

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 7th October, 1958.

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

BILLS (5)—ASSENT.

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

- 1, State Housing Act Amendment.
- 2, VermIn Act Amendment.
- 3, Licensed Surveyors Act Amendment.
- 4, Industries Assistance Act Amendment.
- 5, Government Railways Act Amendment.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST.

Provision of Swimming Amenities at Port Beach.

1. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it correct that the Fremantle Harbour Trust proposes shortly to commence a comprehensive programme for the provision of amenities for the swimming public at Ampol Beach at North Fremantle?

(2) If so, will he list fully the nature of the works proposed and their estimated cost?

(3) From what source will the necessary funds be provided?

(4) What facilities, if any, are to be revenue-producing, and how much is it anticipated they will return?

(5) Will the revenue thus obtained be available for use in financing beach improvements at other places as and when required?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) The Fremantle Harbour Trust proposes to proceed immediately with the provision of bathing amenities within that section of the so-called "Ampol" Beach, now officially named "Port Beach," under the jurisdiction of the Trust.

(2) Two blocks of amenities are proposed, one immediately south of the Ampol installation; and the other in the vicinity

of an extension of Stirling-st., North Fremantle, at present the northern limit of the Trust's boundaries. Each block will provide change rooms, showers, and toilet facilities for both male and female bathers, a refreshment booth, and facilities for life-savers. The estimated cost of each block is £5,000.

(3) From the Trust's general loan programme.

(4) It is proposed to invite tenders for the right to operate the refreshment booths, such right to include permission to operate a mobile booth within limits to be specified. It is anticipated that the revenue likely to be produced will be sufficient to meet capital commitments.

(5) No. Any surplus funds will be used to improve beach amenities within the boundaries of the Trust.

LESCHENAULT ESTUARY.

Work on "The Plug."

2. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Will he now indicate if a definite decision has been reached in regard to the carrying out of certain works on "The Plug" at the old mouth of Leschenault Estuary, during this financial year?

(2) If a decision has been reached, what are the details of same?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) It has not been established that expenditure on "The Plug" at the mouth of the Leschenault Estuary or related works is necessary or would be beneficial.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

DAIRYING.

Agricultural Department Extension Projects.

3. Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) How much money was available to the dairy branch of the Department of Agriculture for expenditure on scientific extension work for the years ended the 30th June, 1955, 1956, 1957?

(2) How many extension projects started prior to the season 1957-58 are being carried on in the present year?

(3) Has there been any curtailment of Department of Agriculture participation in projects extending over more than one year; if so, what projects are affected?

Mr. KELLY replied:

(1) Gross approximate expenditure on dairy division activities was as follows:—

	£
1954-55	105,018
1955-56	115,711
1956-57	128,749
1957-58	145,402

These amounts include expenditure on activities such as herd recording, research stations at Denmark and Wokalup, and artificial breeding, from which much useful data and stimulus is provided for extension activities. This expenditure does not represent the actual cost to the State, as substantial revenue is received from herd recording, the research stations, artificial breeding and sundry items.

(2) All projects under way prior to 1957 are being continued.

(3) There has been no curtailment of projects, but variations occur from year to year as circumstances warrant in certain activities within some projects.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION.

Cost of Transmission Line to Muresk.

4. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What was the capital cost to the State Electricity Commission of—

(a) transmission line and the distance thereof;

(b) other ancillary works; to enable electric current to be supplied to Muresk?

(2) What is the approximate annual revenue returned by this extension?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) (a) £4,430, 7½ miles.

(b) £570.

(2) £1,260.

Cost of Transmission Line to Spencers Brook.

5. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What is the approximate cost of—

(a) the additional transmission line and the length thereof;

(b) reticulation, distribution and other ancillary works;

required to provide electricity at Spencers Brook?

(2) What is the number of consumers to be served at Spencers Brook?

(3) What is the expected maximum demand in kilowatts?

(4) What annual revenue is anticipated from consumers at Spencers Brook?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) (a) £504, 70 chains.

(b) £320.

(2) 18.

(3) 10 kilowatts.

(4) £410.

Cost of Grass Valley Extension.

6. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) In connection with the extension of electricity to Grass Valley—

- (a) how many consumers will be served;
- (b) what is the expected demand in kilowatts;
- (c) what is the anticipated annual revenue therefrom?

(2) What length of transmission line was required to carry current to Grass Valley?

(3) What was the cost of—

- (a) transmission line;
- (b) distribution system and ancillary work?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) 21.
- (b) 8 kilowatts.
- (c) £425.
- (2) 4½ miles.
- (3) (a) £1,136.
- (b) £621.

DENMARK RAILWAY STATION.*Revenue Collected.*

7. Mr. WATTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Referring to my recent question regarding the total railway revenue collected at Denmark station for the four financial years ended the 30th June, 1957, do the amounts stated in answer to that question include freight paid at point of destination—that is, by the consignee after transport of the goods?

(2) If so, can the amounts be given in respect of additional revenue thus collected; and if so, will he give the amounts for each of the years in question?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

(1) The answer to the hon. member's previous questions gave the actual collections at Denmark as requested, and included:

- (a) Freight paid at Denmark on goods consigned therefrom as "paid" traffic, and
- (b) freight paid at Denmark on goods consigned thereto as "to pay" traffic.

The amounts did not include:

- (c) Freight paid at the destination station on goods consigned from Denmark as "to pay" traffic.
- (d) Freight paid at the consigning station on goods consigned to Denmark as "paid" traffic.

(2) This information is not readily available and would need to be extracted specially at a cost of considerable clerical time.

ELECTORAL.*Quotas at the 30th June, 1958.*

8. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) What were the approximate electoral quotas based on enrolments on the 30th June, 1958, for—

- (a) metropolitan seats;
- (b) mining, pastoral and agricultural seats?

(2) What electorates, based thereon, are over or under their present approximate quotas?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

- (1) (a) Metropolitan area 22 districts—9779 electors.
- (b) Agricultural, mining and pastoral area 25 districts—quota 5313 electors.

(2) Taking into consideration the permissible margin of 20 per cent. above or below quotas—

Districts above quota—

Beeloo
Canning
Mt. Hawthorn
Wembley Beaches.

Districts below quota:

West Perth
Murchison.

WANDANA FLATS.*Capital Cost, Income and Vacancies.*

9. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What was the full capital cost of the "Wandana" flat project?

(2) What was the gross revenue derived therefrom for the two years ended—

- (a) the 30th June, 1957;
- (b) the 30th June, 1958?

(3) What was the net income for these two financial years, giving details of the main outgoings?

(4) What percentage (if any) of the total available accommodation was untenanted on the 30th June, 1958?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

(1) £589,704 (including land and architectural fees).

- (2) (a) £43,256.
- (b) £46,629.

(3)

	30/6/57 £	30/6/58 £
Net income	9,278	10,952
Outgoings:		
Amortisation	21,787	22,303
Rates	5,834	6,291
Maintenance	778	989
Wages	3,179	3,674
Administration	2,420	2,420
	£33,978	£35,677

(4) All flats were occupied at the 30th June, 1958.

PUBLIC SERVANTS.*Permanent and Temporary.*

10. Mr. CORNELL asked the Premier: What was the number of employees, showing separately permanent and temporary staff, under the control of the Public Service Commissioner on—

the 30th June, 1956;
the 30th June, 1957;
the 30th June, 1958?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

The 30th June.	Permanent.	Temporary.	Total.
1956	3,018	1,313	4,331
1957	3,225	1,208	4,433
1958	3,457	1,059	4,516

RAILWAYS.*Sources of Income and Losses.*

11. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What proportion did the income from the following services bear to the total earnings of the Railway Department in each of the years 1956-57 and 1957-58—

Suburban passenger;
Country passenger;
Goods?

(2) What proportions, respectively, did the losses on these three services bear to the total operating loss of the Railway Department in each of the two years mentioned?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

	1956-57.	1957-58.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
(1) Suburban coaching	2.9	3.3
Country coaching (Rail)	7.9	8.5
Goods	81.8	79.9

The word "coaching" includes mails and parcels traffic. The balance of the earnings come from road services, refreshment services, and miscellaneous services.

(2) The figures for 1957-58 are not yet completed. For the year 1956-57 the proportions, after distributing overheads, including depreciation and interest, are:

	Per cent.
Suburban coaching	21.9
Country coaching	24.8
Goods	54.3

CUNDERDIN AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.*Details of £30,000 Expenditure.*

12. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education:

As no additional buildings are required to be erected at the Cunderdin Agricultural High School, how is the amount of £30,000 mentioned in his reply to part 10 of my question of the 17th September, 1958, made up?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

Renovations, conversions, equipment, and furnishings.

MERREDIN AND MANJIMUP HIGH SCHOOLS.*Total Cost.*

13. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education:

After the completion of the second stage in each case, what will be the approximate total cost of the Merredin and Manjimup High Schools, respectively?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

As the second and third stages of these schools have yet to be tendered for, it is not considered desirable that such information should be publicly announced at the present time.

BOWLING CLUBS.*Amendment of Rules.*

14. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) Have some bowling clubs registered under the Licensing Act recently amended their rules to confer honorary membership thereof on members of other bowling clubs?

(2) If so—

(a) Has this alteration to the rules of the clubs concerned been approved by the Licensing Court?

(b) Does such a provision in the rules of a registered club conflict with the relevant sections of the Licensing Act?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

(1) Yes, but only for the purpose of competing in a game of bowls, when under the sponsorship of the West Australian Bowling Association or the West Australian Ladies' Bowling Association.

(2) (a) Yes.

(b) No. Section 184 (i) provides for persons possessing certain qualifications defined in the rules and subject to conditions and regulations provided therein to be admitted as honorary members.

NEW INDUSTRIES FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.*Effect of State Consumer Potential on Establishment.*

15. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Works:

What proportion of the total number of firms interviewed by his trade mission lost interest in establishing themselves in Western Australia when they were told of the actual consumer potential in this State?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

No firm which showed interest in establishing in Western Australia lost interest when told of the actual consumer potential.

COLLIE COAL.

Effects of Coking Process, etc.

16. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What are the possible effects on the coal industry at Collie, if an economic process is perfected for the coking of Collie coal?

(2) In what way would centres other than Collie benefit from such developments?

Mr. MOIR replied:

(1) The present demand for metallurgical coke in Western Australia is small, and any coke industry started would have to rely on export. It is, therefore, probable that a coke industry initially would also be small, and the immediate benefit to Collie would not be great. However, if coke could be produced cheaply enough for use in the iron and steel or chemical industries, the ultimate benefit could be very great.

(2) It cannot be specifically stated what centres other than Collie would benefit from the establishment of a coke industry, but the State would benefit from any additional employment created.

FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Proposed Changes and Inquiry by All-party Committee.

17. Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier:

(1) Has he any information upon the report on proposed changes in the Federal Constitution tabled in the Federal House?

(2) Will he obtain copies for members of this Chamber?

(3) Can he arrange for a study of the effects of the proposals upon the State of Western Australia, to be made by an all-party committee of this House?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) Only from the Press.

(2) An endeavour will be made to do this.

(3) This suggestion will be considered by Cabinet.

HIRE PURCHASE.

Failure of Firms and Examination of Cases.

18. Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) Has his attention been drawn to meetings of creditors called recently by two fairly large firms with interests in the hire-purchase field?

(2) Has his department received any inquiries or complaints suggesting that other firms in this field are finding difficulty in repaying funds lent to them at high interest rates?

(3) Will his officers examine the cases referred to in No. (1) to determine whether there is or is not any evidence of conspiracy or fraud?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

(1) If the question refers to L. G. Gill and Russell's Transport, only the latter had extensive interests in the hire-purchase field.

(2) There have been no such inquiries or complaints.

(3) The cases referred to will be examined by the appropriate officers.

Uniform Legislation.

19. Mr. JOHNSON asked the Premier:

What progress has been made towards a Premiers' conference to deal with uniform legislation upon hire purchase?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

A letter received from the Premier of New South Wales (Mr. Cahill) last Friday suggests the advisability of calling a meeting of appropriate Ministers and their respective officers. This suggestion will receive consideration by Cabinet.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Plan for Land Near Lake Monger.

20. Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What is the departmental plan for the land it holds for technical education in the vicinity of Lake Monger?

(2) When is it anticipated that this plan will be acted upon?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) The land was originally reserved for a high school, but it may in the future be utilised for technical education. No firm decision has been reached on this.

(2) No decision as yet.

NARROGIN AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.

New Students and Additional Dormitories.

21. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Education:

(1) How many new students will be admitted to the agricultural wing of the Narrogin Agricultural High School for 1959?

(2) Will additional dormitories be available for the new year?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) About 30.

(2) No.

CAPE TULIP.*Action for Eradication.*

22. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that the widespread incidence of Cape tulip is serious and demands urgent action?

(2) Is he satisfied with progress being made in its eradication?

(3) In cases where persons or local authorities are not co-operating and their disinterest is likely to affect others, what action can be taken?

Mr. KELLY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Present advice would indicate that control measures are achieving practical results, although eradication is proving difficult in areas extensively affected.

(3) Direction notices to undertake control measures may be issued either to persons or local authorities by the Agriculture Protection Board and the cost charged to the party concerned.

NARROGIN HOSPITAL.*Tenders for Additions.*

23. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Health:

When will tenders be called for additions to the Narrogin hospital?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

December, 1958.

SCALLOPS.*Varieties and Export Possibilities.*

24. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Fisheries:

(1) What varieties of scallops are to be found in Western Australian waters, and in what areas?

(2) What varieties are most acceptable to the American market?

(3) What are the possibilities for the export of scallops?

Mr. KELLY replied:

(1) Saucer scallops (*Amusium balloti*), scarlet scallops (*Annachlamys leopardus*) and doughboy scallops (*Mimachlamys australis*) have been trawled in Shark Bay. Saucer scallops have also been recorded from Fremantle and Albany. *Notovola preissiana*, which is the Western Australian form of the Tasmanian scallop, has been recorded from Albany.

(2) The Tasmanian scallop, which is a deep scallop, is said to be the most acceptable on the American market.

(3) On present indications, the possibility is small.

CITY OF PERTH.*Establishment of Wards and Number of Ratepayers.*

25. Mr. LAPHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) When were the present boundaries of the several wards of the City of Perth established?

(2) What was the number of ratepayers in each at that time?

Mr. MOIR replied:

(1) According to the records of the City of Perth, the Central, North, South, East and West Wards have existed since 1898; the North Perth and Leederville Wards were added in 1914; and Victoria Park in 1917.

According to departmental records the existing wards were established or the last major alteration made on the following dates:—

1. Central—the 27th April, 1900.
2. North—the 27th April, 1900.
3. South—the 27th April, 1900.
4. East—the 27th April, 1900.
5. West—the 27th April, 1900.
6. North Perth—the 22nd December, 1914.
7. Leederville—the 22nd December, 1914.
8. Victoria Park—the 1st November, 1917.

In practically every ward minor alterations have occurred since that date consequent upon boundary adjustments, including the addition of the endowment lands and Lime Kilns Estate to the Leederville Ward on the 18th January, 1918.

(2) There is no information as to the number of ratepayers in each ward in either 1898 or in 1900. The number of ratepayers in the North Perth Ward in 1914 was 1,580; and in the Leederville Ward, 1,897; whilst in the Victoria Park Ward in 1917 the number of ratepayers was 2,150.

SHORTHAND.*Teaching in Secondary Schools.*

26. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is shorthand taught in secondary schools in this State?

(2) If so,

(a) in what schools;

(b) up to what class standard?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) In all high schools except some in the metropolitan area whose students are accommodated at the Perth Girls' High School.

(b) To the Junior standard.

SEWERAGE.*Commencement of Bunbury Scheme.*

27. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

Further to the reply to my question of the 20th August, 1958—

- (1) Has a decision now been made in reference to the commencement of a sewerage scheme in Bunbury?
- (2) If not—
 - (a) why not;
 - (b) when will a decision be made?
- (3) If so, what are the details of such proposed works.

Mr. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) Because an intimation from the Bunbury Municipal Council that it now desires the scheme to be proceeded with has only been received very recently.
- (b) Very shortly.
- (3) Answered by No. (1).

CHAMBERLAIN INDUSTRIES.*Directors and Proposed Changes.*

28. Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Who are the directors of Chamberlain Industries at the present time?
- (2) Are any changes in the directorate under discussion?
- (3) If so, when are these changes anticipated?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

- (1) Mr. Peter Butterworth, General Manager of Saunders & Stuart Limited.

