

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 17th December, 1953.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Electricity supplies, as to current for Tammin townsite	2957
Water supplies, as to steel plate for Cunderdin-Minnivale pipeline	2957
Royal visit, as to train services to Northam	2957
Firearms, as to licences for sporting guns	2957
Superphosphate, as to quantities transported	2958
Galvanised iron, as to supplies	2958
Co-operative Bulk Handling, Ltd., as to storage facilities, North Fremantle	2958
Housing, as to commission's building blocks	2958
Motions : Licensing, as to temporary facilities, Kwinana	2959
Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code, to disallow legal costs regulation	2962
Annual Estimates, Com. of Supply, general debate	2969
Speakers on financial policy—	
Mr. Hearman	2969
Mr. Hutchinson	2972
Mr. McCulloch	2973
Mr. Hill	2975
Mr. Sewell	2981
Mr. Norton	2982
Mr. J. Hegney	2986
Hon. V. Doney	2990
Bills : Boxing Day Holiday, 1r.	2957
Message, 2r., remaining stages	2968, 2994
Local Government, 1r.	2957
Message, 2r.	2967
Pensions Supplementation, 3r.	2958
Members of Parliament, Reimbursement of Expenses, returned	2962
Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	2966
3r.	2993
Acts Amendment (Allowances and Salaries Adjustment), 2r., remaining stages	2966
Public Works Act Amendment, Council's amendment	2994
Industrial Development (Resumption of Land) Act Amendment (No. 1), returned	2994
Government Railways Act Amendment, Council's amendment	2994
Reserves, returned	2994
Fire Brigades Act Amendment, Council's amendments	2994
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, Council's amendments	2994
Council's message, Assembly's request for conference	3014
Council's further message	3017
War Service Land Settlement Scheme, Council's amendments	3002
Industrial Development (Resumption of Land) Act Amendment (No. 2), returned	3002

The **PRESIDENT:** In expressing my thanks to Ministers and members for their kind remarks, I want to say that this session has been marked more than any other for many years by the strenuous work with which we were faced, especially towards the end of the session. For that reason, our special thanks are due to the clerks, on whom the burden of that work has fallen. I think they are to be congratulated for the way they have got through their work and kept the measures up to date. I do not want to reiterate what has been said about the officers, the "Hansard" staff, the Controller, and the others who have helped to make our stay in Parliament so pleasant; it has been so well expressed by previous speakers. Our thanks go to them for the efficient way in which they have done their work.

We have finished the year with high hopes for the future, and I do hope that the New Year will bring in its train many things that will help to make this State better recognised and more appreciated in the Eastern States than it has been in the past. I feel sure the future is bright, and perhaps the Royal visit, to which we are all so looking forward, will put the cap on what has been a series of most wonderful happenings for the future of Western Australia. I wish you all a very bright and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 1.11 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

CONTENTS—Continued.

	Page
Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment, Council's message	3002
Assembly's request for conference	3003
Council's further message	3014
Firearms and Guns Act Amendment, Council's amendments	3003
Point of order	3004
Council's message	3014
Agriculture Protection Board Act Amendment, Council's amendment	3005
Western Australian Marine Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3006
State Housing Act Amendment, Council's amendment	3007
Council's message	3014
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 1), 2r., remaining stages	3008
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r., remaining stages	3011
Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act Amendment (No. 1), returned	3014
Electoral Act Amendment (No. 1), 2r., defeated	3014
Loan, £17,850,000, returned	3017
Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment (No. 2), returned	3017
Bulk Handling Act Amendment (No. 1), returned	3017
Parliamentary Superannuation Act Amendment, returned	3017
Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment (No. 1), Council's further message	3017

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Boxing Day Holiday.
Introduced by the Minister for Labour.
2. Local Government.
Introduced by the Minister for Railways.

QUESTIONS.**ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.**

As to Current for Tammin Townsite.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

After the completion of the power line from Northam to Kellerberrin, is it the intention of the State Electricity Commission to make A.C. current available to Tammin townsite consumers?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Steel Plate for Cunderdin-Minnivale Pipeline.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

What is the closing date for tenders for the supply of steel plate for the pipeline from Cunderdin to Minnivale?

The MINISTER replied:

Tenders were not called for the supply of steel plate, but were called for the supply of steel pipes, including concrete lining, etc., in accordance with the normal departmental procedure.

Tenders closed in March, 1953.

A contract has been let to Hume Steel Ltd. for the supply of 42,240 lineal feet of 19½ in. external diameter pipes.

ROYAL VISIT.

As to Train Services to Northam.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it the intention of the Railway Department to conduct special train services from other country stations to Northam on the 31st March next, the date of the visit of Her Majesty the Queen to that centre?

(2) If so, will a reduced scale of fares operate on this day?

(3) If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No arrangements have yet been made for the issue of concession fares.

(3) The state of the railway finances may make it difficult to justify the granting of reduced fares.

FIREARMS.

As to Licences for Sporting Guns.

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

(1) Is he aware that the police are refusing to grant a licence for a sporting gun to anyone—

(a) because he lives in the metropolitan area;

(b) until he gets a written statement from someone giving him authority to shoot on his property?

(2) Does he not think this is a ridiculous state of affairs, as most people simply have to write to a friend in the country, and get the necessary written authority?

(3) Will he see that any respectable citizen is given a licence for a sporting gun on application?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The police do not refuse to grant a licence for a sporting gun to anyone who can give a good reason for desiring a licence.

(a) The licence is not refused because an applicant lives in the metropolitan area.

(b) A written statement is not essential, but a person usually quotes that he has authority to shoot on the property of another, which is then deemed to be a good reason.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) No respectable citizen has been refused a licence when he has given a good reason for requiring the same.

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

As to Quantities Transported.

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) How many tons of superphosphate have been transported by—

(a) rail;

(b) farmers' own transport;

(c) controlled transport, up to Friday, the 11th December, 1953?

(2) How many tons were transported by these methods for the same period in 1950, 1951 and 1952?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) Information relative to superphosphate despatched from Geraldton and Picton Junction is not readily available. The following statement relates to despatches from all works in the metropolitan area—

	Rail.	Controlled Road.	Normal Road.	Total tonnage Despatched.
9-12-50	70,915	20,328	11,771	103,014
11-12-61	90,413	8,952	11,904	111,269
11-12-52	34,826	45,804	24,014	104,704
11-12-53	77,544	NH	19,427	96,971

Deliveries in farmers' own vehicles cannot be segregated but the heading "Normal Road" covers delivery in farmers' own vehicles as well as deliveries up to 40 miles from works or to the Dale-Wandering area by carrier's trucks.

GALVANISED IRON.

As to Supplies.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Supply and Shipping:

(1) How does the prospect of supply in Western Australia of Australian and imported galvanised iron compare with last year?

(2) What import licences have been issued for importation of foreign galvanised iron?

(3) When do Australian manufacturers anticipate being able to supply orders without delay?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:

(1) As far as can be foreseen, the Australian supply will be equal to last year's. It is impossible to predict what galvanised iron will be imported during the coming year.

(2) This information is not available from local sources. It is a Commonwealth matter and has to come from Sydney.

(3) It cannot be anticipated as the demand is continually increasing due to greater development throughout the State.

It is understood, however, that manufacturers, to step up production, are increasing plant which will be in operation during 1955.

CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LTD.

As to Storage Facilities, North Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In answer to the recent question by the member for Fremantle as to who is finding the money for the new shed at North Fremantle and who owns the building, the following particulars are given:—

The money to build the annexe at North Fremantle is provided by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., on the recommendation of the Bulk Handling Advisory Committee and approval of the Minister. The money is repaid over a number of years by the Government, who are charged interest at 5 per cent. The Government therefore owns the building.

The Government rebates to the company the money which it would normally collect as rent if it had used its own money to erect the building, and in this way discharges its financial obligation.

HOUSING.

As to Commission's Building Blocks.

Mr. NORTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) How many vacant building blocks are held by the State Housing Commission at Carnarvon?

(2) Is it the intention of the Commission to acquire any building sites at Carnarvon?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Eleven vacant blocks.

(2) The matter is receiving consideration.

BILL—PENSION SUPPLEMENTATION.

Third Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [2.25]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [2.26]: I do not wish to delay the passage of this Bill except to say that I am still not satisfied with its provisions. As I explained yesterday, I cannot see why there should be any differentiation between those who come under the 1871 Act and those under the 1938 Act. I pointed out that in a number of cases they were both receiving the same amount of pension, but only half the increase is given in one case. I would ask the Premier to give some further consideration during the parliamentary recess to the provisions of this Bill with a view to introducing an amendment.

next session so that justice can be done to those receiving pensions, as mentioned by me. I feel the provisions of the Bill will cause a good deal of resentment and disappointment, and, while it is not likely that any alteration will take place at this late stage of the session, I think the Premier would be wise to give consideration to what I term the anomalies in the legislation, with a view to bringing the matter forward next session and making the necessary adjustments.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—in reply) [2.27]: As a result of the amendment agreed to yesterday, the proposal will cost the Government about £6,000 more than was agreed upon originally. It is not therefore reasonable to ask the Government to further consider the matter for the purpose of providing additional revenue to meet the additional increases suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. The only alterations which can possibly be considered by the Government in connection with this Bill are those which will reduce the maximum amount of the increase proposed, and perhaps raise the minimum amount. In other words, we would have to build up the lower rates of pensions and bring down the top rates to a middle position.

There is no doubt that when a Government sets out to give something away, it runs the risk of being attacked from every direction. Immediately requests are made for increases here, there and everywhere. The Treasurer who wants to avoid trouble and worry for himself, should not introduce any Bill which gives something away. He is able to pursue the even tenor of his life, if it is possible, only by bringing forward legislation which has the effect of taking money away from the people, and not for the purpose of giving money to them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—LICENSING.

As to Temporary Facilities, Kwinana.

Debate resumed from the 11th December on the following motion by the Minister for Works:—

That this House approves—

- (a) of the provision in the Kwinana district facing Harley Way in Medina shopping and business centre of temporary facilities for the purchase and consumption of liquor and other liquid refreshments as set out in the form of agreement tabled in this House on the 26th day of November, 1953, and made pursuant to clause 5 (c) of the agreement defined in section two of the Oil Refinery Indus-

try (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Limited) Act, 1952, between the State and the Company therein mentioned and Australasian Petroleum Refinery Limited; and

- (b) of the completion of the form of agreement and the carrying out of its provisions.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [2.30]: This motion seeks the approval of the House to a variation of the agreement existing between the Government and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. relative to the building of the refinery at Kwinana. The variation is that the Government undertakes to erect facilities for the supply of liquor at Kwinana. My view—and I think it is confirmed by the Solicitor General—is that the Government is under no necessity to seek the approval of the House. If the proposed amendment of the agreement comes within the scope of the agreement, the Government could have acted on its own responsibility.

In approaching the House as it has done, doubtless with the object of giving the necessary publicity to the proposal, the Government will also secure the views of members on the matter. I asked the Minister whether, if the House did not agree to the motion, the proposal would be pursued, but he did not answer the question. The agreement is executed by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. Ltd. and also its associate, the Australian Petroleum Pty. Ltd., but so far as I can ascertain from the copy before me, it has not been executed by the Government.

Admittedly, in the establishment of an industry of the proportions of this one, it would be almost impossible to envisage all the contingencies that might possibly arise during the period in which the refinery was being constructed. We must realise that many occurrences could arise that would not have been thought of at the time when the agreement was executed, when the area at Kwinana was almost all bush, and when many of the public facilities had to be provided and the company had to carry out major works. Therefore, it was not irrational to provide in the agreement for its amendment.

As the agreement has statutory confirmation, it would be only natural and proper to provide that any amendment would have the same force, once agreed upon between the Government and the company, as if it had been inserted in the agreement originally. So I come to the point: Is the amendment such as could reasonably have been within the contemplation of the parties when they executed the agreement? Any amendment, of course, could not be outside the purpose of the agreement; it would have to come within the purpose and object of the agreement. The Minister for Works did not

give the House any legal opinion on the matter, but the Chief Secretary, when discussing the motion in another place, gave the opinion of the Solicitor General in answer to certain queries raised during the debate by Mr. Parker. The first point I wish to quote from the agreement is really in confirmation of what I have said.

Mr. Lawrence: Are you now referring to the current "Hansard?"

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, No. 18. Perhaps the Minister for Works will furnish me with a copy of the opinion, but until he does so, I may be forgiven if I refresh my memory from notes I am holding in my hand. He discussed Section 3 (2) of the Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Limited) Act as follows:—

Notwithstanding the provisions of any other Act, the provisions of Clauses 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the agreement shall have effect as if the same were repeated in and enacted by this Act.

That is a perfectly valid and constitutional provision in an Act of Parliament. Clause 5 (o) of the original agreement which is contained in the schedule says—

Any application under or provisions of this agreement may from time to time be cancelled, added to or varied by an agreement in writing to that effect signed by or on behalf of the parties hereto.

The Solicitor General speaking of that arrangement says—

In a proper case, there would certainly be no need for another Act of Parliament to ratify an amending agreement under Clause 5 (o). The question remains, however, whether or not this particular amending agreement is a proper one or not.

It is a matter of law whether or not the provision of wet canteen facilities could reasonably facilitate the erection and establishment of the refinery.

I agree that the passing of the resolution would have no legal effect.

So that is the only legal problem that confronts, not this House, but the Government, and it will be entirely on the Government's responsibility that the canteen will be established. The only effect any resolution we may pass can have will be that the House views with favour the action of the Government in this matter provided it is within the law.

I do not think the Minister would suggest for a moment that if it were found that this action were illegal, the fact of this House having approved of the motion would remove any difficulty or that the fact of this House having ratified the amendment justified the Government in continuing despite the law of the land. I

say I do not think that the Minister would suggest that for one moment. It is within the power of the Government to give effect to the amendment, and until it is declared to be wrong in law, the Government feels that it could and should do so, and that any confirmation or approval of it here would only take it that far.

For my part, I hope the Government will not regard this motion as an excuse for delay in the erection of proper licensed premises, because this agreement does not envisage that licensed premises comparable with those in connection with which a publican's general licence is held, are to be erected. No accommodation or meals are to be provided and it will be agreed that one of the major objects of a publican's general licence is the provision of meals and accommodation for those requiring such facilities. I think the Minister would agree that it is highly probable that were such facilities provided in this instance, they would be utilised by those who need to visit and stay in that area.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you think they would constitute an amenity?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I will deal with that shortly. It certainly would not be the amenity which is envisaged in a publican's general licence under the Licensing Act, so I hope the Government will not regard this motion as having shelved the problem for the time being and delay a proper decision to furnish all the facilities that are provided for in licensed premises erected in accordance with the Licensing Act.

Before such premises can be constructed, it is necessary that land be made available as all suitable blocks in that vicinity are owned by the Government. I would like the Minister to give the House an idea of the Government's intention in that respect. I think a block suitable for the erection of a hotel, which I understand is envisaged in the plan, should be made available straight away to the public and tenders called in respect of it. Such a block would probably bring a considerable price as there is little doubt that the Licensing Court would grant a licence in that situation.

It seems that both the Government and the company have recognised that hotel facilities are required in that locality and are, in fact, essential, because were that not so, I do not think the Government would have taken the action it has. The facilities envisaged here cannot be described properly as a canteen, having no relation to the ordinary meaning of that term. A canteen is almost invariably established in the vicinity of where workers are engaged, but that is not so in this case. A canteen is usually made available to certain classes of people only, whereas this facility is to be made available to the general public.

When one peruses the accounts of State trading concerns—I refer to the State hotels—and the public criticism that appears from time to time in connection with them, I think the Government will have little difficulty in concluding that it is better for this facility to be run on the usual lines so that the police and Licensing Court will not be indirectly influenced by the fact that the property belongs to the Government and is run by Government servants.

As a Minister, I found that Government departments are influenced by the fact that property is owned and run by the Government, and that is only natural, because the Executive of the Crown, which is responsible in such matters, is very powerful and criticism of it by officers of the Crown is difficult, although they do not shirk that duty when they feel that action of that kind is necessary.

I do not think it can be claimed that the State hotels have been a success and I therefore again ask the Minister to indicate whether the Government intends to permit a hotel to be built by private enterprise at Kwinana, and how long it will be before steps are taken to enable that to be done. It is important that the hotel be built as soon as possible so that the facilities provided by the canteen may be taken over by the hotel and meals, bathrooms, and all other usual facilities made available. I feel that the Government, on the request of the company, could take no action other than it has adopted, and I therefore support the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. T. Tonkin—Melville—in reply) [2.48]: I thank the member for Mt. Lawley for his remarks in connection with the motion. It is, as he has said, the belief of the Government that the passing of this motion will not give validity, if no such validity already exists. The Government was caused to act in this way because of the request of the company for early provision of these facilities and had that request not come forward, the Government would have taken no action to make provision for temporary bar facilities at Kwinana.

However, we were impressed by the arguments advanced and desired to help the company in its work of establishing the refinery at Kwinana. The Crown Law Department pointed out that power to have these temporary bar facilities already exists, but as Parliament in the first place had provided the powers under which the Government would be working, it was thought as well to get from Parliament an expression of opinion as to whether it felt this was a fair exercise of the powers contained in the original Act and agreement. So all that is being sought by this motion is an expression of opinion from Parliament on a proposal to provide

temporary bar facilities. The member for Mt. Lawley asked if the Government would proceed if Parliament did not give its approval to the motion. I say quite definitely that the Government would not proceed if that were so. It would take that as an indication that Parliament did not want temporary facilities provided at Kwinana, and even although the Government might have power to provide them, it would not go ahead with the proposal against the wish of Parliament.

We are now seeking Parliament's opinion as to whether this is fair and reasonable and, in view of the arguments that have been advanced to the Government by the company and which I have explained to the House, I trust that Parliament will agree that these temporary facilities should be provided. The only other question that should be answered is this: What steps will the Government take to provide as quickly as possible, permanent hotel facilities in the area? In this direction, Government policy has already been announced. The Government believes that Kwinana is being established through sacrifices on the part of everybody in Western Australia. Nearly every district has been deprived of something it would have had, this year or last year, because money is not available to provide it, and because a great deal of money was required to carry out certain works at Kwinana.

Because of the general contribution that is being made to the development at Kwinana, it is felt that the general community should be in a position to derive such profits as can be derived, and which will be derived without doubt, from the provision of hotel facilities. The Government does not intend to establish a State hotel. It desires that a community hotel shall be established, if possible, and that the people in the district will be able to run that hotel for their own benefit on much the same lines as people in Nuriootpa, South Australia, have successfully run their community hotel for many years.

Mr. Yates: How is the community hotel at Cunderdin going?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I understand it is being run quite satisfactorily. The people there would not have the same opportunities as those at Kwinana. I think a hotel at Kwinana would be a much better proposition than the one at Cunderdin because of the planning that has taken place to establish the town and because there will be congregated very quickly at that centre a large number of people.

Mr. Yates: What is the population there now?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I could not tell the hon. member that. It is growing all the time and I believe that within 12 months there will be 1,800 single men in the area. It is clear that it will be a fairly lucrative business, and the Government view is that, rather than enable one individual or a syndicate to derive the pro-

fits from what is a community effort, it is more reasonable to say to those in the community, "You can all derive the benefits that can be obtained from this business." The Government believes that the temporary bar facilities can be conducted on the same lines as the community hotel in South Australia.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That would require statutory authority.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The Government knows that there will be financial difficulties at first, and it could very well be that the Government's desires could not be achieved because of obstacles that would have to be surmounted. If that should occur, I have no doubt that the Government will reconsider the question, and it is quite possible, in the circumstances, that the land will be thrown open to private selection. We hope, however, that it will be possible to provide a hotel at Kwinana on a community-ownership basis. I repeat that the Government does not regard this as a motion which will provide validity where none exists, or which will remove validity if it does exist. The Government considers this motion purely as an expression of opinion by Parliament to provide these temporary facilities which the manager of the company has emphasised are so necessary to enable him to carry out the company's constructional work without any difficulty.

To prove its bona fides, the company has guaranteed to make good any loss up to £7,000. It has been said in another place that the company will not run much risk in giving that guarantee, but I am advised that it will. It will be called upon to find a substantial amount of that guarantee because of the short period over which the temporary bar facilities will be provided, and the inability in that time, to recover the capital cost involved to erect the building and provide furnishings, because some of them will be of very little value when the permanent facilities are acquired.

The refrigeration units can be transferred to a permanent hotel but the building itself will be of little use where it is, and if it has to be pulled down and re-erected, there will be considerable loss. The profits to be gained are expected, in a short time, to be insufficient to cover the expenditure involved. Therefore, the company, in undertaking to meet any losses, has proved its bona fides in believing that these facilities are necessary. I cannot imagine that the company would approach the Government on this question unless it did believe that such facilities ought to be provided to assist it to establish the oil refinery. What other reason could the company have? Surely it could not be said that the executives are so fond of their liquor that they want temporary bar facilities provided. That would be nonsense. So we must agree that in the opinion of these men—and they are men

of experience—it is highly desirable that these facilities be provided. For that reason, the Government is prepared to assist the company accordingly, if Parliament signifies its approval.

Question put and passed.

BILL—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

MOTION—MATRIMONIAL CAUSES AND PERSONAL STATUS CODE.

To Disallow Legal Costs Regulation.

MR. LAWRENCE (South Fremantle) [3.11]: I move—

That the amendment to Rule 166 made under the Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code, 1949, as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 4th December, 1953, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 8th December, 1953, be, and is hereby, disallowed.

The reason for this motion is, that I do not believe any increase in costs should be allowed to the legal fraternity, especially since the basic wage has been pegged. Looking at the regulations, I find that the increased charge for an undefended divorce action will be 45 guineas, whereas now it is 35 guineas; for defended actions the cost will be increased from 55 guineas to 75 guineas.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: How many undefended actions does a solicitor handle per day?

Mr. LAWRENCE: That is an interesting point. On one occasion not very many months ago I saw one solicitor handling 14 undefended actions. For this he received about 35 guineas each. In all they took three hours and ten minutes in court, which means that for this time he received something like £540.

Mr. Yates: There is a lot of preparatory work before the actions are heard.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I agree with the hon. member but nevertheless I would suggest that the preparatory work of an undefended action is not great.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: There is a considerable amount of responsibility attached to such actions.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The point I make is that interjections will continue from the member for Mt. Lawley because he is a member of the legal fraternity. I would like to be fair in this case but I also know there is not that much work prior to an action being heard in an undefended case. Before any action is taken some costs are paid by the plaintiff.

I understand from people who have been in such an unfortunate circumstance that the first payment is at least 25 guineas

and prior to the action being brought before the court the balance of the fees must be paid. If costs are recovered from the respondents the money paid is refunded to the plaintiff. Last year some lawyers specialising in divorce in Perth paid over £3,000 in taxation. It is obvious to me that the legal fraternity does not require such a steep increase in charges, as is shown in these regulations.

Mr. Yates: How many lawyers are practising in Perth?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I cannot tell the hon. member, but there are many. I am not very happy about the charges made by the legal fraternity because I know of one glaring instance of too severe a charge. The member for East Perth at one time referred me to someone in regard to a worker's compensation case. The person concerned was a Yugo-Slav who had been injured in a mining accident at Cue. He was brought down to the Royal Perth Hospital when he was sufficiently well to travel and was an inmate for 12 months. After that he died.

During the twelve months in hospital he was paid £6 a week under the Workers' Compensation Act. I found that this person's attorney had consulted a firm of solicitors in Perth and they had charged him £48 odd to find out whether his dependants in Yugo-Slavia, whom he was supporting, were eligible for compensation under the Act. On looking through his file I asked to see the death certificate, but there was none on the file. I asked if there had been a postmortem and I also asked for a copy of the certificate, but neither was that on the file.

I then got in touch with the superintendent of the Perth Hospital to find out the cause of death, and within an hour and a half he rang back and informed me that the person had died of carcinoma of the skull, and that under no circumstances was he eligible for compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act, because his death was not caused through his employment nor the accident incurred during this employment. The cost of finding out this information was threepence for one telephone call yet the firm of solicitors charged £48 to find out if this man's dependants were eligible for compensation.

While I may feel very savage over action of this type, at the same time I do not consider that lawyers in this State are entitled to such a large increase in costs, especially when the worker, who mostly comprises the clients of solicitors, is paid on a wage that has been pegged. Why should we not, therefore, mete out the same measure to the legal fraternity? Surely there can be no objection to that! We should not tolerate an increase from 55 guineas to 75 guineas in one hit. As I pointed out before, the time taken to conduct an undefended divorce is not very great. I also pointed out that one lawyer

in Perth earned over £500 for three hours work in court. If the House passes the regulations laid on the Table they will become statutory.

Mr. Hutchinson: Do you realise there is a great deal of work behind three hours' attendance in court?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I agree. What would the hon. member suggest is the time taken for an undefended action? I know that processes have to be served, agents' fees have to be paid. The Minister for Justice would probably bear this out; agents are parasites and a blot on the face of this country. That is well known and I do not think the member for Mt. Lawley will deny it. I do not think there is a great deal of work done in an undefended action. This was borne out in conversations I had with a few lawyer friends. There may be singular instances where cases are protracted, but in the main there is not that much work.

Mr. Yates: The lawyer in question might have accepted lower fees if there was not much work to be done.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The point is that these regulations provide for increased fees, and lawyers do charge them. I do not know of any lawyer who is impartial in this matter.

Mr. Oldfield: The member for Mt. Lawley does not work for me for nothing.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Knowing the member for Mt. Lawley, I suggest he should pay the hon. member if he does any work for him. I am not so much interested in the legal fraternity, but I do feel we should try to make the fees stable at this time. Having regard to the fact that the basic wage has been frozen, it is only fair that solicitors should be treated on the same basis as the average worker.

Hon. A. F. Watts: What is the date of the regulation?

