If the hon. member looks up the Act he will see that in 1954 that section was removed, so that any children that are now going into the missions or into the schools, I understand, have to be voluntarily placed there, and the department has to approve. I had the experience at Wandering two years ago of sitting in the office of the superintendent of the mission there, when a native mother brought her child in and asked permission to leave it; and the superintendent said "I cannot take it until you give me a written authority to do so." She signed a document, and from then on that child became a resident of that particular mission. I understand that native woman had journeyed down from Scarborough, where she was working and keeping company with a white man. It was not easy for her to work and look after the child; and I think that type of case is repeated time and time again.

On another occasion I asked one of the missionaries how they got control of a child and he told me that sometimes they go around the camps for weeks. They have real arguments with the native families as to the desirability of the children going into the mission to be educated, and the missionary told me it is very hard to convince some parents that it is in the best interests of the children; but nine times out of ten they agree it is advisable.

Mr. Grayden: Section 69 of the Act gives the power to commit native children to an institution.

Mr. BRADY: Section 69 gives the department power to make regulations, and certain regulations are laid down. So as to help the hon. member for South Perth, who has recommended that certain amendments be made, I am prepared to accept his amendment in regard to substituting the words that he has given notice of. So far as the department and I are concerned, we are prepared to see eye to eye with him on that matter.

But I do want to point out that there is no power under the Act to go along and grab a child and place it in an institution without the parents agreeing. In my own electorate during the last three months a member of the Native Welfare Departments went to Bellevue, and took a child, and had it placed in a home because its parents were not looking after it, and it was being neglected. The case was immediately dealt with under the Child Welfare Act, the same as if it had been a white child; and the magistrate committed it to the Mogumber Mission as being in its best interests. I will not deny that that took place in my own electorate. But if a white child is being neglected by its parents the same circumstances apply. So any ideas that the members may have that under the Act the department can go along and grab a child without the parents' consent are wrong.

There were a number of other points which were made by various hon. members in regard to natives. I think the hon. member for Dale made a point about the various abilities of the natives that he had experienced. He referred to their sporting activities. The hon. member for Claremont—I think—referred to their ability as mechanics; and somebody else referred to their ability as miners, and it would appear that they have ability to do a lot of things—but not the ability to become citizens. That is where a lot of the contradiction comes from on the other side.

If these people have the ability to do all those things that have been mentioned, they have the ability to exercise their citizenship rights. It may take a little time to seep through. I can concede that some may not realise for a few years that they have citizenship rights; but they will have the opportunity to go into a hotel if they want to. I would exhort the average native who may read my speech to leave drink alone. I have seen sufficient of drink to induce me to leave it alone myself; though I do not deny the right of anybody else to drink. But I would urge all natives to leave liquor alone, because I do not think it will do them any good in the long run. It may have some temporary advantage, but ultimately will do them no good.

There is another point, too. If natives want liquor today, they get it, and in the worst possible places; and they drink it under the worst possible conditions. I have visited Fremantle gaol a couple of times in the last two years, and I think I can say that without any doubt the majority of natives were there because of drinking offences—either for drinking themselves, or trying to get it for others, or for supplying it. I do not think that it is desirable to bring up natives in that atmosphere.

As one hon. member said tonight, when natives drink, their resentment of the whites comes out; and if we do not want that resentment to continue in the future, I think we have to face up to the fact that they are entitled to drink. I have given my testimony on the matter of drink; but if they want the right to drink they should have it. I have seen natives drinking by the dozens in hotels in the North-West. In at least three places there were more natives drinking than white people, and the natives conducted themselves well. On one occasion I saw a fight in which two Italians were involved, and the only man that was game to separate them was a full-blood native.

So these people can exercise citizenship rights if given the proper encouragement, instead of being given an inferiority complex, and being belittled and called all the peculiar names they have been called. One or two hon. members mentioned some of

these names tonight; but I will not repeat them, because I think it is a reflection on a lot of people that they should continue to use such names for these unfortunate people. They are prepared to use the natives for their economic advantage; but when it comes to providing them with social advancement, they are not prepared to do so.

While I am on the matter of liquor, I would mention that some very influential people have written to me from time to time about natives getting citizenship rights. I want to read at least two letters. I may have the opportunity to read the others in the Committee stage, but I do not want to draw out the debate unnecessarily. Here is a letter from the secretary of the W.A. Native Welfare Council written to Mr. Hawke, the Premier, and dated the 21st of April, 1958, which reads as follows:—

At the first Annual State Conference on Native Welfare held on 1st February, 1958, which was attended by approximately 90 delegates and interested persons including several country members, the following resolution was carried after considerable discussion:—

That this conference believes that the interests of those West Australians who are descended from the original inhabitants of Australia, will be best served by the removal of all legal disabilities, placing them on the same footing in all respects as those citizens of West Australia who are of European descent, and especially that they should have the right to vote.