Mr. A. Constantine, General Manager, Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry.

Mr. W. A. Young, Managing Director, Attwood Motors Pty Ltd.

Messrs. G. H. Chessell and G. H. Hankin, respectively the Chairman of Commissioners and a commissioner of the Rural and Industries Bank of W. A. Mr. Hankin is Chairman of Directors of the company.

(2) and (3) An invitation has been given to a person with excellent Australia-wide distribution experience in machinery to join the board, and it is expected in a few months he will be available; and in that event it is Mr. Chessell's intention to make his seat on the board available to this person.

29. *This question was postponed.*

SCALLOPS.*"Lancelin" Log re Shark Bay Area.*

30. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

(1) Has the Fisheries Department received a copy of the log of the "Lancelin" for the days of the 5th and the 6th September?

(2) If so, does it make any reference to the scallops in the Shark Bay area?

Mr. KELLY replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.

WATER STORAGE.*Position in Harvey Irrigation District.*

31. Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has a site been selected for the construction of additional water storage to serve the Harvey irrigation district?

(2) If so, what is the location of the site selected?

(3) If not, when can a decision on this matter be expected?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) Investigations into the possibility of further economic water storage on rivers in the Harvey area are in the preliminary stage. It is not possible to state if and when a decision will be made regarding a site, or sites, for further storage of water.

EDUCATION.*Roll Checks at Five-Year High Schools.*

32. Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Further to my question of Thursday, the 2nd October, relative to daily attendance at certain classes of high schools, would he more fully explain the modification referred to, in the case of students moving from room to room.

(2) Can he state in the case of five-year high schools—

- (a) if rolls are called at all; and if so, how often;
- (b) what other checks are made;
- (c) how students moving from room to room precludes roll calls;
- (d) in what way students moving from room to room differ in the case of five-year high schools from other schools?

(3) Has there been any truancy in the last 12 months from five-year high schools; if so, how many cases?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) In five-year high schools, each staff member has a diary in which he enters absentees at each period of the day. Thus a complete check is made of every student for every lesson.

(2) (a) (b) and (c)—Answered by No. (1).

(d) There is a wider range of subject selection.

(3) Yes. Figures are not kept except in persistent cases.

RAILWAYS.

Metropolitan Suburban Passenger Traffic.

33. Mr. WATTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What were the financial returns for the financial years 1956-57 and 1957-58 of the railways in respect of metropolitan suburban passenger traffic?

(2) If a loss was again disclosed, to what extent was this loss greater or less in those years, than in the three previous years?

Mr. GRAHAM replied:

(1) and (2) The figure for 1957-58 is not yet available. The direct operating losses of suburban coaching traffic were as follows:—

	£
1953-54	406,125
1954-55	491,524
1955-56	500,327
1956-57	528,915

ARMADALE HIGH SCHOOL.

Extensions.

34. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What extensions are contemplated to the Armadale High School this year?

(2) When is work expected to commence?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) and (2) It is not proposed to provide any further accommodation at Armadale High School.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT.

Amending Legislation.

35. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it intended to introduce an amendment to the Marketing of Eggs Act this session?

(2) Will it embrace an extension of the life of the board to allow of a Government guarantee for money to be borrowed by the board to erect a new egg floor?

Mr. KELLY replied:

(1) A Bill has been drafted for introduction this session.

(2) It will facilitate finance for any approved capital expenditure by the board.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2), £18,000,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Hon. A. R. G. Hawke (Treasurer), resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Sewell in the Chair.

THE HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Treasurer—Northam) [4.58]: I move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty on account of the services for the year ending the 30th June, 1959, a sum not exceeding £18,000,000.

First of all, I would like to say how pleased all hon. members are to see the Leader of the Opposition back in his seat following his nasty motorcar accident recently. We sincerely hope and trust that he will very soon be restored to complete health and strength; and again, I repeat, we are extremely pleased to see him back with us.

This is the second move, during this session, to obtain parliamentary approval for the expenditure of moneys from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and from the General Loan Fund to carry on the affairs of the State. The amounts which were voted by Parliament under the terms of the first Supply Bill have been practically exhausted, and therefore it is necessary for parliamentary approval to be obtained to enable further expenditure, under both headings, to be made legally in respect of activities which are financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and undertakings which are financed from the General Loan Fund. The total amount sought by way of approval from Parliament on this occasion is £18,000,000. Of that amount, £14,000,000 will come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and the balance of £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund.

As all hon. members of the Committee are aware, the Loan Estimates and the Budget have both been introduced and are now before the House for consideration and debate. Presumably most of the debate on financial matters will take place under those Estimates. However, this Bill does

allow an opportunity for debate, if any hon. member desires to take advantage of it.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Sewell in the Chair.

THE HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Treasurer—Northam) [5.3]: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1959, a sum not exceeding £14,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill Introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Treasurer—Northam) [5.5]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. D. BRAND (Greenough) [5.5]: It is not my intention to speak on the Supply Bill but merely to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the hon. members here, from the Treasurer downwards, for the good wishes which they expressed following my unfortunate car accident.

At this stage, whilst in this atmosphere, I should say, as Leader of the Opposition and from this side of the House, that I would not like to see the Supply Bill going right through without some of the hon. members sitting on the back benches taking the opportunity, as we have always done following the example of an ex Labour Premier in Mr. Wise, of at least expressing a few of our disappointments to the Government in respect of the many problems which face private members as representatives of the various electorates throughout Western Australia. Having said that, I shall resume my seat and leave other hon. members on this side to carry on with the debate.

MR. WILD (Dale) [5.6]: I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without saying a few words on two matters which very seriously affect not only the electors of Dale, but other people who suffer the same indignities which are being meted out by the Town Planning Board. I want to mention specifically a case that has

occurred in my district during the past 15 months. I wish it to be clearly understood at the outset that my comments are in no way any criticism of my friend the Chief Secretary. I understand he has been very sick for many months past.

All hon. members in this House owe a responsibility to their electors. If the Minister to whom I refer is suffering from an illness and is unable to perform his work, then I say it is the responsibility of the Government to appoint somebody else to carry on with that job.

Mr. May: The Chief Secretary is a very good Minister.

Mr. WILD: I agree. I say without fear of contradiction that he has been the fairest Minister with whom I have associated. I do not want my comments to be taken as a criticism of the Chief Secretary at all. The position which he holds has been allowed to drift on, and I for one will stand on my feet at every opportunity to declare that the Government is to blame for not giving someone else the responsibility of doing that work while the Chief Secretary is ill.

I want now to refer to a particular case concerning a subdivision of some 10 to 12 acres of land in Armadale. It was the subject of an application for subdivision early last year.

Mr. W. Hegney: Is it Minnowarra?

Mr. WILD: It is not. I have no interest in Minnowarra.

Mr. W. Hegney: You asked me what I said, and I said Minnowarra.

Mr. WILD: In this case it happens to be a piece of land in Forrest-rd., Armadale, which is known to many people as Fremantle-rd. The owner of that land made application early in 1957 for subdivision. The application was rejected on the ground that the land had too high a water table. Unfortunately, I did not know that this Bill was coming up for debate today, and I did not bring the letter relating to that application with me. The Minister who is representing the Chief Secretary, as Minister for Town Planning, can see that letter on the file.

The only ground for the rejection of that application for subdivision was that the land had too high a water table. I was asked to appeal, which I duly did. In company with the Chief Secretary in September, 1957, and the owner, I inspected the land which was the subject of the subdivision. The owner pointed out to the Minister that the winter just passed was the wettest for the district.

May I say that the month of July, 1957, was the wettest July ever experienced in the history of Armadale. I think I am right in saying that 18 inches of rain fell in that one month. However, the owner of the land had put down his own test hole, and at no stage did the water

reach within three feet of the surface. It has been standard practice with the Town Planning Board to reject anything closer than 2 ft. 6 in. as a high water table.

The Minister went out there and did what I consider to be the fair and obvious thing when he said, "Well, the winter rains have gone, and I cannot prove who is right, so I shall have to defer a decision on this application until next winter." The owner of the land naturally accepted that—as I did—in good faith. Unfortunately, however, the Chief Secretary became ill and the winter came again in 1958; and this man is still waiting and hoping that somebody will come out. He approached me on several occasions, and I pointed out that Mr. Fraser was ill, but I felt somebody would go out in his stead, because his departmental officers should know what is going on.

I spoke to the Minister for Mines, who has been acting for the Chief Secretary in this Chamber; and up to a couple of weeks ago, the only person who turned up, to the best of my knowledge, was the same officer from the Public Health Department who condemned the land last year. The man who owns the land lives a few hundred yards away and saw somebody going over it. I was not there, but he went over, because he was very keen for something to happen.

Talk about Caesar appealing to Caesar! There was the same person who had said it had a high water table, looking at it again. It was September and the winter rains had gone by. During a conversation with Mr. Spencer Gwynne, who owns the land, the officer said that there was not much sign of water at the present time, but he felt if Mr. Gwynne altered his application there might be a possibility of its going through. The next thing that happened was that I received a letter from the Chief Secretary, dated the 29th of September, and it reads as follows:—

On 13th February I advised you that in view of the varying opinions on the water levels at Mr. S. Gwynne's property on the corner of Seventh and Forrest Roads, Armadale, I would defer my decision on your appeal on behalf of Mr. Gwynne until such time as the levels were further examined.

The further report of the Department of Public Health indicates that, while the intermittent nature of this winter's rainfall, preceded by an unusually long, dry spell, has caused a lowering of water levels, the heavy clay nature of the land causes it to quickly become heavily water-logged during periods of extended rainfall, irrespective of the existing drainage arrangements; and that the land in its present state is not suitable for the installation of residential disposal systems.

I have decided, therefore, to disallow your appeal on behalf of Mr. Gwynne against the refusal of the Town Planning Board to agree to the subdivision of the property.

There we have the man who went out last year and who said the land had a high water table, making another report to the Minister and giving an entirely different story! He now says that the type of country is not suitable. Surely I am entitled to know, on behalf of this man, what is going on. His application has been rejected again, and it looks as though he will have to wait another 12 months.

I would like the Minister to have a look at the plan which I have here, and which I am prepared to lay on the Table of the House. It is a copy of the land referred to. The land coloured green is owned by Mr. Gwynne. All the land in the centre was originally owned by the State Housing Commission for building purposes. However, when it was decided some four or five years ago not to continue building so many houses in the district, the land was sold to the local authority.

On portion of the land the local authority has erected a bowling green on which there are two conveniences, one for ladies and one for gentlemen, each with a septic tank. They have been installed for over 12 months and have been through a very wet winter. However, there have been no complaints from the health authorities of the Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board.

This land drops 7 ft., and there is a natural fall away from the highest point of the land which it is desired to subdivide. With money made available by the late Mr. Sampson—he left money to various authorities in the Swan electorate—the local authority has erected a grandstand and two conveniences on the southern side of the piece of ground the subdivision of which was refused this year. I am assured—and saw with my own eyes—that on the day of the south suburban school sports carnival anything up to 800 or 1,000 children use those conveniences without any complaint. In addition, football is played on most Sunday afternoons, and 400 or 500 people are present.

The whole thing is just too petty and ridiculous. Talk about Caesar appealing to Caesar! The land is on a main bitumen road. There is water and light, and it is surrounded by houses with septic tanks. Yet we get this reply—a stock reply—that the land has too high a water table.

I am taking this opportunity of asking the Minister to have another look at this matter. However, he cannot look at the existing appeal, because the Chief Secretary has told me that the law will not allow it.

Mr. Moir: When you raised the matter with me about three weeks ago, the situation would have been the same if I had gone out again; in effect, the winter rains were over.

Mr. WILD: I recognise that. But this man has been done a grave injury. The departmental officers should have followed this matter up. In his letter the Chief Secretary said he would defer the decision until the next winter rains. Surely it is somebody's responsibility to chase these things up and see that what the Minister says is done. This land cannot be subdivided; yet people are wanting individual blocks at Armadale and cannot get them. This man has been done a grave injury, because it looks as though it will be another year before he will get an opportunity to subdivide the land.

I want to make this point to the Minister: I told Mr. Gwynne last Saturday morning that his only hope is to put in a fresh application with altered boundaries. He has to do that, because the Chief Secretary told me on a previous occasion that he cannot review his own decision. Once it is made, it is final. I have told this man to submit a fresh application altering the boundaries of the subdivision, so it will be a different transaction. Even though the winter rains have gone, I ask the Minister to have a look at this matter, because this man has been done a grave injury.

The other point I want to raise concerns a question I took up with the Minister in charge of the Factories and Shops Act, in connection with two service stations. A great injury was being done to the proprietor of the Yule Do service station, at Bedfordale, and to Mrs. Brady of the Oakland service station at Byford.

The Minister was good enough to receive us, and he allowed these people to state their case. But all we have got, by way of an answer, is "a lemon." I shall read the letter which the Minister wrote on the 15th September last—

Following on the recent interview at which Mrs. Brady of the Oakland Service Station and the Manager of the Yule Do Service Station met me last week, I wish to advise that consideration was given to the representations made, but in view of all the circumstances it is felt that if these stations were to be exempted from the roster system others in the zone would expect the same consideration, and the system would become unworkable. I regret therefore that I cannot agree to your request.

Mr. W. Hegney: What is wrong with that?

Mr. WILD: It is very nice, except that these two people have just about gone broke. I would say it is only a matter of time before they will have to file their petitions, or walk off their properties.

This matter does not hold water. The Automobile Chamber of Commerce—or whatever the organisation is called—is given sole authority to say when and where these service stations shall open. I put this to the Minister: If it upsets the apple-cart in Zone 5, because these two people, who are out on the extremities, should be taken off the roster system, what is the position on the Upper Swan road where, 4½ miles from Guildford, there is a service station which operates outside the roster? Why was not that one included?

Mr. W. Hegney: Did you say Upper Swan?

Mr. WILD: On the Upper Swan road.

Mr. W. Hegney: How far up?

Mr. WILD: Some 4½ miles up. I ask the Minister to have a look at the position. Both of these service stations are at the extremities of Zone 5. As I told the Minister, when he met us, if they were to be removed from the roster system, it would not make much difference, because the figures prove that people will not go out there.

When we look at the roster we find—I say quite frankly—that it is fantastic. I live in the district; and if I were to run out of petrol, I do not know how I would get to some of the stations which are rostered in a particular week.

Mr. May: You would not, if you ran out of petrol.

Mr. WILD: That is so. I would have to walk a long way. Parliament has agreed to this piece of legislation, and it is now on the statute book, and we have to accept it; but it should be handled fairly and with commonsense. I say, without fear of contradiction, that in this case there is either direct stubbornness on the part of the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, or that organisation has its head in the clouds.

Both of these men had small businesses that were bringing them in a normal living. Some hon. members go past these service stations, and they know what has happened. Up to the passage of this Act, the proprietor of the Yule Do Service Station had given service to people at any hour of the day or night. He used to sleep on the premises; and any wood carter, sheep man, or anyone else who wanted petrol late at night, could ring a bell and he would come and serve them.

All that has happened as a result of Zone 5 having been established as it is, is that this man's livelihood has been taken from him and transferred to the Half-way House; because it is strange but true—the figures prove this—that his figures have gone down by exactly half since the introduction of the legislation and the creation of Zone 5. Yet, just up the road, the Half-way House has recently put in two more underground

tanks. This shows that the business has been transferred from A to B, and in the process this man is going broke.

Exactly the same thing applies on the other road at Byford, where people by the name of Brady are affected. In this instance, apart from the fact that they have lost their business, there is a sympathy side to the case. This man is suffering from acute arthritis, and he was forced to give up his farm at Moora. He bought this piece of land at Byford and put up a service station, and got cracking. He was selling sufficient petrol to make a success of the venture, and his wife opened up an eating house, and was taking up to £50 a week.

However, up to a fortnight or three weeks ago, when I previously raised this question in the House, her takings dropped down to as low as £3. The reason is obvious. What is the good of her leaving this little cafe open on the week-end if no-one is allowed to pull up for petrol? It is high time the Minister had a look at the position of these people.

Finally, I would like to read to him a passage out of "The Road Patrol" because it shows that someone other than I is thinking along these lines. In "The Road Patrol" of August, 1958, the R.A.C. had this to say, amongst other things—

The location of roster stations. It was pointed out that where these are located at the extremities of adjoining zones much unnecessary running results. It was suggested that this could be overcome by giving closer attention to this aspect when appointing roster stations and by providing additional roster stations in some zones.