Mr. LAWRENCE: It dates from 1949. Nevertheless an increase of 50 per cent. since that date is too great. Before that, I cannot tell what increases were granted under the Supreme Court rules of 1909 because the charges were all itemised. I think the increases are far too great, and I therefore ask the House to support my motion.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [3.14]: The hon. member would not have moved his motion unless he believed that a legal practitioner was receiving more than was justified under these rules. Costs can be recovered from a guilty party and also, I admit, from a client, when no arrangements have been made. Like everyone else in our community, a lawyer can charge what a client agrees to, and this scale comes into operation only when no such agreement is made. Lawyers are amongst the few professional men whose remuneration is price-fixed. If there is an agreement, that is all right; but where

there is no agreement, the remuneration is price-fixed, and can be queried by the person who employs the lawyer and thinks he has paid too much, and the claim can be investigated.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Does he have to employ another lawyer to do that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No; but he would be well advised to do so.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you think the fees should be price-fixed?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: So long as I can remember during my career, and during that of my father and of his before him, they have been fixed.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you believe they should be?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes; in this way, that my profession is under the jurisdiction of the court, and the court should have the right to govern the practice of its officers. The law of this land is carried out by the judiciary, and the bar, and legal practitioners. They all form part of a system, and no part would work without the other. It is because of that system that British justice is respected in the way it is.

I do not think any class in the community receives more respect than does the judiciary, and it must not be forgotten that the judiciary is drawn from the legal practitioners. When an impartial tribunal assesses the value of services, it is unlikely to be unreasonable, and the signatures of Mr. Justice Dwyer, Mr. Justice Wolff, Mr. Justice Walker, Mr. Justice Jackson and Mr. Justice Virtue constitute a recognition of the fairness of the reward that applies in this case.

Mr. Lawrence: I think that one of those gentlemen was one of those who froze the basic wage.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The fact about the basic wage is that wages are not frozen. If the hon. member can render service to the community, he is entitled to the maximum amount he can obtain, so there is no pegging of the wage; one can earn just as much as one likes. But for the protection of certain people, who are not in a position to protect themselves, a minimum wage is established.

Mr. Moir: It is the maximum in quite a lot of cases.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not think the hon. member can continue to discuss the basic wage argument on this motion.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker! It must be pointed out that this scale shows the maximum that can be recovered or awarded by the court against the guilty party when no agreement is made. That is set out.

Mr. Lawrence: These costs are paid by the plaintiff before the case is brought before the court, and the hon. member knows it full well.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know it. It is not customary.

Mr. Lawrence: It is.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is not customary.

The Premier: It is with some lawyers.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: What is customary is that a certain amount is received in advance; but unless there is a special agreement, that has to be accounted for in the final settlement, and always is. After all, the law is a very skilled profession and requires people of considerable ability. The hon. member would have no hesitation in approving of the principle of a margin being granted, and that that margin should be commensurate with the skill of the person concerned and the quality of the work performed. It is all very well to say that certain exceptional men make a lot of money. I do not know of any exceptional lawyers, but I do know that in my own firm no one makes anything like the amount suggested by the hon. member.

Mr. Lawrence: I can prove my statement.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I can prove mine too.

The Premier: Payment by results might be worth a trial.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The results of the average lawyer's work are not more than to enable a decent living to be obtained. I think that not one member in this House will deny that each one of us is entitled to reasonable remuneration according to his status and the duties he has to perform.

Mr. Lawrence: I agree.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Not one will deny that under certain conditions, in spite of any pegging, consideration should be given to that factor.

Mr. Lawrence: I agree.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: So the question is: Have the judges made a mistake in agreeing to this scale? My experience of them is they are pretty hard; they do not give away too much.

Mr. Lawrence: It all depends on what you have done.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I would note here that the Crown has assessed its reward, in an intervention which is not often a matter of a major work, as being up to £60. That is what the Crown thinks it should be entitled to. If it did not, it would not have had it inserted in the regulations, which have to be approved by the Minister.

I hope the House will leave the matter to the judiciary and let it decide what is a fair thing in these cases. I admit that there are those in my profession who on occasion are not worthy of belonging to it; but what profession does not have

people of that kind? I admit that there are those in my profession of whom I am heartily ashamed. But it seems that there is no part of the community, from the top to the bottom, which does not contain within it those who ill deserve the position they hold. I hope the House will allow the regulations to remain and accept the view of the judges that these fees are fair and just.

MR. YATES (South Perth) [3.24]: I was interested in the case put forward by the member for South Fremantle. He evidently went into the question of payment for services rendered by solicitors on behalf of clients. He referred to costs recoverable from a party in connection with an undefended divorce action. It might be possible on an isolated occasion for a number of undefended cases to go through the court in three hours; but that would be only on odd occasions.

Mr. Lawrence: That is not right.

Mr. YATES: It is quite true.

Mr. Lawrence: It is not.

Mr. YATES: The courts are not conducting divorce cases every day. There are certain periods during which they are heard.

Mr. Lawrence: I referred purely to undefended actions.

Mr. YATES: There are certain occasions when judges sit in Chambers to decide divorce actions. A lawyer might have had 14 undefended cases, but they could have been the only ones he had for the whole year.

Mr. Lawrence: Rubbish!

Mr. YATES: The hon. member did not say anything to the contrary. He mentioned only 14 cases, and I say that they might have been the only ones the lawyer had. One lawyer does not get all these cases; and there are not that many divorces.

Mr. Lawrence: How many are there?

Mr. YATES: I do not know.

Mr. Lawrence: Then what are you talking about!

Mr. YATES: You tell me the number.

Mr. Lawrence: Oh, no! I am asking you.

Mr. YATES: I do not know the number.

Mr. Lawrence: Then do not make such wrong statements.

Mr. YATES: I did not. I said I do not know the number, but I suggest that there would not be hundreds of them. If there were a hundred cases and each firm got the average, it would not have more than from 15 to 20.

Mr. Lawrence: You have not seen Mr. Hale, Q.C. in the divorce court.

Mr. YATES: I am not talking of one individual.

Mr. Lawrence: You would not see Mr. Abbott going into the divorce court.

Mr. YATES: He might not be interested.

Mr. Lawrence: The majority are not. There are only a few of them who are interested.

Mr. YATES: A man who specialises in these cases would not be engaged on them all the time. There would not be sufficient. He has to face competition with others who like that type of work. Of course, all of them would like to have undefended actions, but each would get only his share. A man might have 60 cases in a year, of which 14 were undefended. Perhaps owing to a peculiar set of circumstances, those 14 would all be dealt with on the one occasion. It might be for the convenience of the court to have them dealt with at the same time.

Mr. Lawrence: By a simple arithmetical calculation, a man having the number of cases the hon. member has suggested would earn £3,000 a year for a very limited period of work.

Mr. YATES: There is a lot of expense involved. A lawyer has to have an office. He has to pay a good deal of money by way of rent, and he has to engage staff, and meet other expenses involved in running the business. The hon. member has visited lawyers' offices and has seen the set-up. He knows the furniture, and fittings, and law-books that are to be found in such places.

Mr. Lawrence: I have those things in my own home.

Mr. YATES: The hon. member knows all the other considerations that go to the running of such a business. Then, before a lawyer is qualified he has to undergo a course of highly technical training at the university, and he has to spend many years as a junior before he reaches the top of the tree. The average lawyer in this State is not as well paid as many people in other professions.

Mr. Lawrence: Rubbish!

Mr. YATES: I am talking of the average individual, not the one that gets all the plums; and what I have said can be borne out by members of the profession who sit in this Chamber. The member for Claremont will support my contention, because he knows many of these men and has discussed the matter with me. He is aware that they are receiving only average remuneration for the work they do.

Mr. Lawrence: They have been admitted to the bar.

Mr. YATES: Yes.

Mr. Lawrence: Can you maintain that statement?

Mr. YATES: I can maintain that I do not know of many lawyers that are rolling in wealth.

Mr. Lawrence: I am not suggesting they are rolling in wealth. You said they were having a very hard time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for South Perth is making this speech.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The member for South Fremantle has made one, and now he is making another.

Mr. YATES: I am trying to be fair to the hon. member and to answer his interjections to the best of my ability. I think that the increases suggested are not out of place. There has been none for four years, and a 50 per cent. increase is not unreasonable. It has been approved by the Minister for Justice. I am certain that he has regard for the interests of the public and would not have allowed the regulations to go through if he had not thought that course was justifiable and in the best interests of the profession. I do not think the amounts suggested in the regulations are excessive. I am not, therefore, in favour of the motion.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [3.31]: I rise to inquire: Are we not going to hear from the Minister for Justice on this motion?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Premier should tell us.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [3.32]: While the member for South Fremantle was speaking, I sent a note to the member for Mt. Lawley informing him that if he wished to follow the member for South Fremantle he could do so, but if not I would have the debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting. If no one else rises to speak on the motion now, I shall certainly have the debate adjourned until a later stage to enable the Minister for Justice to put forward the point of view he holds in connection with the matter.

On motion by Mr. McCulloch, debate adjourned.

BILL—JUDGES' SALARIES AND PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [3.33]: As explained by the Premier, the Bill gives to the judges an increase in salary. The last time their salaries were fixed was in 1950, and they have not had an increase since. The public servants, members of Parliament, and indeed all other sections of the community, have received basic wage increases since that time.

As far as I can see, all that the Bill does is to make up to the judges the amount which has been made available to these other sections of the community as a result of basic wage increases since

1950. The Premier said that the increases would not take place until the 1st January, 1954; that there would be no retrospectivity in regard to the proposals. I agree that the judges are entitled to the increases suggested by the Premier, and I support the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 5 amended:

The PREMIER: Paragraph (a) would make the increases retrospective to the 1st day of July, 1953. This is not desired. It is proposed to pay them from the 1st day of January next year. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (a) the word "July" be struck out and the word "January" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of paragraph (a) the word "three" be struck out and the word "four" inserted in lieu.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

Sitting suspended from 3.38 to 4.4 p.m.

BILL—ACTS AMENDMENT (ALLOWANCES AND SALARIES ADJUSTMENT).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [4.4]: This Bill sets out to amend the Audit Act, the Public Service Act and the Stipendiary Magistrates Act. In principle, it follows the lines of the Bill we disposed of prior to the afternoon tea suspension. The measure will provide increased salaries for the Auditor General, the Public Service Commissioner and the magistrates; it will actually provide basic wage increases as applied to judges in the previous Bill. The same principles apply. Accordingly, I support the second reading.

There is one other provision that the measure contains which states that, instead of coming to Parliament with a similar Bill in future and asking Parliament to agree to such increases, the Governor will have power to fix a new maximum at any time it is considered reasonable so to do. I do not see any objection to that; on the contrary, I think it is something to be commended. I support the Bill.

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.

BILL—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS

(Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [4.8] in moving the second reading said: In introducing this Bill, I would like to advise the House that I am doing so in order to keep faith with the promise made by the Government to introduce a local government Bill during this session.

As members are aware, following the introduction of the Local Government Bill in 1939, a Royal Commission was set up to take evidence and make recommendations for desired alterations in the Bill. The printed report of the Royal Commission, together with its recommendations, was not available until March, 1951. These were duly considered and early in 1953 a start was made to redraft the Bill as first introduced. When the present Government took office, it was arranged that this work should be speeded up. Due to extreme pressure of work in the Crown Law Department, it was not possible for the redraft to be placed before Cabinet until a short time ago. Cabinet has considered the Bill generally and desires certain alterations to be made, in consequence of which it is not possible for the Bill to be available at this stage.

There will not be any copies for distribution to members today. In fact, I have not got a complete copy myself; the only copy I have is a typewritten one of the early formal clauses of the Bill. The Chief Parliamentary Draftsman is doing his utmost to complete checking the Bill but, in view of the size of the measure, it is a big job. I can promise the House that immediately the Bill is printed copies will be sent to each member of Parliament and local authority. This action will enable those interested to become conversant with its provisions. It is intended that next session the measure will be introduced for final consideration by Parliament. The introduction of the Bill now is solely for the purpose of permitting copies to be sent to members and those persons interested, immediately it is printed and copies are available.

I would like just briefly to outline some of the more important clauses of the Bill. The measure proposes that existing city councils shall remain city councils, while other existing municipal councils shall be known as town councils; road boards existing will be known as shire councils. The chief executive officer of the City Council will be the city clerk; of a town council, the town clerk, and of a shire council the shire clerk. The City of Perth will be headed by a lord mayor; other existing municipalities, as at present, by a mayor, and existing road boards by a president. The Bill proposes that lord mayors, mayors, presidents and councillors shall be appointed by means of a poll. Another proposal is for adult franchise in local authority elections, and also that residents within the district for six months shall be enrolled and be capable of election to the position of lord mayor, mayor, president or councillor. It is proposed that the method of voting to be used shall be the preferential system.

A further proposal is that unimproved capital valuations only shall be used, and that these valuations shall be made by an officer of the Taxation Department. Power is given in the Bill to alter a town council to a city council and for the alteration of a municipal council to a town council. Another provision is that every person elected must make and subscribe an oath of allegiance. At present, this is only required in the case of municipalities. The financial year will, in all cases, end on the 30th June, and annual elections will take place on the third Saturday in April of each year.

The Bill seeks to empower the Governor to make regulations prescribing educational and professional qualifications for the chief executive officer of a municipality, and for the prescribing of examinations and the issuing and granting of certificates of qualification. It is not proposed, if such regulations are made, that they shall apply to any officer of a council in office prior to the coming into force of the Act. A further provision is that an officer moving from one municipality to another shall have his long service leave credit maintained and that the various municipalities that have shared in the employment of such officer shall contribute equitably towards such long service leave. The Bill provides for superannuation on retirement or death, and for such benefits to be mandatory.

Another provision is that all contracts above £500 must, except in cases of emergency, be by public tender. The Bill sets out that in all cases the absolute property in all roads is vested in the Crown. Another provision is that the Governor may, at the request of two or more municipalities, constitute a county district or regional district to carry out, on behalf of municipalities joining in the scheme,

functions delegated to it, and full machinery measures for controlling the county or regional councils so created are prescribed.

A further provision will authorise the fixing of building lines generally following the legislation now contained in the City of Perth Act, 1925. Power is given in the Bill for a council to compel the installation in, or on, a building of fire escapes, subject to a right of appeal to the Minister. Other than the usual appeal to the Minister against the decision of an authority to grant a building permit, the Bill provides for any other matter affecting building disputes to be referred to referees. At the present time any such dispute must be referred to the Supreme Court or Local Court.

The Bill proposes that a municipality may expend portion of its funds in insuring members of the council against death injury or damage when proceeding to attend meetings or carrying out any specific request on the instruction of the council or in carrying out any authorised work of a national character. Further, power is given to authorise local authorities to purchase motor vehicles for resale to their officers for use in carrying out council duties.

Apart from a provision that any special rate raised shall be spent in a special area, there is no provision for the keeping of finance on a ward system. Rating of Government land, schools, churches and institutions generally remains as at present. Provision is made for land to be sold when rates have been unpaid for three years, and notice of intention to sell need be advertised only once in a local paper in lieu of three times as at present. A further provision in the Bill is that the audit of all accounts of local authorities shall be undertaken by Government auditors.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Like the curate's egg, good in parts.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, debate adjourned.

BILL—BOXING DAY HOLIDAY.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR (Hon. W. Hegney) [4.18] in moving the second reading said: This is a very brief Bill containing only four clauses. The object is to provide that Monday, the 28th De-

cember of this year shall be regarded as a public holiday for Boxing Day. The Bill specifically refers to the 28th December, 1953, and will have application to that particular day only.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Why could you not have brought this Bill down a month ago? What was to prevent it?

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR: If the Leader of the Opposition will permit me to proceed, I shall clarify the position. The arrangements made in the other States have been examined. In South Australia, Boxing Day is not regarded as a public holiday, but Proclamation Day is observed and, under the Holidays Act of that State, provision is made that where the 28th December falls on a day other than a Monday, the following Monday shall be regarded as a public holiday. This year Monday, the 28th, will be observed as a public holiday in that State.

In Tasmania, when Christmas Day falls on a Friday, the following Monday is observed as a bank holiday, and when it falls on Saturday or Sunday, the following Monday and Tuesday are observed as bank holidays. Those days are regarded under the Act as the days on which Christmas Day and Boxing Day are observed and amendments of industrial awards are not necessary.

I have recently received information from New South Wales to the effect that there will be a general holiday in that State on Monday, the 28th December, and the same arrangement will apply in Victoria. I have not an official copy of the decision of Mr. Justice Morgan in the Federal Arbitration Court. Recently workers under Federal awards approached the Chief Conciliation Commissioner, Mr. Commissioner Mooney, to obtain a decision to the effect that, as Boxing Day would fall on Saturday—a non-working day for five-day-a-week workers—the following Monday should be observed. He declined to give a favourable decision. The matter was referred to a judge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, who indicated that where the workers in a State are working under Federal awards and the State Act provides for a public holiday on that day, such workers shall be entitled to the benefit of the holiday.

Of course, I can anticipate the suggestion that the courts of this State have not granted a day in lieu of Boxing Day for five-day-a-week workers, but it must be remembered that the five-day-week principle has brought about changes with respect to holidays. Had Christmas Day fallen on Wednesday and Boxing Day on Thursday, the five-day-a-week workers would have received the benefit of both holidays and they are really entitled to the prescribed public holidays each year. With one public holiday falling on Saturday and another on Sunday, it could not

be seriously argued that the workers in industry should be deprived of both of those public holidays.

The main principle of the Bill is that Monday, the 28th December of this year will be regarded as the public holiday in lieu of the Saturday. If members read the relevant clauses of the Bill, they will find that so far as the provisions of industrial awards and agreements are concerned, although Saturday the 26th December was regarded as Boxing Day, the Monday will be the recognised public holiday and penalty rates etc., will pertain to that day.

The Department of Labour approached the Employers' Federation some time ago to ascertain what there action of the federation would be to this proposal, but that body did not appear to be too happy about it. Recently a further approach was made and the council of the association, I understand, declined to regard Monday as the Boxing Day holiday. The Government has given serious consideration to the proposal and feels that, in all the circumstances, the position could be most equitably met by granting Monday, the 28th December, as a public holiday.

While it is true that the Bill might have been introduced earlier, we were hopeful of being able to obviate the need for legislation by securing an understanding between the trade union movement and the Employers' Federation and then an award by consent from the Arbitration Court. This was done in 1948 when Christmas Day fell on Saturday. The parties on that occasion, after discussion, agreed and President Dunphy issued an award by which all parties were content to abide, and the need for legislation was thus obviated. I think that is a satisfactory explanation as to why this measure has been introduced at this stage. I hope that members will facilitate the passage of the Bill and that it will receive the blessing of members in another place. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1953-54.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and on the Annual Estimates. Mr. Moir in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £6,079:

MR. HEARMAN (Blackwood) [4.28]: I wish to address myself to the subject of railways. The freight increase introduced by the Government has been discussed freely both in this Chamber and outside it. I have interested myself considerably this

session in railway matters, and while I cannot say that I agree with everything the Government claims in regard to freight increases, I believe that if we paid more attention to the traffic management of the railways, we would obtain much greater efficiency and incidentally the railway returns would show an improvement. This, I believe, would ultimately be reflected in the freight rates that the department would find it necessary to charge.

The particular case I have in mind concerns the matter of super haulage at the Picton works. I suggested that it would be generally more desirable to haul super from Picton, by special super trains, than under the system whereby it was transported as ordinary goods traffic in a rather haphazard manner and the estimated time of arrival at its destination was something that could only be guessed. Before getting this system introduced, little goodwill existed between the railways, the super works management and the farmers. Differences needed to be reconciled. If all concerned decided that this system was worthy of a trial and the virtues rather than the difficulties were emphasised, considerable progress could be made.

The department at that time said it thought the system should be continued until Christmas. Today the district traffic superintendent at Bunbury is convinced that he cannot afford to allow the system to break down because the time for the turn-around of trucks in the area over which the system is operating has been halved. Not only that, but also by virtue of the forward advice it has been possible to send farmers with regard to arrival times, there has not been a single case on that section where demurrage has had to be charged, apart from a couple of instances of hold-ups where subsidised road transport was responsible for unloading the trucks.

The Picton super works have not had a single complaint this year about delayed delivery of super by rail and I think that highlights the fact that there are other avenues for increasing railway efficiency and revenue other than the obvious course of increasing freights. The Government could well give attention to this aspect of the matter. We have been told there are not enough trucks or locos and that delays are due to various causes, but I think I have given a clear instance which shows that twice the amount of freight could be handled with the same number of trucks if the right system were adopted.

I think the Minister will agree that if a more business-like approach were adopted by the Commissioner and his officers, considerable improvements could be effected. In this case, both the Chief Traffic Manager and the District Traffic Superintendent and his officers in Bunbury have been extremely co-operative and without their assistance we could not have

brought about the present position. It is only fair to give considerable credit also to the Cuming Smith-Mt. Lyell staff at Picton Junction for their co-operation in giving the railways the loading required.

That state of affairs builds goodwill between the department and its customers and is what the department should strive to achieve. A greater desire on the part of the railways to improve goodwill would minimise, if not overcome, many problems. I was rather disappointed, but I found that due to certain arrangements by the manufacturers of super, it was decided to restrict the area to be served by Picton Junction to a little this side of Kojonup, Muradup being the siding concerned.

I was amazed when I heard from the District Traffic Superintendent at Bunbury that all super for that area was to be hauled over the Great Southern. Apart from the fact that that involves a slightly greater mileage—about 20 miles—it is responsible for considerable 'railway difficulties'. It takes five or six days for a truck that leaves the metropolitan area to get down there, whereas by hauling the super via the South-West line, a truck could be loaded on Monday and unloaded on the following Wednesday. I was taken aback to find that for some reason it was decided to haul the super through the Great Southern. I took the matter up with the department, but no one could explain why the decision had been reached. Apparently it was because the super had always been hauled that way. However, the department did see the virtue of continuing the set-up in the Bunbury area and arrangements have now been made for the regular transport of super over the South-West line.

All this indicates that there are many avenues that the Government should watch closely in regard to railway efficiency. The instances I have mentioned illustrate the point, but if the right methods are adopted, they will inevitably cheapen railway working costs and increase earnings. It happens with increasing frequency that trucks loaded at Bunbury on Monday reach Kojonup at about 5 a.m. on Tuesday, are unloaded and re-loaded and the truck is on its way to Bunbury on the Tuesday afternoon. Such rapid turn-around with full loading each way helps considerably to give efficient service and reduce the losses sustained by the railways.

I wish to make some suggestions to the Government in relation to the so-called non-paying lines—none of which are in my electorate. Every line in the State is actually unpaying, but the term coined for some of the worst lines is "non-paying," which is a misnomer and creates the wrong impression in the minds of certain people. A great many of our railways are developmental and it would be sounder to classify those which the Minister says earn less than half their working costs as developmental lines.

There is an idea in the minds of the public that because the Minister—in public utterances and on the floor of the House—has singled out certain lines—I notice the member for Murchison paying attention—for a certain amount of criticism, they have been spoken of as non-paying lines. In fact, the Perth-Kalgoorlie and Perth-Bunbury lines are the only ones which are not non-paying. The impact of these developmental lines on the finance of our railways prejudices us with the Grants Commission, and I have wondered whether a formula could be developed to decide which lines should be classified as developmental, and represented as such to the Grants Commission, the losses sustained on them being shown not so much as a straight-out railway loss, but as a developmental cost, which, I think, is how they should properly be regarded.

I do not think the total losses on the railways should be considered as a single lump sum and all users of the system forced to contribute in that way to the developmental cost of other portions of the State in which they have no interest. I did mention that there are no such lines in my electorate. The general railway traffic in that area is increasing considerably and I hope it will build up further as the developmental potential of that part of the State is considerable. I do not wish to feel that people in my electorate are to be penalised for the transportation costs of those in developmental areas. I am not unsympathetic in this regard, and if my suggestion were accepted, I think it would lead to a lowering of rail freights, which would obviously benefit people in outlying areas and might benefit them even more than those situated closer to Perth.

Our railway deficit has become so serious a matter in State finance that it is a nettle that should be grasped. I would rather see the question lifted out of the hurly-burly of 'pre-election politics, but unless an effort is made in the very near future, I am afraid there will be the usual pre-election promises and no party will do anything about it, with the result that nothing will be done. That has been the experience of past years and I do not think a continuation of the unwillingness to grasp the nettle is desirable.

I suggest that something in the nature of an all-party committee should be set up, possibly during the recess, to determine what lines should be regarded as straight-out developmental projects rather than business propositions and which had been established sufficiently long and had a sufficient density of population along them, to be properly considered as having passed the developmental stage. That having been done, an endeavour could be made to find means of representing the problem to the Grants Commission in such a manner as would not prejudice the State's approach to that body by a tremendous railway deficit.

If we take this matter out of the realm of party politics, and adopt some constructive suggestions to put before the Grants Commission along these lines, I do not think there will be the compulsion that at present exists on Governments to maintain freight rates at a level which the Grants Commission more or less insists on owing to the comparative rates in other States. I feel that a comparison of our rail freights and problems with those of the non-claimant States, which have a greater population density per mile, and, generally speaking, nothing like the same area to serve as we have, is not fair because it places us at a tremendous disadvantage.

I would like to see an endeavour made properly to represent that disadvantage to the Grants Commission. I think that any case we might put forward along those lines can be bolstered up by impressing upon the Grants Commission the efforts that have been made to improve the efficiency of our railways. In that regard I have instanced traffic management and I believe the Railways Commission is much more aware of that aspect today than it was in the past. However, we have still a long way to travel in that direction.

Those who represent country districts are also not always entirely satisfied with the manner in which the fettling gangs carry out their work. I will not deny that many difficulties arise respecting the absorption of new Australians into these gangs, but, nevertheless, I think it is an aspect of railway management that could be investigated.

I know there is a general belief that the amount of work is not done today by the same number of men as was done in the past and that belief is held not only in regard to railway work, but in all avenues of employment. Many labour saving devices have been introduced into the railways to improve the working conditions, but the volume of work performed per man per day is not so great as it used to be.

For my part, I admit that a great deal of work is necessary on the permanent way. I am not suggesting that a big stick should be wielded, but some extraordinary things have been done which have mystified the men themselves. Often when 300 sleepers are required, only 100 are supplied and then, in three months time, the same gang is back on the job to put in the remaining 200 sleepers. Perhaps the district engineer would be able to give an explanation for such action, but I am not so concerned about the explanation as I am about the lack of efficiency. However valid the explanation might be, I consider that there should be no need to make one because the necessary materials for the job should be supplied at the time.