At the same time this conference is of the opinion that as a transitional measure, provision should be made to safeguard the interests of such persons of aboriginal descent as may from time to time require assistance.

This conference also declares its support for the provisions contained in the Bill recently before the State Parliament for an Act to be known as the Native Status as Citizens Act, 1957, and expresses the hope that a similar Bill will again be introduced.

Yours faithfully,

J. C. KNIGHT,
Secretary.

I want to remind the members of the Opposition that their Minister for Territories in the Commonwealth Government has introduced legislation in the Northern Territory whereby natives automatically get citizenship rights. Why should the people in Canberra view the position differently from people in Western Australia? It would appear that the members

of the Opposition in Western Australia are out of line with modern thought in regard to these matters.

Let me quote another important organisation which has written two letters to me. This organisation does good work, as do others of its type. The letter dated the 9th of April, addressed to the Acting Minister for Native Welfare, is from the Methodist Church of Australasia, Sydney, and reads as follows:—

Thank you for your letter of the 31st March on the subject of the status of native persons. My board will be pleased to receive your information that a Bill will be introduced which proposes to confer citizenship rights on natives in your State.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. GRIBBLE,
General Secretary.

Another letter from this particular organisation says—

The annual meeting of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church of Australasia gave consideration to the question of aboriginal rights in Australia and passed the following resolution:—

That the board endorses the Synod's affirmation of the belief that aboriginal and part-European people should be granted citizenship rights in Western Australia.

We would be grateful if your Government would consider this matter which we know has many problems associated with it but which we are sure is just and right for a people who have been much wronged in our history.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. GRIBBLE,
General Secretary.

Referring again to the Native Welfare Council, I would remind hon. members that the 90 delegates at that conference included representatives from practically every church and organisation in Western Australia that is trying to do something for natives. I am not sure that the Liberal Party is not also represented on the council. I know the Australian Labour Party has one or two representatives; and I think the Liberal Party has.

Yet that organisation says it is most enthusiastic about the natives getting citizenship rights. Therefore I think the House should give due consideration to the matter and help the natives to get this overdue benefit. I could continue to deal with the criticism of the Bill expressed by hon. members; but as there were about 15 speakers, I feel we might be here very late in the night, so I will just pick out one or two statements which I feel should be answered.

The hon. member for Narrogin said he felt this was only a half-baked native citizenship system. I say that it is a better system so far as citizenship rights are concerned because the natives under the present system, which is provided by the Act known as the Citizenship Rights Act, are only being embarrassed, and time and time again natives have refused to take out rights under the conditions which are laid down in that particular measure. They feel that the board is largely stacked against them and the possibilities of getting citizenship rights are not very favourable.

An hon. member: That has not been proved by past happenings, of course.

Mr. BRADY: I think it has been proved by the very few who have been given citizenship rights under this particular measure. The hon. member for Narrogin criticised the Government and the department for not hopping in and doing immediately all the things recommended by the committee. It is strange that he should do that, because one minute he criticised the committee for jumping the gun, and bringing in a recommendation for citizenship, and in the next breath he was prepared to laud the efforts of the committee and criticise the Government for not immediately implementing all the 63 recommendations; although he knew full well that the resolution was carried conditional upon the Commonwealth Government finding the money. He was simply not consistent.

I think it was the hon. member for Narrogin, also, who said we should have been more expeditious in our representations to the Prime Minister regarding the recommendations of the committee; although he knew full well, when making that statement, that within a few days of receiving the recommendations from the committee, the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister in that regard. I would remind the House that three members from this Chamber—the hon. member for South Perth, the hon. member for North Perth, and I—went to Sydney to see the Federal Minister (Mr. Howard Beale) in 1956; and on that occasion I thought we had a watertight case for the granting of £70,000 to this Government to provide for pastoral activity for natives out near the Giles meteorological station. We thought that was a suitable area—and others have thought so since—but the Commonwealth was not prepared to grant the money, despite the fact that it had set up an extensive meteorological station on what was previously a native reserve, and was carrying out work over hundreds of miles of that reserve.