That hits the nail on the head. Here we have two people who are right out on the end of the zone. No-one can get to them because of the distance. If the authorities were to take a reasonable view of the question and make Armadale the southern extremity of Zone 5, it would allow these two people to make a living; and within Zone 5, someone else would obviously get two additional roster days during the period.

However, I put the matter to the Minister again. I know he has rejected it. But I take this opportunity, on the Supply Bill, to ask him to have another look at the matter; because these people, I can assure him, are being done a grave injury.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [5.27]: This Bill gives me the opportunity to bring forward one or two matters concerning education in the State; and I hope that, at some subsequent stage, the Treasurer or the Minister for Education will make some comment on my remarks. Widespread public concern, which cuts across all party ties, is still being felt and

forcibly expressed over the financial requirements of the Education Department. The lack of adequate finance in this State has caused the holding up of educational reforms which it is desirable should be implemented at the earliest opportunity. I refer, in particular, to the raising of the school-leaving age, and secondly, to the reduction of the size of classes.

Serious concern has been felt for a number of years by the people of the State; and half way through last year matters came to somewhat of a head when a large public meeting was held in the Perth Town Hall to discuss the very problems that appertained to education at that time—or, should I say, that appertained to these educational problems. At that meeting a number of speakers were heard, and they expounded quite clearly and forcibly that something must be done for education in this State to ensure that the educational requirements to which I referred were implemented in the shortest possible time.

Following the speakers' remarks, debate ensued from the body of the hall; and, eventually, a motion was submitted and passed unanimously by that large meeting. I want to bring that motion to the attention of the Treasurer, and to ask him to make some comment upon it. I think hon. members will be generally familiar with the terms of the motion because it was conveyed to each hon. member in a letter written by the State School Teachers' Union. The meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

This meeting calls—

(a) on the State Government to give education a greater allocation of revenue and loan funds, and

(b) in view of its belief that funds beyond the present resources of the State may need to be provided by the Commonwealth Government, on the Federal Government to appoint a commission similar to the Murray Committee to produce a report on primary, secondary and technical education in Australia, and

(c) on the citizens of this country to give to education a higher regard than it has hitherto received, especially in view of today's extreme needs for a properly educated community.

I shall refer to paragraph (c) first; and I suggest to the House that everyone would agree with the sentiments expressed in that paragraph—"That the citizens of this country should recognise the need, more so than they have in the past, of the real requirements of education in this State." I do not think any further comment is required on that particular paragraph.

Paragraph (a) states that the meeting calls on the State Government to give education a greater allocation of revenue and loan funds; and I feel that there should

be some sort of reply from the Government in regard to that matter. The Treasurer should make some statement as to whether or not the Government will try to do as this large public meeting asked it to do. To my mind, the meeting, by passing this motion, fairly and squarely put upon the State Government the real responsibility of providing more adequately than in the past the means for giving further and more adequate finance to the Education Department.

Paragraph (b) suggests that in view of the fact that the State Government will find it impossible properly to allocate all of the funds required, an approach should be made to the Commonwealth Government to appoint a commission on lines similar to the Murray Committee in order that it can investigate and produce a report on primary, secondary, and technical education. On this particular point, I asked a question recently of the Minister for Education; and it was couched in these terms—

(1) Has the Government made representations to the Commonwealth Government to appoint a commission, similar to the Murray Committee, which could produce a report on primary, secondary and technical education in Australia?

(2) If not, is it intended to make such a request?

The Minister's reply was in this vein—

(1) No.

(2) As the Directors of Education of the various States, following upon a recent decision of the Australian Education Council are preparing a report on the matter, it is not considered necessary to request the Commonwealth to appoint a commission.

I feel it is unwise not to request the Commonwealth Government to appoint a commission on lines suggested by that large meeting which met in July of last year.

Mr. W. Hegney: Was it not on the 18th June this year?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Minister is right; it was this year—but in July, I think. I made reference earlier to the fact that the meeting was held last year, and I thank the Minister for reminding me on that point. In my opinion, the directors of the various States could well submit a report that would prove to be of almost equal importance and virtue as a report that could be furnished by a commission appointed by the Federal Government. However, the important thing is that if the Commonwealth Government agreed to appoint a commission to investigate and make a report on the three aspects of education to which I referred, we would already be part way towards obtaining the financial support required for the implementation of such a report.

Mr. Brand: The directors could give evidence, in any case.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, the directors could easily give evidence, and the important thing is that the Federal Government would be committed in part towards some financial responsibility. So I still contend that an approach should be made to the Commonwealth Government, and I ask the Government in all sincerity to give further consideration to this important point.

In the letter that was addressed to each hon. member from the State School Teachers' Union, an indirect reference is made in the final paragraph to this particular point. It reads—

Your attention is also drawn to section (b) which seeks the appointment of a commission similar to the Murray Commission which reported on Australian universities. Your support of this request is sought. The report of such a commission will, we believe, provide a factual basis for the development of sound policies for the financing of education in the future.

Hon. members will notice that mention is made of the development of sound policies. While I agree that the directors of the States can develop sound policies in regard to education, the vital matter is financing education in the future. That is the point I want to drive home at this moment.

I should now like to mention another paragraph of this letter, which has to do with part (a) of the motion, calling on the State Government to give education a greater allocation of funds from revenue and loan. The paragraph reads—

As a representative of the Australian people, would you please note section (a) of the resolution. Parents and teachers appreciate that education is not the only activity which has to be financed by the State. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt the most important activity in which the State can invest to secure its future well-being and prosperity.

Having brought this motion to the notice of the Government, and having asked the Premier and/or the Minister for Education to make some comment on it, I would request that something be done in the matter.

MR. HEARMAN (Blackwood) [5.41]: In view of the frequent comments we hear from the public about Government expenditure generally, it would be wrong to allow this Supply Bill to pass without some comment from hon. members of this Chamber. The actual sum of money being asked for by the Government, through the passing of these Supply Bills, is constantly

on the increase; but I am not suggesting, even if the sum of money that is available were doubled, that it could not be used gainfully in this State. What concerns me—and a great many people—is the question as to whether we are really getting value for the money that we are expending.

The Government has certain policies—such as the supply of all materials to Government works through State instrumentalities, wherever possible, the use of day labour, and things of that nature—which many of us think are becoming increasingly costly; on the other hand, we are constantly being told by the Government that there is no money for this, and no money for that, in reference to such things as hospitals, schools, town water schemes, and the like. A few weeks ago, in regard to the railways, I mentioned the need to bring some realism to costs on our railways. I think that comment could be taken a good deal further.

The Deputy Premier will probably recall an instance last year when I drew his attention to the quality of some timber that was being supplied to the Main Roads Department by the State Saw Mills for certain work on a bridge. If the Deputy Premier jogs his memory, I think he will recall that I brought a couple of pieces of timber to Perth and showed him what it was like. In fairness to the department, I must say that the quality of timber supplied to that particular gang has improved since then, from observations I have made.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that, as a result of Government policy, it was quite obvious that the State Building Supplies had reached the stage where they were not concerned about the quality of the timber that was being supplied, but were merely taking the view that it did not matter because the Government had said that business such as this had to be done through the department, and so quality did not matter.

That simply means that the Government was not getting value for the money it was expending. I am not greatly concerned as to whether or not that money came from the petrol tax or from some other source. The fact is that the Government was responsible for spending it; and, as the Deputy Premier well knows from the instance I mentioned, the Government on that occasion did not get value for the money it expended with another Government department.

Actually the sequel to that was rather amusing, if a little expensive. The timber in question was inspected about four times. A representative of the State Saw Mills first inspected it; the bridge foreman naturally inspected it; an officer from the Forests Department inspected it; and finally, an engineer from the Main Roads

Department inspected it. They then sent the truck back to Buckingham's Mill twice, to get the necessary replacements.

Of course, they were not all available on the first occasion. Nobody knew anything about the condemned timber lying on the side of the road and, a month, later a truck was sent to pick it up. On balance I wonder if it would have been better had I not raised the matter at all, because the whole thing cost the Government twice what it should have done. I mention this because this is the sort of thing the public see.

The public are not completely blind, even though they do not always necessarily mention these facts to the Ministers or the Premier when visits are made to the district. The general conditions under which those visits are made, when a Minister is invited to an area, are not always regarded as being appropriate occasions for criticism to be levelled at the Government. None the less, a good deal is said at different times about Government expenditure. Because it is said behind the Government's back, that does not mean it is not said, or that there is not some justification for it.

Only recently I attended the opening of a new set of classrooms for the convent at Donnybrook. Four satisfactory classrooms had been erected. It was a brick and tiled-roof building, and a good job had been done. The classrooms were satisfactory for the purpose for which they were intended. They might not have been as elaborate as some of those provided at the junior high school at Donnybrook, but the cost was a few thousand pounds less.

The people naturally ask themselves why it is inevitable that the cost should be so much higher when the Government spends money on these jobs. I know that this work in Donnybrook was done by a private contractor; but when one talks to these people, one wonders what is going on.

I remember speaking to a contractor who had a large Government contract in my electorate. He made no secret of the fact that he did very well out of it; and it is well known to everybody that he did. He told me that his tender was £10,000 below that of the next tenderer. The only thing about which he was concerned was that he had not quoted a higher price. One wonders what is going on when one hears of things like that happening. On the one hand we are told that building by private contractor is cheaper than day work, and I believe it is. At the same time I ask myself whether we have not been a little haphazard in the prices we have paid for various jobs and buildings undertaken by the Government. There are so many places that come to mind.

Last year, I mentioned an instance in which the Main Roads Department quoted 45s. a chain for clearing a certain road, while the successful tenderer quoted 27s. 6d. It is things of that nature to which I refer, and about which I am concerned. That took place when the road board called tenders for certain work to be done, and when the Main Roads Department was looking for work for its men. Needless to say, the department did not get the job.

One wonders whether we cannot properly insist on more money being made available for things that we would like done, particularly when we see these amounts of money being provided for various purposes, such as those I have mentioned. I wonder whether a closer check cannot be kept on this expenditure. I might tell the Treasurer that the public are getting pretty fed up with this sort of thing, and are becoming extremely critical.

It is all very well to say that day labour creates employment. I do not think it does, because if there is so much money to spend, then obviously we could have more building which, of course, would mean more work being created. More material would be required; and as a result of this, more men would be necessary to secure it. It is possible that we might not be paying so much in labour, but we would be doing so in other directions which also create employment.

So this idea of making jobs immediately available in order to provide employment is, to my mind, quite fallacious. The object should be to make the money go as far as possible, and to get more work done; because that is the way to create additional work. This matter concerns a lot of people.

The Treasurer knows that both in the city and throughout the country, business is not as bright as it was. Only this morning I heard of a firm that had put off 16 men because the business available did not justify their retention. We must also consider the effect of lower wool prices, and the falling returns from primary products generally. The returns from our fruit export may be considerably lower than those we have come to expect in that particular industry. We also know that the dairy industry is not in a particularly happy position. All this is going to have a cumulative effect.

While I am not necessarily holding the Government responsible for the fall in wool prices, it does impose an additional responsibility on the Government to ensure that the fullest possible use is made of the money it spends; and when thinking in terms of raising additional revenue, the Government should pay particular attention to ensuring that there is no waste at all in Government administration.

I know that a great number of people are concerned with these things. Hon. members know that I have often discussed

the Department of Agriculture in this connection. I notice that the dairy branch has received a considerably augmented amount of money—something in the vicinity of £40,000 over the last four years. Most dairy farmers would feel, I am sure, that the services rendered by the department have not increased proportionately. In fact, not only the dairying branch, but the whole of the Department of Agriculture is something at which we should have a good look, to see whether we cannot obtain some real return for the money expended.

It is not good enough to say, "We have made another £40,000 available over four years, and therefore we must be doing a better job." That does not necessarily follow at all. I feel that the whole department could be reorganised in such a manner as to provide a far greater service to the farmers for the same expenditure. At present the department is far too closely compartmented, as it were. For instance, if a man from the horticultural branch sees a sheep with foot-rot, he feels it is none of his business; it is the concern of the sheep branch, or the veterinary branch. I know that in some instances there is a degree of co-operation, but in many others there is not.

Consequently we do not get the return we should from these things. When anything in the nature of an emergency has arisen, such as a codlin moth outbreak, and so on, the department has generally been able to meet the situation. I still think, however, that a great many of these troubles could be avoided, and costs reduced, if we had a look at what was going on overseas in scientific extension work as it applies to agriculture. Hon. members could find that the practice adopted overseas is very different from our approach.

This is particularly so in the United States of America. They feel they cannot afford to carry on assistance such as we are attempting here in Western Australia. If a country like the United States cannot afford it, I think it is time we asked ourselves whether we can afford it, because I feel there is a better and cheaper way of doing this—particularly with the need for scientific extension work becoming increasingly necessary, not only because of the pests that are met with in agriculture, but also with a view to reducing costs and improving the quality of our product.

This is a matter to which the Government could give close attention. Actually in the United States they do not attempt to have a series of experts dealing with all these matters. Their approach to scientific extension work in agriculture is similar to that adopted by the Medical Department. We tend to have a general medical practitioner in each country town rather than

a series of specialists in the bigger country towns. It is realised that in medicine advice must be immediately available. Much the same view is adopted in the United States in connection with scientific extension work. They feel that an officer must be resident in the town so that he will get to know the individual farmer—his strength, his weaknesses, and his difficulties.

To do that he must be personally acquainted with each farmer; and, consequently, the tendency would be, instead of having a number of men, as we have—such as 15 or 20 grouped in Bunbury—to have one of those men in each country town throughout the South-west, dealing in the general treatment of agriculture, as a medical practitioner deals generally with medicine in the district. If additional expert attention were needed, the necessary consultant would be called in. I believe we could very well save money, or get a much better return for the money we spend in this department, if we endeavoured to reorganise it along the lines adopted by other countries.

After all, our department has remained basically unchanged ever since I can remember. We have had various branches that have worked along separate lines. Actually I doubt very much whether the general farming problems vary so greatly in one district that one officer could not, in general terms, handle them. They seem to manage it in other countries; and I do not think we are really so different in that respect to those countries that we cannot apply some of the lessons they have learned.

We should think seriously about this matter when it is realised that a different system has been adopted in the United States, because they could not afford the sort of system we are attempting to persevere with here. They found it too costly and had to revise it and get down to a more personal sort of service, which actually helps a far greater number of farmers.

I make no criticism whatever of the individual officers of the department. It is not an officer's fault if he is given a certain job to do, and—by virtue of the fact that limitations are imposed on him—can do only part of it. For instance, if a man is sent to the Kimberleys and is then given a mileage restriction for the year, it is not his fault that his effectiveness is tremendously limited.

Mr. Nulsen: There is no restriction.

Mr. HEARMAN: I do not think the Minister is right.

Mr. Nulsen: Years ago, but not now.

Mr. HEARMAN: There have been restrictions. The Minister admits that. It is hopeless to send a man to a place like the Kimberleys and restrict his mileage.

I know there are good officers—for instance, at Bridgetown—in the dairy branch, and they can assist on questions other than those relating to the dairying industry. I know that when I have mentioned to certain people that the officer of the dairy branch in their home town could assist them, in a number of cases they have said to me, "Who is he? I have not heard of him." Of course they have not, if they are not dairy farmers, because he does not have to go and see them! His time is completely taken up with dairy farmers in the area he has to cover. He is trying to cover the Bridgetown area, the Greenbushes area, and the Balingup area, as well as others. I do not know how far towards Manjimup he has to go; but now they want him to go to Boyup Brook, because of the good work he has been doing.

They are trying to get another man; but under our present system, the dairy branch will not put a man there because it is not a dairying area, and the sheep and wool people do not seem to be very interested. The system I would like to see in operation would be that instead of having men grouped in the country areas they should be spread out into the smaller country towns. A farmer in Beverley said he had never seen the man from Northam.

An hon. member: All private practitioners.

Mr. HEARMAN: No, they are not. I am not talking about vets, but officers of the department. Of course the people in Beverley never see the man from Northam because he never gets that far; but he is not to be blamed. I think the idea should be to spread these people around like medical practitioners. We do not try to have an orthopaedic specialist, an ear, nose and throat specialist, a chest surgeon or, in fact, any specialist, in country centres. We have general practitioners; and if they run into something too complex for them, they call in a specialist.