Mr. Brady: You think there should be more mechanisation on permanent way work.

Mr. HEARMAN: I am not an authority on permanent way work, but I know that farmers have assisted to make breaks along the line in my own electorate. There are many failings in regard to permanent way work and these must be attended to in order that we may be able to say to the Grants Commission that it is getting value for the amount of money it is allocating to the State for railway work and so that we would be in a position to convince its members that they should give more consideration to the development of the railways.

To reduce rail costs and losses, every investigation should be made with a view to restricting the rail services that do not pay and have no prospect of paying because as long as they remain in operation, railway losses must increase. I refer particularly to our passenger services. I know there are no passenger services south of Bunbury because those routes are now served by road transport and that considerable economies have been effected.

I think the Railways Commission has now given up the idea of reintroducing steam passenger trains on the lines south of Bunbury. When the road service was first introduced, it was suggested that it would be only a temporary expedient because the life of the buses would be only seven years and that at the end of that period they would be replaced by steam trains. My only hope is that that will never take place.

Personally, I sincerely believe that more investigation should be made regarding the reduction of the number of steam passenger trains on the metropolitan-suburban routes. I find it hard to agree that the public is particularly anxious that these services should continue when one judges the support the people give to those services. I hope the Minister, when he introduces his diesel electric cars, will be able to provide a better service to the public, but I am inclined to think that his contention is contrary to the experiences overseas where there is a greater population density than we have and where electric trains are used.

I do not think that Perth will grow into a large metropolis with a population running into millions. I think the town-planning authorities have indicated that a population of 500,000 is sufficient for a town like Perth and therefore our transport service should be one that is sufficient to meet the need of a city of that size. In many English cities which are much larger than Perth there is a more favourable set-up for the profitable operation of these short-run passenger services. In those cities 91 per cent. of the passenger traffic is carried by road transport and if that is the trend in England

we might as well bow to the inevitable and realise that it is an economical proposition to lean more and more towards road transport.

Mr. May: You could not compare our roads with those in England.

Mr. HEARMAN: I do not think that the roads in the metropolitan area are so bad that we cannot run passenger road services over them. We are doing that now with Government buses. This session, in reply to questions that have been put to him, the Minister has indicated how cheap it is to run a modern diesel bus. Although its earning capacity might not be as great as other forms of transport, there is no question about its effectiveness. As the member for Collie knows, the road passenger service runs over much worse roads than those in the metropolitan area, especially on the South-West route. He knows that there is a road service being run successfully between Boyup Brook and Donnybrook. There is no road in the metropolitan area that is as bad as that.

I would now like to raise the question of water supplies in my electorate, which question is tied up with the railways. The Minister is well aware that this year it will cost approximately £13,000 to haul water to Bridgetown. In fact, I am sure he feels that he will be lucky if it can be done for that figure. In my opinion, it will be nearer £20,000. The proposed water supply scheme for Bridgetown is estimated to cost £130,000. I feel quite sure that if we saved the money that is now spent on the hauling of water by rail to these centres, it would provide the interest and sinking fund on the capital required for the water supply scheme at Bridgetown.

There are many towns in my electorate that have no water supply scheme. Boyup Brook and Bridgetown are the only centres that have a water supply, but at the moment the railways are obliged to haul water to them. Serious consideration should be given to what would be a relatively cheap scheme costing £26,000 for the supply of water to Donnybrook. At present we have the amazing situation of trains hauling water to Boyup Brook which is pumped into an overhead tank.

This is necessary at this juncture because at present there is no water available to the W.A.G.R. at that town. On one occasion recently they had an engine in the yard without water and before water could be put into it, representations had to be made to Mr. Pearce, the Public Works Department representative at Bridgetown to make sufficient water available to get the engine under steam again. The provision of a water supply should not present many difficulties in a district which has a sound rainfall and I am sure the Government would have quite a lot to gain, from the point of view of the railways, if water supply schemes were installed at these towns.

Undoubtedly rail traffic must increase and one of the provisions the engines must have is water. Steam traction is, of course, likely to be used in Western Australia for some considerable time. Without going into the question of whether we should use coal or oil as a fuel, it is obvious that it will be many years before we can convert our locomotives, from steam-operated units to oil-operated units.

[Mr. Moir took the Chair.]

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [5.0]: Originally I intended to speak on several subjects during this debate, but I shall now confine my remarks to only one, principally because it is of paramount interest to the State. The topic should appeal to the Premier to whom I want to address these remarks in particular, because it has a much broader base than any plank of a party platform.

The topic is that Perth should be made the chief airport of entry into Australia. It is imperative to bring this subject forward so that representations can be made by the Premier to the Commonwealth authorities in the Eastern States to bring about the transformation of Perth airport into the main airport of entry to Australia. Public enthusiasm has not been aroused on this subject. Furthermore, Cabinet Ministers in this Parliament have not given the subject the consideration that it deserves. I have put forward this view to the previous Government, and the former Premier, following on the suggestions, made representations to the Prime Minister requesting that consideration be given to make Perth the principal airport of entry.

Unfortunately that request was treated lightly. The reply was that consideration would be given, but there the matter rested. We have been fobbed off too long with feeble excuses. I endeavoured also to interest several Federal members in this subject to try to get them to bring this matter before the Federal Parliament. Unfortunately the view they put forward was only done half-heartedly. I appeal to the Premier to use his ability, talent and charm—qualities which he possesses to a marked degree—to bring before the Federal authorities the importance of making Perth the main airport of entry.

To date any attempts at representations have been cut short by the reactionary elements in the Civil Aviation Department. It is high time that people not only in this State but in the East should realise the importance of this move. With the discovery of oil in the North-West and the further impetus given to this State by the programme of industrial expansion undertaken, the importance of this topic is given greater significance, and greater efforts should be made to carry out my suggestion.

At present people coming to Western Australia from Europe or the United Kingdom travel via Singapore, Darwin and Sydney, and some time is lost in transshipping to Perth. Travellers from Perth have the choice of two routes, one by McRobertson Miller plane to Darwin and Europe, and the other to Sydney, through Darwin and Europe. This means that air travellers to and from this State lose a great deal of time. The fares would be lower if there was a more direct route. This loss of time and money seems absolutely unnecessary because aircraft can be routed from Singapore via Perth to Sydney, in which case travellers destined for Melbourne will save a few hours, but those for Sydney would lose an hour or two.

The obvious advantages that will accrue to this State by this change of route are evident, and I have expressed them on a number of occasions. As everyone knows, air transport is by far the most convenient method of transport for business executives, sea transport being far too laboured and long. Lack of enthusiasm on the part of the public and authorities to urge the recognition of Perth as the main airport of entry, will cause the loss of golden opportunities which are offering at present. We should use every endeavour within our power to bring about that recognition by the reactionary powers in the Eastern States.

Today aircraft are regularly travelling at more than 1,000 miles an hour. An airman in the United States travelled at 1,300 miles an hour a few months ago, and in today's "Daily News" it is reported that Major Charles Yeager has flown at two and a half times the speed of sound, or, as quoted in the report, 1,650 miles an hour. When the sound barrier was crashed a few years ago, that opened up a future for air travel which can only be guessed at present. With all the possibilities brought about by the development of air travel, people in this State would indeed be naive if they allow themselves to be side-tracked, and the Commonwealth continues to treat Perth as a branch airport.

People should not accept a common line of thought that Perth is already an international airport because of the existence of the fortnightly air service between Perth and South Africa. That is only a minor route. It is merely a link between two Dominions. What we should strive for is the important traffic with Europe and the United Kingdom. Without labouring the topic further, I appeal to the Premier to do his utmost to bring about this change which will be of immense benefit to this State.

Mr. Brady: What businesses would receive an impetus from the diversion of the main aerial route to Perth?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: All sections of business would receive a benefit from a change of route. A large number of people who travel by air to and from Australia have untold millions in capital behind them. By passing through Perth they would have an opportunity to see the State. At present they fly direct to the Eastern States and have no chance of inspecting the potentialities and opportunities in this State. It is only very recently that Perth has been put on the map. This was brought about by the discovery of oil. Eastern States still consider this State a land of sand and flies, and it is high time they learnt the true position. With existing air routes, travellers from this State have first to fly to the Eastern States and then, via Darwin, to Europe. By this route, they are involved in extra cost, and more time is taken up. That in itself is unfair. There is no necessity for it. Getting back to my appeal to the Premier, I hope he will use his own arts to bring about this very desirable change.

The Premier: I will do my best.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [5.16]: I was concerned this morning to read a paragraph in the paper about water restrictions in the metropolitan area. It was also said that water would be taken from Mundaring Weir to supply Mt. Yokine. The Minister started a new pump the other day, and there was an expectation that the Goldfields would get 15 per cent. more water in the coming year. I hope that the proposition to take water from Mundaring to Mt. Yokine will not mean that in the summer months we will be told that the water supply is such that there will not be sufficient for the Goldfields. We have had an assurance on several occasions that there would be no restriction on the Goldfields in the coming year. I hope that will be the case.

With the discovery of oil in the North, there is the possibility that new towns will be established, and that leads to a consideration of the naming of such towns. I disagree with their being given names like Medina, Calista, and Maniana. More appropriate names should be found. I have here a cutting from the newspaper in which reference is made to this matter, and I think the writer is pretty well on the mark. It is in the form of a letter addressed to the editor of "The West Australian," and reads as follows:—

Could some light be thrown on the origin of the names currently being foisted on to new towns and suburbs in W.A.? At Kwinana we have Medina and Calista. It is known that the slum areas of Moroccan towns are referred to as "the Medina" but the name Calista is less well known and is not even particularly euphonious.

The latest hair-raiser is Maniana, which is said to be an aboriginal word meaning "tomorrow morning" but which is obviously a variation of the Spanish word Manana (pronounced manyana) meaning tomorrow. Imagine the pride aroused in the occupants of this suburb by the name "tomorrow morning!"

Is some practical joker at work or someone with a bias against Western Australia? If not, could not more appropriately Australian names be selected?—J. JACKSON.

I agree with that letter. I have read some Australian history, and it includes stories of one of the great explorers of the early days named Leichardt. We find that he was not exactly true-blue, and claimed a lot of credit to which he was not entitled. Notwithstanding that, there are many places named after him. In Queensland there is a Leichardt River, a Leichardt Range, a Leichardt electorate, a Leichardt district rabbit board, a Leichardt dingo board. In New South Wales, there is a Leichardt electoral district, and a suburb of Leichardt; and so it goes on.

Then again, I think that more appropriate names could be given to new townships in Western Australia. There are some individuals in this State after whom we could name such places. We could call a place Abbottsville, after the member for Mr. Lawley; and we could commemorate the late George Miles with the name Milestone, or something of that description.

The Premier: What about Wildville?

Mr. McCULLOCH: That would be quite all right; it would be very appropriate. We are opening up the country, and it looks as though new towns will be established in the North-West. We should name them after prominent individuals who have worked in the interests of the State. For instance, there is Dr. Raggart of the C.S.I.R.O.

Mr. Bovell: We could rename City Beach as McCulloch's Bus.

Mr. McCULLOCH: All jokes aside, there are a lot of prominent people after whom new townships could be named. I turn now to the matter of the winning bets tax. When the Bill to impose that tax was being discussed in this Chamber, I mentioned that I thought it was a bad proposition for country racing clubs, and my prediction has come true. I have here a cutting from the "Kalgoorlie Miner," of the 28th October, carrying a heading, "Nearly £3,000 in Winning Bets Tax." The article reads as follows:—

The taxation levied on racing in this State is proving a crippling burden both to the clubs and to the paying public on whose support the clubs depend for their survival.

From the opening of the 1953 goldfields racing season on April 6 until the latest meeting last Saturday the local club paid to the Government £6,102 4s. 6d. in taxation, representing £2,944 18s. 4d. in winning bets tax and the remainder in totalisator tax, stamp duty, entertainment tax, employees' group tax and payroll tax.

In all, since 1905, the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs (now amalgamated as the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club) have paid £228,860 4s. 7d. in taxation—a staggering sum when it is considered that during that time racing on the goldfields has merely struggled through from season to season and has never been able to get far enough in front to establish reserve funds to tide over the hard times.

The details of this huge sum paid in taxation are:—

Entertainment tax (introduced in 1917), £38,964 9s. 6d.; totalisator tax and stamp duty (introduced in 1905), £186,950 16s. 9d.; and betting tax (introduced this year), £2,944 18s. 4d.

The only redeeming feature of the taxation from the point of view of the club is that it receives back from the State Government 25 per cent. of the winning bets tax collected on the course, to be used in the furtherance of racing and the provision of amenities for the public.

But this is a doubtful benefit when it is realised that this iniquitous tax can only have the effect of driving people from the course to bet with starting price operators where they have no tax to pay.

I still think that the winning bets tax has done a lot of harm, as I said it would, when the Bill was being discussed. The sooner it is removed from country race clubs, the sooner the position of racing in the country will be improved.

I would like to compliment the police of this State on the expeditious way they trace stolen motor-vehicles. At 12 o'clock last night I reported to the central police station that a car belonging to me had been stolen. At five minutes to 4 this morning the sergeant told me the car had been located, and wanted to know what he should do about it. He said, "There is some of it left." I said, "If there is still a bit of it left, what do you propose?" He replied, "We can tow it in." I said, "So long as it has wheels, that is a good suggestion." I have the highest regard for the expeditious way in which that car was located. Some people say the police only stand up against lamp-posts or lean against walls, and go around with their eyes shut; but I think a very good bit of work was done on my behalf.

I lost a lot of the car. Amongst the things removed were the carburettor, the fuel pump, and the spare tyres. Anything that was movable was taken away. I think the time has long passed when people should be allowed to cut up other people's cars and damage them considerably, and be fined only £10 or £20. I was told that mine was not an isolated case, but that this sort of thing has been going on for some time. I understand that what was taken from my car could easily be sold for as much as £100. If the person concerned were fined £50, he would still be making a good profit for a night's work.

Instead of fines being imposed for this kind of offence, there should be a term of imprisonment. There are offences for which men do not get the option, but are sent to gaol. We should get away from the idea that men should not be put in prison because it is a shame so to degrade them. I think such people deserve severe sentences. Last night we passed a Bill relating to traffic offences and providing for penalties for first, second, and third offences. There should not be a second chance for a man who has been convicted of drunken driving or stealing parts from cars. If I broke into somebody's house and burgled to the extent of £200 or £300, I could be imprisoned for three years; but individuals who are committing the offence of which I have been speaking, are let off with a fine of £20.

I hope, as I have suggested, that consideration will be given to removing the betting tax from country race clubs. In addition, if further towns are opened up in the north country I trust that instead of high-falutin names being used, more appropriate ones will be found. I also hope that the proposition with regard to the goldfields water supply will be adhered to as I would be afraid to go back to Kalgoorlie if restrictions were again imposed.

MR. HILL (Albany) [5.31]: I regret that the Estimates have come on so late in the session. I have heard it said that there are three "actions"—legislation, organisation and administration, and of the three I think that administration is the most important. We have dealt with a lot of legislation during this session but unfortunately we have not time to attend to administration.

When introducing the Estimates, the Premier supplied us with his financial statement, and when one studies it, one should get a nasty headache. Our so-called loan assets are really a liability of £153,000,000 and they show a loss of £10,500,000. Of that loss, £7,437,000 is due to our transport system. The way in which some of these calculations are made is quite remarkable. The other day I asked the Premier these questions—

(1) Has he noted that Return No. II presented with the Estimates shows—

(a) Fremantle harbour surpluses, £73,693, and

(b) Bunbury harbour deficiencies, £90,627?

(2) Did he, when attending the recent South-West conference, draw attention to the rapid and serious deterioration in the finances of the Port of Bunbury?

(3) Did the South-West conference suggest means to improve the financial position of the Bunbury Harbour Board?

(4) Is it the Government's intention to increase charges at Fremantle to help pay for the losses of the out-ports?

When I asked the first question I set a bait for the Premier, and he gave the reply I expected.

Mr. J. Hegney: Did he fall for it?

Mr. HILL: Yes. The Premier's answers were as follows:—

(1) Yes. There was also a deficiency of £51,493 in connection with the Albany harbour.

(2), (3) and (4) No.

I wonder why it is that Albany gets it in the neck whenever there is a chance. Last year return No. 11 showed the following figures:—

Bunbury Harbour Board	£39,540
Bunbury Other	£13,307
Albany	£35,438

The Auditor General's report shows that the Bunbury harbour lost £68,000 whereas the loss shown in return No. 11 is £41,847. The Albany Harbour Board shows a loss of only £7,780. Return No. 11 shows that Albany has a loan liability of £1,369,317.

I wonder when this liability started. I think I would be correct in saying that the first amount charged was in 1860 or thereabouts. In 1872, the people of Albany complained because the revenue from the harbour was greater than the expenditure in the whole district. Up until 1914, the Treasury must have received hundreds of thousands of pounds from the harbour but had not used any of it to improve the harbour or to pay off the loan liability. In that amount, a sum of about £2,000 was absolutely wasted about 40 years ago by the P.W.D., on the Kalgan River above my property. The biggest proportion of the amount has been brought about through the present work, and up to date the Albany Harbour Board has not been able to obtain any revenue from the sum expended.

I refer to the fact that I have often, in this Parliament, advocated sound transport administration. We are just bungling along, and the Government today—it has been the same for years—is like an army that has gone into action without a general staff, and so has suffered a debacle. We have no efficient administration.

In this regard, I put forward the following suggestion as a basis for discussion—this is based very largely on the recommendation of the Commonwealth Transport Committee of 1929. I suggest that the transport administration for the State be as follows:—

All transport under the one Minister who would be the ministerial head of the Department of Transport.

The permanent head of the department to be the commissioner or director of transport.

The function of the department would be to study continually, and to administer, all transport activities with the object of providing the State with the most efficient and economical system possible.

A transport council to meet when required. The personnel of this council would be the heads of our various transport activities and, perhaps, representatives of commercial interests, primary producers and trade unions.

The functions of the council would be to—

- (i) consider all matters affecting more than one form of transport;
- (ii) construction or extension of any railway line;
- (iii) closing of any existing railway line;
- (iv) new developmental road construction programme;
- (v) development of any new harbours and consideration of all major harbour works.

The council would, as far as transport activities are concerned, take the place of the Standing Public Works Committee in South Australia.

I make this suggestion so that all new transport activities would be dealt with on their merits and not as a matter of party politics.

When the transport council commenced operation, one of the first matters it would have to consider would be a sound port policy for the State. Unfortunately there is no prospect of this transport commission or department coming into operation, so it is our responsibility to see that we have a sound transport policy. One of the great authorities on transport was the late Sir David Owen who, when general manager of the Port of London Authority, was appointed president of the Institute of Transport, and in his presidential address he said—

A port is not in itself a means of conveyance or of transport, but is only a facility for the actual instruments of transport. A port, in order to be effective, must adapt itself to the changing means of transport.

Like all transport experts, he recommended fewer ports. In 1927, Mr. Bruce, the then Prime Minister of Australia, brought Sir George Buchanan out here to report on transport with special reference to port and harbour facilities. Sir George Buchanan said—

Ports are the medium or clearing houses between sea and land transport. On their proper location and efficiency, the success of the transport system as a whole greatly depends.

At page 16, paragraph 38 of the report, Sir George Buchanan referred to the fact that a few self-contained ports are to be preferred to numerous small ports. Paragraph 40 is worth reading—

The promoters of a small port may think that they can provide, at the expense of some big neighbour, a trade outlet and entry nearer to the producing and consuming areas and so embark on an equipment scheme, but trade is like a river: having found a channel it follows that channel, and refuses to be diverted easily. The work that a small port does with great effort and at great expense is done by a big port in its stride, and usually at less expense, and the big port probably has advantages in the shape of better landing and shipping facilities, quicker despatch, good storage, accommodation, etc., which to a certain extent compensate for the longer railway haulage.

This report was made in 1927.

Sir George Buchanan was continually attacked in this Chamber because when he came out here to report upon our ports he did his job without fear or favour. Queensland is an example of the position in regard to small ports. I spent one day in Queensland, so I do not know all about that State, but coming back from Brisbane I travelled with a representative of Queensland in the Federal Parliament, and he said, "Our trouble is that we have too many ports. Gladstone will gradually swallow Rockhampton. It would be better if they realised that fact today and closed Rockhampton."

Mr. J. Hegney: There is no port at Rockhampton.

Mr. HILL: Port Alma is more or less the seaport.

Mr. Hearman: Esperance will swallow up Albany.

Mr. HILL: It is rather pathetic to hear some of the interjections made when I am speaking! A year or two after I returned from my visit to Queensland the Commonwealth Director of Rail Transport was in this House and I said to him, "How is the Rockhampton-Gladstone controversy getting on?" He said, "The trouble with Gladstone is that it is too close to Bris-

bane. It is only 300 miles away." The Federal Transport Committee of 1929 had this to say—

Main ports at capital cities show an annual profit of about £500,000, most of which enhances State revenues. Minor ports on the mainland States make an annual loss of about £490,000 which is met from State revenues. About 80 per cent. of the overseas trade is carried out at the main ports, and thus overseas trade is at present being taxed to some extent to meet the losses incurred at minor ports.

Many minor ports have, for a lengthy period, shown annual losses, failing to earn even their working costs. Other outports are losing trade on account of motor transport concentrating trade at larger ports.

The report goes on—

Losses at minor ports should be met from State revenue, and annual losses now incurred be reduced by closing certain ports, and by rail and road transport concentrating the seaborne trade at other more suitable ports.

Mr. Yates: Those losses have increased since then.

Mr. HILL: Yes, particularly in this State. The Commonwealth Grants Commission, in its Eighth Report (1941) had this to say in paragraph 178—

The expenditure out of loan funds on outer harbours in Western Australia is large and it does not appear to us that a sufficient attempt is made to get an adequate return from the users in the districts served. If the traffic will not stand the cost, there is no reason for expenditure on harbours unless it is essential for the industry of the district in which case the industry should be charged through a special rate. This policy has been tried in other parts of Australia, and insistence upon it has on occasions led the people of a district to decide that the expenditure on a harbour was not really necessary for their interests. A multiplication of harbours is uneconomic. It is true that in Western Australia the port of Fremantle returns a large profit, but this does not make up for the losses on the other ports. In any case the profit of Fremantle is no excuse for an unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of harbour development. A large expenditure has been made on the Bunbury Harbour, which is only about 100 miles from Perth, and it is doubtful whether it has succeeded in overcoming the disadvantages of the port.

What is the opinion of our present Government? A few weeks ago I asked the Premier the following questions:—

- (1) Is the Government desirous of economising wherever possible?
- (2) Does he agree with the Commonwealth Grants Commission and every shipping witness that gave evidence before the Outports Royal Commission that a multiplicity of ports is uneconomic?
- (3) Is he aware that shipping companies are demanding fewer ports?
- (4) Has the Government ever considered effecting economies by carrying out recommendation (b) of section 18 of the report of the Commonwealth Transport Committee, 1929, to reduce annual losses incurred by outports by closing certain ports and concentrating overseas trade at other more suitable ports?

The Premier lumped all the questions altogether and replies:—

- (1), (2), (3) and (4) The Government policy is to have a well balanced policy of harbour development and not necessarily development of one country port at the expense of another country port, or development of the city port at the expense of country ports.

Now let us get down to tinctacks. Who is right? Is the Grants Commission right when it says we have an unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of port development, or have we, as the Premier claims, a well-balanced policy of harbour development and not necessarily the development of one country port at the expense of another country port? We are all very familiar with the map of Western Australia.

The South West Land Division extends from 100 miles north of Geraldton to 100 miles east of Esperance and the four ports—Geraldton, Fremantle, Albany and Esperance—are almost equally spaced. Nature not only provided the State's finest harbour at Albany, but she also made easy grades up to Merredin and Southern Cross. She provided no harbours on the western coast, and she advised politicians to keep away from that coast by putting a range of hills in the way.

In 1923 I had the pleasure of entertaining at my home nearly all the members of the Commonwealth Navigation Act Royal Commission. Two members, Messrs. McHugh and Yates, were away, and I met Mr. Anstey who was one of the Labour party members on the commission. Messrs Yates and Anstey and Senator McHugh reported on the decline of Albany as a port, and this is what they said:—

The Government of Western Australia spent large sums improving the port of Bunbury. It ran lateral lines into that port from the Albany-Perth main trunk railway. These lines tapped districts previously exporting products and receiving requirements

through Albany. Thousands of tons of primary products found an outlet via Bunbury, and Bunbury progressed. Albany correspondingly declined.

Mr. Bovell: You know why that is?

Mr. HILL: Because of the railway system.

Mr. Bovell: In the area that I represent, and in the Bunbury district, the produce is there to enable us to use the ports.

Mr. HILL: What a wonderful remark! I will deal with that later. This report continues:—

Its local coasting inside the State trade has declined 70 per cent. That decline was continuous for years prior to the Act, and it is a trade outside the Act.

I will never forget my first visit to Bunbury; I travelled via Fremantle. When I was a boy, I remember saying at one time, "Nature made Albany and Nature is not going to see Albany go back."

In previous speeches I have referred to the suitability of Albany as a naval base and as I passed over the Fremantle bridge I saw the white elephant of the Fremantle dock, abandoned after £249,000 had been spent on it. I passed the Henderson naval base, abandoned after £1,000,000 had been expended and if one went to Cockburn Sound today, one would see the Curtin naval base, another white elephant. When I arrived at Bunbury I was shown around the port by the late Captain Douglas.

Mr. Heal: What did you think of it?

Mr. HILL: The hon. member might think I am prejudiced, but I will not give him my opinion.

Mr. Bovell: Do not make a mistake!

Mr. HILL: On the 27th August I asked the Minister for Transport the following question:—

Is it the intention of the Government to give serious consideration to the report of the Outports Royal Commission?

The answer was "Yes." As far as Albany is concerned, the recommendations of that Royal Commission have been adopted. I might mention that the present Minister for Railways and the present Minister for Agriculture and Mr. Triat, the then member for Mt. Magnet, the late Mr. F. E. S. Willmott, and myself, were members of that Royal Commission. I do not claim that the recommendations were 100 per cent. correct, but we tried to do our job without fear or favour. One of the members of the commission, when we were considering our evidence, suggested that we should wipe out Bunbury as a port, but I was not prepared to go as far as that.