Mr. Grayden: They went further than that—

Mr. BRADY: I think the hon. member for South Perth and the Minister had some private discussions outside the conference room; but I did not wait to see

the result, as I thought it safer to be on my way. In view of the general ability of the hon. member for South Perth I thought I would be quite safe to do that, just as in the case of a television programme that had been arranged. This Government is doing everything possible to assist the natives in the North-West, to the best of its financial ability.

I think I have dealt effectively with the proposition that the department would take native children from their parents against their wishes. As I said before, any legislative power in that regard was taken away in 1954, and in any case I am assured by the department that that it not done now. I have personally witnessed natives making representations to missionaries to take their children.

The hon. member for South Perth referred to Clause 35 and objected to the fact that the Native Welfare Department could take possession of the property of adult natives. He said there was a softening-up provision to the effect that they could not do that without the consent of the native; and I understand that that is so, and that invariably the department does not take over a native's property without being requested to do so. To indicate to the House what the department is doing in that regard, I would point out that it is handling hundreds of cases of workers' compensation, third party insurance claims, and so on, for natives at their request. The hon. member for South Perth said there was a softening-up provision, but there is also a hardening-up provision, inasmuch as the department must account for every penny it handles in regard to the affairs of natives.

Mr. Grayden: But at present it does not have to get consent.

Mr. BRADY: It has to get consent at present. At all events the fact remains that the department invariably gets the written consent of the native concerned. There is sufficient trouble already in trying to handle the affairs of about 25,000 natives in this State, without taking over their individual activities.

Mr. Grayden: That is not how the clause reads.

Mr. BRADY: That is how it reads now. There may be a distinction in regard to native children, as their affairs are handled by the department in many cases, simply because they cannot handle their own affairs. There are many orphans; and in other cases the parents want the department to take charge of the children, because they cannot keep them.

Mr. Grayden: What about the end of the clause?

Mr. BRADY: That deals with cases of emergency. If a native owning a perishable product—at Broome or Derby, for

instance—died tonight, the police or somebody else would ask the department to take charge of the deceased native's affairs, and that is a reasonable proposition.

Mr. Grayden: But that applies equally in the case of a white man.

Mr. BRADY: The Bill provides that it can be done for a native just as for a white man. I do not think any objections to Clause 35 are valid if hon. members want to help the assimilation of our natives. If the hon. member for South Perth had his way and the natives were not, under that clause, given the right to have their affairs dealt with by the department, they would be forced to consult legal advisors and others, perhaps at a cost of hundreds of pounds, which they do not now have to pay, because the Native Welfare Department is recognised as the right department to handle such affairs for them.

Mr. Grayden: The department has all those powers.

Mr. BRADY: I have been assured by the department that it invariably gets the written consent of the native concerned.

Mr. Nalder: Will these privileges cease when the natives get their citizenship rights?

Mr. BRADY: I would point out that the citizenship rights measure is out first of all to give citizenship rights; and the native welfare measure is for the benefit of people who for over 150 years—since the white man took over this State—have been treated as under-privileged people. They are entitled to some welfare legislation, just as is provided for returned soldiers and many other categories in our community, for whom protective legislation is provided. The natives who want the Native Welfare Department to act for them will have that right, and that is the intention of the Bill. I will not pursue the debate further, as I think the measure should now be dealt with in Committee in order to hasten its passage as much as possible.

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

Ayes—26

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Evans	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hall	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Kelly	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Noes—12

Mr. Court	Mr. Owen
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Roberts
Mr. W. Manning	Mr. Watts
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Wild
Mr. Nalder	Mr. I. Manning

(Teller.)

Ayes.	Pairs.	Noes.
Mr. Tonkin		Mr. Brand
Mr. Bickerton		Mr. Mann
Mr. Norton		Mr. Bovell
Mr. Nulsen		Mr. Thorn

Majority for—14.

The SPEAKER: As this Bill seeks to amend the Constitution I have satisfied myself that there is an absolute majority of 26 hon. members in favour of the Bill and I declare the question carried in the affirmative.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sewell in the Chair; the Hon. J. J. Brady (Minister for Native Welfare) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—put and passed.

Clause 7—Section 2 amended:

Mr. I. W. MANNING: If this Bill is not a sham; and if it is not all eye-wash; and if it is not a publicity stunt, I challenge the Minister to remove this clause from the Bill.

Mr. Graham: How long have you been rehearsing that?

Mr. Court: It is well spoken and well meant.

Mr. Graham: Tripe!