Why cannot the same thing be done with regard to these various problems? We should have as many general practitioners as we can, instead of all being specialists, and they should deal with problems generally and, when necessary, consult a specialist; for instance, a member of the Institute of Agriculture or perhaps a member of the C.S.I.R.O. I am sure if this were done, we would have far more farmers in direct contact with the department, getting the benefit of the knowledge of these officers, than we have at present.

It is not that farmers are unwilling to learn. I think the average farmer—and particularly the younger farmer—is very ready to assimilate new ideas; but the difficulty is to acquaint him with the new ideas. He should be kept in touch with these specialists who would stimulate his interest along the lines that the department thinks best. It is very difficult for

an officer, unless he has a good knowledge of the individual, to always give his soundest advice.

One man may be a good farmer, and a good manager, and be comfortably off financially. He is able to take advantage of the latest methods and benefits from them. Another man, for various reasons, might not be as good a manager, or not so well off and he might have other difficulties. For instance, his family might not be so interested in the farm as he would like them to be. In this case, the same advice might not be advisable, because he might not be able to act upon it.

Unless a departmental officer is able to know the farmers personally and assess their general capabilities, he cannot always give them the soundest advice. The advice he gives them could even be dangerous. It is no good asking one man to adopt a certain type of control or system if that man has not the finances, capabilities, or interest to do so. It would be far better for him to adopt a simpler method.

One has only to look at the bulletin which the department distributes: for instance, in regard to the cleaning of milking machines, which is all very sound and good. But we should compile this literature in comic strip form, or in some other way that captures the imagination and is easily assimilated. The Americans have done this. The Cornell University has done a lot of work on this type of literature that will appeal most to the farmer who will read it.

It is necessary to adopt this form of literature, as is done all over the world in advertising. The farmer has to be encouraged to read it; but unless he is a very keen person, he will not read even a page or two of the bulletins distributed by the Department of Agriculture. I do not necessarily blame the people responsible for that particular form of bulletin; but I do not think that enough importance is attached to this particular aspect; and it is another way in which we are lagging behind. If handled better, it would be of much more benefit.

In conclusion, I would just like to reiterate what I have said. The public is getting very restive at the obvious waste and inefficiency that occurs in Government departmental administration and Government expenditure. I think that the Premier, in his capacity as Treasurer, should pay considerably more attention to the obvious economies that could be effected. It will take a certain amount of political courage, because it is not easy to change a system that has been accepted for a number of years. I am well aware of the difficulties that might confront the Premier, particularly with an approaching election, if he tightened up on these things. On the other hand, if the interests of the State are really taken to heart, and the

interests of the working man are fully borne in mind, we will have to grasp this nettle and have some indication of the realisation on the part of the Treasurer that it has to be grasped if people's jobs are to be protected.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [6.11]: There are one or two matters I would like to bring to the notice of the House about the use of finance. We know that in this State we depend very considerably on our primary production—in particular our agricultural production—and yet it will be noticed from the reply received today to a question regarding the Narrogin Agricultural High School, which caters for boys not only from Narrogin but from a very wide area, that there is nothing going to be done again next year in the way of dormitory accommodation. This is most disappointing, and it is very hard to understand the attitude of the Government on this matter.

In a State which depends on agriculture for a large proportion of its income, surely the training of youths in agriculture is a matter of primary importance. I do not think it is an incidental matter. If our agricultural lands are to be used to the best advantage, and other areas are to be utilised, as we are seeking to have them utilised, then training youths to get the utmost use out of the land is one of the first matters that should occupy our attention and utilise our finances. Yet what do we find?

Year after year there is no provision for the training of the boys. In fact, the number of trainees has had to be cut down. Why should we be reducing the number of applicants for entry into the agricultural high school? We need far more to be trained than are being admitted. But training is being refused, and thereby we are neglecting the needs of agriculture. We provide technical education for those wanting to take up trades; and who would deny that such is necessary? But surely the same amount of training is necessary for boys taking up agriculture!

I know the Minister has said we must have money for classrooms before dormitories. But when we are dealing with agricultural training, the provision of dormitories must be considered. The boys have to live on the site; therefore dormitories are just as important as classrooms, and I cannot understand the attitude of the Government in by-passing this particular aspect of their education year after year. I think it would take some explaining as to why that is done.

Mr. W. Hegney: Your own leader had to duly turn the proposition down for the same reason, when he was Minister.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: We did maintain the number of boys over those years; but since then the number has had to be

reduced. That is not progress. It is just as much retrogression as closing the railway lines. I think the attitude adopted is not the right one, and that something definite should be done.

There is one other point I would like to raise and it is an alarming one. It is in connection with the Cape tulip. I asked the Minister a question regarding this, and I feel there is occasion for considerable alarm at the present time.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. W. A. MANNING: Before tea I was speaking about Cape tulip, in an endeavour to sound an alarm in regard to it. In reply to a question I asked this afternoon, as to whether the Government was satisfied with the progress being made in the eradication of this weed, the Minister said, "The present advice would indicate that control measures are achieving practical results, although eradication is proving difficult in areas extensively affected." I know that a lot of good work is being done and it is to the credit of the officers of the Department of Agriculture, the local governing bodies and private people, many of whom are spending a considerable amount of money on the eradication of Cape tulip; but the cost of the spray alone, where there is an extensive growth of the weed, is approximately 25s. per acre, which members will realise is beyond the means of many private people if the infestation covers a wide area.

It is not those who already have Cape tulip on their properties who should be most alarmed, as they are already aware of the menace and are probably taking steps to control it, but those to whose properties it is likely to spread. This weed spreads very quickly, as the seed is carried by wind and water and by other means, along water courses and roads—

Sir Ross McLarty: And along the railway lines.

MR. W. A. MANNING: Yes. It is spreading through private properties, reserves and forest areas. We are apt to take things easily sometimes and it is not until some pest really becomes a serious menace that we take notice of it. I believe that this weed has already progressed far enough; and if we are not very careful we will find it covering the countryside from one end to the other. One can travel along country roads today and see large areas of these beautiful flowers. They are extremely pretty and it is no wonder that someone brought the plant here for its flowers, in the first place; but when one realises what it does to the countryside, one must raise the alarm about it —

Mr. Evans: What colour are these flowers?

MR. W. A. MANNING: They are apricot or amber. This weed damages the feed and prevents the gathering of hay, as the leaves are toxic. The stock, used to its

presence, will avoid Cape tulip in the field, but when it is cut with the hay it is dangerous. I recognise what is being done to eradicate Cape tulip; but I think that if we could measure the present rate at which it is advancing, despite the endeavours to eradicate it, we would find that it is keeping ahead and that we must obtain more money in order to intensify our efforts to control it. So long as the weed continues to spread it is a danger to everyone; and if it eventually covers the agricultural areas of the State we will indeed be in a sorry condition.

I do hope the Government will take notice of what I have said, because this is not a matter to be taken lightly. Cape tulip should be attacked wherever it is found in small areas. It must be sprayed at a certain time of the year and it is now too late to treat it this year. July and August are the main two months for the successful spraying of the two different types of this weed, and that is the only way to get rid of it, although the spraying is costly and takes time. Complete eradication cannot be achieved in one year; and as soon as this weed gets out of hand there is trouble, not only for the man on the spot but also for his neighbours, to whose property it spreads along the water courses or per medium of the wind, and in other ways. I hope what I have said will bring this matter to the notice of the Government, so that action may be taken promptly.

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [7.35]: I would like some indication of what are the economics of the Government in supporting various projects that are taking shape in this State today. About 12 months ago the then Minister for Lands, Mr. Hoar, introduced a measure known as the Northern Development Bill, the purpose of which was to grant to a company up to 20,000 acres of land out from Derby, in the area held by the Liveringa Pastoral Co., for the purpose of growing rice.

The intention, I believe, was that the company was to take 5,000 acres to begin with, and would grow 1,000 acres of rice per annum during the next five years. I had seen rice growing in other countries, and, as I had not seen it grown in Australia, I took the opportunity of flying to the north in order to have a look at this project this year. It was very interesting and I think it could be a most successful venture; but I imagine that its success or failure depends on whether the Government is satisfied that it will be able to make available sufficient water, at the right time of the year, to water the crops.

The SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat? I realise that the noise in the Chamber is disturbing the hon. member, but if he wishes to stop it, he should appeal to me and should not take action on his own account. The hon. member may continue.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I apologise. What I just did was done on the spur of the moment. The success or failure of this project depends entirely on the availability of water for the rice crop at the right time. Harking back to the financial aspect of the project, I find that up till the end of June, 1957, the Government had spent £38,000 in assisting the company; and last year a little more than that was spent, while for the year ending the 30th of June next, I understand the expenditure will be £55,000. I believe most of that money has been spent on building roads and establishing a dam in the creek, about 17 miles above the rice fields. Further up the creek, where it runs into the Fitzroy River, a pumping plant has been established.

In the second year—I refer to the operations of the new company—the crop taken off 200 acres gave a yield of approximately 30 cwt. per acre. Contrary to expectations, and possibly contrary to Mr. Hoar's information also, this year the company put in a second crop. During his speech, when introducing the Bill last year, Mr. Hoar said the company would grow only one crop of rice per year; but I understand they are going to endeavour to grow two crops per year.

Their second crop, which was planted about last February, came on very well and looked quite promising in June, but at that stage there was very little water left in Uralla Creek and they had to pump for all they were worth to keep the crop going. I understand that the supply of water ran out and that factor, together with the problem of keeping down the bird life—in particular the brolgas—resulted in their receiving a yield of only 8 cwt. per acre from the 100 acres that they harvested.

That low yield was quite a disappointment to the company, but it stresses the point that they cannot grow rice without sufficient water. Unfortunately the seasonal conditions for that second crop were not the best, as it was a cold winter, with temperatures well below normal, so that the rice was prevented from maturing as quickly as would have been hoped—

Mr. Rhatigan: The Government is doing everything possible to provide the necessary water.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I realise that. As I said, the money being expended this year is being spent on the installation of pumping plant at the top of the creek. Evidently the plant there last year was not of sufficient capacity to lift enough water into the creek. From the answers given to my questions, I understand it is now the intention of the Government to complete, by the end of 1960, a barricade across the Fitzroy River just at the mouth of Uralla Creek.

By building that barricade to a certain height it is hoped that, when the river comes down, a tremendous amount of

water will be turned into the creek, with the result that it will be held back and will be available, with the installation of the bigger pumps, to irrigate the rice crop. This, in turn, will flow to the company's own plant and billabong and it will then flood according to its own requirements. It will need three men to maintain this plant and to work the pumps that are necessary at an approximate cost of £9,000 a year.

Under the agreement, the company, on taking all the water that it requires, will pay £3,000 a year to the Government; and as the cost to the Government will be £9,000 for the maintenance of the pumping gear and the supply of labour required, the net cost to the Government will be £6,000 a year.

The SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for Claremont please resume his seat? I ask hon. members to lower the tone of their voices. I am finding it very difficult to hear the hon. member for Claremont, so I therefore ask hon. members to lower their voices and give him an opportunity to express his views in this Assembly.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I was endeavouring to obtain an opinion on what is the economic amount that any Government should invest and spend each year to make a project worth while. If this company can grow 1,000 acres of rice per annum successfully even at, say, a yield of one ton to an acre, which would return £25 per ton for paddy rice, it would be sound economics from the Government's point of view. However, once again the question revolves around the amount of water that can be supplied to the company to handle such an acreage.

To place 72 inches of water on to one acre of ground—8 ft. is the normal requirement for such a crop—in order to give the rice crop its average amount of water would, in round figures, take 1,656,000 gallons to water 5,000 acres. As a 72-inch depth is required for each of these acres during the growing season prior to harvesting, it would take 30,000 acre feet of water. In other words, it would require 8,280,000,000 gallons of water. I do not profess to know how much water that is, but it is an awful lot; and I would like to feel that the damming of the Fitzroy River with this barricade will provide this amount of water each year.

Unless the Government is reasonably certain that it can supply to the company this amount of water—I do not know that it can be certain until it has been asked for and is supplied during one year—the company would be at a tremendous disadvantage. Then again, if a dry season occurred and the river did not run to any extent, I fail to see how the company could be expected to be supplied with water

by the Government to the extent of such a large gallage that is required to grow the crop.

If it is possible to guarantee such a large supply of water, I can assure the Government that the men engaged by the company today certainly have the knowledge of how to grow rice, and there is every possibility of the project succeeding. I would like to compare it with the similar project at Humpty Doo.

About 10 miles out of Darwin there has been established a tremendous mill, complete with drying kilns of all types, which are used to dry the rice. They have there also an American harvester with a 16 ft. cut, and it is a self-propelled machine. However, when one visits the project itself, one finds that no rice is being grown. It is intended that a crop shall be grown next year to cover 5,000 acres. I know a little about land, and I feel certain that that at Liveringa is every bit as good as the land at Humpty Doo for successful rice growing. At Liveringa they are going the right way about succeeding with the project by commencing on a small scale to prove that they can grow rice, and I think the company should be congratulated on its efforts to date.

At the Kimberley Research Station, the field officers have proved that all land about 70 miles out from Wyndham is capable of growing various crops with a very high yield. However, in making comparisons again, I would say that the Liveringa land is every bit as good as that about 70 miles out from Wyndham. At Wyndham this year they produced 100 tons of sugar cane from one acre. I might explain that they grew one acre last year and then left it to re-seed, but over the two years they produced 100 tons of sugar cane on one acre of land. I feel certain that the same could be done at Liveringa.

At the Kimberley Research Station they also grow safflower which, as hon. members know, is a base for paints, margarine, and oil cakes. In growing this crop they obtained yields of up to 2,000 lb. per acre. That is nearly one ton per acre, and it is valued at the very conservative figure of £45 a ton. As well as growing rice at Liveringa, Northern Developments Pty. Ltd. is quite capable of growing safflower. At Kimberley Research Station in 1957, 2,500 lb. of cotton was produced to the acre. However, they did not have such a good crop this year, as only 1,500 lb. to the acre was obtained.

It is well known that there is not a great deal of cotton grown in Australia, but today it is worth 1s. 4d. a lb., or approximately £150 a ton. I think that all these products can be produced at Liveringa. Therefore, even if it were impracticable to grow such a large amount of rice, there are many alternative crops that the company could grow. However, once again it

all depends on whether the amount of water that is required can be supplied. We would have to wait until 1961 before that question could be answered because it will not be until then that the first demand for enough water to supply 5,000 acres of land to grow a rice crop is made. Until then, we will not know whether the building of the barricade across the river will be a success.

Of course, it has to be realised that this land is regarded as some of the best pastoral country on the station property. In normal times these flats would, I suppose, be used for the raising of fat lambs. Therefore, the company must be making a great sacrifice to set this land aside for the growing of rice. I am not sure whether the growing of this crop will prove to be as great an economic asset as the raising of fat lambs on the same area. That is certainly a matter for conjecture. Nevertheless, we should appreciate the assistance that has been granted to Northern Developments Pty. Ltd. by the company, which is a very large leaseholder in those parts.

Reverting to the barricade across the Fitzroy River, I cannot remember how wide the river was at the point where the barricade was to go across, but I would say it was approximately 200 yards. If a barricade is to be built, I would assume that it would have to be constructed of reinforced steel and cement.

Mr. Rhatigan: Don't you think that this is a matter that should be left to engineers rather than politicians?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I am not questioning the knowledge of engineers; I am just trying—

Mr. Rhatigan: Your knowledge could be very remote.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I admit that it could be very remote indeed, because I do not know anything about engineering. I am merely trying to ascertain what would be the economic asset to any Government that might finance this project. I am not criticising the scheme; I am only hoping that it will prove to be a 100 per cent. success. I am merely stating that when this barricade is placed across the Fitzroy River I would assume that it would have to be built to a fair depth to withstand the weight of water. It would be a tremendous project for the Government because every ton of steel and cement would have to be carted over a distance of approximately 60 to 80 miles to the site.

I can appreciate the criticism levelled at me by the hon. member for Kimberley in questioning what I know about engineering. I do not know anything about engineering, but at least I did go to the trouble to inquire what the position was up there and I found the subject very interesting. However, I do not propose to

take up any more time of the House except to repeat that I hope the rice-growing project will be successful.