Mr. Yates: Dig a hole and bury it.

Mr. HILL: This is not a laughing matter, as members will see when I quote a few more figures. Members who are inclined to laugh would do better if they studied the report.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. Hegney: How could you wipe out Bunbury?

Mr. HILL: I have another report here—the report of the Bunbury Harbour Board, dated the 30th June, 1953. When it was suggested that we should wipe out Bunbury as a port, I was not prepared to go that far at that time. But if we had had the Tydeman report and the latest report of the Bunbury Harbour Board at that stage, we would have had no alternative but to recommend giving up the costly fight against Nature which is taking place down there. Largely on my suggestion we recommended that Colonel Tydeman be asked to report. Firstly, I would like to mention that we reported against the construction of a deep water berth at Bunbury, which is now estimated to cost £600,000.

The Premier: What about the revenue from Busselton?

Mr. HILL: We cannot get any revenue from Bunbury now. As I said, we reported against that jetty and a few weeks ago I asked the Minister for Works a question and he said that large quantities of primary products will be exported when the jetty is completed. Not one extra shipload of primary production will be exported when the jetty is completed. The annual cost of the jetty will be £28,000, and that will be an increased loss on the port of Bunbury.

The Mayor of Bunbury was giving evidence, and the representatives of the Bunbury Harbour Board said that if they had a 32ft. berth at Bunbury they would be able to ship 1,000 tons of butter from that port. I looked at the mayor and I said, "Do you know any of the ships by name?" He replied, "Quite a lot of them," and I said, "I have a list of ships that lifted butter at Fremantle in 1939. I will not read them all because there are too many."

Then I read out those that took over 1,000 boxes of butter and I said, "Mr. Payne, how many of those ships would call at Bunbury if that jetty were completed?" He said, "None; they are all mail boats." One of the members of the Bunbury Harbour Board said that the shipping companies had guaranteed to call if they could collect 500 tons of butter. I looked at him and said, "Can you see people shipping butter from Bunbury when they only get two shiploads a year and there are two shiploads a week leaving Fremantle?" He said "No," and laughed.

I have had 43 years in the fruit export business, and if I were a grower at Donnybrook I would take the same stand as "The

"West Australian" took a few years ago when a person wrote in and signed his name "George." He pointed out that Fremantle was the port for the South-West. This year over 800,000 cases of fruit were shipped from Fremantle, and 250,000 from Albany. We had nine ships call there, five of which could have called at Bunbury and of the 66 ships that loaded fruit at Fremantle 40 could have called at Bunbury; but not one did so. I agree with what Sir George Buchanan said: "The advantages of a big port compensate for a certain amount of extra railage."

Mr. Yates: What good have all these reports done in the past?

Mr. HILL: They could have saved the Government hundreds of thousands of pounds if the Government had taken advantage of them.

Mr. Yates: They could have done so, but did not; so what is the good of the reports?

Mr. HILL: The people of South Perth are paying big prices today because of the three political parties all chasing Bunbury votes.

Mr. J. Hegney: They are also after Albany votes too.

Mr. HILL: I know, but what is the difference between Albany and Bunbury? When the work is completed at Albany, it will be one of the best ports in Australia. But what has been the position at Bunbury? Since the present Premier started his election campaign in 1946, there has been a constant fight against the silting problem at the port of Bunbury. That is only another round in the game.

We were told by Mr. Dumas, at the Outports Royal Commission, that an expenditure of £500,000 would stop the silting at that port. I did not like the proposal, because I thought that Colonel Tydeman would have recommended that they put a gap in the breakwater. I still think that if 30 or 20 years ago that gap had been put in the breakwater, Bunbury would have been a better port today.

Up to date, £580,000 has been spent in trying to stop the silting at Bunbury, and since 1946, £212,000 has been spent on dredging maintenance. According to the Bunbury Harbour Board report, last year £40,000 was spent, and, in reply to a question of mine, the Minister for Works said this money was used to deal with the accumulated river silting. When I read the report the other day I got a bit of a shock. A sum of £40,000 was spent on dredging maintenance last year, and 13,880 yards of material were dredged. Colonel Tydeman, in his report, said that in the past it had cost 2s. a yard to dredge material from Bunbury harbour. He estimates a cost of 5s. a yard for future dredging, so it would cost £3 a yard as £40,000 was spent on shifting 13,880 yards.

Of course the Bunbury Harbour Board tells us that half of that £40,000 was spent on rent for the dredge and the annual overhaul of it. The dredge was working for only six months of the year, and on that basis the cost would work out at almost 30s. a yard for the removal of the material. I think I am correct in saying that it is accumulated river silt, and it is difficult to deal with it, although it may be cleaned up in a few years' time. The estimate for the work this year is £30,000.

Mr. Yates: Do you have these troubles at Albany?

Mr. HILL: No, it is one of the few harbours in the world that has no silting problems.

Mr. Bovell: We do not have any at Busselton.

Mr. HILL: The hon. member does not have a harbour at Busselton. That is only a place for joyrides.

Mr. Bovell: It is strange that we handle more ships than they do at Albany.

Mr. HILL: Do you! The hon. member interjected just now, and said that most of the goods are produced in the South-West. We will get down to facts. How has Bunbury progressed over recent years? There have been two major mistakes made at Bunbury—the first was that the breakwater should not have been built out from the shore, and the second mistake was to endeavour to make a timber port into a general port. Last year the loss was £81,000, although it was a record year as far as cargo was concerned. A total of 73 ships called at the port, so that means that for every ship that went into Bunbury the poor old taxpayers had to subsidise it to the tune of £1,100.

Mr. Bovell: How many ships went into Albany?

Mr. HILL: Wait a minute! They had to spend about £550 on dredging maintenance for every ship, and the hon. member says, "Look at the trade at Albany." Look at the treatment that Albany has received! From 1924 until 1946, when the McLarty-Watts Government came into power, out of the £4,000,000 spent on the ports of Western Australia, Albany received £175. In 1929 one of the most costly mistakes that was ever known in Western Australia was made by the then Minister for Railways, Hon. J. C. Willcock. The question as to whether the super works should go to Bunbury or Albany was under consideration. Members can turn up the copies of "The West Australian" of the 25th April, 1929, and they will see that Mr. Willcock announced that the Government had very proudly asked for the works to be at Bunbury.

Mr. Bovell: That is where the production is coming from.

Mr. HILL: Mr. Willcock said he wanted the works there to provide back-loading for the wheat trucks. It was entirely the wrong place to have established the works with a view to supplying the back-loading, because 90 per cent. of the trucks that came to Albany returned empty, and we had 300 odd empty trucks per day going from the metropolitan area to the South-West. The report of the Bunbury Harbour Board tells us that the accumulated loss up to date is £842,000.

Mr. Yates: What was the loss on the Albany harbour last year?

Mr. HILL: The figures are not available.

The Premier: Just as well.

Mr. HILL: The year before last a profit of £5,000 was shown. If we could obtain the figures in relation to the establishment of the works at Picton Junction instead of Albany, it would probably be seen that it cost the State £1,500,000. Further we have the question of wheat. The Government spent £70,000 on putting a "Heath Robinson" terminal at Bunbury. Some 13,000 tons of grain were shipped from Bunbury this year. I guarantee it costs the railways £20,000 more to take that wheat to Bunbury than what it would have cost to have taken it to Albany.

Railway men have said to me, "It would pay us to send the wheat to Albany in spite of the fact that there is no back-loading, because of the quicker turnaround of the trucks". I will not forget the day when I first approached Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. with a view to a terminal being established at Albany. It was Mr. Braine who said that it would be a great gain to C.B.H. if it used Albany instead of Bunbury. I told the people of the traffic manager's office that C.B.H. was likely to have a terminal at Albany. They said it was good news and it would mean a lot to them. At Bunbury we have only three commodities for which the port is used, namely, phosphatic rock, wheat and timber.

It is the duty of this Government to carefully consider the facts in the interests of the State, and to stop carrying out a very costly and ever losing fight against Nature at Bunbury. Two and a half years ago the member for Bunbury—whom we all respect—was trying to do a job. He convened a conference, backed up by the Associated Chamber of Commerce, in order to see who was interested in getting shipping to Bunbury. I did not see the newspaper report because it was about the time that there was likely to be a by-election for Albany. Before I came out of hospital two members of the Phosphate Commission saw me and one of them said that he had attended that conference representing the super company. The question was put as to who was interested in getting ships to go to Bunbury. The super

men said, "We are," and not another soul was interested in using Bunbury as a port.

I would like to draw the Premier's attention to the fact that today there are about 300 trucks going empty from the metropolitan area to the South-West; they are not earning a penny. I should not be surprised if it would not be a better proposition for the railways to haul the phosphatic rock from Fremantle to Picton Junction instead of from Bunbury to Picton Junction, because it would go down in the trucks which today are running empty. I have made a careful study of the port problems and I can see no future for Bunbury. If I were the member for Bunbury, I would be decidedly up against the people of Albany, who are advocating a flat rate for power and water.

Any attempt to develop industry at Bunbury will have my support. I appeal to the Minister not to continue slinging this £600,000 away on a jetty; he should give it to people who want it for the establishment of industries. Because we have a transit shed at Albany, the Bunbury Harbour Board decided that they should have one, but they have not gone on with it. If the Minister desires to help Bunbury, then let him give that money to the Bunbury Golf Club and the bowling club!

Mr. Bovell: Tell us some of the advantages of Albany.

Mr. HILL: Albany might show a big loss, but we have big companies interested in establishing themselves there. Representatives of the shipping companies have come to me and said, "We want to build up a trade with Albany; we do not want Bunbury on our minds because it is too close to Fremantle and is always silting up." A representative of an Australian shipping company recently said to me, "When you get that berth at Albany, try to arrange to bring the timber from the South-West to Albany by motor truck." He said, "We are fed up with the Railway Department." Let us take the Shell Oil Company as an example. That company wanted ten acres of reclaimed land at Albany to do work that cost just over £250,000.

Other companies also applied for land and all told 33 acres were applied for. Westralian Farmers, Sandovers, Goode Durrants and several other distributing firms are starting branches at Albany, which is the centre for the southern end of the State. They will show a loss when the port is completed, but that loss will only be a fraction of what the railways will save by hauling wheat and super to and from Albany.

I might explain that I have taken a very close interest in Cockburn Sound since 1910. The opening up of Cockburn Sound is a very big gamble. It is a gamble I support, because the stakes are so high.

Some years ago an engineer said to me, "I have had 25 years' experience as an engineer at Fremantle, and when I heard they were going to make a naval base at Cockburn Sound I thought they would regret that they had ever started it. Nature put the banks there and will keep them there. I do not hold such a pessimistic view. I think there will be a certain amount of dredging to be done at Cockburn Sound, and I fancy it will be a full-time job for the "Sir James Mitchell" which is just the type of dredge for it.

Over the years as shipping goes through the channel there, I should say there will be a tendency to draw sand into the channel and that will have to be removed. The dredging maintenance will help to widen out that development. I was interested in what the Minister for Works said when discussing the future extensions at Fremantle and Cockburn Sound. I am only an amateur; I do not claim to be an expert, but I would draw the attention of the Government to the fact that when engineers start making a harbour, they never know what they are up against.

While the Minister was speaking, I was particularly struck with the fact that the view of Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane coincided almost exactly with what I had considered as a better proposition for Fremantle and Cockburn Sound. I am afraid there may be trouble in building the wharves at Cockburn Sound. The engineers realise that fact. I am very glad to see the oil refinery established in Western Australia instead of in the Eastern States. I visualise a very big future for this State.

Up north oil has been discovered and Nature has been very generous to Western Australia. Let us work in with Nature and, to use the words of the first chairman of the Port of New York Authorities, let us "apply modern science, experience and invention to natural advantages." Albany is first and foremost a harbour. Bunbury has coal and water—two advantages we have not got. Cockburn Sound is a wonderful sheet of water very suitable for supplying the needs of big industrial undertakings. Now, as I have said, up north we have oil. We have a great State; let us plan not for the next election, but for the next generation.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [6.11]: In speaking to the Estimates, I would like to direct my remarks mainly to the lack of loan funds for the work I consider necessary for the development of the State; particularly in my electorate. Before doing so, I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to a matter that is agitating the people of Geraldton at the present time. I refer to the exclusion of Geraldton from the itinerary to be followed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II when she visits Western Australia next year.

We all know that the itinerary was drawn up originally for His late Majesty King George VI, and we understand that that programme is being adhered to.

There has been quite a lot of argument, with telegrams and letters going back and forth between the State Director and the Federal Director in connection with this matter. The Federal Director said that Geraldton could have been included in the itinerary had the State Director so desired. On the other hand, the State Director says that if the Federal Director would grant another day Geraldton could be included. Seeing that Fremantle will be the last port of call for Her Majesty's yacht, I feel it could quite easily be arranged for Geraldton to be included in such a visit.

It would take about five hours flying and it would meet the desires of a lot of people drawn from a very large district. I understand that people in the Northampton, and Morawa area, people down on the Wongan and the Midland lines, and even those represented by the member for Murchison are interested in such a visit, because they find it is impossible for them to travel to the metropolitan area with their children who, naturally, desire to see Her Majesty. Road boards in various districts have been bringing pressure to bear on the Mayor of Geraldton asking him to call a meeting to go into the pros and cons of the matter in order to see if something cannot be done, even at this late stage, to alter the decision of the people in power and to get them to include Geraldton among centres to be visited by Her Majesty.

I am informed it would take about four hours by plane. The Geraldton aerodrome, or even the grounds in Geraldton could be used for the large number of people who will visit the town from the districts I have already mentioned. I do believe that if a thorough investigation were made into these facts, even at this late stage we could have Geraldton included in Her Majesty's itinerary.

Referring to the question of loan funds, I think the most important necessity in this State—even allowing for the finding of oil at Exmouth Gulf recently—is the matter of water. It is a job that the Government should tackle. I feel it should be continually pressing the Federal Government to make further loan funds available to help augment our country water supplies. I know the Government has done a good deal in this direction and I commend it for the action it has taken. The water position is very acute in Geraldton. Even in October the people were placed under water restrictions and I feel sure members will agree that that is very tough. After the heavy winter we had, our reservoir was full and yet we cannot get enough water.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. SEWELL: I was saying that water is one of the most important factors in the development of this or any other State, and I hope that the Government will see its way clear to continue with a vigorous policy of water conservation. I also referred to the fact that we in Geraldton have been on water restrictions since October, which is very bad indeed. We have had an assurance from the Minister for Water Supplies that a new holding tank is to be provided in Geraldton to serve the western portion of the town, and we shall be very pleased to hear in the near future that the Government has planned to continue that scheme. A new holding tank is vital. At present residents at the west end of the town have a very poor pressure, and they are prohibited from watering lawns and gardens during any part of the day except between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. To try to grow lawns and gardens in Geraldton under such restrictions is almost impossible.

The Government is embarking upon a policy of rehabilitation of the railways. We are fortunate in having the line re-laid from Walkaway to Narngulu in order to cater for the heavy loads that will be hauled when the diesel engines arrive. We in the North are very keen to see the arrival of those engines, because we believe they will do much towards putting the Railway Department on a proper footing and providing the people in the back country with a good service, which we do not receive at present.

There are quite a lot of other matters affecting my district that could be mentioned. There is the mining industry; then there are improvements to the harbour that will have to be made. Our main roads will need attention; the road from Northampton to Carnarvon will have to be made an all-weather road having in view the expansion of our northern areas by the discovery of oil at Exmouth Gulf, apart from anything else in the way of expansion at Carnarvon. I have no doubt that some of the items I have mentioned will be discussed in more detail when the departmental votes are being considered and the respective Ministers will be able to deal with them.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [7.35]: Since the Treasurer introduced his Estimates, a great change has come over the North-West—a change of importance to both the State and the Commonwealth. Doubtless the State will receive far more financial benefit from the discovery of oil at Exmouth Gulf than will the Commonwealth, but on the whole the finding of oil there will have the effect of bringing Australia to the forefront, not only as a nation, but also as a great power.

Over the last few years, it has been very interesting to note the attitude of the several Ministers towards the North-West

and even of members in this Parliament and particularly one in another place. It is not so very long since, after a considerable amount of persuasion, the Federal Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, Mr. McEwen, made a trip through the North. He listened to all that anyone had to say and gave all a sympathetic hearing, but on his return to Canberra, he sent back a very definite "No" to every plea submitted to him.

Since the discovery of oil, we have found the Federal Minister for National Development, Senator Spooner, rushing here with all haste.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You do not object to that, do you?

MR. NORTON: Not in the least, but he has rushed here hoping to get something, whereas he would not have deigned to spend a penny to assist our people to develop the North.

Mr. Sewell: Hear, hear!

MR. NORTON: Senator Spooner has been investigating, quizzing, and rushing into the Press on matters that pertain only to this State and the department of the Minister for Mines. He was given almost headlines on the front page just for reiterating those things that our Minister had said previously. These Federal people are looking to see what they can get from us—the Cinderella State, the State they would not help.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: We have had our fair cut from them.

MR. NORTON: We have not; otherwise they would be assisting us with the development of Kwinana.

The Minister for Lands: We have not had a fair cut from them. It is of no use arguing that we have.

MR. NORTON: The discovery of oil is a development that will need to be carefully watched. As the member for Boulder stated in his speech last night, it is a matter that needs a lot of studying, and I agree with him in his statement that a study should be made and made quickly in order that we may obtain the best possible results for our State from the finding of this valuable substance in the North. I thoroughly agree that the Minister for Mines and his senior executive officer should pay a visit, not only to Alberta, but also to other parts of the world with a view to familiarising themselves with the best methods pertaining to the development of such a field.

MR. HUTCHINSON: Do they not wish to go?

MR. NORTON: I understand that the Minister has not yet been asked, but I am expressing the hope that he will go. One thing we must be careful to avoid and that is the giving away of our oil as our iron-ore has been given away.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: By a Labour Government for 3d. per ton royalty.

Mr. NORTON: The iron-ore has been absolutely given away and what is still worse, it has been given away for transport to the Eastern States.

Hon. L. Thorn: Better that than sending it to Japan.

Mr. NORTON: Let us treat our own oil in our own State. Let us have more refineries and send away the refined product rather than the crude. Let us develop our own industries and export overseas the finished products, instead of importing them, as we have been doing, from other countries.

Much money will have to be spent, particularly in my electorate, if, as I believe is quite possible, oil will be produced in large quantities. It will be necessary to develop roads, as roads are the only means by which transport can serve that vast area. The nearest town to the point where oil has been discovered is Carnarvon, which is 250 miles distant. Carnarvon, in turn, is 270 miles from Northampton, so members will realise that there is a very large stretch of road upon which much money will have to be spent. It will be of no use providing a fair-weather road; we must have one that may be traversed irrespective of the season or the weather conditions. There is only one way in which to meet this need and that is by constructing a road which can be sealed against all contingencies.

In addition to roads, we shall need water supplies as water throughout the North, except in a few places, is sparse. Carnarvon has a certain amount of water, but by no means sufficient to pipe through the 250 miles to Exmouth Gulf. It will therefore be necessary to have a hydraulic survey made, not only of Carnarvon, but of all the North, because these developments in oil will gradually be extended further and further afield. The geologists tell us that the present oil discovery could extend 300 miles south of Rough Range.

Kwinana is going to prove of great value to the State. True it is costing a lot of money, but it will be of value inasmuch as it will encourage the establishment of various industries that will be of even greater value now that oil has been found. However, money spent at Kwinana will show very little return as compared with what would have been realised had an equivalent amount been spent in the North. Therefore I appeal to the Treasurer to give the North far greater consideration than it has received in the past and make money available for all those works in the way of roads and other necessities requisite for development there and in order that development may take place as it has been encouraged at

Kwinana. The development at Kwinana could have taken place at less cost than is being paid today.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: How do you know?

Mr. NORTON: That interjection is rather interesting. When we visited Kwinana earlier in the year, we were given by a representative of the company a blackboard lecture and a description of the diagrams and plans exhibited on the wall. The representative of the company apologised that they were not quite correct and told us—other members will bear me out in this—"that these plans were prepared for Kwinana for two years and it has been necessary to make slight alterations." Therefore that company had been prepared to come to Western Australia before the Government negotiations were started.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I do not believe it.

Mr. Lawrence: That is a fact.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: There was no intention of the company's coming here until it was approached.

Mr. NORTON: In the past, the North-West has been practically a forgotten area, but as I have mentioned on previous occasions, it was not forgotten when efforts were made to give it away. I am now wondering whether those who suggested giving the North-West back to the Commonwealth are still of the same opinion. It is interesting to recall what the North-West has subscribed to this State and its economy. When a Commonwealth loan is being floated one sees large advertisements in "The West Australian" every day, calling on people to subscribe in order that schools, hospitals, roads and other facilities may be provided, but we must not forget that taxation also helps in this direction.

In the last loan quotas were given to 141 districts, of which 61 filled their allotted amounts, while 41 subscribed less than £1 per head. Carnarvon subscribed £81,600, or £23 7s. 6d. per capita. Albany, on the other hand, which over the last four years has had just on £2,000,000 spent on public works—apart from housing—subscribed only £5 19s. 6d. per head. Admittedly, that centre is an ideal holiday resort and a good home for retired farmers and so on. It has a pretty harbour but of what use is it when only a couple of bombs would be required to close up the harbour and put out of action any ships that might be in it.

Mr. Nalder: You are quoting only one loan.

Mr. NORTON: I could quote others from the bulletin issued by Mr. Shillikin. The exact figure subscribed by Albany was £50,800. I appeal to the Premier, when allocating loan funds, to ascertain the areas that subscribed the money. In my elec-

torate there are four road boards and one municipality and subscriptions that made up the £80,000 odd which I mentioned came from only two road board areas. The others bank elsewhere.

Although the money is earned in my electorate, most of it is credited to Perth, as far as the loans are concerned, because many of those people bank or live here. I would also remind the Treasurer of the high total of taxation returned from my electorate, and would point out that, together with the loan money subscribed, it should entitle that area to a far better deal than it has received in the past.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You are dealing with Revenue Estimates now, not the Loan Estimates.

Mr. NORTON: I am dealing with both, and I submit that the money should be spent in the areas that subscribe it. Before coming here, I heard that if one were to get anything done, one had to live south of the East-West railway. A bit later I heard that to get anything done one must live in the area to the south of a line running east and west through Fremantle. Since examining the Estimates I can realise why people say that sort of thing, especially on seeing that Albany, which is well to the south, had £1,761,295 spent on public works alone, and then Stirling, with £628,886.

The only electorate in the North that has received any appreciable sum of money is Greenough, where the figure is £906,108. Those figures were taken from answers to questions in this House. I repeat that Carnarvon got £202,000 over four years, and that is very small expenditure. I heard from an official source of a couple at Albany—I take it they were a young couple—who returned from their honeymoon and were able to walk straight into a Commonwealth-State rental home because there were no other applicants. Yet people in the North must struggle to get homes.

The Minister for Lands: We will change all that.

Mr. NORTON: Carnarvon, like other centres, pressed for schools, hospitals and other essentials. After a great deal had been said with the elections looming, plans were eventually drawn up and a school was promised. The plans were beautiful, but immediately the work was started they were cut in half. I refer there to the State school at Carnarvon. The Government was good enough to supply the material for the mission school at that centre and voluntary labour erected it, but the material supplied was sufficient to build only the jarrah-asbestos shell. It was not lined and was without even a verandah or a water-tank from which the children could obtain a drink. The conveniences supplied for the use of the children—particularly the boys—were still incomplete when I last inspected that school.

I believe that since June it has been lined and a water-tank has been put up, but apart from that it has cost the Government next to nothing to supply a school for 70-odd children. The hospital at Carnarvon has just been opened and it is certainly a nice building as far as it goes, but it has not even a kitchen. The only kitchen is in the old building. I have not measured the distance but it is some chains from the present building and everything has to be wheeled around verandahs to get to the main hospital.

The Minister for Housing: How would it compare with the hospital at Pinjarra?

Mr. NORTON: I have that information, because the present matron at Carnarvon was matron of the Pinjarra hospital and she said that what has been given to Carnarvon is, as far as it goes, equal to what is available at the hospital at Pinjarra but that it is not nearly finished and does not provide anything like the amount of accommodation or working facilities that are found at the Pinjarra hospital.

I will now direct some remarks to the Minister for Housing. I think the people of Carnarvon should be given much more consideration in the matter of housing because they cannot move, as people in the metropolitan area can, from suburb to suburb in a search for houses or rooms. The children up there, because there is no domestic science centre at the school, must forgo that training. They are unable to travel, as children in the south can, a mile or so on subsidised transport, to obtain the training elsewhere.

Young couples who get married at Carnarvon are unable to obtain rooms or share houses and consequently they have to leave and move south. Young people born and reared in the North-West understand the country and would certainly make the best settlers, and so it is absolutely wrong that they should be forced to leave that area. It is only by providing them with housing so that they and their families to come will remain there that we can develop the North along the right lines.

I appeal to the Minister to give special consideration to houses for two-unit families in that area, in view of its isolation. Another point is that a number of the Commonwealth-State rental homes built at Carnarvon are occupied by civil servants. I believe that all Government departments, whether State or Federal, should supply their own housing, and if that were done it would relieve the situation greatly. The Education Department does a good job in that regard and seems to house all its own staff.

The transporting of furniture for civil servants in the North is a costly item and I would suggest that the Ministers concerned see that the houses of their officers in the North-West are furnished. The clerk of courts at Broome was transferred

from Perth and he stayed there for approximately two years, after which he was transferred to Carnarvon, his place at Broome being taken by a single man. In that instance the Government was not involved in the expense of transporting furniture. Generally speaking, it is married men who fill such positions and then, when such a move takes place, there is a double expense. That applies to all Government servants in the North.

The banana industry at Carnarvon is keen to have a hydraulic survey made of the Gascoyne River basin so that it may be known how far the industry can expand and whether it can have further land thrown open to develop the industry to the maximum extent. I would like an estimate made of the cost of damming Rocky Pool and I am anxious to know whether it would be an economic proposition for irrigation.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: How far is it from Carnarvon?