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The Minister indicated that this Bill has been based on the report of the special committee which inquired into the problem of natives; but there is no mention in the report of provision for a protected native, or the taking away of citizenship rights from the native. We said, on the second reading, that this Bill was a complete switch from the present system because it proposes that every native shall be given citizenship rights, and those who cannot meet the standard will be declared protected natives and their citizenship rights will be taken away from them.

I understand from the committee's report that there are some 6,000 natives living beyond the confines of civilisation, and I assume that if one of those natives is to be declared a native, every one of them will have to be so declared and will thus obtain the benefits of a protected native. So what does the Bill achieve? In my opinion it achieves nothing. If the Minister is dinkum about giving every native citizenship rights, this clause should not be in the Bill. In introducing the measure the Minister said there is nothing in it which would enable a native to be put through the third degree. In my opinion this is the third degree clause because it makes provision for protected natives, and for the commissioner to be a protector.

Mr. BRADY: I tried to anticipate what opposition there would be to this Bill when it was introduced last year and again this year. I can imagine what the Opposition would have said had the Bill, either this year or last year, been introduced without some provision such as is contained in Clause 7. Hon. members opposite would have said, "You, as Minister, must know that there will be some natives who cannot measure up to the qualifications required for citizenship. Why have you not put something in the Bill so that we can deal with those people?" In anticipation of that argument this clause has been inserted.

If the measure is passed all natives in this country will have citizenship rights for a period, but it might ultimately mean that some of them will not be able to measure up to the standards required and they will lose their rights. I hope none of them will lose their rights; and I hope that there are sufficient natives in this country, of the right type, who will be able to get the others into such a state that they, too, will be able to stand up to the white requirements. The onus will be on them; and if there are some unfortunates who fall by the wayside, there will be some protection for them in the same way as the Liberal Minister in Canberra has provided for wards under the Welfare Act which operates in the Northern Territory.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The Minister has admitted that the arguments put forward by those on this side of the Chamber have been correct in every detail. We have endeavoured to point out that there are many natives who could not yet accept the full responsibility of citizenship, but this Bill ignores that fact. However, the insertion of this clause in the Bill indicates that the Government recognises that there are natives who could not shoulder the responsibility of citizenship.

Mr. Evans: Do you want the clause in or out?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I do not support this clause, but I support the Bill.

Mr. Evans: Well, sit down and let someone else speak.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I will sit down when I am ready, and I will not be told by the hon. member for Kalgoorlie when I shall sit down. The hon. member for Kalgoorlie seems to think we are here just to crack jokes. The mere introduction of this Bill does not usher in a new era for the natives.

Mr. Brady: You will be surprised.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: Those natives who are anxious to secure citizenship have no difficulty in obtaining their rights when they seek them. There is no doubt that this clause indicates to those on this side of the Chamber that the Minister has conceded much of what we have said.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I support the hon. member for Harvey. The inclusion of this clause absolutely condemns the attitude of the Minister and those who support him. He has still not given any proof of what this Bill will do for the natives. Then, when he seeks to grant them citizenship, he immediately inserts a provision to take it away from them. I cannot see the difference between selecting a native who is worthy of citizenship rights and granting them to him and granting such rights to a native at birth but later taking them away from him and making him a protected native. I think the existing system is the best one. If the legislation that is in operation today were amended it would be more effective.

Mr. Heal: That is not the view held in the Commonwealth sphere.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: We are concerned with Western Australia and our own natives. If hon. members would concentrate a little more on the needs of our natives, we would achieve a lot more. This clause will not help them; and, in fact, it condemns the whole Bill. What is the use of granting natives citizenship rights if, at some later stage, we are to take them away?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I cannot but feel that there is a great deal of insincerity and hypocrisy among one or two members of the Opposition in opposing this clause. The crux of the argument advanced by practically all hon. members of the Opposition has been that certain natives would be irresponsible after consuming liquor. However, this clause, to which they take exception, seeks to overcome that problem, in that, should a native in any country town become intoxicated and create a disturbance, there will be a provision in the Bill that will enable him to be declared a protected native to prevent his obtaining liquor in the future.

It seems extraordinary to me that Opposition members are trying to defeat this clause. Although that is the attitude of those members belonging to both the Liberal Party and the Country Party in this State, the Liberal Party in the Commonwealth sphere is extremely proud of the legislation which controls the natives in the Northern Territory in that they consider that that legislation constitutes a lead to all States of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Act includes a provision similar to that which hon. members of the Opposition are now opposing.