In the Press the other day I noted a report, issued from Canberra, which stated that Australia was growing enough rice for domestic consumption, and that rice consumption in Australia was $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per head. It was also reported that there were 41,700 acres now under cultivation in the Murrumbidgee area, with a yield of 135 bushels per acre, compared with 38,688 acres with a yield of 131 bushels in 1955.

There again, it appears that they can grow enough rice in the Murrumbidgee area without increasing the acreage to supply all the needs of Australia. It is fairly evident, therefore, that rice will have to be sold outside Australia in the near future. Under the methods which are used today, where the crop is put in by a quick way and taken off by a quicker way, I feel sure that rice grown in this State can be sold on the world markets at a cheaper price than that at which it can be produced in some Eastern countries.

THE HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [8.0]: I would like to say a few words on this Bill. I was very interested in the remarks made by the hon. member for Narrogin prior to the Minister for Agriculture entering the Chamber. He was referring to the spread of Cape tulip and drawing the attention of the Minister to the seriousness of that weed. I am sure the Minister will look at those remarks in Hansard and pass them on to the responsible officers of his department.

There is no doubt that Cape tulip is spreading at an alarming rate. The hon. member for Narrogin told us about its spread along water courses, drains and roads, and I interjected that it is also to be found along railway lines. In that connection I would ask the Minister for Agriculture to confer with his colleague, the Minister for Railways, with a view to early action being taken to eradicate this weed in railway reserves. I understand that landowners can be prosecuted if they do not deal with it, and I think they should be prosecuted if they do not take appropriate action. But if it is found in railway reserves and Government reserves, as mentioned by the hon. member for Narrogin, the individual can hardly be prosecuted unless an example is shown by the Government and active steps are taken by it to control the spread of Cape tulip.

Mr. Heal: How is it controlled? Is it done by spraying?

Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes and very effectively, too. I listened to the speech made by the Treasurer when he was introducing the Estimates. He told us about the need for the Government to have money. Every Treasurer whom I have known in my long period in Parliament has told us about the dire need of

the Treasury to have money. Of course the Government must have money. The Treasurer said that members of Parliament ask that money be spent in large quantities, but do not do much to advise the Government how it should get the money. He went on to say that certain hon. members objected to the Government getting certain revenues, and he dealt with the land tax on improved agricultural lands. In speaking on this matter, the Treasurer said—

Should members of Parliament in another place have the nerve to deny the Government the net amount of £200,000 involved in the proposed continuation of the land tax on improved farming lands in face of these figures, then they either have no conscience or they have no appreciation of the degree of financial responsibility which every member of Parliament should have in a situation of this kind.

I want to stress to the House the position of primary industry. In the last Perth sales, there was a further decline in the price of wool: it was down by 5 per cent. from what it was at the last sales.

Mr. O'Brien: And a 5 per cent. decline again tonight.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: The hon. member for Murchison says it is down again tonight. It is generally recognised that the price of that great commodity—our greatest export commodity—is in many districts nearing the cost of production. There are probably hon. members here, representing agricultural constituencies, who will say that wool cannot be produced economically at its present price. Apart from that, we have a sharp fall in the price of other primary products, such as butter. The Treasurer mentioned one other commodity which I cannot recall.

I notice that in a speech made recently and reported in one newspaper found in the reading room here, Mr. Arthur Calwell (Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament) said we might find difficulty in marketing our wheat despite the fact that there is a guaranteed price for 100,000,000 bushels. He thinks the surplus might be so great, because of the bounteous season throughout Australia, that wheat producers could find themselves in a difficult position. Apart from the fact that the Treasurer and the Government want money, a large section of primary producers at present want money also.

Mr. Naider: And want it badly, too.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: The hon. member should know, because he is a farmer representing a large farming community. We are told from time to time that farmers should cut their costs of production. I tire of hearing these comments. I think that

every move is being made by farmers to reduce costs by introducing better methods of farming, mechanisation, and so on.

Mr. Bovell: If their costs were not cut to the absolute minimum, they would not be able to farm. They would be forced off their properties.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: It must not be forgotten that the primary producers of this country are today bearing a heavy burden of taxation. The sum about which the Treasurer was so concerned amounts to £200,000. It would have been a good gesture on the part of the Government to forgo that tax this year in order to help the primary industries. I do not agree with the Treasurer that hon. members of another place would be irresponsible if they rejected this tax. I hope they will use commonsense and see that it is rejected.

Mr. W. Hegney: Are you trying to influence another place?

Sir ROSS McLARTY: If what I am saying will have any influence up there, I shall be very pleased. I want to make some reference to the trade missions which are to be sent overseas. In tonight's "Daily News" there is, under the heading of "Second Mission", the following report:—

A second W.A. trade mission is likely to go overseas at the end of next year or early in 1960.

Premier Hawke said today: "It will depend upon the need to follow up negotiations started by the first mission."

The actual date of departure would depend upon the progress of the negotiations initiated by the mission headed by Deputy Premier Tonkin, he said.

Mr. Brand: He has overlooked the elections.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: I am not critical of the mission that went abroad recently. In fact, if the Deputy Premier remembers, I said to him on several occasions that I would like to see him go overseas in order that he might have a look at other parts of the world. I think it is necessary from time to time for Governments to know what progress is being made in other parts of the world, and how this State compares in a number of directions with the progress being made overseas. But I am going to question the necessity of sending another trade mission abroad so soon after the first. I do not think it is necessary to send them so frequently. As I proceed, I shall outline my reasons.

Mr. Potter: You do not think the Opposition will be the Government.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: In speaking of this matter, I am not worried about which particular party will be the Government after the next elections. In London we have an Agent-General; and under him, a secretary and some considerable staff.

I notice from the Estimates that the cost of this office was £34,484 last year, and the estimated cost this year is £38,585, or an increase of a little over £4,000. As we know, an ex-Minister is now Agent-General in London. I was going to ask the Treasurer what this office was doing in the way of encouraging industry to establish in Western Australia. Can it not follow up the work that has been done by the Deputy Premier and those gentlemen who recently accompanied him abroad? Surely an ex-Minister of the Crown, and one so recently an ex-Minister, should be able to follow up the work of the mission and should have an intimate knowledge of the affairs of Western Australia!

We feel that not only the taxpayers of Western Australia, but also the taxpayers of Australia generally, have reason to complain about the huge sums of money that are being spent by Australia overseas on such establishments as the High Commissioner's Office in London. Perhaps the Deputy Premier will be able to tell us something about that matter later on in the session. Australia has seven Agents-General and their staffs. Surely what might be termed in the main a very large set-up, and a very expensive one, should be able to take steps to encourage trade, not only in regard to exports, but also in regard to industries establishing here, without the need for frequent trade missions being sent overseas for that purpose.

Apart from that, we have just about in all the European capital cities not only an ambassador but a trade commissioner as well. Those trade commissioners have been appointed to encourage and develop trade between other parts of the world and Australia. In addition to trade commissioners in Europe, we also have them in India, in U.S.A. and—I am not sure of this—in some of the southern countries of America. I feel there should be more co-ordination between the Commonwealth and States in regard to encouraging industries to come to Australia.

I am not critical of the mission that was sent overseas recently. When we take into consideration that the other States, with the possible exception of Tasmania, recently sent trade missions overseas, it was only natural that Western Australia should not sit back and allow the missions from the other States to go overseas while Western Australia did not have a member of the Government on one to be sent to plead the case for this State.

It seems to me that action is being duplicated, and one State is trying to outdo the other; and, in some cases at any rate, very lavish promises and concessions to industries have been made to induce them to establish themselves. I do not think that is a desirable state of affairs.

I believe there should be closer co-ordination between the set-up we have in overseas countries and the States of Australia generally.

It might be said that in such a set-up Western Australia would lose out. I cannot imagine these trade commissioners—who who are sent abroad to represent Australia, and not any particular State—would do anything to the detriment of any one State. If there were some co-ordination, surely an effort would be made to build up industries in the weaker States! I think any Government would do that, irrespective of its political complexion.

I have noted, from time to time, that the suggestion has been made by visitors, and by residents in Australia, that some co-ordination is necessary in order that we might attract industries to Australia and cease this auctioning, which is now going on; because that is all it amounts to. I feel quite certain that the auction system is not in the best interests of Western Australia. We have not the large population here yet that the Eastern States have, and they are in a position, when it comes to a matter of auctioning, to offer probably more than we can.

I make these few remarks in the hope that the Treasurer will note them, and at least see if something can be done along the practical lines which I have suggested.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Harvey) [8.17]: I wish to take this opportunity of bringing several matters to the notice of the Government. The first is one which I have raised by way of question during the debate on the Address-in-reply, and at other suitable times. It deals with the installation of septic systems at country schools. The one I wish to speak on tonight is that at Yarloop. The position at this school is causing the local parents and citizens' association great concern.

The existing latrine facilities are very close to the school building and to the school house; and when the wind is blowing from a particular direction, the smell coming from the latrines is objectionable indeed. This matter has been brought to the notice of the Minister on numerous occasions, both by letter from the parents and citizens' association and to his department by myself; and we have also appealed to the Minister to receive a deputation from the road board in connection with this matter.

Mr. W. Hegney: The position is the same as with your government; there is no change.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: That may be. But the Minister has been in charge of this department for some six years now, and two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. Brand: He has had a lot of time.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: My purpose in raising this matter again is to stress to the Minister the seriousness of the situation. In answer to my most recent question on the subject, the Minister said that a septic system would be installed when loan funds became available.

Mr. W. Hegney: That is right.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: He has answered my question on this subject in the same manner for some six years now.

Mr. W. Hegney: No he hasn't!

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I want to know when loan funds will be made available.

Mr. W. Hegney: There is no cause for panic.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: There is cause for panic at this school.

Mr. Nalder: When the Minister's party is in opposition these funds will be made available.

Mr. Brand: That is right.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: We do not tell the Minister that existing circumstances are serious when such is not the case.

Mr. W. Hegney: We know.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I have raised it repeatedly and stressed to the Minister that in this particular instance something should be done forthwith. The latrine facilities at this school are hardly more than a chain away from the school building itself.

Mr. W. Hegney: Would you say that this change is more urgent than classrooms,

Mr. I. W. MANNING: In this case, yes.

Mr. W. Hegney: In general cases?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: In this case, very much so.

Mr. Brand: You stick to your own case.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: This is a matter of real urgency, as the local parents and citizens' association—the parents of the children attending the school—are very concerned with the unpleasant circumstances under which the children have to receive their education. They are also concerned about the health of the children, because of the pan system which exists at the school. I appeal to the Minister to have another look at the Yarloop case and have something done as soon as possible. Surely something can be done when the situation is serious enough to warrant it!

Another matter I wish to raise, concerning the same Minister, is the question of petrol trading hours, as they affect Zone 10 in the Bunbury district. I would be interested to know who was responsible for defining the boundaries of these zones, and what considerations were taken into account when particular service stations were brought into a zone. The case

I am interested in is the Waterloo service station, situated on the South-west Highway, 9½ miles out of Bunbury, at Waterloo.

Mr. Brand: Did the Deputy Premier see any zones like this in America?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The service station is situated on the corner where Paradise-rd turns off the South-west Highway. The proprietor is dependent on the travelling public for his business and livelihood, and his main customers are those going south to Bridgetown and the Warren district. It is somewhere around the half-way mark between Manjimup and Perth, and is a very suitable station for anyone requiring petrol on the journey.

Most of this man's business was done out of the normal trading hours and over week-ends; and the inclusion of this particular service station within the zone and restricted trading hours has seriously affected his business and could put him in serious financial difficulties. Surely these points should be taken into consideration when zone boundaries are defined! Commonsense should prevail in a case like this where a man's livelihood is derived from trading over the week-end and outside normal trading hours. Surely the legislation will not be permitted to continue if it is going to put people out of business! If that was the intention of the Minister when he introduced the measure into Parliament, then it is a very grave state of affairs indeed.

This particular proprietor is seriously concerned about the state of his business; and I think the Minister should have a look at the matter, even to the point of having this service station excluded from the Bunbury zone. There is no rhyme or reason for this service station to be in the Bunbury zone. It is not attached to Bunbury, and the people of Bunbury do not do business with this man. He transacts all his business with the travelling public going south—mainly those going to the Warren district. I hope the Minister will have a close look at this matter and, at the first opportunity, have this particular service station excluded from Zone 10.

Mr. W. Hegney: I have had a look at it.

Mr. Bovell: Have another look!

Mr. Brand: Under this legislation, I think the whole of the service stations will be controlled.

Mr. Nalder: It looks like it.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am concerned and alarmed that the Minister sits back and allows that state of affairs to continue. Is the Minister prepared to watch this man have his livelihood taken away?

Mr. W. Hegney: Do you think the others in the Bunbury area should be included?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: That is the concern of the people in Bunbury; but this man should not be included.

Mr. W. Hegney: Do you agree that others should be zoned?

Mr. Bovell: Never mind the others!

Mr. Hearman: Personally I do not think so.

Mr. Brand: If they want to zone themselves, let them use a roster.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I do not support zoning anywhere.

Mr. Brand: It is the most stupid legislation we have seen in years.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: Instances such as that of the Waterloo service station indicate how farcical this legislation is. If legislation we discuss here and pass subsequently puts people out of business, the position should be closely investigated and something done about it at an early date.

I was interested in the activities of the trade mission which was led by the Deputy Premier, and the purpose for which it went abroad—to attract new industries here. I am interested because, in my own electorate, at Waroona, Nestle's Ltd. has a factory which is reducing its business activities by two-thirds. At present, approximately 100 producers are supplying milk to this factory, and two-thirds of its product are exported. It can no longer continue to produce for export, because of the cost of production; and it is reducing its activities to supply only the local market. I view that with very grave concern, and would appreciate the Government looking at the position of this industry.

It is a very important industry because it is situated in one of those closely-populated country areas. The township of Waroona has grown up around Nestle's Ltd., and the industry has made a big contribution to the economy of this State. A strong work force is employed at the factory, and the activities of the town are influenced by what happens at Nestle's. I understand that a number of employees at the factory have been given three months' notice. I also believe that some 60 of the producers supplying milk to the factory will be told over the next nine months to divert their product to some other factory; that it cannot be handled by Nestle's because the cost of production today is such that they cannot compete on the overseas market.

I understand, too, that one of the contributing factors is the freight charge. Tinplate is brought from the Eastern States and goes as far as Kalgoorlie as a one-truck lot of 11 tons. At Kalgoorlie it is transhipped to two trucks and the company has to pay freight from Kalgoorlie at the rate of two truck lots. These are one or two small instances which could be looked into and possibly something done about them.

When the Government is so interested in attracting new industries here—as of course we all are—it should not permit the industries that are here to get into difficulties without inquiring into those difficulties and reviewing them with the idea of doing something about them. This particular industry has made a great contribution to the district in which it is situated, as well as to Western Australia. If it ceases to export from Western Australia, that must have an effect on the economy of the State. I am taking this opportunity to bring these three points to the notice of the Government, and I hope it will view them with sufficient concern to do something about them.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [8.31]: The Treasurer has sought the approval of Parliament to apply for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1959, the sum of £18,000,000 — £14,000,000 from the Revenue Fund and £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund. Of course, £18,000,000 is a lot of money in anybody's language. I hope that in the distribution and administration of these funds, the Treasurer will give due consideration to the difficulties of the primary producers in the far-distant country areas.

Last night I attended, at Witchcliffe-Forest Grove, a meeting of dairy farmers. It was sponsored by the Witchcliffe-Forest Grove Pasture Improvement Group, and several matters were discussed. One subject appertained to country school bus services. The other day I asked in the House what were the costs of the school bus services for the years 1956-57 and for 1957-58. The Minister for Education stated that for 1956-57 the cost was £936,657, and for the following year it was £904,523. This showed a decrease for the year, 1958, over the year immediately preceding it, of £32,133.

We know that some 12 months ago, the Government pruned country school bus services almost to a minimum. The Deputy Premier, as Minister for Education, was, I think, primarily responsible for the inauguration of the consolidated schools system. This scheme was commenced during the regime of the Wise Government shortly after the end of the war. In principle, I think it is admirable; but difficulties do face country residents in far-distant areas, especially in regard to the transport of children over long distances.