Mr. NORTON: About 24 miles, and 14 miles from the nearest plantation. It holds 12,000,000,000 gallons of water, which would be sufficient for the industry at its present stage over a period of two years. Shark Bay is also short of water but what can be done to relieve the position there, I do not know. As artesian water exists in that area, perhaps a bore could be put down to supply water to that town. The people at Shark Bay who are 211 miles from the nearest hospital are without any medical or nursing facilities, which is very unfortunate because those people have suffered a great deal of sickness and many have been the victims of accidents quite recently.

An extract from the "Shark Bay Bulletin" which appears in the "Northern Times," dated the 10th December, 1953, reads as follows:—

Shark Bay townspeople have had to call the ambulance three times in one week to convey sick and wounded to hospital. One case proved fatal before any medical attention could be summoned. It is time Shark Bay people were given some attention in this regard. We have an hospital that has never been opened but left to the white ants; we cannot even obtain the services of a doctor or nurse, and our nearest airfield is 70 miles away. Surely it is time something was done.

I quite agree that it is time something was done. If a casualty nurse were appointed to that centre, she would prove to be of great assistance and comfort to the residents.

The Minister for Health: Would it be possible to have a landing ground established there?

Mr. NORTON: It would be possible to lay an Anson air strip there. By and large, the town of Carnarvon has developed with-

out any financial assistance from the Government with the exception of a few loans obtained by individuals through the Rural and Industries Bank to offset the ravages of floods and cyclones.

There is a great difference in the cost of transporting fruit, particularly bananas, to the market in Perth compared with the transport of any other primary products in Western Australia, which is assessed on a ton-mile rate. We have heard a great deal about what it costs the poor old farmer to transport wheat to the nearest port. It is rather interesting to note that wheat and super are carted over a distance of 350 miles at the rate of 1.97d. per ton mile. Carnarvon is 612 miles from Perth and the cost of transporting wheat to the city at that rate would amount to £5 0s. 6d. per ton. To carry one ton of bananas from Carnarvon to Perth would cost £14 12s. 3d., or 5.56d. per ton mile. In comparison, New South Wales can cart bananas at the rate of 2.57d. per ton mile. Therefore it can be seen that the Carnarvon banana-growers have to pay a great deal more to get their produce to market.

The Premier: Are bananas carried all the way to market by rail in New South Wales?

Mr. NORTON: Very little use is made of road transport to cart bananas in that State. The rate is £10 per ton over a distance of 300 miles, which is nearly double the rate in this State over a similar distance. If a weekly boat service were operating between Carnarvon and Perth, growers would be able to have their bananas transported to Perth by boat, including harbour and light charges, at £4 8s. 2d. per ton. Unfortunately, there is only an irregular boat service, and fruit, such as bananas, needs a regular service. Whenever some problem arises in the cartage of wheat or super, for example, or if the railways are unable to cart wheat or super at the existing cheap rate, the Government quickly steps in with the payment of a subsidy.

The growers of practically every commodity, with the exception of those at Carnarvon, have received a subsidy at some time over the years. Even in the Kimberleys, a subsidy of £15,000 per annum is paid to assist the air beef project, yet an industry that has more growers and is subject to more hardships, receives no subsidy whatever. If a subsidy could be granted for the cartage of bananas from Carnarvon to the markets, it would greatly assist the growers.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Is there much difference between the price of Carnarvon bananas to the public in Western Australia and the charge for those sold in Sydney?

Mr. NORTON: That depends entirely on the production in New South Wales and the production in this State.

Mr. Yates: They are cheaper in Sydney than in Western Australia.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Very much cheaper?

Mr. NORTON: In answer to those interjections, it must be remembered that bananas are sold by auction and therefore the price is determined by the bids made by purchasers.

Taxation exemption in the North is a matter that has received a good deal of publicity and also the support of members in this House. If such exemption were granted, it would be a great incentive to attract people to the North, which would lead to greater development. More capital would be spent and as a result, more workers would be employed. With both capital and labour, the minerals in the North-West would be developed and that section of the State would become one of the richest areas in Australia, irrespective of the recent oil discovery.

It is interesting to peruse various Press cuttings of the statements made by many people with regard to the North. One statement made by Mr. L. H. Atkinson, the sub-manager of the Australia and New Zealand Bank, appeared in the "Daily News" on the 20th August, 1953. It reads as follows:—

The solution of many North-West problems, said Mr. Atkinson, could be found in greater taxation relief and greater attraction to capital.

The population of the North showed little increase except at Wittenoom.

That proves that whenever capital has been spent in the North an increase of population has always followed. Many articles have also been published by the various pressmen who made a tour through the North-West some months ago. Every one of them urged that the people of the North should be exempt from taxation, and pointed out that if this were granted it would increase production, attract capital and population would naturally increase.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.10]: I propose to deal with only one of the items appearing on the Estimates, and it is a question I raised on the final day of the session last year. It refers to the legality of the amount that was paid by the Government to the North Beach Bus Coy. for goodwill and the unexpired portion of its licence when the company sold its interests to the Government. Recently the member for Guildford-Midland moved that the file dealing with this matter be laid on the Table of the House. I took the opportunity of perusing it, and it proved to be very interesting. I considered it my duty, as member for the district concerned, to endeavour to deal with this matter at the first opportunity.

Prior to the North Beach Bus Coy. taking over the service in my district, it was shared between that company and the Federal Bus Coy. During the war years and until 1951, the service continued haphazardly, until finally it collapsed. At that stage, the question of which operator would run the Bedford Park, Morley Park and Caversham routes was the subject of consideration by the Transport Board and the Minister. A service had to be provided for those areas because the Federal Bus Coy. gave a week's notice to the Transport Board of its intention to quit the service. The company was persuaded to continue operating for a fortnight longer and ultimately it induced the North Beach Bus Coy. to take the service over.

At that stage I am reliably informed that the Government bus service was anxious to operate in the area but the Government would not grant permission because it was its policy to assist private operators and it was not interested in a Government bus service operating in that area. As a result, the manager of the North Beach Bus Coy. was allowed by the Transport Board to do practically what he liked. I made many protests, both to the Minister and the board, but the chairman evidently was prepared to allow the manager of the North Beach Bus Coy. to select his own route because, when that company took over the service, its buses served only the more closely settled areas and the manager of the company refused point blank to give a service to the outlying parts.

The Government bus service was compelled to take over the scattered areas and provide a service which the North Beach Bus Coy. refused to cover. The area served by that bus company was built up, and it did not even provide a school bus from Caversham or from 3½ miles beyond Bayswater to the Bayswater school. The Government bus service was compelled to do this. The North Beach Bus Coy. was permitted to run along a route close to the tramway. It selected the most compact areas and refused to give a service in areas further removed. It infringed on the tramway service which was already providing a service to many people. At the time I protested vigorously, but the protest went unheeded.

We now come to the stage when it was proposed to adopt a zoning system. In June, 1951, the North Beach Coy. took over, and on the 15th December, 1952, 18 months later, the Government service took over No. 1 zone. In that period when the Government took over it had to accept six buses belonging to the North Beach Coy. at a cost of £25,000. I have often heard used the phrase "the State Treasury is plundered," but it has never been plundered so glaringly as on this occasion. The Government bus service could have come in 18 months earlier when the North

Beach Coy. first took over and it could have given a service beyond the actual area covered by the private bus company.

The £25,000 payment was made for six buses, portion of unexpired licence and goodwill. The Act did not provide for that. Since then those six buses were put up for sale by tender. No reasonable tender was received and subsequently they had to be sold by private treaty. The Tramway Department attempted to sell those buses to the railways but the buses were not suitable for the railway service. Eventually the vehicles were sold for £6,000. The Government secured Mr. E. L. Baker as an assessor. Therefore, the Government actually paid £25,000 for the assets, and, as £6,000 was recovered from the sale of the buses, it actually paid £19,000 for the unexpired licence and goodwill.

I quote from the report of the Auditor General to show that what I am saying is substantially correct. It says—

It was found when the omnibuses were taken over, that considerable expense would be involved in bringing them up to the general standard considered necessary for use by the Tramways, and action has been taken for their disposal. Of the purchase price of £25,000, only £5,600 was treated as capital expenditure and met from the Loan Fund Vote, the balance, £19,400, being charged to Working Expenses for the year and met from Revenue Fund. The amount of £19,400 can hardly be considered a fair charge against the one year's working.

As a result of this transaction, the Tramway Department has been debited with £19,000 against revenue for one year. No wonder the Tramway Department cannot show a profit when such transactions take place.

That is not all. The Government service was not permitted to go beyond the boundaries of Bayswater. This service was first operated by the Federal Bus Coy., then owned by Mr. Baldock, who subsequently sold it. The new owners wanted to change the name and at the same time desired to run the buses to North Cottesloe during the hot summer months. The Transport Board refused permission and also refused the application for the change of name. The management did not maintain a satisfactory service, and the business finally collapsed. When the North Beach Bus Coy. took over, it paid nothing, yet 18 months later, when it withdrew from that service it received £25,000 from the Tramway Department.

On the last day of the session prior to this one, the Leader of the Country Party, on behalf of the Minister for Transport, spoke on this matter. I raised the point about the provisions of the Act not providing payment for goodwill and other

considerations, and the Leader of the Country Party assured me and the member for Melville that he would look into the matter. I see from the file that he was concerned on this score. For the benefit of members, I shall read his minute dealing with this question:—

Following on our talk regarding zoning of transport, and the purchase of the bus services of the North Beach Co. Pty. Ltd., and that of Mr. L. G. Woodland.

The former, it appears, was completed before the matters hereunder mentioned came to the notice and, of course, in those circumstances, I know that the arrangement was made in complete good faith and if, as I understand, it is actually complete, then it would appear to me we can do nothing more about it. It is, moreover, as far as I can see, quite an advantageous proposition for the Government.

I feel, however, that the Woodland's proposal should not proceed any further unless a written legal opinion is obtained which completely disposes of the matters I now mention.

Section 29 (2) of the State Transport Co-ordination Act provides that no sum of money by way of "premium or otherwise" shall be paid for the transfer of a licence.

The sum proposed to be paid to Woodland is far in excess of the value of the buses, accessories, etc. He asks for even more. Despite arrangements to the contrary, I consider some of the excess must come under the heading "premium or otherwise." If so, to that extent the transaction is contra the Act. While this would not, I feel, have the effect of invalidating any agreement, if I am right, it would be questioned by the Auditor General and be subject to parliamentary criticism.

Moreover, before I knew all the facts, a parliamentary question evoked a departmental answer to the effect that it was not proposed to pay anything in the nature of goodwill and was so answered by me. I have no doubt in view of the view taken by the chairman of the Transport Board, that this answer was supplied completely bona fide. But now I have drawn attention to the probability that the Act has not been followed, I feel we must clear the matter up one way or the other before deciding.

I do not think the suggested "surrender" of licence and issue of a new one is anything better than another way of "transfer," and if that is so, an evasion of Section 29 (2), and therefore the power in the Tramway Act does not help.

I am sending a copy of this memo. to the Hon. Premier in case you might wish to discuss the matter with him.

The Minister at that time was not so sure that everything being pursued was proper. Subsequently the matter came before Cabinet and the ex-Premier put this minute on the file:—

Cabinet decides no further action be taken until resubmitted to Cabinet.

That deals more particularly with the Suburban Bus Coy. taking over the service operating to Bassendean. The two of them were pretty well linked. The other service that operated in Morley Park and Bedford Park is in the same category. In my opinion, the sum paid to the North Beach Bus Coy. was altogether too high. I shall not read the complete file, although it is very interesting. Suffice to say that the North Beach Bus Coy. has obtained the right and is operating the service formerly operated by the Government in Osborne Park. It runs a service into Main-st.

The Scarborough Bus Coy. was concerned about the future developments in that area and about the possibility of the North Beach Bus Coy. using the argument that it was in the area already to extend its operations. The Transport Board was naturally concerned and only issued a temporary licence to the North Beach Bus Coy. notwithstanding the fact that it will be operating in that area for some time. There is nothing on the file to indicate that the Government was compensated for withdrawing from the run to Osborne Park. Payment seems to be only a one-way traffic.

In order to bring about greater efficiency and co-ordination in transport service and in order to reduce overheads, the proposal to carry out zoning was adopted. When the Government service took over the Bayswater district the Minister of the day refused to allow it to continue on to Bassendean. To indicate what the manager of the Tramway Department thought, I quote this letter which he wrote to the Minister, under date the 20th January. This is what he said:—

Inter-Suburban Omnibus Service.

The "West Australian" newspaper on 17/1/1953 published an alleged statement by you to the effect that the Inter-suburban Service would be taken over by the United Buses commencing February 1.

If the statement is correct, I respectfully inquire why the Transport Board did not consult the Zone 'A' operator (Government Tramways) through whose area the Inter-suburban Bus traverses many miles.

Surely Zone 'A' operator should have been extended the opportunity of taking over from the present operator.

Evidently the manager of the Tramways Department was never given an opportunity to continue the extension of the Government service as far as Bassendean, yet, when the service for that area was first developed it was developed both through Bayswater and Bassendean by the one operator. When Mr. Baldock subsequently sold out, the service was taken over by another operator. Now it is divided amongst three. The Government was anxious to bring about some form of unity in the areas which it was zoning, but in its administration it had three operators.

The manager of the Government Tramway Department was anxious to provide a service to Bassendean, and that is what should occur. It would be much more efficient and economical, and would give the people in those areas a much more satisfactory service. But the Government was not prepared to go that far, though the Minister for Transport at that time, Mr. Simpson, pointed out in his minute that he was under pressure to improve the service in the Bassendean district in the previous 12 months.

There are other aspects I intend to bring to the notice of members. We do not often have an opportunity to scrutinise these files. It is, however, our job to do so, and when we find that things are being done that are not in conformity with the public interest, we should take an opportunity to discuss them. Here is a minute to the Treasurer from Mr. Reid, the Under Treasurer:—

1. Some time ago Cabinet approved of a scheme for the zoning of the passenger transport services in the metropolitan area, and arising out of that approval, a special committee, appointed by the Government, negotiated with the existing transport operators in one zone covering the North Perth and Inglewood districts. The arrangement was that the two existing operators should remove from that zone, which would then become a monopoly of the Tramway Department.

2. In order to adjust the payments to the two private operators in this zone, Cabinet approved of the appointment of an assessor. The assessor has done his work in regard to one of the operators—the North Beach Bus Coy. Pty. Ltd.—and has arranged a settlement with that company for the sum of £25,000.

3. When the negotiations between the North Beach Bus Coy. and the assessor commenced, it appeared that we would not have sufficient loan money to buy out the private operator, and tentative arrangements were made whereby a settlement would be effected by the Government taking over the private operator's overdraft. It was thought then that the amount of the

overdraft would just about equal the amount of the payment to be made to the operator. Since settlement was arranged at £25,000, it was found that the overdraft is about £15,000, which the Bank of New South Wales is willing to transfer to the Government on condition that it is paid off within three years. The bank is not willing, however, to increase the overdraft to £25,000 to enable the North Beach Bus Coy. to be paid out entirely, so that even though this arrangement still stood, we would have to find £10,000 in cash.

4. The position of our loan funds has improved and we should now be able to pay out the £25,000 due to the North Beach Bus Coy. if Cabinet so agrees.

5. The payment of £25,000 recommended by the assessor is split up as follows:—

£11,000 for the purchase of omnibuses and accessories owned by the North Beach Bus Coy.; and £14,000 as consideration for the purchase of the company's business undertaking.

The second part of the payment is difficult to understand. For inquiries I have made both from the assessor and from the Transport Board, it appears that the North Beach Bus Coy. was induced to enter this zone to take over from a service which had not been operating satisfactorily. The North Beach Bus Coy. improved the service, but initially suffered fairly substantial losses. The £14,000 is, therefore, to reimburse the company for these losses, and obviously to pay it for some element of goodwill which it had established.

6. The agreement for the payment to the North Beach Bus Coy. and for the taking over of their buses and operating rights in the North Perth-Inglewood zone, has been signed by the Bus Coy. and by the Honourable the Minister controlling Government Tramways. The Bus Coy. has surrendered its licence to operate in this area, and a new licence has been issued by the Transport Board in the name of the Tramway Department.

7. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any files dealing with these transactions, and only with difficulty have I been able to get the agreement which is attached to this minute. In order that payment may be made, I seek Cabinet's approval of the payment of £25,000 to the North Beach Bus Coy. I propose, if Cabinet agrees, that of this sum, £11,000 be charged to Loan and debited to the capital of the Tramway Department, and that the balance, namely £14,000, will be

charged as part of the working expenses of the Tramway Department for this year.

The North Beach Bus Coy. did not make any loss at all during the first few months. The Transport Board paid to it a subsidy of £250, but subsequently the company found that it had done so well that it was able to refund the amount. It made no loss at all, and the Under Treasurer was evidently under a misapprehension with regard to that item. The sum of £14,000 referred to in the minute, was not paid to make up for a substantial loss allegedly incurred in 18 months.

Mr. Brady: It must have been paid illegally.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The minute from the Under Treasurer is followed by the following note:—

Cabinet requests the Attorney General to obtain the opinion of Crown Law as to whether the agreement is enforceable.

That opinion was obtained from the Solicitor General, Mr. R. W. Neville, and was as follows:—

In my opinion, the agreement, a copy of which is attached hereto, is quite valid and enforceable.

2. It has been suggested that the agreement may be unenforceable by reason of the fact that it may be tainted with illegality because of the total consideration of £25,000 payable by the Government, £14,000 is allocated as consideration for the purchase of the company's business undertaking and that the only assets of that undertaking of any value, apart from the buses and accessories would be the goodwill arising from the fact that the company had licences issued by the Transport Board to operate the buses on the particular routes in question.

3. It should be noted, however, that the State Transport Co-ordination Act does not make it illegal to pay or agree to pay any money or other consideration in respect of the transfer of the unexpired term of any licence issued in respect to an omnibus under that Act. Section 29 (2) merely provides that no transfer of a licence for an omnibus shall be granted unless and until the board is satisfied that no money or other consideration by way of premium or otherwise is to be paid or given for the transfer of the unexpired term of the licence. The fact that a premium has been agreed to be paid for the licence would not therefore invalidate the Agreement but would be a reason why the Transport Board should refuse its consent to the transfer of the licence. It would also perhaps be a ground for an application to the court for an injunction to

prevent the Transport Board from agreeing to a transfer of the licence. However, once the licences have been transferred the matter is completed and as the payment is not made illegally, the contract is, in my opinion, quite enforceable.

That was Mr. Neville's opinion—that the agreement having been signed, it was quite valid and enforceable. His opinion in respect of Section 29 (2) that deals with the question of the transfer of the licence, is indeed interesting. If the Transport Board had not transferred the licence to some other operator, the users in that area would have had no service at all, and that would have been ridiculous. The provision of this service is important for my district, and I have taken several deputations to the new Minister in respect of its operations, with a view to securing an improvement, because the district is growing apace.

When the North Beach Bus Coy. took over, the Transport Board allowed it to turn buses in Wellington-st., but immediately the service was transferred to the Government, the buses had to turn round in Stirling-st. The service had become popular with the people using it, because it went into Wellington-st. and put them down in the city. The North Perth operator, who has taken over the Osborne Park service, continues to turn in Wellington-st., but the operator of the Bedford Park service, a Government service, has to turn round in Stirling-st.

Recently the trams were removed from William-st., and the people in my district are looking forward to an extension of the service through William-st. I contend that the district I represent—the eastern suburbs—is entitled to the same consideration as other areas. I understand that the board is going to allow the Scarborough Beach Bus service to go into Murray-st. The North Perth service, which the Government took over, is now permitted to go through the city and turn round at the foot of William-st. Early in the New Year it is my intention, on behalf of the people I represent, to make the strongest possible representations to the Minister that some consideration should be given to the Government service that now operates in the Bedford Park and Bayswater districts.

Some years ago the buses serving Belmont and Redcliffe used to be stationed on the north side of St. George's Terrace near the Burt Memorial Hall. However, the Transport Advisory Board said that they should go to the south side because only a left-hand turn was desirable, and a right-hand turn could not be allowed. So the people from those districts had to be set down alongside Government Gardens, though, for years, they had alighted on the north side. Only a few months passed by when a Government bus service

to South Perth was established and the self-same advisory committee allowed a right-hand turn for that service.

With regard to the North Beach, Bayswater, Bedford Park and Morley Park services, it is my intention to urge that they go through the city. If that is not agreed to, then I shall ask that all services be removed from the city, and then there can be no complaints. It has been put strongly to me that as the Wembley bus stops in Wellington-st., then the eastern suburbs should receive the same consideration. The people from those parts have to walk from the Shaftesbury Hotel in Stirling-st. into the city.

This is the first opportunity I have had to speak on the subject since the member for Guildford-Midland moved for these papers to be laid on the Table of the House. Had commonsense prevailed and the policy of the then Government to help a private bus company not applied, the Treasurer could possibly have been saved the amount of £25,000 which was paid to the North Beach Bus Coy. According to the Under Treasurer's statement, he had difficulty in finding sufficient loan funds to meet the account. I have ventilated this matter so that the people I represent, and those throughout the State generally, will know some of the facts.

HON. V. DONEY (Narrogin) [8.47]: My contribution to the debate on the Estimates has to do with the attitude of Governments—not this one any more than any other—towards the question of water supplies for country towns and settlements, with particular reference to the needs of the towns adjacent to the central Great Southern railway line. By this I mean the towns from Brookton southwards, including Pingelly, Popanyinning, Cuballing, Narrogin, Wagin, Katanning, Broome Hill, and quite likely, ultimately, Albany.

Mr. May: Whose fault is it you have not got the supplies?

Hon. V. DONEY: I am not dealing with that aspect. Members might remind me that the towns I have just mentioned have nothing to worry about because they are specifically provided for in the comprehensive water supply scheme. This is quite true, but the fact has not amounted to very much during the last 3½ years, which is a long time to people who, day by day, bemoan the fact that they have very little or no water at all.

There is a scheme all right, but for the last few years it has been more or less dangling in mid air. The only reason why I intend to repeat a page or two of what I may refer to as the history of the Great Southern, is not because I have pleasure in doing so, but because by restating the water worries of the people in that busy part of the State, I may convince the Government that there must be no further

delay. Incidentally, we all know that it is easy for delay to drift into habit. I am not directing my remarks at this Government any more than at the previous Government.

To the best of my knowledge my home town of Narrogin has not been free from drastic water restrictions on more than five or six occasions during the 30 years I have resided there. The restrictions I refer to generally start as soon as the winter is over. Later in the year it is not unusual to see water carts moving from street to street, which means from house to house, distributing water. I would like those who live in Perth and the suburbs to reflect upon this fact, that never probably in the whole of their experience have they had water brought to them by this primitive means.

For a long time past we in Narrogin have impounded each year a little more than 20,000,000 gallons of water, whereas what we should impound is nothing short of 78,000,000 gallons. We did not get 78,000,000 gallons this year, but we did get a little over 60,000,000 gallons, which should be sufficient to see us through. As a consequence of what I am complaining about, lawns and summer gardens are just luxuries of the past. I personally had to replant my lawn some five or six times during the first 12 years of my residence in the house in which I now live. Following on that period of 12 years—which would be about 14 years ago—I ceased replanting my lawn, and now nothing grows there but a crop of wild oats at this time of the year. There is, of course, a better day coming. I want the Government to speed that day.

Bad as conditions have been in Narrogin, I am of the opinion that they have been vastly worse in the town of Pingelly just a little to the north. South of the town about five miles, there is a pool of dark green-looking water. Successive Governments—the present one included—recognised the entire unsuitability of this water for domestic purposes by making a basic charge of 1s. for it in lieu of the customary 3s.

No one uses the water for drinking purposes or for gardens. About the only thing it is used for is for palming off certain jokes on visitors at the hotels, and for what is referred to as "slushing." Yet, strange to say, the two towns I have referred to, still continue to insist upon being progressive. I do not know whether the Pingelly people would object to my saying this, but I am sure that they have the most useless and hopeless water supply in Western Australia, and quite possibly in the whole of Australia.

The Minister for Native Welfare: How long has that been going on?

Hon. V. DONEY: I would say for the last 30 years. The Minister may say that is a reflection upon past Governments,

or that it points to a dilatory outlook on the part of the people there.

The Minister for Railways: On the member for the district.

Hon. V. DONEY: I remind the hon. member that I have been the member representing the town of Pingelly for less than four years, but member for the town of Narrogin for some 26 years, and I took this problem over from my predecessor, Mr. Johnston, who had complained about it for 17 years. I can recall having a conversation with him shortly after I took over, and he reminded me that this was a problem which would never be solved. Of course, that is not so. The reason I am passing on all this Great Southern information in regard to water is so that new members may learn to be country-conscious, and realise that the country should have precisely the same solicitous treatment with regard to water supplies as the metropolitan area has now, and always has had.

Mr. Yates: How far has the pipeline progressed from Wellington dam?

Hon. V. DONEY: The Minister, in reply to a question I asked, told me it was 42 miles, and I know that to be correct.

Mr. Yates: That is in six years.

Hon. V. DONEY: No, nearly five years.

Mr. Yates: At that rate you will get water in another 30 years.

Hon. V. DONEY: The hon. member's arithmetic is sadly at fault. Whenever I get on to this topic I find myself in a very grouchy mood, but to demonstrate that I can appreciate a blessing as freely and as thankfully as anyone else, I would like now to express my thanks for the very beautiful falls of rain we had during the past winter. As I said a little while ago, as a result of them we should have water to see us through the summer despite the recent big accretion in the town population.

When I entered this Parliament some 26 years ago I drew up a list of my electorates most essential needs. That list included, among a great many other matters, a new hospital, a secondary school, certain bituminised roads and, of course, leaving the most important till last, a reliable water supply. Since that time I have had the satisfaction of ticking off all those jobs one by one, with the exception of the water supply one which today is moving with exasperating slowness to what I might refer to as the ticking off stage. I do not know how long I will have to wait for that great day, but if everything happened favourably—and that is too much to expect—it could be finished in one year's time.