The Minister has assured us that he will agree to certain amendments that will remove all doubt at present existing on some clauses in the Bill. If he does that, this legislation, without question, will be the most dramatic step forward ever taken for the betterment of the natives in this State. It will grant to natives citizenship rights and restore to them the right to retain the custody of their own children and their own property. If the hon.

members of the Opposition intend to oppose that, they should give some second thought to it; because I am sure that if they continue with their opposition they will regret it later on.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The hon. member for South Perth surprises me—

Mr. May: I bet he did!

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The hon. member surprises me when he states that he cannot agree with the Opposition in opposing this clause. During the debate on the second reading the hon. member for South Perth indicated that any provision in the Bill which created a difference between a black citizen and a white citizen would have no support from him. Yet he now supports a clause which seeks to take away from the black man the citizenship rights already granted to him.

I also draw the Minister's attention to Subclauses (4) and (5). Would he indicate who is to appeal against a decision given by a stipendiary magistrate?

Mr. Graham: That is Clause 9. We have not reached that yet. We are on Clause 7. The Opposition does not know where it is on this Bill.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: We know very well where we are.

Mr. Graham: More conservative than the Menzies mob.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: We are just as interested and keen to do something to uplift the natives as is the Minister.

Mr. Graham: It is all lip service and platitudes.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: We differ in our approach to the problem. It would be better to reach the objective by planning rather than by introducing something objectionable.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—put and passed.

Clause 9—Sections 3A and 3B added:

Mr. I. W. MANNING: What does the Minister intend by prescribing regulations covering an appeal? Who will make an appeal? In what grounds will it be made against the decision of a magistrate, and with what hope of success?

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 22—put and passed.

Clause 23—Section 35 amended:

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am left in some doubt as to the meaning of this clause. The Minister said that under the Act the commissioner only had power to take away, sell or otherwise dispose of property of a particular native if he had the consent of the native. The Minister was extremely specific on that point. If hon. members read Subsection (2) of Section 35 they will see that the commissioner cannot exercise

the powers conferred except so far as they are necessary to provide for the due preservation of the property. So it is for the commissioner to say whether the native's property should be disposed of in order to preserve that property.

While the provisions of Section 35 might seem innocuous, they are all-embracing because they give the commissioner absolute power to dispose of the property of any native whether he be protected or whether he has full citizenship rights. So those with citizenship rights will be worse off than they are now. This clause is as despotic and imperious as anything that has been introduced into this Parliament. We would consider a Bill requiring the beheading of people under 16 to be extreme legislation; and I say it is equally extreme to give the department power to sell or dispose of the property of any native. We would certainly consider it extreme if our properties could be disposed of by the department. In view of the Minister's opinion, there could be no objection to my proposed amendment. The clause would then read—

The powers conferred by this Section shall not be exercised without the sanction of the native, or protected native.

Mr. BRADY: At the moment the department is making it obligatory on all natives to give sanction before it exercises the powers under this clause. If the hon. member for South Perth prefers the deletion of the words referred to I shall raise no objection.

Mr. GRAYDEN: In that event I move an amendment—

Page 6, line 17—Insert after the word "amended" the letter and brackets "(a)".

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as paragraph (b):—

by deleting the words "except in the case of minors" in line two of of Subsection (2); and deleting the words "except so far as may be necessary to provide for the due preservation of such property," in lines three, four and five of the same subsection.

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

Clause 24—Section 36 amended:

Mr. WATTS: This clause proposes to amend Section 36 by including the words "or protected native." If one were to look through the records of this House when this provision was originally inserted some 20 years ago, one would find that it was the subject of very considerable argument.

At that time I took the attitude that it was completely wrong to give the Commissioner of Native Affairs such wide powers in respect of administration of the property of a deceased native. I believe that objection was tenable then; but looked at in the light of the proposition contained in the Bill for the granting of citizenship rights to all natives, the provision in Section 36 becomes more objectionable than ever because Subsection (2) states—

Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act or law to the contrary regulating in the absence of a will any succession to and the administration of the estate of any deceased or missing native, all property and rights of property vested in any native other than a native exempted from the provisions of this Act who dies intestate shall vest in the commissioner upon trust to pay the just debts of the deceased and to distribute the balance between the widow or husband of the deceased and/or the next of kin, if the same or some of them can be ascertained, according to the laws of the State, in accordance with and in the manner prescribed for the administration of the estates of persons dying intestate by the Administration Act, 1903, and if such widow, husband, and/or next of kin cannot be so ascertained, amongst those persons who may by regulation be prescribed as the persons entitled to succeed to the property of the deceased: Provided that, where there is no person entitled to succeed to such property under the regulations, the proceeds of the estate of the deceased shall be paid to a special trust account and be utilised by the commissioner for the benefit of natives generally:

In no circumstances can the property of a white citizen be treated in this manner. Letters of administration would not be granted to a commissioner; they would be granted to one of the next of kin, or the widow or husband of the deceased. I stressed it was objectionable to give the commissioner wide powers of obtaining administration, in accordance with regulations 20 years ago when there was no suggestion of conferring citizenship rights on the aboriginal inhabitants. It is certainly more objectionable today in this Bill which proposes to confer absolute equality in every other respect on natives. In regard to the provision of this clause the Bill proposes to retain the iniquity which has been in the legislation for 20 years and which I thought was not desirable at that time. It certainly is not desirable at the present.

I am not in favour of the major principle of this Bill, but the House has decided that the principle is to be accepted. Having agreed to accept the principle which grants citizenship rights to all natives, then we have no right to make

any exception in the administration of estates of deceased natives. We have every right to amend the principal Act by abolishing this section. I therefore move an amendment—

Page 6, line 20—Delete the word “amended” and insert the word “repealed” in lieu.

Mr. BRADY: I can see the hon. member's point of view. In the main no great harm would be done by deleting that section, and I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

Page 6, lines 20 and 21—Delete all words from and including the word “by” to the end of the clause.

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

Clauses 25 to 39—put and passed.

Clause 40—Section 69 amended:

Mr. GRAYDEN: I move an amendment—

Page 9, paragraph (b)—Add the words—

and by deleting the words “be sent to and detained” in lines one and two of the paragraph and substituting therefor the word “attend.”

The Minister has already agreed to accept this amendment. He rather confused me when he said there was no power in the Act for the Commissioner of Native Welfare to take children away from their parents. I am not quite certain what he meant. He would be right if he meant there is no section in the Act specifically giving the commissioner that power, but he would be wrong if he meant there was no power to do it, because Section 69 empowers the Governor to make regulations enabling any native child to be sent to and be detained in a native institution, industrial school or orphanage. It would be unthinkable if this House were to pass a Bill which would give this power in respect of Europeans; and similarly, it is unthinkable that this House should pass a Bill which would provide that power in respect of natives.

We cannot say we are giving natives full citizenship rights if we are going to allow regulations to be made giving that power to any one individual. The clause was apparently introduced by the Minister with the object of giving the Native Welfare Department the right to look after native children in institutions, industrial schools, or orphanages, irrespective of whether they are protected or have full citizenship status. With that I am entirely in agreement. If the amendment is agreed to it will ensure that the department will

have power to take these children into orphanages and institutions but will not have power to send them there without the consent of their parents.

Mr. BRADY: I have no objection to the amendment; however, I would point out that it is not new and has been in the Act until now. If the hon. member for South Perth is desirous of having this amendment passed, there is no objection on my part.

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

Clauses 41 to 63—put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 11.2 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 24th September, 1958.

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

BLIND AND AWNING HEIGHTS.

Variations in Regulations.

1. The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Would the Minister please explain why the minimum measurement from ground level to the bottom of any blind or awning is—

(a) eight feet in the regulations under the Traffic Act;

(b) seven feet six inches in the uniform building regulations; and

(c) seven feet under the Police Act?

(2) Does the Minister agree that so many measurements to establish a minimum are confusing?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) To achieve uniformity with Section 312 (2) of the Municipal Corporations Act. Both these provisions refer, however, to awnings, not to blinds. An awning, like a verandah, is more or less horizontal to the footway, while a blind is vertical to the footway.

(b) This refers to blinds only.

(c) This refers to awnings only and the appropriate provision in the Police Act is contained in Part VII., Section 95 of the Act, and provides that the provisions of this part shall not apply wherever any by-law or regulation is made by a local authority to effect the same or a similar object.

(2) Consideration will be given to making the provision in the Police Act consistent with that in the traffic regulations and the Municipal Corporations Act.

GERALDTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL.

Inclusion in Hospital Plan.

2. The Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is the Geraldton regional hospital included in the plan whereby the Government intends to expend £6,000,000 on hospitals within the next few years as indicated in "The West Australian" on Saturday the 20th September, 1958?

(2) If not, why not?

(3) If the reply to No. (1) is "No," why has Geraldton's priority been overlooked?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) and (3) It has not been overlooked. Because of insufficient Loan Funds it has not been possible to proceed with a new regional hospital other than at Albany, but substantial sums have been spent on existing hospital facilities at Geraldton.

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