It is said that when the small country schools existed, children had to travel up to four and five miles to school. That is quite true; and they also had no Government transport to assist them. But it must be remembered that four or five miles was the length of the journey they had to undertake, and in most cases it was only a mile or two miles. When they arrived at their destination, they were at school. I point out to hon. members the climatic

conditions as they exist in the lower South-West, where there is a heavy rainfall; and in the inland areas where, at different times of the year, the heat is excessive.

Today, a child of six years of age is required to travel upwards of two miles to the point where he meets the bus, and then has to spend a considerable time in the bus itself. I know that in the area I mentioned a few moments ago, some children have to leave home before 7 o'clock in the morning, and they do not return until after 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

Mr. Lawrence: What do you mean by the expression "a considerable time"?

Mr. BOVELL: The position in regard to the young children needs careful attention. Only this week—this happened to coincide with my visit to the Witchcliffe-Forest Grove district last night—an officer of the department went through the district; and I understand that a further curtailment of the school bus services is to be implemented forthwith. If the department has in mind the curtailment of school bus services, the people concerned should at least have an opportunity of discussing, with the departmental officers, the problems that confront them.

At last night's meeting, I was informed that an officer of the Department of Education had visited the district and pruned certain of the bus services; and this will impose an additional hardship on some families. In fairness to these people, I ask the Minister to ensure that in the future, when there is a proposal to investigate and curtail school bus services in the country areas, the parents concerned will have the opportunity to discuss their problems with the department. The present situation, as I was informed last night, is that the axe falls, and the position of the parents and the children becomes one of confusion.

I am seeking the co-operation of the Minister for Education in this matter. In the far-distant country areas, if any alteration to the existing school bus services is to be made, at least the people concerned should have the opportunity of putting their problems before the department before the axe falls and the new system is put into operation. I hope the Minister will give careful consideration to my suggestions. I know what it will mean now. The individual parents will write to the department; seek the co-operation of their local member; and ask the parents and citizens' association to assist; and so on. All this could be avoided if, at the outset, there was co-operation between the department and the parents.

The second matter raised at the meeting I attended last night concerned the wastage of timber in the timber areas. This question was raised when it was said that the Government's scheme to assist farmers in the Margaret River area to

further develop their properties, entailed more clearing. By this clearing, a lot of timber is being destroyed and pushed into windrows for burning. I asked the Minister for Forests to give consideration to making the timber royalties—whether the land be under a Crown grant or on a leasehold basis—available to the farmer concerned, where the farmer is operating his property and is, by his own efforts, producing primary products. The finance available from this source would assist materially to develop under-developed properties.

Of course, it is the timber on these properties that costs an immense amount of money to clear. But if the timber could be removed and full royalties paid to the producers, the farmers would be assisted considerably in their financial difficulties. It is not as though the Government is reaping any benefit from these timber royalties, because at present the timber is being destroyed. It is not being used for any purpose, but is being heaped in windrows and burnt. Therefore I ask the Minister for Forests to give serious consideration to making available to the farmers—provided they are themselves working and operating the properties—the full royalties from the timber which is now being destroyed.

Another matter which I have to bring before the Minister for Agriculture was raised at the meeting I attended; and this concerns the fixing of field days for the agricultural research stations. For some time the field days have been allotted to various stations, and these days are not always suitable to the conditions of the districts concerned.

It is requested that, as far as the Bramley Agricultural Research Station is concerned, the annual field day be held early in October. After the first week in October, the farmers are busy with hay-making and other seasonal employment, which increases as the summer approaches. Fire breaks have to be attended to, hay-making carried out, and a number of other seasonal jobs dealt with. If the field days are held later in the season, many farmers who desire to attend are prevented from doing so because of the work they have to carry out on their own properties. I have been asked to request the Minister for Agriculture, when fixing the field days, to arrange for the field day at this particular research station to be held not later than the first week in October in each year.

I am advised that this matter has been raised departmentally from time to time, although it has never been submitted to Parliament. As far as I am aware, the field day at Bramley for this year has not yet been fixed; and we are now at the end of the first week in October. I hope the Minister for Agriculture will take note of what I have said.

Mr. Kelly: The Bramley Research Station field day has been fixed for Friday, the 31st October; and it has been so fixed for three or four months.

Mr. BOVELL: It has not been advertised; and the people at the meeting said they did not know the date of the field day. I myself have looked for the announcement, particularly in the daily Press and in the "Farmers' Weekly." I may have missed it, but I have seen other field days advertised.

Mr. Kelly: The list was brought to me at least two and a half to three months ago.

Mr. BOVELL: I have not seen this particular field day advertised in the Press. Not only that, but none of the farmers there—and a number were present at the meeting last night—knew the date of the Bramley Research Station field day for this year. I thank the Minister for his information that the field day is fixed for the 31st October; but I would ask him to give consideration next year, and during the years that follow, to having the field day for Bramley early in October; because, as the Minister will agree, it is not much good holding field days unless the farmers around the districts concerned can attend them. I can assure the Minister that there is a genuine desire on the part of the farmers themselves to attend these field days; and he knows, as well as I do, the value they are to the farming community.

But if there is work to be done on their properties, and it is a fine day, the farmers say that they must start their haymaking; and the later the field day occurs, the more chance there is of there being circumstances to prevent the farmers from attending. I ask the Minister to give consideration, particularly in regard to Bramley, to making the field day each year not later than the 1st October.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You mean the next Minister.

THE HON. J. T. TONKIN (Deputy Premier—Melville—in reply) [8.47]: I suppose it was to be expected that some hon. members would have things to say on an occasion when a Supply Bill was before the House. But it is rather remarkable that so many of them should advocate additional expenditure, such as extra facilities for education, and extensions of bus services, which are very costly, when this session they have already taken steps to reduce the amount of revenue available to the Government—I refer to the land tax. It is a bit foolish to deprive the Government of something like £200,000, and then advocate things which will cost far more than that sum. It just does not make sense.

Mr. Court: It is not foolish.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes it is; it just does not make sense.

Mr. Court: There is such a thing as the reallocation of expenditure.

Mr. TONKIN: Unless the Government has money to provide these services, it cannot provide them. If the Opposition takes steps to reduce the amount of money available to the Government—and does it deliberately—it must take full responsibility for reducing the expenditure which the State can face.

Mr. Court: There is such a thing as the reallocation of funds.

Mr. TONKIN: There is such a thing as reality.

Mr. Court: We are being realistic.

Mr. TONKIN: I listened very carefully to the hon. member for Murray who invariably makes a thoughtful contribution to the debate; but I do not think that on the subject he dealt with tonight he has thought sufficiently long. The hon. member quite rightly referred to the fact that he told me on a number of occasions he thought it would be in the interests of the State if I were to go abroad, and he said he would support any suggestion from the Government side that that should be done. But he does question the advisability of sending further missions abroad at an early date; and mentions, and quite rightly too, that there is in the United Kingdom an Agent-General who might be expected to follow up a lot of the work that has already been commenced.

The Agent-General, of course, is doing that, and will do it very effectively. But he will not have the benefit, such as the mission recently had, of very wide publicity, which has the effect of focussing attention on what is being attempted. If the Agent-General had to pay for the publicity which we obtained, the cost of such publicity would be more than the cost of a mission; and he would not ordinarily get the publicity which the trade mission did receive both in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

We heard it said dozens and dozens of times, by people in Great Britain and America, that it was essential that the work which we commenced should be followed up by further approaches. We did not put those ideas into the heads of the people who expressed them; they were their own opinions formed as a result of the success which attended our efforts. They knew that a number of firms were not yet quite ready to act upon the proposals which we advanced; they would think about them in the meantime and, if approached again, there would be a very good chance that those firms would make up their minds.

Let us consider what happens ordinarily in business in one's own country. Quite frequently a salesman has to make half a dozen visits in order to clinch a deal. He makes a first approach and sets his client,

or his proposed client, thinking. If he does not follow it up, very often it goes no further; but if he follows it up within a reasonable time, and puts forward some more suggestions, eventually he might succeed in getting the business. One is indeed most fortunate if one can succeed at the very first approach. There would be a number of firms in Great Britain today who are giving consideration to the proposals which we advanced, and are moving towards a decision in connection with them.

In his speech the hon. member for Murray suggested that we might expect there would be co-operation between the States to obtain businesses for Western Australia. That was his statement.

Sir Ross McLarty: And the Commonwealth.

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member said, "For Western Australia."

Sir Ross McLarty: No, I intended to say the Commonwealth. I talked about trade commissioners.

Mr. TONKIN: If the hon. member intended to say that, it is all right; but that is not what he said, because I jotted down what he had to say.

Sir Ross McLarty: I meant that.

Mr. TONKIN: For the life of me I cannot see how there could be co-operation between the States to obtain businesses for Western Australia. I will tell the House of an experience I had today. I received a letter from a businessman in Los Angeles, who referred in his letter to a broadcast which he had heard given by the trade mission when it was in California. He did not think sufficiently about it at the time to make any approach to the mission. Los Angeles was our last place of contact with the United States; and after we had left, this businessman thought he might like to know more about the possibilities. So he got in touch with the trade commissioner in that city and asked for certain particulars about Western Australia.

This businessman sent me a photostat copy of the letter which the trade commissioner sent back to him and in which he said, "I presume you are just as interested in establishing in any of the other States as you are in Western Australia," and supplied him with an address in Melbourne where he could get some more information. That inquiry arose out of the efforts of the Western Australian Trade Mission, and the person making the inquiry was interested in coming to Western Australia.

Why should he have been put in touch with somebody in some other State; and why should the idea be advanced that he might be interested in going to some other State? This is the State which needs development most because we have been

missing out all along. Unless we send our own trade missions overseas—and send them frequently—we will continue to miss out, because there are many firmly entrenched firms already operating in the Eastern States and therefore those States have the greatest advantage. I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Murray refer to the terms which this Government offered, through the trade mission, as being lavish. One has only to consider what attractions were offered to British Petroleum to establish the oil refinery at Kwinana.

Mr. Wild: They came here.

Mr. TONKIN: They came here of their own volition, did they? The Government of the day did not entice the company here?

Mr. Wild: I said they came here; they did not have to be asked.

Mr. TONKIN: What point is there in that?

Mr. Wild: The fact that the company came here and spent £40,000,000.

Mr. TONKIN: I am dealing with the question of making lavish promises. I am not denying that very good inducements were offered to the various companies, because I know they were necessary; but it ill becomes anybody who offered rich inducements in the past to criticise another Government for doing something similar. If the position is carefully analysed, it will be found that whilst the terms which the Government has offered—through the trade mission—are quite generous, they are no more generous than the terms which were extended by the previous Government to British Petroleum Ltd.

I do not hesitate to say that it is a good thing for the State that the terms offered to British Petroleum were good enough to bring the company here, because its very presence in this State is assisting us materially in our attempts to encourage other businesses to come here. If we did not have the oil refinery, we would have no chance whatsoever of establishing a petro-chemical industry in Western Australia.

Mr. Brand: I should think that we could expect further extensions to the oil refinery itself which would involve millions of pounds.

Mr. TONKIN: The company intends to make them. I am free to say that the refinery is co-operating with the Government to the full in its attempt to attract further industries to Western Australia. It was the fact that it was prepared to co-operate so well that enabled us to make such good progress in our approaches to important industries overseas.

I agree that the Agent-General can do excellent work in this regard; and he is doing it, because letters are being sent

to the Government now which show that the Agent-General is following up the initial work carried out by the trade mission; and, undoubtedly, he will continue to do that. However, he will not be able to go out and break new ground that a trade mission can for the reasons that I have already advanced.

For example, the Agent-General cannot assist us very much in the United States or in Canada. Although the various trade commissioners gave us very able assistance when we were abroad, I am afraid that if we have to leave it to them to advance the case for Western Australia and to go out seeking industries for us, we will not get very many.

The only way in which we are likely to obtain much success is to go out after these businesses ourselves, and go out after them properly with the determination to get them, fully alive to what we are after, and to make this plain to the people whom we approach. In that way I feel we will get some success. We have relied on the other method long enough; and, as a result, we have seen these businesses going to the other States.

Only the day before yesterday the Premier, or some Minister in Victoria, said that there was no need for them to make a special effort to obtain businesses because they came there themselves. Of course they will go there now, because already in those States they have large businesses functioning, around which others can group themselves.

For example, I think the Dunlop Rubber Co. has two factories in New South Wales and one in Victoria. That company is content to keep its factories in those States and sell its products in Western Australia. It will never give a thought to establishing a factory in this State while it suits the company to keep its factories in the Eastern States. I have no doubt, however, that it would raise some opposition if an attempt were made to establish a similar company in this State to do the work that it is doing. Therefore, it would avail this State nothing at all to refrain from deliberately going out after these businesses.

I have had sufficient experience abroad this time to convince me that these industries are there to get if we go after them; but, if we do not, they will, in most cases, go elsewhere. The various matters that have been raised by hon. members will be investigated. I have noticed that whilst I was abroad the Premier instituted a system by which the remarks of any hon. member were carefully noted and referred to the Minister concerned for his attention. That will apply in regard to the remarks that have been made during this debate. Therefore, any points that have been raised by hon. members, to which I have not specifically

referred, will not be overlooked, but will receive attention in the various departments.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (POSTPONEMENT OF 1958 ELECTIONS) BILL.

First Reading.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS) BILL.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

Report of Committee adopted.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [9.8]: I rise to oppose this Bill. In spite of the fact that the Minister hoped it would be non-contentious, I am sure he is not in the least bit surprised that I oppose the measure. If it is the intention of the Government to put up the price of home building by 10 to 15 per cent., this Bill will do it, if it is passed. That would be the end result, on the best estimates I can obtain in respect of this legislation, if it goes on to the statute book.

In essence the amendment says that the court can deem a tradesman in the building industry to be a worker, despite his having been engaged on contract; and the person for whom he works shall be his employer and not his principal. I think that fairly summarises what the Minister seeks to achieve. There is, of course, the qualification that the Minister mentioned in his speech, and which is in the Bill—that this matter is subject to decision by the Arbitration Court.

However, the principle indicated by the Bill is that, subject to the decision of the Court, a person who is a tradesman in the building industry can be classified as a worker, in spite of the fact that it was the intention of the parties when they originally came together that there should be a contract in the generally-accepted sense of the word.

In other words, under this Act, what is meant to be contract for service could immediately become a contract of service—an entirely different relationship. Any person who takes on a contract and who himself works at the trade, on the job, can be deemed a worker, and entitled to the conditions of the award. An individual who enters into a contract with a tradesman can be deemed an employer and a respondent to the award. The Minister does not think we are naive enough not to have understood, and studied, the principles of the common rule as it is applied in the practice of industrial arbitration law in this State, and in other parts. There are specific sections in the Industrial Arbitration Act which cover this question of common rule, both in respect of awards set out under Section 85, and in respect of industrial agreements set out under Section 42 of the Industrial Arbitration Act.

Accordingly, it does not require any imagination at all to conceive what the end result of this legislation would be. Once a person becomes a respondent under the award, everyone else engaged in the same industry as that particular person is automatically covered by the common rule. There is nothing new in that; it is an old-established principle under our industrial arbitration law.

In our opinion the Bill cuts away far too much of the freedom of the individual. After all, why should a person who wants to set up as a contractor, be he large or small, be unable to do so? It is from small businesses—where one or two men get together and set themselves up as contractors—that our large businesses grow. It is something of which we are very proud in this community.

Some very substantial concerns have developed from humble and modest beginnings; and through getting a start with an odd sub-contract, or a small contract, they have managed to establish themselves; and, eventually, they expand to be large-scale concerns, making a wonderful contribution to the economy of this State, and also providing employment. It is important that the House should understand that the Industrial Arbitration Act applies throughout the whole State.

Unless an award is restricted to a particular locality which is possible under the Industrial Arbitration Act—it likewise applies throughout the entire State. We do not think of this particular legislation in terms of the metropolitan area only. In fact, I would hazard a guess that, with the passage of time, the section of the community that would be most detrimentally affected by the passing of this measure would be the farming community.

It would not take much for a farmer to be classed as a respondent to the particular award or awards concerned; and, of course, once a farmer becomes a respondent,

everyone in his particular industry, under the common rule, is directly affected; and in place of a contract, the person concerned would find himself with a day-labour arrangement on his hands—a contract of service, instead of a contract for service. Under the Industrial Arbitration Act, the Arbitration Court already decides the relationship of master and servant. The Minister referred to this in his speech. The court has the right, and the power, to determine whether there is a relationship of contractor, or whether there is a relationship of master and servant.