Following my entry into this House the present Leader of the Country Party and the then member for Pingelly, now Senator Seward, came to this Chamber. They were sterling workers in the best sense of those two words and the three of us used

to be almost daily visitors to successive Ministers for Water Supplies. We scored one or two minor successes, mainly, I think, from what used to be recognised as a most difficult source—I refer to my dear old friend, the late Mr. Millington. But nothing of any real substance ensued until the present Premier brought down a Bill in 1946. One of the big features of that Bill was a repetition of the water supply method that had been such a success north and south of the Goldfields railway line—that is to say, that farmers should agree to a scheme that brought water right on to their farms.

Strange though it may seem today, certain opposition in another place was sufficient to wreck the present Premier's Bill. I think I might quite properly add here that I strongly supported that 1946 measure. It is possible that the Premier had some pretty harsh thoughts about the setting aside of his measure at that time. I would have felt the same way myself, but I am glad to recall that it did not stop him or his party from giving complete support to the Bill which I introduced at a later date. What was equally important, they agreed with me that the Bill was one of exceptional urgency. One of the purposes of my remarks tonight is that I want a rebirth of that urgency and I am pleading for it now.

As I said earlier, I am worried lest the delay which the scheme is experiencing should continue and I want the new members here to be impressed by the great need and urgency of country water supplies, not only for the benefit of country people, but also for the general welfare of the whole State. I hope that the finding of oil in the North-West will not absorb a great deal of the finance which would normally go to works of this kind. I am not saying that it will; I have not been told that it will, and perhaps I have no reason for thinking that it will. But nevertheless I have one or two small fears that it may happen. I know that with regard to Kwinana there was not much trouble in the country areas because of the water supply for that undertaking. Fortunately the oil company provided its own steel and cement, but the thought that keeps knocking at the back of my head is that had the oil refinery not come here at all, in all probability the comprehensive water scheme might have moved towards the completion of its first stage by now.

This evening the member for Gascoyne gave us an interesting account of the finding of oil. I, too, believe that it is most important and yet I do not consider it as important as water. There is a strange thing about water; the less you have of it the more you appreciate it. I do not know whether members look at it in that light, but I do. Thus we in the country areas appreciate water more than do people in the metropolitan area. About 22 out

of 50 members here represent metropolitan seats and as a result, when anything concerning the metropolitan area crops up, there is a foundation of 22 votes already in favour of the proposition. But when a country town is seeking the good will of Parliament in respect of some vital need the initial vote is never more than just one. I do not say that this is done deliberately, but it just cannot be otherwise and, in the general summing up, the city areas get a vastly better deal as regards water supplies than do the several towns in the country areas.

In 1947 I submitted a new water supply Bill to this Chamber and I am glad to recall that it received the unanimous endorsement of members. That demonstrates how completely urgent the Wellington Dam project was regarded in 1947. Yet the work in connection with the scheme has been more or less dangling in mid air for the last 3½ years. Members will recognise, too, that with the ready concurrence of the then Government, I lost no time in launching the scheme. In the first year we were set a target of some 10 miles of pipeline of 2ft. 6in. diameter. The Premier would be interested to recall that originally the plan was for pipes of this diameter, but when I introduced my measure the first intention was to have pipes of only 1ft. 6in. It entered my mind, and the idea was supported by the engineers, that what the Premier had planned for—although it had already been turned down—should be used, in other words 2ft. 6in. pipes. I did not want the job to be spoilt and I thought it would be wise to use pipes of a diameter which would permit not only the towns, but also the farms to be provided for in due course.

As I said, we were set a target of 10 miles in our first year. Strange to relate we hurried to a greater extent than is customary, and in the first year we finished with 15 miles. I am not pretending for one moment that I had anything to do with the speed of the job. I did not. But it happened that one Mr. Russell Dumas was in charge of the scheme and that means a good deal because that gentleman is, in my judgment, by a long way the finest public servant that this State has ever had. There may be those who disagree with me, but that happens to be my view of this gentleman. Of course he was backed up by the best engineers that the Public Works Department could spare and also by a splendid gang of men.

In our second year trouble between the major nations broke out and the nations with the deepest purses started stockpiles of steel and wool and other high-valued commodities. We managed to stand up to pressure in relation to steel plates for a while, but we were like mendicants by comparison with the big nations, and it

was difficult to keep in the market. Even so, we came close to realising our target of the next year which was 25 miles of piping. Although we did not quite reach the 25-mile mark, we got reasonably close to it so that by the end of our second year we were creeping up pretty close to the half-way mark between Collie and Narrogin. As I said in answer to an interjection by the member for South Perth, today there is roughly another 40 miles of piping still to be laid down. But although half-way, a great deal more than half of the work has been done.

The most difficult territory has been covered; the surveying and the track cutting has been done and what is left, of course, is relatively easy country which could be covered in one year. I do not know what my colleagues at the Public Works Department would say, but I think it could be done in one year, indeed that mileage represents our original intention before the bad times came along. It can still be done provided there has not been, in the meantime, a too wide dispersal of equipment and men who previously had worked so very hard and so successfully.

All the difficult hilly country in the Collie area has been finished and I think that such jobs as pumping stations and regulating tanks and so forth are at least nearing completion. I understand that, fortunately, the pump-house building and the suction main at Wellington Dam are erected and in working order, and that the State Electricity Commission has the requisite power available as soon as it becomes necessary for it to be used. Little of serious consequence, therefore, remains to be done other than the plans for the laying of the main.

I certainly feel, therefore—and so, I think, do my colleagues representing other parts of the Great Southern—that there are grounds for hoping for a very early reopening of this important project. I would like to point out that succeeding Governments have a duty not only to the farming areas in relation to their water supplies, for not until the job is finished can we completely honour our promises to the Imperial Government with regard to food supplies as they relate to meat and grain. The Government also has a responsibility to the long-suffering people of the Great Southern areas.

Naturally, I do not desire to mislead members into thinking that the comprehensive water scheme does no more than supply that portion of the Great Southern to which I have been referring. That is only one-half of the full scheme. The other half has its northern limit at Dalwallinu and reaches out as far as Narembeen, Merredin and Kondinin. The production increase is what we are all concerned about these days although admittedly production from the 4,000,000 to

6,000,000 acres of land which is covered by this scheme cannot be safely assessed at this stage. No one will deny, nevertheless, that the increase will be enormous. Not only will it improve our standing in the Empire generally but also very substantially add to the potential wealth of the Western Australian people.

Mr. Brady: Would water conservation by dams go out as a result of the pipeline?

Hon. V. DONEY: No, though there are, of course, certain sections of the country here and there that will continue to rely upon dams and other methods of conserving water because of the enormous expense otherwise involved in long distance piping. It is going to be extremely difficult in the future. Although there are no more than 600,000 people in the State, we still find it very difficult to supply them with water, despite which we continue to hear people talk about Western Australia carrying a population of 35,000,000. If we are experiencing this trouble with half a million people, I cannot imagine what trouble we will have with 2,000,000, 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 people, let alone with a population of 35,000,000.

But the ingenuity of engineers is such that these difficulties will be overcome. I dare say that the humble tank will again be called into use. That is all I have to say. I know the Premier has been searching out certain spots from which he expects to get financial help for the comprehensive water supply scheme—though I have not seen anything in the Press to indicate how successful he may have been—and I hope that either he or the Minister for Works, when replying to the debate on the Estimates, will let me have some of the information which they know I so badly need.

Progress reported till a later stage of the sitting.

BILL—JUDGES' SALARIES AND PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [9.26] in moving the third reading said: I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to bring before the notice of members and the public an expression of opinion from the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court, Sir John Dwyer, in relation to an item which was published in the "Western Mail" of the 10th December, 1953. On page 7 of that publication the following appears:—

The story behind the parliamentary allowance increases is that the tribunal—Chief Justice Sir John Dwyer, Mr. Justice Jackson and Public Service Commissioner S. A. Taylor—not only recommended a rise considered by members—

That is, members of Parliament—

to be far too small, but proposed that they—

That is the judges and the Public Service Commissioner—

themselves should benefit. The extra amount suggested for judges was £400, for the Public Service Commissioner £300 and for magistrates £250.

His Honour the Chief Justice sent a letter to the Minister for Justice this week in regard to the item I have just quoted from the "Western Mail" and this is how His Honour's note reads—

My Dear Minister,

Yesterday evening I was handed a copy of the "Western Mail" of the 10th December containing a statement that I as a member of the tribunal dealing with salaries and allowances had proposed a payment of an extra £400 for judges.

As you are aware, increases in judicial salaries was a matter which was removed from the tribunal's consideration at my request and the question was dealt with by Cabinet before the tribunal entered upon its deliberations.

I appreciate that it may be inconvenient to state that the increase was so decided but I request that you make it public that the question of increases in judicial salaries was not one remitted to the tribunal, but was the subject of recommendation by an entirely separate body of which no judge was a member.

As the Hon. the Premier has indicated to me that legislation is to be introduced regarding C.O.L. allowances I should add that I would desire you to advise him of this request.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) J. P. Dwyer.

All I desire to add is the fact that the information contained in His Honour's letter is absolutely correct. The recommendation for increases of judges' salaries was not made by the tribunal which later made recommendations in regard to the salaries of the Premier, Ministers and other members of Parliament, other Government employees whose salaries are fixed by statute and other Government officers whose salaries are fixed by Executive Council. I make this explanation in fairness to both His Honour the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Jackson, who were members of the tribunal.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL (5)—RETURNED.

- 1, Public Works Act Amendment.
- 2, Government Railways Act Amendment.
With an amendment.
- 3, Fire Brigades Act Amendment.
With amendments.
- 4, Industrial Development (Resumption of Land) Act Amendment (No. 1).
- 5, Reserves.
Without amendment.

BILL—BOXING DAY HOLIDAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON. L. THORN (Toodyay) [9.33]: At first sight, I thought of offering some opposition to the Bill because the workers enjoy a 40-hour week, annual holidays and statutory holidays, while a special holiday is being provided for the Royal visit next year. In these circumstances, I felt that the workers were well provided for, but I suggest that when a closer study is made of the measure, we must concede that the proposal contained in it is justified. Otherwise, as Christmas Day this year will fall on Friday, workers would be practically deprived of a holiday, because Saturday and Sunday are non-working days. Therefore, they would receive only the one holiday, namely, Friday.

Other States have moved to make provision for a holiday on the Monday as Boxing Day. The Leader of the Opposition asked why the Bill had not been introduced earlier in the session. I think it should have been; it has an industrial aspect and members on this side of the House would have liked more time to consider it. The interjection, in my opinion, was quite appropriate. However, opposition to the Bill would not be justified, although I notice in today's paper that the Employers' Federation does not favour it. I support the second reading.

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.

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 34 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 1—Add a subclause after Subclause (3) to stand as Subclause (4) as follows:—

(4) This Act shall come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2. Clause 2—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This refers to the retrospective application of the measure. If the amendment were accepted, workers injured before its passing would not be entitled to any of the benefits of the new provisions. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 3. Clause 3—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This refers to payments to dependants of injured workers residing outside the State. If the dependants lived in South Australia, England or Holland, they would be deprived of compensation. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 4. Clause 4—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: For reasons consequent on disagreeing to the preceding amendment, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 5. Clause 5—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This clause relates to insurance of workers while travelling between their place of employment and their homes. In four of the five other States, this principle applies. The member for Mt. Lawley, when Attorney General, introduced a measure containing this provision, and so did the member for Stirling when he was the responsible Minister in 1948. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 6. Clause 6, page 4—Delete the passage commencing with the words "by substituting" in line 32 and ending with the word "pounds" in line 37 and substitute the following paragraphs:—

(a) by substituting for the words "amounts indicated in the second column thereof" in lines 6 and 7 of paragraph (a) the words "the appropriate amount indicated in that Schedule";

(b) by substituting for the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds" in line 14 the words "two thousand pounds or where the amount indicated in the third column of such Schedule in respect of that injury exceeds two thousand pounds then the amount so indicated";

(c) by substituting for the words "amount set out in the second column of" in line 2 of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (e) the words "appropriate amount set out in the said table";

(d) by substituting for the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds" in lines 5 and 6 of paragraph (f) the words "two thousand pounds in respect of any personal injury resulting from the one accident or where the amount indicated in the third column of such Schedule payable in respect of any injury resulting from the one accident exceeds two thousand pounds then such indicated amount";

(e) by substituting for the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds" in lines 10 and 11 of paragraph (g) the words "two thousand pounds or where the worker has suffered an injury compensable under the table and the amount indicated in the third column of the table in respect of such injury exceeds two thousand pounds then such indicated amount".

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This amendment would have the effect of drastically reducing the maximum amount of compensation from £2,800 to £2,250. I need only repeat that in claims arising out of negligence in traffic accidents, before the Supreme Court, injured people have obtained amounts in excess of £4,000 and it is considered that an amount less than 2,800 would not be reasonable in present-day circumstances.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think we should agree to the amendment which puts the amounts payable on a more scientific basis. In some cases the maximum provided is £2,500. For routine cases the provision made by another place is £2,000

and that is a rise of 20 per cent., with the exception of £100. During the debate I suggested that £2,100 would have been a 20 per cent. increase on the existing figure.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I said the maximum under the schedule would be £2,250 but it is true that in a couple of cases the maximum agreed on in another place is £2,500. Although there is a difference of only £300 between what we decided on and the figure fixed by another place, I would impress on the Committee that it is very rarely that incurable loss of mental power arises through employment. The £2,000 represents an increase of only 16 or 17 per cent.

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

No. 7. Clause 7—Delete this clause and substitute the following:—

7. Subsection (14) of Section 8 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by substituting for the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds" in lines 12 and 13 the words "two thousand pounds or where such other disease results in an injury compensable under the Second Schedule to the Act and the amount indicated in the third column of such Schedule in respect of such injury exceeds two thousands pounds then such indicated amount";

(b) by substituting for the words "Any worker who subsequent to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1948, receives the full amount of one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds or who, prior to the coming into operation of such Act, received the full amount of seven hundred and fifty pounds in respect of such periods of incapacity" in lines 23 to 26 inclusive the words "A worker who has received the full amount of compensation—

(a) of seven hundred and fifty pounds prior to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1948;

(b) of one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds prior to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1951;

(c) of one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds prior to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1953; or

(d) after the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1953, of the sum of two thousand pounds in respect of such period or periods of incapacity or, in the case of a worker whose disease has resulted in an injury also entitling him to compensation under the Second Schedule of the Act, of the appropriate maximum amount in respect of such period or periods of incapacity and such injury.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

It would result in a drastic reduction in the amount that this Chamber agreed to and would eliminate the provision for workers who contract silicosis in the iron and steel industry being covered by the Workers' Compensation Act.

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

No. 8. Clause 8, page 6—Delete the words "eight hundred" in line 35.

No. 9. Clause 8, page 6—Add after the word "pounds" in line 36 the words "or where the worker in respect of the accident causing such permanent partial incapacity is also entitled to compensation under the Second Schedule for an injury mentioned therein and the amount indicated in the third column of such Schedule in respect of such injury exceeds two thousand pounds then such indicated amount."

No. 10. Clause 9—Delete.

No. 11. Clause 10—Delete.

No. 12. Clause 11, page 9—Delete subparagraph (ii) in lines 13 to 17.

No. 13. Clause 11, page 10—Delete all words after the word "determination" in line 3 down to and including the word "accordingly" in line 35.

No. 14. Clause 12, page 10—Delete the words "two thousand four hundred" in lines 40 and 41, and substitute the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty."

No. 15. Clause 12, page 11—Delete the word "seventy-five" in line 3 and substitute the word "sixty."

No. 16. Clause 12, page 11—Delete paragraph (c).

No. 17. Clause 12, page 11—Delete the word "eight" in line 21 and substitute the word "six."

No. 18. Clause 12, page 11—Delete the word "seventy-five" in line 24 and substitute the word "sixty."

No. 19. Clause 12, page 11—Delete paragraph (i).

No. 20. Clause 12, page 11—Delete paragraph (j).

No. 21. Clause 13—Delete paragraph (a).

No. 22. Clause 13—Delete paragraph (b).

No. 23. Clause 13—Delete paragraph (c).

No. 24. Clause 13—Delete paragraph (d) and substitute the following:—

Substituting for the words "one thousand seven hundred and fifty" in lines thirty-seven and thirty-eight the words "two thousand."

On motions by the Minister for Labour, the foregoing amendments made by the Council were not agreed to.

No. 25. Clause 14—Delete paragraph (a).

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This refers to the payment of weekly compensation, which would be subject to basic wage adjustments. The Council has seen fit to disagree with the amendment set out in the Bill. The clause that was passed by the Assembly represented a departure from the principle that had been established over a long period, but it was thought that workers who had been injured on a particular day should receive any benefits in the increase of the basic wage that may have been made on that day. I do not stand hard and fast on the principle, but seeing that we have disagreed with so many of the amendments that have been made by the Legislative Council, and that its amendment in this instance is wrong in principle, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 26. Clause 14, page 13—Delete the words "five pounds" in lines 29 and 30 and substitute the words "three pounds twelve shillings."

No. 27. Clause 14—Delete paragraph (c).

No. 28. Clause 14, page 13—Delete the words "one pound" in line 41 and substitute the words "fifteen shillings and sixpence."

No. 29. Clause 14, page 13—Delete the words "six pounds" in line 44 and substitute the words "four pounds sixteen shillings."

No. 30. Clause 15, page 14—Delete the words "one pound" in line 4 and substitute the words "fifteen shillings and sixpence."

No. 31. Clause 15, page 14—Delete the words "six pounds" in line 7 and substitute the words "four pounds sixteen shillings."

No. 32. Clause 16, page 14—Delete the words "eight hundred" in line 12.

No. 33. Clause 16, page 14—Add after the word "pounds" in line 12 the words "or where the incapacity, liability for which is sought to be redeemed, was caused by an accident also resulting in an injury in respect of which the worker is entitled to compensation under the Second Schedule and the amount indicated in the third column of such Schedule in respect of such injury exceeds two thousand pounds then such indicated amount".

On motions by the Minister for Labour the foregoing amendments made by the Council were not agreed to.

No. 34. Clause 17, page 14—Delete all words after the word "is" in line 13 and substitute the following:—"repealed and re-enacted as follows:—

In this table the basic percentage of 100 is £2,000 and is used as the basis for the computation of the amount specified in the third column of this table.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

TABLE.

In this table the basic index percentage of 100 is £2,000 and is used as the basis for the computation of the amount specified in the third column of this table.

Nature of Injury.	Percentage.	(Amount).
1. Total loss of the sight of both eyes	112½	£ 2,250
2. Total loss of the sight of an only eye	112½	2,250
3. Total loss of the sight of one eye	50	1,000
4. Loss of binocular vision	50	1,000
5. Partial to total loss of sight of one or both eyes		
(All eye assessments to be assessed on the corrected visual defects)		

Schedule of Assessments for Uncorrected but Correctable Visual Defects.

One Eye 6/8 or 6/9.		One Eye 6/12.	
The Other Eye.	6/8 } Nil 6/12 } Nil 6/18 } From negligible 6/24 } to 10% 6/36 } from 10% 6/60 } from 20%	The Other Eye.	6/8 or 6/9 } Nil 6/12 } Nil 6/18 } from negligible to 10% 6/24 } from 10% 6/36 } from 20% 6/60 } from 30%
One Eye 6/18.		One Eye 6/24.	
The Other Eye.	6/8 or 6/9—Nil 6/12—negligible to 10% 6/18—from 10% 6/24—from 20% 6/36—from 30% 6/60—from 40%	The Other Eye.	6/8 or } from negligible 6/9 } to 10% 6/12—from 10% 6/18—from 20% 6/24—from 30% 6/36—from 40% 6/60—from 50%
One Eye 6/36.		One Eye 6/60.	
The Other Eye.	6/8 or 6/9—from 10% 6/12—from 20% 6/18—from 30% 6/24—from 40% 6/36—from 50% 6/60—from 60%	The Other Eye.	6/8 or 6/9—from 20% 6/12—from 30% 6/18—from 40% 6/24—from 50% 6/36—from 60% 6/60—from 70%

One Eye (3/60) Less than 6/60.		One Eye Blind.	
The Other Eye.		The Other Eye.	
6/8 or 6/9—from 30%		6/9—55%	
6/12—from 40%		6/12—from 60%	
6/18—from 50%		6/18—from 70%	
6/24—from 60%		6/24—from 80%	
6/36—from 70%		6/36—from 90%	
6/60—from 80%		6/60—from 100%	
		6/60—from 100% to Blind	

Loss of fields of vision :—

Loss of all but central vision within 5% circle (bilateral)	90 per cent.
Loss of all but central vision within 5% circle (unilateral)	45 per cent.
Loss of central vision but fields full (bilateral)—Patient has no useful vision—"Blind"	95 per cent.
Loss of central vision but fields full (unilateral)—Patient has no useful vision	90 per cent. of one eye.
In partial loss the fields are considered to be divided into three arbitrary concentric zones of 30 deg., 60 deg., and 90 deg.	
Relative importance of loss of outer zone	20 per cent.
Relative importance of loss of middle zone	30 per cent.
Relative importance of loss of inner zone excluding macular vision	50 per cent.
Unilateral Aphakia with vision correctable to 6/60 and with 6/60 vision in other eye and full fields	70 per cent. minimum.

Nature of Injury.	Percentage.	(Amount).
6. Total loss of hearing	60	\$ 1,200
7. Loss of hearing to be based on percentage of total loss of hearing, and shall be based on audiometric testing and assessed on the basis that the relative values of the four octaves from 256 to 4,096 cycles comprise the entire speech range and are :—		
256 to 512		
15%		
1,024 to 2,048		
35%		
512 to 1,024	30%	
2,048 to 4,096	20%	

Assessment Table.

Frequency (dvs) = 512	1024	2048	4096	
Decibels loss	Percentage Loss.			
10	.2	.3	.4	.1
15	.8	.9	1.3	.3
20	1.1	2.1	2.9	.9
25	1.8	3.6	4.9	1.7
30	2.6	5.4	7.3	2.7
35	3.7	7.7	9.8	3.8
40	4.9	10.2	12.9	5.0
45	6.3	13.0	17.3	6.4
50	7.9	15.7	22.4	8.0
55	9.6	19.0	25.7	9.7
60	11.3	21.5	28.0	11.2
65	12.8	23.5	30.2	12.5
70	13.8	25.5	32.2	13.5
75	14.6	27.2	34.0	14.2
80	14.8	28.8	35.8	14.6
85	14.9	29.8	37.5	14.8
90	15.0	29.9	39.2	14.9
95	....	30.0	40.0	15.0
100	....	....	....	....

The hearing loss of an individual as a result of audiometer tests is measured by providing that the percentage of loss to be assigned to each frequency is the value shown in the table for that frequency.

In calculating the percentage loss for the two ears combined the value of the better ear is rated at seven times the value of the poorer ear. The actual value of the poorer is added and the sum when divided by 8 gives the combined percentage loss for both ears.

Nature of Injury.	Percentage.	(amount).
8. Loss of both hands	112½	\$ 2,250
9. Loss of both feet	100	2,000
10. Loss of a hand and a foot	100	2,000
11. Total and incurable loss of mental powers involving inability to work	125	2,500
12. Total and incurable paralysis of the limbs or of mental powers	125	2,500
13. Total loss of the right arm or of the greater part of the right arm	80	1,600
14. Total loss of the left arm or of the greater part of the left arm	75	1,500
15. Total loss of the right hand or of five fingers of the right hand, or of the lower part of the right arm	70	1,400
16. Total loss of the same for the left hand and arm	70	1,400
17. Total loss of a leg	70	1,400
18. Total loss of a leg with sufficient remaining to attach artificial limb	65	1,300
19. Total loss of a foot or the lower part of the leg	62½	1,250
20. Total loss of the thumb of the right hand	35	700
21. Total loss of the thumb of the left hand	30	600
22. Total loss of a forefinger	5	100
23. Total loss of middle finger	5	100
24. Total loss of index and middle finger	20	400
25. Total loss of a joint of the thumb	20	400
26. Total loss of middle and ring finger	12	240
27. Total loss of the first joint of the forefinger of either hand	3	60
28. Total loss of the little or ring finger of the hand	3% each 10% both	60
29. Total loss of any other finger joint		200
30. Total loss of the great toe of either foot	1	20
31. Total loss of a joint of the great toe of either foot	20	400
	5	100"

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: If members care to peruse this new schedule which is incorporated in the Legislative Council's amendment, and which relates to eye injuries, I am sure that, like myself, they will understand very little about it. This is the first time that such a radical principle has been introduced in regard to the assessment of compensation for eye injuries.

I have been advised that a worker will require to have a very high percentage of disability in the other eye to enable him to receive anything like the compensation to which he would be entitled under the present method of assessing eye injuries. The only person who is sure of receiving an increase under the schedule as proposed by the Legislative Council, is the person who loses the total sight of one eye.

Those cases are few compared with the numerous cases of minor injuries to the eye.

In considering this matter, I have compared the suggested schedule with the present Second Schedule, and I have found that the percentages set out in the schedule in the Bill are lower for this type of disability than those proposed in the schedule proposed by the Legislative Council. I do not think that the members of this Chamber should be expected to agree to such a comprehensive schedule without being given an opportunity of studying it very carefully.

Members who have had experience of workers' compensation cases will agree that the method of assessing the compensation payable for the loss of a limb or an eye has, in the main, proved to be very satisfactory. These assessments have been made by medical boards. The Council's schedule is a radical departure from the principle that has been adhered to in this State for many years past. Members would show wisdom by not agreeing to this amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Many medical experts have given great consideration to this schedule. The object was to ensure a fairer allowance to those who were injured by decreasing the compensation very much for those who received a minor injury, and increasing the compensation for those who received a severe injury. We cannot compare the total loss of both eyes with a minor injury to one eye. The compensation for the former should be much greater. The figures in the Second Schedule are based on 100 being equal to £2,000. The Minister might have accepted the table and moved an amendment to increase the amount proportionate to the Bill when it left this Chamber. He did not do so. In my view we should accept the schedule. It is a much more scientific document.

Mr. Moir: It is too scientific.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know. When we desire to be just, we must be scientific. We cannot use rough and ready methods.

Mr. Moir: The schedule provides for many reductions.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: And many increases also. To some extent it tabulates what the doctors have actually been doing. It was left to the doctors to assess the proportion of deficiency.

Mr. Moir: We are still leaving it to the doctors.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Doctors vary in their diagnoses, so that one man who is injured may receive more than another for exactly the same injury.

Mr. Moir: Why should we have the idea of one doctor incorporated in the Act?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is not a matter dealt with by one individual. It was made up as the result of investigation, by many specialists. This document gives an accurate formula instead of being dependent on the deficiencies that would be caused by the injury. Doctors may agree that two injuries are the same, but one may hold the opinion that the proportion allowed for that injury should be 50 per cent., while another doctor might consider it to be 60 per cent. That would be accurate. As far as possible, the law should be based on accurate science. So I ask the Committee to accept this amendment.

Mr. MOIR: Like the Minister, I oppose the amendment, and I do so vigorously. This is a very scientific way of putting something over the injured worker. As far as I can see, there are many reductions on what are regarded as minor injuries but which frequently occur. Under this, compensation for the loss of a point of a finger is £20. It is far below the present amount. In industry this type of injury occurs most frequently, especially in the mining industry. Again to give a pair of glasses to a man is no compensation for an injury causing defective sight.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Do you not think that a man who cannot see properly, even with glasses, should get more than a man who can see properly with glasses?

Mr. MOIR: Any person who can produce the medical and other proof that he has lost part of the sight of an eye through an accident, should be compensated. The system which operated in the past was just. The ordinary practitioner does not assess an eye injury; that is done by specialists and if there is a difference of opinion between the specialist engaged by the worker and the specialist engaged by the employer, then the case can go before the board where an average is struck. This schedule represents the opinion of one or two medical men. It seeks to lay down an arbitrary method by which assessments are to be made.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is an accurate method.

Mr. MOIR: The member for Mt. Lawley seems to know everything. He now blossoms forth as a medical expert, of all things, on eyes. When an assessment is made on the correct visual defects, that means the assessment is made after a man is provided with glasses which he has to wear as a result of the accident. I wholeheartedly oppose the amendment.

Mr. COURT: I said during the second reading that my sympathies were with the worker who received a major injury, as distinct from a worker who received a minor one. Over the years there has been

a tendency to allow the margin between the two to get out of focus. To the best of my knowledge this table, far from being arbitrary or one man's opinion, represents the combined brains of the best physicians and the leading orthopaedic surgeons in the State. In the main it represents the work of the best brains in the world regarding the ocular and hearing sections of the schedule.

In this instance, I would not like the managers from this Chamber to go to a conference with the idea that this schedule is bad. The fact that the other method has gone on for years might be a very good reason for us to turn to a scientific basis, so that a man's injury can be appraised on a correct basis. I am not arguing whether £2,000 is the correct one. The managers will get down to that. If our representatives can go to the conference with the thought that this schedule might be a very good approach from the worker's point of view, it could be the means of doing something revolutionary to overcome a lot of the anomalies.

I would ask members to forget their feelings with regard to the £2,000 basis adopted in the compilation of the schedule. It will be observed that some percentages have been based on 100; some below and some above that figure. If members will have regard to the procedure adopted by the Repatriation Department, I can tell them that the department acknowledges the fact that a man losing both hands is subject to a greater disability than that of a man who loses both feet. Looking at the matter dispassionately, the loss of both hands involves a greater degree of incapacity than the loss of both feet. Money alone would not make good any injury, but so far as we can appraise compensation in terms of money, let us try to use the best method to arrive at the correct assessment. I can see in the schedule many points to the advantage of the worker. If we can agree on a correct basis, then the other percentages will more accurately affect the degree of compensation. I support the Council's amendment. I do not do so on the basis of the figure that has been used as the base, but on the principle that the most scientific method has been availed of to arrive at an assessment of injuries. I know some of these tables are inclined to be technical to the layman, but they will present no difficulty to the practitioners.

Mr. Moir: It might cause a lot of difficulty to the worker.

Mr. McCulloch: They should have set the table out in Latin. We would all be able to understand it as much as we can this one.

Mr. COURT: Let us not hold the view that this schedule is aimed at the worker. It is not. The people responsible for drawing it up are fair and reasonable. They

have approached the question on an impartial and highly scientific basis blended with a great degree of experience.

Mr. Moir: Who is responsible for it?

Mr. COURT: I do not know their names, but I am quite confident from the information that has been bandied about, that the many people who worked on these are the best experts in this country for the job. I do not know if it is competent for members sitting in conference to call for these people. I ask members not to reject this schedule because we might be rejecting something which is good for the worker.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The member for Boulder and I cannot be criticised unduly for not accepting this schedule with open arms. The member for Boulder criticised it, as there was ample room for him to do. But neither of us can be blamed for not accepting this schedule with open arms, in view of the action of the Council in putting on the notice paper no fewer than 34 amendments to a Bill of 17 clauses. If another place had approached this matter in the impartial manner to which the member for Netherlands referred, I would have been more inclined to accept this schedule with less hesitation.

But I believe that the series of amendments sent to this place were in the nature of an insult to the working classes of Western Australia. There is a very influential section of this community which has adopted that attitude. The basic wage has been pegged and that section has done its best to prevent any substantial progress towards giving reasonable compensation to working people injured in their employment.

We cannot be expected to accept this schedule without further examination. I have information to show that so far as the assessment for loss of sight is concerned, these figures came from the Repatriation Department and the schedule has been in operation there for quite a long time. In some of the items of the schedule proposed by the council relating to fingers and toes there is a loss of £300 to the worker, so I cannot be expected, as a responsible Minister, to grab the schedule with both hands. Regarding the section relating to eyes, there are provisions which chisel down the amount that a man would receive for a permanent injury.

The compensation of £2,800 which this Chamber proposed has been cut down by the Council to £2,000. In rare cases the amount of £2,500 can be permitted to an incapacitated man, and in other cases the figure could be £2,250. I do not say that the member in another place who proposed this schedule tried to put a quick one over us, but the working people cannot be expected to view the schedule other than with suspicion for the time being. That is the way I view it.

I shall not go to a conference on this matter with any preconceived ideas, but I shall do my utmost to ensure that the provisions of the Bill as adopted by this place are agreed to by another place. The time has arrived when the people of Western Australia, and members in another place, should realise that this Chamber is elected by the majority of the people of Western Australia, who are citizens and do not have some special qualification. The sooner that is done the better.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Has that anything to do with this Bill?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: It has a lot to do with it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If you want a debate on this, you can have it.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I am happy about that. I was just replying to the member for Nedlands, and assuring him that I would go to the conference with no preconceived idea other than that the people who elected this House are in the majority and their views and sentiments should receive the consideration to which they are entitled.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know why the Minister wanted to introduce extraneous matter. The Upper House has very sound and balanced representation. Its members represent the normal married man with children who has a sense of responsibility. The Minister might remember that a convicted thief, once he has served his sentence, has the same voting power as any of us in this Chamber. There are many people with no comprehension of their responsibilities, but they possess equal voting power with others. When the Minister compares the two Houses and says that another place does not represent a proper section of the community—

The Minister for Labour: I did not use the word "proper" at all.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister alleged that they had no right to exercise their powers under the Constitution.

The Minister for Labour: No, I did not.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister said that the sooner it was realised that this House is elected in part by convicted thieves, in part by drunkards and 101 other kinds of people, the better it would. But that is by the way.

The Minister for Lands: I should think it was!

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I did not start this.

The Minister for Lands: You are not doing too good now that you have taken it up.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister does not like it.

The Minister for Lands: I certainly do not like your ideas on the subject.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not like the other ideas either. But let us get back to the schedule and be sensible. I am not

competent to assess the value of it any more than the Minister is. But I have not the advantage he has of highly qualified medical men being available for consultation such as the Commissioner of Public Health, the doctor employed by the State Insurance Office, and others.

In due course he will, I presume, produce, if not to this place, at least to the conference managers the considered opinion of those people, but I would point out that £2,000 is only a base and for some losses an amount representing 112 per cent. of the base can be awarded. The compensation payable for incapacity has been reduced to a scientific basis. I know that some men with minor injuries will receive less, but those with major injuries will get very much more.

Mr. Moir: Injuries that seldom happen.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: When they do happen, surely they should be more heavily compensated in comparison with the others. Surely we should leave it to the experts to determine the relativity of incapacity. What the base should be is a matter for this place, and it can exercise an equally accurate assessment as the professional man.

Mr. McCulloch: Who is the professional man?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I understand that a number of senior medical men were responsible for this.

Mr. Heal: Would Dr. Hislop be one?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

Mr. Heal: He would be very impartial!

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: He might or might not be.

Mr. McCulloch: Is not this Parliament supposed to be responsible for this Act?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It will have to be; but there are many matters of which members of this Parliament have no personal knowledge, and I suggest that one of them is the relative assessment of incapacity.

Mr. Moir: Why do not these medical men make representations to the Government or the Minister if they think there is a better way of assessing injuries?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Why did not the Minister ask them before he introduced his Bill? What co-operation has the Minister shown towards the Opposition? He did not accept one amendment.

The Minister for Labour: I followed the example of the member for Mt. Lawley when he was the Attorney General.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In many cases the weekly payments were increased by more than 20 per cent.

Mr. McCulloch: Do you fully understand the schedule?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, I could not judge incapacity resulting from an accident. I ask the Committee to accept the amendment. Later, in the conference, the base figure can be discussed.

Mr. JOHNSON: It seems that at least the member for Nedlands has some doubt as to the financial value of the schedule. He appears to believe that it has some scientific basis. Like the member for Mt. Lawley, he is completely in the dark as to who drew up the schedule. I believe it was drawn up by the medical committee of the Liberal Party. There is no doubt it is a scientific method of reducing the cost to insurers in respect of accidents which are most frequent—the minor injuries such as loss of fingers, etc. I would like to have the schedule with regard to eye injuries examined closely. That part of the schedule might bring the injury, which most clerks suffer, within the range of compensable injuries. This has been wanted for some time. If that is so, it would be an improvement.

Mr. Moir: There has to be an accident.

Mr. JOHNSON: There have been some weird definitions of "accident." If there is any group of medical people who have experience of workers' compensation and who feel that the present schedule is unscientific, they are at liberty at all times to approach the Minister of any Government and point out the defects. Because the schedule has not been so dealt with, we can assume that it is scientific.

Mr. COURT: I feel that the remarks of the member for Leederville were completely wide of the mark. The hon. member who introduced the schedule in the Legislative Council would, I am quite sure, tell the Minister, and the conference, who compiled it. My information is that the hon. member himself had nothing to do with it. It was submitted to a body of experts. If there is friction between the two Houses over the amount, is it not a good time to see whether the percentages are correct?

Frankly, I do not think the top payments are enough. The Minister has not told us whether the schedule has been submitted to his experts in the medical profession to see whether they, divorced from any political considerations or every-day worker and employer representation, consider that the technical percentages are reasonable. The Minister said that the schedule is the basis that has been used for many years by the Repatriation Department. What better basis could there be, because that tribunal is supposed to favour the claimant?

Mr. Moir: Yes, but it accepts responsibility for the rest of the man's life.

Mr. COURT: The repatriation schedule has been based on years of examination.

Mr. McCulloch: This is the first time this system has ever been proposed here.

Mr. COURT: It might be so, and that might be a good thing. I want the Minister, when he goes to the conference, to have thoroughly examined the various aspects of the schedule because it may be the means of his improving the lot of the more unfortunate people suffering from industrial accidents.

I can see that in putting forward the purely scientific percentage that a man should receive, the medical profession could be a little too scientific. We, as a legislative body, could say that, in our opinion, there should be some premium on that assessment. That would be a parliamentary decision. In the final drawing up of the schedule there should, perhaps, be a plussing up of the scientific assessment by a percentage which we acknowledge as the human factor as distinct from the scientific factor.

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

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Labour, Hon. A. V. R. Abbott and Mr. Moir, drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, War Service Land Settlement Scheme. With amendments.
- 2, Industrial Development (Resumption of Land) Act Amendment (No. 2). Without amendment.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendments, Nos. 1 to 10 inclusive.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING: It appears that the Legislative Council wishes to insist upon its amendments, and, without debating their merits, as that has been done previously, I move—

That the Assembly continues to disagree to the amendments made by the Council.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I move—

That the Council be requested to grant a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and that the managers for the Assembly be Mr. Brady, Mr. Court and the mover.

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

BILL—FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Police in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2, page 2—Insert after the word "testing" in line 10 the word "it."

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: This amendment is of little consequence, but I think the wording of the clause was correct, and I do not think we should agree to the proposed alteration. The word "it" will be redundant, and I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 2. Clause 2, page 2—Delete paragraph (b) in lines 13 to 15.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: This amendment refers to the same clause. Prior to the drafting of the Bill, I had the representatives of the retailers of firearms and ammunition, together with Inspector Hickson, the officer in charge of the firearms and guns branch of the Police Department, in my office for a matter of two hours, when the whole legislation was discussed. One of the complaints of the retailers was that if a retailer requires to take out a firearm for the purpose of testing it for a prospective buyer, it is necessary to get a separate permit from the Police Department on each occasion. It was agreed that a permit issued under either paragraph (b) or (c) of Subsection (3) of Section 5 would be sufficient for the purpose. After the conference was over, Inspector Hickson notified me that, in his opinion, a register should be kept.

Since the proposed amendment of the Legislative Council was made in that Chamber, I have discussed the question with Inspector Hickson, and he still considers that the paragraph is necessary. I cannot altogether agree with him and, from the police point of view, I cannot see what purpose could be served. I propose to agree to the amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3. Clause 6, page 3—Delete the words "or six months' imprisonment with hard labour" in lines 26 and 27.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: This refers to the additional penalty of six months imprisonment for carrying an unlicensed firearm. At present, only a monetary penalty is provided of not less than £1 nor more than £50. While it is agreed that there is ample scope for the imposition of a penalty on any decent citizen carrying an unlicensed firearm, it is thought by the Police Department—and this is copied from the New South Wales Act—that in the case of a criminal—and I want to emphasise that these amendments apply only to unlicensed firearms—there ought to be a provision for the imposition of a penalty of imprisonment.

Frequently criminals are men of financial substance, and a fine of £50 would be no penalty at all. The department points out that it would be beyond the realms of possibility for a magistrate to impose a term of imprisonment upon a decent citizen found in possession of an unlicensed firearm, or using it for no illegal purpose. The police believe that this penalty provision of imprisonment for a criminal found in possession and carrying an unlicensed firearm should be persisted in. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think the Minister might have accepted this amendment. Later it will be seen that anyone who carries a pistol is liable to imprisonment. The penalty is a little high. The magistrate would not know whether a man was a criminal or not because evidence of that could not be given. So anyone on trial for this offence must stand on the same ground.

The Minister for Police: He would know before imposing the penalty.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is quite correct. I think it is a little too high and that the monetary penalty would have been sufficient.

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

No. 4. Clause 6, page 3—Delete the words "or twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour" in lines 35 and 36.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: This amendment is objected to by the Police Department on the same grounds as the amendment with which we have just disagreed. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 5. New clause: Add a clause to stand as Clause 9 as follows:—

9. This Act shall remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-four and no longer.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I object to this amendment. I would rather lose the Bill than agree to it. The Act, I should say, is 98 per cent. effective and acceptable and has operated successfully for some 20 years. The effect of this amendment would be to completely overhaul it before the 31st December next year. There may be differences of opinion as to certain portions of the Firearms and Guns Act and some members may think they should be amended. It is quite competent, however, for a private member to bring down a Bill next session to amend the parent Act if he so desires. I would even say that I agree with some of the recommendations of the select committee, though I do not think others are at all necessary.

In some of the amendments considered to be acceptable to the Police Department, there is some point and I would be prepared to bring down an amending Bill to give effect to some of the recommendations. One objection raised is that it is difficult to get an original firearms licence at present. There is little substance in that. If members will peruse the report of the Commissioner of Police, they will see that for the current twelve months up to the end of June last 4,900 odd original licences were issued, in addition to 140,000 firearms licences.

So it will be seen that there is no difficulty in getting an original firearms licence. Fifty-eight applicants were refused; and 26 consisted of refusals to licence 303 rifles because of their high velocity. They are not licensed below the 26th parallel. There is a complaint regarding the inconsistency in the attitude of police officers in different stations in relation to the issue of original licences. This could, and does, occur but very largely because of misrepresentation.

A man will go to the Central Police Station and make application for an original firearms licence; after questioning, his application is rejected because he does not appear to have any legitimate reason to own a firearms licence. He becomes wise to what is required, probably goes to Bayswater, Maylands or Fremantle and tells lies to the officer in charge who believes him and issues him with a licence. I am quite prepared to bring down a Bill to give effect to some of the recommendations of the select committee but I cannot accept the amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I cannot see anything wrong with this amendment. We have had a number of Acts overhauled at

various times, and we have heard it said on many occasions that we should try to bring our laws up to date. Only recently we have been endeavouring to do that in relation to the Traffic Act. The time has arrived when we should overhaul the Firearms and Guns Act; it is not a good Act at present. We have a lot of different opinions at police stations. It is not Inspector Hickson's fault but the way the Act is administered.

Mr. McCulloch: We also find lawyers disagreeing.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The Minister says a private member could bring down a Bill, but I think he would be battling to get it through. It would be much easier for the Government to do so. I have been asked by the member for Bunbury to read to members the following letter to the Select Committee from Mr. G. S. Hayward, of Bunbury, under date the 19th November last—

I contend that 90 per cent. of all guns, rifles and ammunition purchased is used for the destruction of vermin, in fact having been in the North-West, the Midland and the South-West as a farmer, and having always been a sportsman, I know of very little ammunition that is used other than for shooting either dingoes, emus, kangaroos, foxes, rabbits, cockatoos or parrots, and all of these are vermin.

As there is no Act governing the sale of other articles used for the destruction of the abovementioned vermin, why should it be made so difficult to get firearms and cartridges?

Farmers can buy rabbit poisons, without even signing the poisons book.

Apparently the police have dealers frightened to such an extent that they are giving up their licences rather than put up with the continued irritating inconveniences. As an example, recently I needed some gunpowder for reloading shot-gun shells. As it was not procurable in W.A. I sent to Adelaide where it was easily purchased and brought to me by a person without any licence or questions asked, yet when I went into a well known Perth store and asked for 1 lb. of lead shot, the assistant asked for my licence.

I would suggest that one very important alteration be made to the present Act and that is that any person holding a gun licence be permitted to purchase a new firearm and that the onus of getting it licensed be on him, say within 10 days of purchase.

Another section of the present Act that is in need of drastic alteration is that listed as 10 under heading of offences. Under this clause the police continually claim, that if a person has a firearm in a car and leaves that car

without locking up the firearm in the boot, or locking the car itself, he is guilty of an offence.

This is very hard on farmers and others who do not possess a sedan car. People in the country areas always carry a gun when driving about their properties and often go from the property into town or siding or post office, and as many of them use trucks and utilities they are open to any over officious police officer and liable to be charged, the moment they walk away from their car.

I have done the job the member for Bunbury asked me to do, and I see no harm in the Minister's bringing down a measure to take the place of the present Act.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am not quite certain that this Mr. Hayward is not a retailer of firearms. A few years ago there was a firm of Haywards at Bunbury and frequent objections and complaints of the provisions of the Firearms and Guns Act have come almost entirely from the retailers of firearms and ammunition. All they are concerned about is making a sale.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I think he is a farmer.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That may be so. I said I was not certain. The very fact that for the 12 months ended the 30th June last, 5,000 original firearms licences were issued by the Police Department throughout the State shows that there are very few restrictions. In addition, there were 140,000 licences in existence. This is a clear indication that people have little difficulty in getting a licence. I cannot see any relevancy between gunpowder in Adelaide and lead pellets in Perth.

No difficulty is experienced if a person wishes to purchase firearms for the destruction of vermin, but other people must have a legitimate reason for wishing to possess firearms. If members are not satisfied with the existing provisions of the Act, they could bring down an amending Bill. Why overhaul a measure just to get uniformity throughout Australia? The Acts in other States contain provisions that I would not be prepared to support for adoption here.

Point of Order.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: On a point of order, is this amendment within the scope of the Bill? It seems to propose the addition of a new clause that has no relevancy to the Bill.

The Chairman: We cannot reflect upon the vote of another place, but it could be used as a reason for disagreeing with the amendment.

Committee Resumed.

Mr. HEARMAN: The Minister seemed to regard the letter read by the member for Fremantle with a certain amount of suspicion. I can assure him from per-

sonal knowledge that the letter did not emanate from the person of the same name interested in the retail store. A family named Roberts has a controlling interest in that store.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It would be wise to have uniform legislation throughout Australia. The Minister has been working to that end with respect to the traffic laws, and if it is good enough for traffic, it should be good enough for firearms. A few weeks ago a man arrived from the Eastern States, bringing a gun with him. He was a relative of Mr. E. M. Davies, M.L.C., who met him and told him that he could not use the gun here unless he got a licence. When he applied for a licence, the policeman took the gun and said, "This is mine; you have no chance of getting a licence." Mr. Davies was instrumental in getting the gun returned, though but for his action, the police would probably have retained it. It is most confusing to travellers when they find different laws prevailing in different States, and uniformity would certainly be desirable.

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

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Police, Hon. C. F. J. North and Mr. Norton drew up reasons for disagreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

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

Clause 2, page 2—After the word "Agriculture" in line 8 insert the following:—"or his deputy, the Chief Vermin Control Officer."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: To meet objections raised by C.D.L. members here, I arranged with the Minister in another place to have this amendment included. I intend to reappoint the present chairman, and as all the activities of the board will pass through the hands of the Director of Agriculture, my own objections will be met. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

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

**BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
MARINE ACT AMENDMENT.**

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the previous day of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Fisheries in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Section 204 amended:

Mr. LAWRENCE: Subclause (2), if agreed to, could mean that many of the fisherman at Fremantle who have craft over a certain tonnage but who cannot speak English and are not naturalised, although they have been fishing in that area for years, could be adversely affected. I think from the wording of the provision that such men might be refused licences, particularly if somebody with a grudge complained about them to the authorities. Of course it is desirable that such people should be naturalised and should learn to speak English.

In this regard I might add that two nights per week at the technical college at Fremantle we are teaching the younger fishermen, Italians any Yugoslavs, to speak English. I think it would be wise for the Government to set up a mariners' course and use some of the older fishermen as instructors. After discussion with the Minister I realise that the intention is to stop certain nationalities from coming here. They do not know the coast and cannot speak English and thus endanger the lives of themselves and their crews, as has been demonstrated in the past eight months. I would like an assurance from the Minister that the older members of the professional fishing fraternity will not be adversely affected by their lack of knowledge of English or by not being naturalised.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: With regard to Subclause (1), I think the time has passed when large whalers should be taken to sea by unlicensed people. It is necessary that large fishing boats should have a certificate before being taken to sea although I would not like to see the smaller vessels interfered with, as in their case it is usually only the owners whose lives might be endangered. I hope the examination set will not be like that for master builders, where a man must be a jack of all trades in order to qualify.

Mr. YATES: Like the member for Fremantle, I am not happy about the words "knowledge of the English language" as they appear in the clause. We have had many foreigners operating fishing boats in our waters for a number of years and they have never given any trouble, par-

ticularly as regards our language. They have been able to overcome all difficulties in that regard.

Mr. Lawrence: What about the Portuguese boats?

Mr. YATES: I am speaking generally. I do not think a lack of English should bar them.

Mr. Lawrence: I think this is aimed at the Portuguese.

Mr. YATES: It would cover them all if the Bill became an Act. I think we should strike out this provision and carry on as we have in the past.

The MINISTER FOR FISHERIES: There is some justification for the remarks of the members for South Fremantle and Fremantle about the wording of Subclause (2). The provisions regarding age, nationality, qualifications, physical condition, knowledge of English and so on have been the subject of controversy throughout Australia, and a concerted effort is being made on the lines suggested by the member for Fremantle to obtain uniformity. That is the idea of this measure and a precisely similar Bill has been enacted and is now law in Tasmania. Similar legislation is before all the other State Parliaments at present.

This Bill is the outcome of recommendations of the permanent committee of port authorities throughout Australia. One of its main provisions is that no alien shall hold a certificate unless a British subject or naturalised. During the last 12 months we had two Portuguese boats arrive in Australian waters, neither the crews nor masters being able to speak our language. They almost immediately got into trouble in the harbour as they could not understand our signs or marine language and they became a menace to other vessels in the harbour. Their boats must be licensed and pass a fairly stringent examination as to seaworthiness, engines and other factors. They are licensed only if up to the required standard.

Mr. Yates: Who is the judge of their knowledge of English under the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR FISHERIES: The person who passes their boats for seaworthiness.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: This only gives power for the regulations.

The MINISTER FOR FISHERIES: I take it that a knowledge of English means that one can make one's self understood.

Mr. Yates: I hope they will not be too rigid about it.

The MINISTER FOR FISHERIES: The Minister in charge of the Bill in another place assured me that there was no intention of bringing within the ambit of the Bill those already in the industry. He said they would be given every reasonable opportunity of passing the examination. He told me I could give an unqualified

assurance that those who have been operating for many years without any trouble will be able to continue, but that foreigners unable to speak our language would not be allowed to enter the industry here or ply in Australian waters without the necessary qualifications as they could do a great deal of harm and endanger life.

Such people might take on Australian crews and endanger those lives as well as their own. Fortunately there has not been so far any loss of life in that way, but it could occur, and harbour facilities could, in some circumstances, be dislocated. Fouling of a boat in the entrance to the harbour or similar incidents could happen. The men already in the industry will be given every opportunity to qualify.

Midnight.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I think men already in the industry should be given a certificate of service. Engine drivers were granted certificates of service when legislation providing examinations for them was first passed. Therefore something similar should be provided for those men who are operating fishing boats of a certain size. We rely on foreigners to a great extent in the fishing industry. The men who sail large whaling boats and other large fishing craft in the waters to the north might have to be subjected to a more rigid examination than those men who are operating small craft.

The Minister for Fisheries: It is intended to grant a certificate of registration to all those who are already engaged in the fishing industry.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

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

Clause 2—Delete the word "nine" in line 18 and substitute the word "eight."