But this apparently does not suit the Government, and those advising the Minister; and they are seeking to go a step further and make it possible for the court to declare that there is a relationship of master and servant, although, in point of fact, under contract law as we understand it in this State, and as we understand industrial law in this State, there is a normal, bona fide contract existing.

If we want to get the background of this, we have to go back to 1938 when an industrial board, presided over by Mr. Justice Wolff, considered this particular question, and it gave a very sweeping preferential clause to the union concerned. It went so far, in effect, as to say there was a preference to unionists, and that if a man took on contract work he should leave the union. It went further than that and said he should be denied re-entry to the union. This was directed at piecework and out-of-award-hours work in particular.

I understand that the situation is such that the union does not enforce this provision, because if it did it would lose very substantially its membership. The attraction for men to set themselves up as small contractors, which in some cases has expanded into large contracting concerns, has been such that men have not been perturbed to leave the ordinary day-labour employment to give it a go; to go out and see how they fare as contractors.

I understand—and on this I could not be authoritative—that the union has not enforced this denial of re-entry, for the reason that many men would have left the union to try themselves out as contractors, and would now not be members of the union if it insisted on the interpretation of the award that was given. As I see it, the Bill is nothing more nor less than an attempt by the Government to carry further its policy of expanding its political and industrial dragnet to further embrace people who, by all the principles we understand in this community, are not employees, but, in fact, are contractors.

My mind goes back very quickly to the debate that took place in this Chamber recently. It was a rather fiery debate on the Industrial Arbitration Bill that I introduced. The Premier was quite unpromising in his attitude. He said if the

conscientious objectors do not want to belong to the unions, let them get out of the industries covered by the trade unions. On interjection, I asked him where they would go for employment. All he could say was, "Let them go into industries where there is no trade union protection." If we follow that to its logical conclusion these people, because of their conscientious beliefs, will starve.

In line with my suggestion that it was the policy of the A.L.P. to expand its coverage of industries and to make it more and more difficult for a person to retreat from union-controlled trades into others, here we have the Government, within a matter of days, bringing in a Bill which is just another attempt to achieve its ultimate objective, so that the people with conscientious beliefs would have no industry to which they could turn if we accepted the Government's principles—which we do not—that they leave industries protected by trade unions and join industries which are not covered by trade unions.

I touched on the cost aspect at the start; and told this House that from the best information I could obtain today, the net result of this Bill will be a rise of 10 to 15 per cent. in home-building costs. That might sound an extravagant statement; but I am quite convinced, after examining the situation and the background of this matter, that it is not an extravagant statement. The considered opinion of the building trade is that the general standard of work would deteriorate unless heavy increased supervision costs are incurred.

Mr. W. Hegney: You say the general standard will deteriorate?

Mr. COURT: If the Minister will listen for a moment, I shall tell him why. The general costs of supervision will rise if the principal contractor concerned is to protect his reputation and supervise the work. The situation is briefly this: If a person lets a contract to a contractor, the latter undertakes to do certain work for a certain price in a certain way. If he does not do his job, either as to quality of workmanship, materials used, the time factor involved, or the general specifications involved, then that person will have redress against the contractor. It is the job of the contractor, and it is his cost to put the job right.

If a contractor engages a man on a master and servant basis, and the latter makes a mess of a particular job, that of course is the contractor's responsibility and not the responsibility of the man working under the relationship of master and servant. Of course, such a man can be fired; but that is not the remedy. The contractor has to get the job completed because, as the principal contractor, he has to deliver the job to the contracting party in the condition in which he has contracted to deliver it. Therefore the question of costly supervision immediately

arises. The contractor has to supervise a day-labour employee of, say, a cottage, in an entirely different way to supervising the work of a sub-contractor, call him what one will. He is still contracting within the meaning of the law.

It has been suggested, and I think with some justification, that if one was, for instance, a cottage builder carrying out the building of several homes—as a matter of sound economics they usually try to do several homes at one time—one would have to engage at least two supervisors to cope with the extra supervision required on all the jobs. If one were to work out the cost of a supervisor, one would find the wages would amount to £25 per week.

In addition, there are the payroll tax, long service leave commitments, sick pay, workers' compensation and other commitments that invariably follow an employee, plus transport which has to be provided. It costs at least £5 a week to run a vehicle these days in this type of industry. One can easily say that £40 a week would not go very far in a comparatively small contracting business in respect of the engagement of a supervisor.

I have two examples which illustrate the increase in cost that will result. I am assured, for instance, that in connection with the laying of bricks on a day-labour basis one would get approximately 400 bricks laid. It is well known that on a sub-contract basis one would get 700 bricks laid; that is an entirely different proposition as far as the cost is concerned. I have also been told, and I think this information is factual, that to have a roof tiled by contract involves approximately a day. The same roof done on a day-labour basis involves three days.

There is, of course, the other factor that, under contract, one has redress against the contractor; but under the other system the responsibility is one's own to supervise the tradesman to see that he does a job according to one's requirements. There is a further factor—and this is a question of finance. If the cost of cottage building is increased by, say, 10 per cent., in these times of financial stringency it would be just that bit more difficult for the home builder to finance the building of a house.

We all know that in the course of our parliamentary duties, electors approach us wanting to know where they can get a house; they want to buy one, and do not want to rent one for the rest of their days. Invariably we ask such people, "How much deposit can you put up?" The average young man these days will say, "I think I can raise £200."

Mr. Heal: You can get a house on £200 deposit through private firms.

Mr. Cornell: You pay for it 20 years after you are dead.

Mr. COURT: Of course a person can obtain a house on £200 deposit; but by our increasing the building costs, the position would be made that much more difficult for him. The hon. member for Mt. Marshall has just made a comment in better words than I can, touching on costs—that if a person obtained a house on such a low deposit, he could incur such financial responsibility that he would have to live a long time before paying off the house.

I am not suggesting people should not grasp the nettle and do everything they can to get a house, even on a small deposit. There is an incentive to look after the house, and they will not have to pay rent. But if the cost is going up, say, 10 per cent. or 15 per cent., because of the ultimate effect of this legislation, it makes it just that much more difficult to obtain finance. We can be sure that the extra loading on the prices would be reflected in the extra deposit that would be required. If a place were to cost £3,000 and a person could only supply a deposit of £200, the position would be pretty tight, from a financial point of view. That would be a borderline case.

I was very pleased that the hon. member for West Perth added to his comments that these houses are available from private investors, because that is the position at the moment.

Mr. Heal: That is what the Minister for Housing wanted.

Mr. COURT: They are doing what the Minister wanted them to do, because in the last couple of days I fixed up two young men who were concerned that they could not get a house on £200 deposit. However, in both cases they were fixed up through private agents on a satisfactory basis.

Mr. Heal: A good thing!

Mr. COURT: The Government has moved through the State Housing Commission so that no contract carpenters can be engaged on State Housing Commission work. It is logical to suppose that this is only a forerunner of a move by the Government, under pressure, to take the same action in connection with the people who are listed in this Bill. The Bill lists a carpenter, painter, plumber, bricklayer, stonemason, plasterer, builder's labourer, tile fixer and fibrous plasterer. One does not have to let his imagination run riot to think of the ultimate result if all these trades have been similarly dealt with by the Government as it has already dealt with the carpenters through the State Housing Commission.

There is a very serious anomaly that would be created under this Bill, and that is in connection with the smaller type builder who is personally engaged in the trade today. It will be observed that the Bill provides that for the purpose of an

award or industrial agreement, the court may declare that any person who is working or engaged in the industry, etc.

We have the case of the company or corporation which is a contracting firm and, as such, will be outside this legislation. But where we have, say, two young fellows—one might be a carpenter and the other a bricklayer—who set themselves up in business as a small contracting firm—they want to get launched into the contracting field—they are going to be immediately subject to this legislation, because they would both be tradesmen under the various categories set out in the Bill and would be, to use the words of the Bill, working or engaged in the industry.

The bigger corporation would not be affected; it would be a contractor and not subject to this particular legislation, and the men working for it would be its employees. But the two young men—they need not necessarily be young men—or tradesmen setting themselves up in business as a partnership and physically working in the industry would immediately be brought within the ambit of this legislation.

The whole situation could be abused, because a person could take on a contract and then, having taken on the contract and finding it was a loser and he was not going to come out of it too well, could claim to be an employee; and the owner or the contractor, as the case might be, could find himself in the position of having to do battle with this particular individual on legal grounds whether the relationship of master and servant existed in the award or whether, in fact, he was a contractor with whom he had contracted. I oppose the Bill for the reasons I have stated.

THE HON. W. HEGNEY (Minister for Labour—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply) [9.31]: I would like to reply briefly to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not think he set out to hoodwink us or to mislead the House, but that is how the whole tenor of his speech appeared to me.

All I said when I introduced the Bill was that a system had grown up in the building industry which tended to weaken or break down industrial conditions. I would like to emphasise that neither the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, nor myself, nor any union secretary or employers' representative would determine, in any particular case, whether a tradesman enumerated in the Bill was a worker or a contractor. That prerogative would rest with the Arbitration Court. That is very clearly set out in the Bill before the House.

Mr. Court: I said that.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am reiterating it. That is not the impression I obtained from the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Court: I made it clear that the decision rested with the court.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: If two young men—or two elderly men—one a carpenter and the other a plumber, come within the purview of the Act, and if they are self-employed independent contractors, who will they obviously be liable to? They will have nobody working for them, so they will be bound by the award.

Mr. Court: They could be sub-contracting.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am glad the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made that interjection. If they were sub-contractors, or pretended sub-contractors, and the union considered that, to all intents and purposes, they were employees, it would not be the union secretary, I repeat, nor the employer, who would determine whether they were employees or sub-contractors or piece workers; it would be the Arbitration Court, and an approach would have to be made to that court either by the employers' organisation or the industrial union of employees. That is the plain position.

The Bill provides for the adjustment of the interpretation of industrial matters of employer and worker, and the crux of the whole Bill is this: When I introduced the Bill I made reference to Section 61 of the parent Act, and I made the position quite clear. I will not read all the powers and functions of the court, but only one or two. Section 61 says—

The Court shall have jurisdiction . . .

(b) to settle and determine—

(i) all industrial matters and disputes referred to it by any party or parties under this Act;

(iii) all industrial matters and disputes as to which a conference has been held under section one hundred and seventy-two and so far as no agreement has been reached, and which the commissioners have referred to the Court.

(c) to determine and declare in a particular case that a cessation or limitation of work, or refusal to work, or a refusal or neglect to offer for or accept employment does not constitute a strike.

To that we must add the words of the Bill as follows:—

(f) for the purpose of an award or industrial agreement to declare—

Not the employers' representative, employers' organisation or the union; but the court shall have power to declare—

(i) that any person who is working or engaged in the industry to which that

award or industrial agreement applies and who is performing work which is ordinarily the work of—
the tradesmen are enumerated—

- shall, notwithstanding any contract or pretended contract to the contrary, whether made before or after the coming into operation of this paragraph, be deemed to be a worker; and
(ii) that the person by whom the person referred to in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph is engaged shall be deemed to be his employer.

The hon. member for Nedlands made reference to the case heard in 1938. It is true that Judge Wolff was the chairman of an industrial board that dealt with certain unfavourable phases of the building industry which tended to undermine the standard of labour and workmanship in the industry. For the purpose of protecting standards, including those of the tradesmen, the industrial board presided over by Judge Wolff granted a very strong preference clause, and that has been in operation ever since.

Mr. Court: You want to go further.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: When the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says, "You want to go further", he is wrong. I do not want to do anything of the kind. What the Government is asking is that the court shall have the power to determine whether a contract worker is a pieceworker or a sub-contractor; whether he should be bound by the industrial award or agreement because the relationship of employer and employee applies; or whether the relationship of contractor in principle applies. That is all the Bill seeks to do; nothing else.

Here is an extract from the decision of the President of the Arbitration Court on the 20th December, 1956—

In a reserved decision on an application for amendment of the Building Trades Award delivered on the 20th December, 1956, the President of the Court said—

It is true that it (i.e. the piecework clause in the present award) cannot be altogether effective; only legislation can provide a real remedy for this evil in this industry

He referred to it as an "evil". Further on he says—

. . . . this Court has no power to provide in any way for sub-contract work where it is real sub-contract work and not piecework under the guise of sub-contract work. It is always a difficult

question of fact to decide whether any particular work is contract work or work by a worker under contract of service, but those difficulties are inherent in the subject, and as I have said, can only be solved by legislation.

All that we are seeking to do is to write something into the Industrial Arbitration Act to overcome—if I might use the term used by the President of the Arbitration Court—this evil which has grown up in the industry. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

Ayes—23

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Molr
Mr. Blackerton	Mr. Norton
Mr. Brady	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Evans	Mr. Potter
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sewell
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Jamleson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May
Mr. Lawrence	

(Teller.)

Noes—16

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brand	Mr. W. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Owen
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. I. Manning

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Graham	Mr. Mann
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Watts

Majority for—7.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sewell in the Chair; the Hon. W. Hegney (Minister for Labour) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—put and passed.

Clause 4—Section 61 amended:

Mr. COURT: During his reply to the second reading debate, the Minister implied that I had misled the House. He did have the grace to say I did not do it intentionally; but I would like to make it very clear that I certainly did not mislead the House. Everything I said was factual, and in accordance with the Bill he introduced.

I would like to comment on the two contractors who decided to set themselves up in business. It would not matter if they were sub-contractors or the principal contractors; but it could matter so far as the owner was concerned if they were the

primary or principal contractors. This is the situation as I understand it—and if I am wrong, no doubt the Minister will tell me. If these two people—say one is a carpenter and the other a bricklayer—set themselves up in business and come to a person, "A", and enter into a contract to do a job as principal contractors; and then subsequently, on application, it was decided by the court that they were to be classed as workers, the owner would be in the position of having to deal with these two on a master-and-servant basis. The Minister cannot deny that.

These people might contract to do certain work for £200; but if they were declared workers, under this provision, the owner of the house would have to employ them on a day labour basis, with all the commitments for payroll tax, workers' compensation and so on. I have never denied that the court of arbitration is the final arbiter in the matter—that is inherent in the Bill—but this legislation would cut across the established law of contracts, and we have already gone too far in that regard over the years.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I quite agree that the Arbitration Court would be the final authority to determine whether the tradesmen enumerated here were employees or contractors. If one or more tradesmen entered into a legitimate and definite contract with another person, who would be the principal, there would be no question of an approach to the court for a declaration as to whether the contractor was a worker within the meaning of the clause—

Mr. Court: Why not?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Union secretaries are not as foolish as some people seem to think; and most employers have some substance, also. It would only be the representatives of organisations bound by an award who would approach the court. If the secretary of the Carpenters' Union, for instance, found that two carpenters had entered into a definite contract, this clause would not apply—

Mr. Court: You cannot be sure of that.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: —unless after a full examination of the circumstances the President of the Court determined that they were employees.

Mr. Court: How can we be sure that the union would not make an approach such as I have mentioned?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: It would have to apply to the court for a declaration that the tradesmen concerned were workers and not contractors; and the court, on the facts, would determine whether there was a relationship of employer and employee or of contractor and principal.

Mr. COURT: I think the Minister is misleading the Chamber now. The court already has full power under the Industrial

Arbitration Act to determine whether there is a relationship of master and servant or of contractor and principal.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The court says it has not.

Mr. COURT: The Minister knows it has, because a case was recently taken up by the building trade unions and the evidence was against the unions and the court could not say that the men were employees. The court, in exercising its power, found that the men were not employees, but were, in fact, contractors. There must be some sanctity in contracts and people have their remedy at law if they are wrongly treated under a contract. The court is not as powerless as the Minister would have us believe. I do not propose to divide the Committee on this clause, but want the Minister to understand that we oppose it and, in fact, oppose the whole Bill.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: How does the present contracting system break down existing union standards?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: This measure could be the death knell of the small contractor in the country, who may have perhaps one assistant, or none at all. Under this measure he would not stand a chance of getting any work, as he might be regarded as an employee. How would a householder, for instance, know whether the person concerned was a contractor or an employee? He might employ a man as a contractor and then find that he was an employee, with all the resulting responsibility for workers' compensation, and so on. There is no guarantee as to what the Arbitration Court would do in such circumstances. How does the Minister think the measure would affect the small country contractor?

Mr. TOMS: The simplicity of the measure makes the Opposition suspect some ulterior motive. The need for the Bill is a legacy from pre-war times. The hon. member for Cottesloe wanted to know where the breaking down of standards occurred. The unions are not particularly concerned with living standards in this instance. The standard about which they are concerned, and which every craft union has been proud of and built up over the years, is the standard of workmanship. I challenge any hon. member to prove to me that the work being put into buildings is anywhere near the standard of pre-war days.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Would that be the only reason?

Mr. TOMS: That is the main reason. It is most difficult for the unions to determine at present who is a worker and who is an employer.

Mr. Court: Are you sure the unions are not concerned about membership?

Mr. TOMS: They are not concerned about membership in that regard. The unions are concerned at the class of work

being done today, and it is a grave concern, because young people these days have to pay about £3,000 for a home, and they spend most of their lives trying to pay it off. So surely they are entitled to the best workmanship possible. If a person sub-contracts he is outside the scope of the Carpenters' Union as regards protection.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Isn't it customary for them to insure themselves?

Mr. TOMS: That is up to them. The whole object of the Bill is to ensure that people get value for the money they spend. I am wondering where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition got the figure of 10 to 15 per cent. which he said would be the increase if this Bill were passed. There was a time when an employer knew that the foreman, and the men he had engaged, could do their work and do it with pride. But at present, under the sub-contracting system, we are losing out. This Bill has been introduced not for any desire on the part of the unions to increase their membership, but to see that people buying homes get value for their money.

Mr. COURT: I must make some comment in answer to what the hon. member for Maylands has said. His argument, although superficially it sounds all very well, does not ring true with me when he says that the unions are not concerned about membership. I think if one could get behind the scenes one would find that the main prodding has come from the unions because of the danger to union membership under the present system.

Mr. W. Hegney: No.

Mr. COURT: This Bill has been introduced not because of any bigness of heart on the part of the unions, but probably because their membership has become depleted.

Mr. Lawrence: You do not know much about industry.

Mr. COURT: The hon. member for Maylands said that the Bill is aimed at improving workmanship. If he pauses to think he will realise that the contractor is the person responsible to deliver a job in accordance with specifications.

Mr. May: And we know how some of them do it.

Mr. COURT: If a person is paying £3,000 for a job he wants £3,000-worth of value.

Mr. May: They expect it.

Mr. COURT: And it is up to them to get it. The mere fact that there is a change-over from the contracting system to the day-labour system does not ensure that people will get better workmanship. It all comes down to the vital matter of supervision. If a person engages a reputable contractor he will see that a good job is done, and no better job could be done by day labour. A carpenter, a plumber, a

bricklayer, a fibrous plasterer or a tile-fixer will not do a better job simply because he is engaged on the day-labour basis instead of working as a contractor. Certain specifications are laid down and the job has to be done according to those specifications. If it is not, the contractor will not get any more work. If he wants to stay in business he will produce quality workmanship.

Clause put and passed.

Title—put and passed.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

TUBERCULOSIS (COMMONWEALTH AND STATE ARRANGEMENT) BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottlesloe) [10.31]: For a period of ten years now an arrangement has existed between this State and the Commonwealth with regard to the provision of adequate facilities for the diagnosis, treatment and control over the disease of tuberculosis. This arrangement expired as of this year, and this Bill seeks to re-enter into a term of arrangement—a legalised form of arrangement—with the Commonwealth for a further period of five years for the purpose specified.

It would appear to me that the arrangement as enacted is entirely in favour of the State, from a financial point of view. The only financial responsibility that this State has to face in regard to t.b. is the State's liability to meet an amount equal to that of the base year, which was 1948. So, having regard to all the circumstances, and the necessity for the continuation of all these necessary facilities, I support the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th September.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [10.8]: It is the intention of the Opposition to co-operate on this measure to facilitate its consideration both in the second reading and in the Committee stages with a view to getting it to the Legislative Council as soon as possible to give that Chamber a reasonable opportunity to consider the

many amendments that will be necessary before the Bill can be passed by Parliament.

However, I want to make it quite clear, and I want it to be thoroughly understood by the Minister in charge of the Bill, that we on this side of the House are not prepared to surrender any principles. The fact that we are prepared to co-operate should not be misinterpreted as an acknowledgment or an acceptance of some of the Government's contentious points which it has incorporated in this Bill. It is our view that Parliament should not seek the passing of new local government law at any price. It has to be good local government law and not just any old legislation for the sake of placing a new measure on the statute book.

If proper consideration is not given to this Bill, by which we are trying to incorporate two systems of local government law which have been successful for quite a long period, we could find ourselves following the old adage of "marry in haste and repent at leisure" because we could make this marriage of two pieces of legislation in haste and then repent at leisure by incorporating within this legislation the Road Districts Act and the Municipal Corporations Act. We may find that this legislation will not be the success that we thought it would be and it might then be too late to turn back.

It is not easy to create local government legislation in a large way. It is easy to amend this section and that section, but when we come to rewrite the local government law we find that it is very difficult, because there is so much administrative machinery that has to be upset that no Government is anxious to attempt the task unless there is some very strong demand or some very good reason for doing so.

I am quite certain that local governing authorities would be prepared to accept some delay if need be, provided that such delay ensured better legislation. It is true that there has been agitation for some years to have the local government law rewritten, but it is not a question of rewriting the law at any price. I am quite sure that the local government authorities in this State would not agree that we should rush into rewriting this legislation just for the sake of a new statute for Western Australia.

Some local governing authorities are having second thoughts on this measure. The reason is perhaps that the Bill has taken so long to go through Parliament and they have probably reached the stage of having second thoughts, because when a measure such as this hangs fire for so long we are inclined to think up all sorts of alternatives whereas we might have accepted something in the first place and got used to it and made it work. I

am anxious to see the suggestions that have been made by Mr. Gifford. I understand that they are now available, but we have not been able to have a look at them as yet. Mr. Gifford is an authority on these matters; and whilst he would be mainly concerned with the interpretation of the law as such, it would be of value for both Houses of Parliament to have access to his considered opinions.

Unfortunately, in reintroducing this Bill, the Government has seen fit to bring it in with the several contentious features that it had when it was brought before this Chamber previously, in spite of the fact that Parliament has declared itself, in fairly certain terms, as to where it is going in connection with these contentious matters. The contentious points are well known—

Mr. Hawke: When did Parliament declare that?

Mr. COURT: I think that the Premier, being realistic in respect of politics, knows that the Legislative Council brought down a series of amendments which interpreted the views—in the main—of the Opposition and, as I understand the situation, with the exception of one particular point, agreement was reached at a managers' conference.

Mr. Hawke: How long is it since the Opposition was Parliament?

Mr. COURT: It is not, and I am not suggesting for one minute that it is. But the Premier knows—being a realist in these matters—what are the views of the majority of hon. members in another place; and those views are, in fact, the views of the Opposition.

Mr. Hawke: But they are not necessarily the views of Parliament.

Mr. COURT: They might not be the views of the Government; but the Premier will appreciate, when the Bill goes through, that they are, in fact, the views of Parliament. Had the Premier wanted the Bill to go through before this, it could have been introduced by the Government in a more reasonable state and the Government could have made it very clear that it did not accept the views of those hon. members in another place which were contrary to its own policy, but in the interests of getting the Bill put through expeditiously, it was prepared to make the concession—

Mr. Hawke: It was very interesting to hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that the Legislative Council was Parliament.

Mr. COURT: I did not say it was Parliament.

Mr. Hawke: That is what you said in effect.

Mr. COURT: If the Bill is passed after it has been through the Legislative Council it will become an Act by the decision of Parliament.

Mr. O'Brien: That is a different meaning altogether.

Mr. COURT: I do not think I will bother to do battle with the hon. member for Murchison on that. The fact is that it will be an Act of Parliament once it is passed by the Legislative Council.

Mr. O'Brien: When you first mentioned it, you implied they would not consider the Bill.

Mr. COURT: I cannot follow the hon. member.

Mr. Brady: He is implying that the Council will want their own way, or else!

Mr. COURT: I am glad the Minister for Police has clarified the position. I thought I made it clear that we were endeavouring to co-operate in the passage of this legislation. The main headings where contention arises are the methods of electing presidents of shire councils, the system of valuations, franchise, plural voting, and the method of appointing auditors.

If Parliament did succumb, in its haste to get this legislation on the statute book, to the Government's entreaties to include those contentious issues in their present form, I am firmly of the opinion, as I have said before in this Chamber, that the legislation would place local government more under the heel of the central government than ever before. In fact, we find that the degree of direction that could be given by the central government to local government would soon prove to be intolerable.

It would end an era; because we have in this State a system of local government—both road district and municipal—of which we are very proud, and I think we would be replacing it with a system of very doubtful vintage. The Government is using the occasion to introduce clauses which have, as their objective, its socialistic policy; and I think now in terms of what has happened in New South Wales as a result of many of these clauses, or the equivalent thereof, being included in their legislation.

Surely the Government does not want us to finish up with the state of affairs that exists in New South Wales where all the graft and bitterness, and party political struggle that one can possibly imagine are every-day occurrences in local government in that State! We find that even at this time the Labour Party in New South Wales is wanting to change the method of electing the members of local government. It has found that it did not get as good a representation as it wanted; although it has boundaries gerrymandered under the present system, consideration is still being given to a new system. It was

reported only a fortnight ago, and we were given some details of the move it was proposed to make, part of which related to the internal conflict between the A.L.P. and the D.L.P. The fact remains that because the representations did not satisfy the Labour Party in New South Wales it was prepared to further amend, with the legislative power it has, the method of electing representatives to local government.

I think it can be fairly said that in this State we have managed to keep our local government on a very high plane. I know of no great party political bitterness in any local government in Western Australia. At times it might intrude itself to a minor degree; but, in effect, it has been kept out of deliberations in local government in Western Australia.

I would like now to touch on the contentious points to which I have referred. I will commence with the first—namely, the method of electing presidents to shire councils. Those with experience under the existing legislation have very good reasons for wanting to retain the present system of electing a president who is to preside over a local authority, which will now be known as a shire council. The problems of country local authorities are entirely different from those in the metropolitan area. The geographical considerations, and the industrial interests of the people concerned, are so different that it will be disastrous if we remove from those people the right to elect their leader—call him by whatever name we will—in the existing manner.

I am quite satisfied that the person selected would be a desirable leader for that particular locality. His personality, his capabilities, his aims and ambitions, would be well known to each and every one of them. I am sure that, left to the present system, in the long run it would result in more harmony in those particular councils. No doubt from time to time they would select somebody at whom we could point the bone and feel he was not as efficient as somebody else; but after all they would have to live with the person, and if he was no good, incapable, lazy or indifferent to the wishes of the district, and the council, it would make sure he was replaced.

On the question of valuations—this never-ending argument as to whether annual values or unimproved values will be used—it is interesting to note that when introducing this Bill the Minister conceded, if only in a very minor way, that the unimproved value system is not foolproof. There are the purists, of course, who will tell us that there is only one system which should be used, namely, the unimproved value system. But when we put them to the test of critical examination of what can result under that system, they break down.

Therefore it is our opinion that the option as to which system should be used—either the unimproved values or the annual values—should be at the discretion of the local authority; likewise the authority to do the valuation.

It is not every local authority that wants to be tied to the strings of the Taxation Department values. They like to have their own valuations if they think fit, and we should make that possible if they desire. The system of valuations can well be left to the local authorities, because once again it is they who have to live with it, and justify it to the people who elect them. If they introduce a system which is inequitable, or unsatisfactory it will not be long before they are told all about it.

As members of Parliament, we know how closely we are in touch with our own electors when they want us for anything; or if anything is going wrong. It is even worse with members of councils or road districts. They are living amongst their electors the whole time; and if a local authority is doing something unsatisfactory or inequitable for the district, the electors soon let them know what is going on.

We all received a letter from the North Fremantle Municipality regarding the anomalies that could be created if the Government—or, in effect, if Parliament—insisted that the one system, namely, the unimproved value system, were adopted, and taxation values had to be used. I think that sets out very frankly and fairly some of the anomalies that can exist. It would be interesting to see whether the Minister comments on that particular letter when he replies to the second reading debate, because I think it is worthy of comment. This particular municipality has seen fit to make public its views.

It is a pity that more people do not set out their views in the same business-like manner as was done in this instance. The views are set out very frankly. The municipality has stated its attitude towards the system of valuation. It has gone further by setting out examples which in that particular municipality will produce anomalies and inequity.

Mr. Norton: Is that the North Fremantle Municipality?

Mr. COURT: Yes. One can elaborate on the anomalies that can be experienced if the purists have their way in connection with unimproved values. It seems so logical and simple to leave the matter in the hands of local authorities for decision. The experience in some local authorities is that they need both systems within their boundaries to preserve a degree of equity as between residential, commercial and industrial properties. They work it out very well. Under the system

proposed in the Bill there will be no discrimination permitted and it will be a straightforward unimproved valuation system using the Taxation Department's values.

On the question of franchise, I naturally support the retention of the old system and certainly do not support the Government's system of adult franchise. It is very interesting to study the background of this particular problem. The Government's attitude to adult franchise in connection with local authorities has rather a quaint twist. On the one hand, it is always ready to "sock" the poor old property-owner or the ratepayer; on the other hand, it wants to upset his right to vote and to deliberate in connection with the affairs of his local authority.

I have listed a few of the rates and taxes that he is subjected to. There is the land tax, water rate, Argentine ant rate; there is the discussion about the proposed metropolitan beach trust rate; and there was the discussion last session about a town planning rate. In fact, it seems to be almost endless when dealing with the number of imposts which the Government thinks the poor old property-owner can accept. The burden is becoming intolerable in many cases especially for people on fixed incomes. As far as we on this side are concerned, we are opposed to the adult franchise provisions.

On the question of appointing auditors, we likewise consider that the present system can be retained. There is no suggestion that there should be a breakaway from the established system in connection with the equivalent of road districts, but we feel that in respect of municipalities the present system of election by ratepayers should be retained. If one studies the provisions in the Bill, it will be apparent that this is more than just a question of the appointment of auditors by ratepayer elections; because the Bill incorporates such severe restrictions regarding the so-called audit—which is more of an inspection of the local authority than an audit in the true sense—that it would put local government accounting and local government administration into the strait-jacket of the central government.

On the general side, the Minister has commented on the objective of trying to overcome an anomaly that exists at present. He is seeking to clarify the situation of members of local government in respect of their dealings with their particular local authorities. The present situation has become farcical in many cases and it is most desirable that that situation be tidied up. We welcome the efforts to attempt to remove anomalies that exist.

The local government members do a wonderful job, but they find themselves, through no fault of their own, in a situation where they have broken the law. The Minister for Local Government has, I think with considerable tolerance,

handled this situation very delicately and carefully, where he considered that any possible breach of the law had been committed unwittingly and in good faith. However, it is unfair for any Minister to be placed in that position. It is unfair for any road board member or councillor to be placed in such a position; therefore we welcome the attempt to tidy up that position and to bring about a more practical state of affairs. I support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. W. A. Manning, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 8th October, 1958.

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

MOSQUITOES AND MIDGES.

Action Taken to Eliminate.

1. The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What action, if any, has been taken to eliminate the incidence of mosquitoes, mosquito larvae and midges occurring in swamp land, drainage sumps and other places of infestation in the metropolitan area?

(2) If no action is being taken, will the Government undertake a spraying programme in order to eliminate the pests referred to?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND replied:

(1) and (2) This work is being carried out by the local authorities.

GERALDTON HIGH SCHOOL.

Plans and Specifications for Alterations.

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

(1) Have the plans and specifications for the alterations and additional classrooms at the Geraldton High School been prepared?

(2) When is it anticipated that work on the alterations and additional classrooms will be commenced?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND replied:

(1) No.

(2) Tenders will be called in December.

COLLIER PINE PLANTATION.

Plan for Development.

3. The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Are any further details available in connection with the proposed plan for large-scale development of the Collier pine plantation?

(2) When is it envisaged that details of the plan will be available?

(3) When will a start be made on construction?

(4) Will the major hospital referred to be the commencement of the proposed development?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND replied:

(1) The proposed plan for the development of the Collier pine plantation is a long-term one and, except in respect of several allotments already made or in some special circumstances which may arise, is unlikely to proceed until the pines have reached maturity and have been cut out.

(2) No further details are available, and at present it is not possible to say when the detailed plan can be completed. It will probably be a further 10 to 12 years before the pines mature.

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