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The Legislative Council, by its decision, has shown that it has no appreciation of the requirements of the State Housing Commission. Anyone who is acquainted with the position knows that it is necessary for

the State Housing Commission to be vested with the power to acquire land on particular occasions in order that it may properly carry out its duties. It is only necessary for one individual to be difficult over the sale of his land and he could completely destroy a proposed subdivision. It was because of such a situation that it was considered necessary for the State Housing Commission to have this power which will be used sparingly by it in the future.

During the long debate that ensued on this provision I made a gesture, in accordance with wishes of members on the opposite side of the Chamber, by agreeing to reduce the term, during which this power may be exercised, to two years. The Legislative Council, by its amendment, has now sought to reduce the term to one year. That will make it difficult for the State Housing Commission to arrange a balanced programme. If it is granted this power for only a limited period there will be a tendency, on the part of the commission, during the month or so it still has this power available to it, to hurriedly make provision for some period ahead by acquiring land in country districts. I cannot see any rhyme or reason in the Council's amendment and I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. YATES: I cannot agree with the Minister's contention. There are always two sides to every question and he has not referred to that side of the argument in favour of the owners of land which the State Housing Commission might decide to resume.

The Minister for Housing: Cut out the politics!

Mr. YATES: I do not mind the Minister interjecting, but as he did not mention the owners of the land that may be resumed, I would like to point out that the State Housing Commission has resumed many blocks of land at rates fixed by the commission itself.

The Minister for Housing: That is totally untrue.

Mr. YATES: Of course it is true.

The Minister for Housing: The Housing Commission does not fix the valuation, and you know that.

Mr. YATES: Who does fix it?

The Minister for Housing: The Public Works Department.

Mr. YATES: And the State Housing Commission has to agree to it. The Minister knows that the commission always resumes land at prices below ruling rates.

The Minister for Housing: It does nothing of the sort.

Mr. YATES: If the State Housing Commission had been fair in its valuations when it resumed land there would

have been none of this friction in the Chamber. I know some people who, many years ago, bought blocks of land in South Perth for their children and when they were resumed by the State Housing Commission they were paid amounts that were £20 or £30 below what was originally paid for the blocks. Who will get the benefit of that cheap land? It will be the person who has shown no sense of thrift. The blocks will be acquired by him without any effort on his part.

The Minister for Housing: These people tell a different story when the land is valued for rating purposes.

Mr. YATES: I have no complaints from people in regard to rates, but many people have complained that they do not want their land taken away from them. They complain more bitterly when the land is resumed and they receive only a paltry price for it. We on this side of the Chamber do not favour the Minister's idea regarding this provision and suggest that the Council's amendment is entirely in order.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I will make a brief observation in order to bring the member for South Perth down to earth. If a block of land is worth £100 it will be found that the owner will protest to the local authority that its true value is only about £30 or £40 when it comes up for rating. However, when it is proposed that his land shall be resumed he suggests that it is worth £400, £500 or some other ridiculous figure.

Many cases such as that can be quoted and members on the other side of the Chamber know that that is so. It is also well known that a competent officer of the Public Works Department makes the valuations. They are based on the actual transactions that have occurred about the same date that resumptions are made in that area. A person who has had his land resumed has the right of appeal.

Mr. YATES: That right of appeal is absolutely useless. I know of a man who is stationed in the Eastern States and he was offered £82 for his two blocks and yet single blocks of land on either side of him fetched £300 each. This man is still trying to reach some agreement in regard to the valuation of his land. The State Housing Commission should go on to the open market and purchase land at ruling rates.

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

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Housing, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Yates drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendment.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th November.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [12.16 a.m.]: I have considered this Bill and feel that a mixed gallon licence would be helpful to people who might want a bottle of whisky, a bottle of brandy, a bottle of wine and the rest made up in beer. This will not affect hotel trade. It is beyond the financial capacity of most people to buy a gallon of mixed spirits only, for which they will have to pay £5 to £8. This Bill makes provision for a person to buy an assortment of spirits, wine and beer. That will be particularly helpful in cases where a person wanted one bottle of brandy for medical purposes. I favour the Bill.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [12.18 a.m.]: This Bill should not have been introduced because a gallon licence is granted for selling liquor in bulk. Today there is the Licensing Court which exercises rather severe control over hotels which are compelled to provide accommodation for the travelling public. It is necessary to do everything possible to lift up the standard of hotels. If inroads are to be made into the profitable side of hotel business, it must adversely affect the accommodation side as well.

The Minister for Justice, who has had some experience of hotels, must realise that the profits on the sale of liquor in hotels go towards the maintenance of a higher standard of accommodation. In recent years a number of licences have been granted to clubs, which are also making inroads into the business of hotel-keepers who are required to pay heavy licence fees to maintain costly premises and to keep a high standard of board and residence for travellers.

The Bill should not be supported because hotelkeepers should be encouraged to provide superior accommodation. If the profitable lines are to be filched from them the result will be that substandard hotels will become more common in this State, and that is not desirable.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [12.22 a.m.]: I must oppose the Bill. It seems to me that lately everyone has an idea that he should tinker with the Licensing Act. We should be well advised to leave it alone. I entirely agree with the remarks of the member for Vasse. I hold no brief for hotel proprietors. I know it is a well-established fact that there are few, if any, hotels whose house business can possibly be carried on at a profit. The loss on that side of the business is made up by the subsequent profit on the liquor side.

Everyone knows that the standard of our hotels is not very high. If we do anything to affect their trade, we will make it more difficult for hotels to be maintained on even the present level.

Anything which is going to minimise the possibility of making the same profits as are at present made on the liquor side, is going to increase the likelihood of increased accommodation charges and no better service on the house side. Another aspect is that there are very few gallon licences in Western Australia in places where there are no hotels, therefore in the majority of places it is possible to buy half a dozen bottles, one of six different kinds of liquor, without going to a gallon-licence.

The Minister for Health: How much more do you pay for it?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: One cannot buy six bottles of different kinds of liquor under a gallon licence. Since the introduction of this Bill I have been looking around the city and I find that in the main the prices are somewhat similar. In the account given by the Minister in most places of the State there is not the slightest need for this legislation. My contention is that we ought not to tinker piecemeal with the Licensing Act in the manner attempted during the session. As a result, it can only have a detrimental effect on the hotel business, where the accommodation in this State is not in most instances of a very high standard. We cannot risk further deterioration, which I am certain will happen if the profit which can be made on the liquor side is to be reduced by schemes such as this. On those two counts, I oppose the Bill.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [12.24 a.m.]: I oppose this Bill on the ground that we are dealing with it much too late in the session. All Bills dealing with the Licensing Act create a great deal of public interest. On this particular measure we find that almost at 12.30 in the morning it is proposed to send the measure to the Legislative Council. Is this a fair proposition? The Premier knows, as we all know, that any amendment to the Licensing Act always creates a good deal of discussion both in Parliament and outside. It would not do any harm if this Bill were postponed so that further consideration could be given to it during the next session of Parliament.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Or 20 years later.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I said next session of Parliament. Consideration can be given to all the factors involved. The Premier would be well advised to adopt the suggestion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [12.27 a.m.]: This matter has been on the notice paper and it is time to take a vote on it.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The Council must also take a vote.

The PREMIER: The Bill is one which the average person can decide on in a few minutes. I am going to vote against it, and I hope most members in the Council will be able to make up their minds respecting it in a few minutes. This Bill will not delay us. If we take the attitude that the remaining items on the notice paper will not proceed to a vote, that will not be quite fair.

Private members have gone to a lot of trouble in preparing the Bills and putting them on the notice paper. We might have said the same thing about the Bill introduced by the member for South Perth, when it was before us. We could have said we had no time to debate it carefully and vote on it, even though it has since been considered by the Legislative Council. We can decide on the Bill now before us in next to no time. If it is defeated, the Council will not see it; if it is carried, the Council will have an opportunity to vote on it.

MR. YATES (South Perth) [12.30 a.m.]: It does not matter which Bill is last; there has to be a last Bill to end the session. Whether it is this one or another makes no difference. Five years ago, I attended the Licensing Court on behalf of a grocer in Como who was applying for a gallon licence at a time when bottled liquor was hard to secure. The hotelkeepers offered no objection; indeed, they were quite happy for anyone to sell bottled beer except them. They had a huge bar trade; in fact, it was difficult for elderly people to get a bottle of beer at a hotel. The hotelkeepers were selling bottled beer legitimately, but they did not have very big quotas, so they did not offer any objection to the gallon licence-holders getting a quota if they could and alleviating the position in the district.

I was asked by the chairman of the Licensing Court what were my reactions to the distribution of liquor. I said I favoured equal distribution throughout the State. The following day there were big headlines in "The West Australian," "Teetotal Member of Parliament Favours Liberal Distribution of Liquor." I was chipped about it from one end of the State to the other. But the man got the licence, and the only two people who protested were the inspector of the liquor branch of the Police Department, and Mr. Rose, who was representing the temperance league.

The several gallon licences in my district are functioning very well and doing quite a useful job. There are large numbers of people who do not like to go to hotels. That is what I am concerned about. They like to secure bottles of beer through the grocer, and that has been allowed by Parliament for many years. I

can see no real objection to the Bill. It is a good measure. Tinkering with the Licensing Act does not come into it at all, and the suggestion that hotels will go further into the discard because they have no bottled beer to sell is a bogey. If accommodation is not good, as the member for Stirling said, and they can sell beer without restriction, what difference would the two bottles make?

Members: This has nothing to do with two bottles. That is the next Bill.

Mr. YATES: They can have two of everything. They can mix up the gallon. They can buy two of everything instead of having one brand only. I know the intention of the Bill. It is that people may be able to go to a shop and select two bottles of each so that they can have a mixture. This is a step in the right direction. Those in South Perth who have gallon licences are supporting this measure because they know the needs of the people who deal with them. Mainly because of that, I support the Bill.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [12.34 a.m.]: I support the Bill, which I feel is a step in the right direction. The present system, under which gallon licence-holders are forced to operate to conform to the law is, to say the least, archaic. One is forced to buy a gallon of one particular beverage. I feel that it is much more desirable to buy a composite gallon, as envisaged in the measure.

Furthermore, people with gallon licences render a necessary service. I am not a great patron of hotels, and I confess that I find it much more satisfactory to have any liquor we require for our own private consumption delivered direct to the home, instead of having to cart it from a hotel to the car and from the car to the house. These people bring it to one's home in a very dignified manner and, under the proposed amendment, it would be possible to obtain liquor in the particular quantities and types one desires instead of being forced to take excessive quantities of spirits or wines, as the case may be.

MR. JOHNSON (Leederville) [12.35 a.m.]: I support the measure. I made a few inquiries from holders of gallon licences in Leederville and surrounding districts to ascertain their reactions and, if I might say so without prejudicing them, the result of my inquiries was to suggest that this Bill will legalise what is actually happening.

The situation appears to be that beer is normally sold in gallons—sometimes two gallons and possibly more—and is delivered direct to the home. Deliveries of spirits and wines are made by grocers in a manner which is included in the intention of the Bill, but is not covered in the Act as it stands. There are various methods of

dealing with the matter for book-keeping and record purposes, and there is not the slightest doubt that considerable breaches of the Act are taking place which this measure would prevent.

As far as I could discover, the holders of gallon licences deal solely with the persons to whom they deliver goods. It is highly preferable for us to encourage people, if they must be encouraged, to do their drinking in their own homes, instead of in licensed premises. If anything can be done that makes it more likely that people will stay at home for this purpose I am all for it. I think the Bill will achieve that end.

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison—in reply) [12.37 a.m.]: I appreciate the remarks of members who have opposed the Bill. I do not suppose there is a more sober man in this Chamber than I. It is not because I have any hatred of drink; I neither love it nor hate it; I am a fair man. I thank those who supported the measure because I think they are looking at the matter in a fair-minded way. I cannot understand why the U.L.V.A. is opposed to the measure. It may be because the members of that body fear that if it passes it might reduce drinking. It could do so, but I do not think that actually it will make any difference.

I have spoken to quite a number of licensees and they say it will not make any difference to them. A few hotel-keepers, or those who have interests in hotels, are opposed to the measure, but that does not mean a thing to me. I am here to do my job and to represent all the electors, not just a few. On the Goldfields the position is similar to that in the city. This measure is not merely for the Goldfields, and it should be treated fairly and squarely. If a person is entitled to buy a gallon of liquor, he should be able to buy an assorted gallon. If Mum wants to buy Dad a bottle or four bottles of beer, and a bottle of gin for herself, and a bottle of brandy in case of sickness, why should she not be able to do so, or why should she have to go to a hotel to get it?

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	21
Noes	....	....	....	....	12
Majority for					9

Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Brady	Mr. Molr
Mr. Graham	Mr. North
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hill	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hoar	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Yates
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Court
Mr. Lawrence	

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Hawke	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Owen
Mr. Manning	Mr. Sewell
Mr. May	Mr. Styants
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Watts
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. O'Brien in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Section 39 amended:

Mr. OLDFIELD: I move an amendment—

That in line two the words "and kind" be struck out.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member intend to insert something in lieu of these words?

Mr. OLDFIELD: No.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment does not make sense. I cannot accept it. The hon. member can vote against the clause.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT
(No. 2).*Second Reading.*

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 11th December of the debate on the second reading.

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

Ayes	.....	22
Noes	.....	8
Majority for	.....	14

Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Court	Mr. North
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Norton
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hoar	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Styants
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Yates
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Sewell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Hearman	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Manning	Mr. Owen
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Watts
Mr. Nalder	Mr. Hill

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Moir in the Chair; Mr. McCulloch in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 122 amended:

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: When we amended the Licensing Act some time ago to permit hotels to open on a Sunday, I was strongly opposed to the selling of bottled beer on that day, and when the Bill was discussed in Cabinet I took up the same stand. The provision here limits the sale of bottled beer to the Goldfields. Why should we have this privileged section?

The Minister for Railways: You have not lived there.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The hotels there are open for certain hours in the same manner as they are in all other parts of the State. The Minister for Railways referred in his interjection to the climatic conditions. Are they worse on the Goldfields than at Mullewa or Meekatharra?

The Minister for Health: They are on the Goldfields.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Are they any worse than they are in some of our agricultural areas? We get some days just as hot as they are on the Goldfields. This is the thin edge of the wedge for the selling of bottled beer on Sundays. There will be a move from many centres to have this privilege extended to them. It is unfortunate that we are weakening the Act in this direction. If a man wants to take bottled beer home he can buy it on Saturday night.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Then he drinks it when he gets home.

The Minister for Health: He can take a jug or a barrel of beer home on a Sunday.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: He can take his bottled beer home on Saturday night, and if he wants a drink on Sunday the hotels are open to him. They are also open to his wife. If we allow a certain part of the State to have this privilege, how can we consistently say it should be denied to other parts? The Premier's district of Northam can be very hot.

The Minister for Railways: Were you ever at Kalgoorlie in a dust storm?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes, but even if there is dust about, that does not prevent men from buying their beer on Saturday night. A man could go into the various hotels at Kalgoorlie and buy two bottles at each and so take home a dozen or more bottles on a Sunday; and his mates could, too. All the Bill is encouraging is a fine old Sunday spree. I do not think this is for the general good and personally I am sorry the Bill was not defeated.

1 a.m.

Mr. BOVELL: I refrained from voting on the second reading, because I considered that if it was desirable to serve

bottled liquor on Sundays in a certain area of the State, it was also desirable to serve it in other parts. I move an amendment—

That in line 6, the words "the Goldfields District" be struck out with a view to inserting other words.

If my amendment is agreed to, I shall insert in lieu the words "as prescribed in the principal Act" because I think they would be more satisfactory.

Mr. O'BRIEN: The amendment, if agreed to, will destroy the purpose of the Bill.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Why?

Mr. O'BRIEN: I have lived all my life on the Goldfields, and I could never understand why so much beer was consumed in those areas, because I do not drink myself. So I decided to make a study of it, and it was not until about six years ago that I realised the cause. I was working on a mine in the Murchison and chaps used to come to me and complain about fracture headaches.

Mr. Oldfield: What do you mean by that?

Mr. O'BRIEN: Men working underground have to put up with all sorts of conditions, and though I know that we have regulations which provide for dealing with fracture fumes and impure air, there is a good deal of mental strain on a man working down a mine. These people are not like the city slickers who drink around the hotels in Perth. The men in the mines are strong in wind and limb; they have hair on their chests like rope!

Mr. Oldfield: You must have felt out of place among them.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I am battling for the men on the Goldfields and not the city slickers in the metropolitan area. As I said, these men used to come to me with fracture headaches and I tried all sorts of remedies including A.P.C. and Aspros and I have even massaged their temples and the back of their heads with penitrene. I mean medical penitrene, and not the penitrene used for shifting rusty nuts. But all to no avail. However, where there is a cause there is a remedy. One day I asked a man who was in charge of the fracture on a certain mine—

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member connecting this up with the clause in the amendment?

Mr. O'BRIEN: Yes. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Will bottled beer cure their headaches?

Mr. O'BRIEN: I found that these men relieved their fracture headaches by drinking bottled beer. It is true that Nobles make a prescription which smells like sour beer, but it is most expensive. I found that it used to take 36 hours to get relief after taking this prescription,

whereas the men who drank bottled beer got rid of their headaches fairly quickly. A fracture headache is terrible.

Mr. Oldfield: Does it make your hair fall out?

Mr. O'BRIEN: It makes a person bald.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Are there any other types of headaches on the Goldfields on a Sunday morning?

Mr. O'BRIEN: I suppose so. These men work under a mental strain when they are working underground.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Would two bottles be enough?

Mr. O'BRIEN: One or two bottles. I have known some men to go home and their wives have refused to sleep with them. Even after a miner has had a hot or cold bath, he cannot get rid of the fracture fumes, and when he rests his head on the pillow it affects his wife; some women have complained that they have suffered fracture headaches as a result. I oppose the amendment and support the clause as it stands.

Mr. SEWELL: I oppose the amendment. I voted for the second reading because I believe that the people on the Goldfields and the North-West have asked for this alteration. I have had no requests in my own district for the Act to be amended. As a matter of fact, people in the trade have said to me that selling bottled beer on Sundays is the last thing they want. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I intend to support the amendment, but ultimately I hope the clause will be defeated. Apparently the people on the Goldfields get a different form of headache from the people at Busselton, Pinjarra or Northam, because of the type of employment. Apparently, the people on the Goldfields do not suffer from a headache after a night out! People in the rural areas are not permitted to buy bottled beer on Sundays in order that their wives can have a drink at home, so why should a person in Kalgoorlie be permitted that privilege.

Mr. O'Brien: Because he is working in the mining industry.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Now the hon. member wants to become discriminatory. In other words, the miners are a race apart. They are up in the air.

Mr. O'Brien: No, they are below the ground.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The hon. member says that because people work in the goldmines they are entitled to this privilege. The hon. member has never worked in a goldmine in his life. He might have worked on a mine, but not in a mine.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He has worked in a mine.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Out of the entire population there are only about 4,000 miners.

Mr. O'Brien: I would like you to come for a trip with me to the Murchison.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I have been to the Goldfields. I went to school in Coolgardie in the depression days. My grandfather was killed in a mine and an uncle was crippled for life. I can tell members where the money came from to start the A.W.U. I support the amendment but later I will move another amendment to strike out certain words. The Bill provides for people on the Goldfields to purchase two bottles of beer on Sunday to take home with them. This Chamber is supposed to be made up of people of average intelligence; yet we propose to pass a Bill which cannot be policed. There may be three men standing in a bar, one of whom asks for six bottles of beer; he is refused and he turns to his mates and asked them if they are taking their two bottles.

Mr. O'Brien: And his mates will not help him out.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It is impossible to police it. We might just as well try to police the number of schooners a man should drink. The metropolitan area is not permitted to enjoy the privileges given to the country areas two years ago. The rural areas are permitted one hour of drinking, the Goldfields area five hours and the metropolitan area none at all. How many more privileges over the metropolitan area do the Goldfields people want?

If legislation becomes law, it should be adhered to, and this provision could not be policed. When a member tries to maintain a balance between the south-western areas and the Goldfields and endeavours to introduce uniformity into the legislation, the member for Murchison says, "No, the people in the farming areas cannot have two bottles on Sundays." His objection is, of course, that the people in the country areas are not workers. He feels that they are silver tails and can afford to buy barrels of beer.

Mr. Yates: They take home barrels of beer in Kalgoorlie.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I have seen them taking barrels home at 11 o'clock at night to carry on the party.

Mr. BOVELL: I moved the amendment to obtain some sort of uniformity. I was not approached by the licensed victuallers in my district and I have no personal motive at all, because I have never entered any part of a bar where liquor is served. But there is a principle involved and the legislation should be uniform.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I oppose the amendment. The member for Vasse and the member for Maylands are agreeable to two bottles being supplied on Sunday; their only objection is that it should not be con-

fined to the Goldfields. As the member for Geraldton said, the country areas do not want it because they can get bottled beer without any trouble at all.

Mr. Yates: They must be breaking the law to get it.

Mr. McCULLOCH: The purpose of this amendment is to throw the Bill back to the Legislative Council where it will meet its doom.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I move an amendment—

That in lines 6 and 7 the words "and then only in quantities of not more than two bottles to each purchaser" be struck out.

The Premier: If your amendment were carried, it could be supplied in unlimited quantities.

Mr. OLDFIELD: As I have said before, members desire to pass legislation that cannot be policed. Against whom is the charge laid if a man is found with two dozen bottles of icy cold beer in his car? Will the publican be charged for selling those bottles? There is nothing in the Bill to show who would be culpable if a person purchased more than two bottles. Anyone could call at all the hotels in Kalgoorlie and purchase two bottles at each. How could that be policed? If it is to be permissible to purchase two bottles, why limit the quantity? I hope that members will be sensible and will accept the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I oppose the clause for reasons that I have already given. The measure reflects the power that is exerted in the Goldfields area.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The Collie miners will be along after this.

Mr. OLDFIELD: They are honest and do not want it. Members in discussing this question should take a State-wide view. The clause is wrong in principle and represents a most inequitable piece of legislation.

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

Ayes	.....	20
Noes	.....	10
Majority for	.....	10

Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Brady	Mr. North
Mr. Court	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Styant
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Yates
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Sewell

(Teller.)

Mr. Abbott	Noes.	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Hearman		Mr. Nalder
Mr. Hill		Mr. Owen
Mr. Lapham		Mr. Watts
Mr. Manning		Mr. Oldfield

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council and had appointed the Chief Secretary, Hon. L. C. Diver, and Hon. H. K. Watson as managers for the Council, the Chief Secretary's room as the place of meeting and the time 10 a.m. on Friday.

BILL—FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 1 to 5 inclusive.

BILL—STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on its amendment to which the Assembly had disagreed.

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted upon its amendments Nos. 2 to 34 inclusive.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier (for the Minister for Labour) in charge of the Bill.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the Assembly continues to disagree with the amendments made by the Council.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the Council be requested to grant a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council and that the managers for the Assembly be the Minister for Labour, Hon. A. V. R. Abbott and Mr. Moir.

Mr. COURT: I suggest that the managers from this House request the conference to allow advice to be taken from the experts who prepared the schedule which was the subject of discussion earlier in the evening. I understand that there is precedent for that procedure.

Mr. SPEAKER: The matter is entirely in the hands of the conference managers themselves.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 11th December.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [1.50 a.m.]: I think this measure should be defeated as it would be a retrograde step and would take a definite advantage away from the electors. If it became law, "how to vote" cards could not be distributed within a mile and in some circumstances even two miles of a polling booth. For a great many years it has been the custom to hand out "how to vote" cards at a table and that is convenient to the electors. The Bill would virtually do away with canvassers and literature and would remove all contacts with the elector. In the Commonwealth sphere the distance is 20ft. and I would, in fact, favour a reduction in the 50 yards that has been the law in this State.

Mr. Yates: When did you last fight an election?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In 1950. I had plenty of volunteers who did a good job and were most courteous to the electors. The people are not over-interested in elections now and if the Bill were agreed to, they would take still less interest. In another place it was said that those handing out the cards were, in effect, pestering the people, but I do not think that is true.

Mr. Yates: It is.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It might be so in the metropolitan area, but it is not true of the country.

Mr. Yates: On frequent occasions they have children handing out the cards, and that is not right.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have never seen children doing it. I do not think the Bill would affect the polls much, as most electors have made up their minds how they will vote before going to the poll, and I cannot understand why it was introduced unless some candidate in another place, being not too popular, had difficulty in getting people to assist him.

Mr. Yates: There are a number on your side who must favour this, although they may not be able to vote for it.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am sure members on this side wish to continue the present system. When there are five or six names on the ballot paper, many people may not be conversant with them all.

The Premier: Sometimes two people with the same surname stand for the same seat.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I voice my opposition to the Bill. I have never experienced trouble in getting volunteers to work at election time and they have always been enthusiastic and polite. I think we should continue the present system.

Mr. Yates: You should have been at Nedlands during the last election.

The Premier: I was there and thought they had a happy day.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I hope the Bill will be defeated at the second reading.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [1.57 a.m.]: The Bill is all right as far as it goes and I would be inclined to support it in doing away with "how to vote" cards outside polling booths, but it does not go far enough. The people are entitled to know for whom they are voting and I think the names of candidates and the parties they represent should be placed on the ballot paper. Until that is done, I do not think we should support this measure. In Federal Senate elections the candidates are grouped and a ballot is drawn for places on the ballot paper. The parties are not shown. I think if the political designations were placed opposite the names the people would know how they were voting. As has been said, two people with the same surname may stand for the same seat and the elector might not know the Christian name of the man for whom he wished to vote.

I do not think the measure will affect my electorate much. There are certain booths there where on occasions I have not been able to get people to hand out "how to vote" cards. Usually I got better results at those places than I did at others where people were handing out cards. So I feel that until we advance our ideas along the lines I have suggested, I am not prepared to support the measure.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [2.0 a.m.]: I freely grant that the principle contained in the Bill is debatable, but I think it is a step in the right direction. I doubt whether there are many members present, and whether there are many candidates for political honours who have not experienced some difficulty in fully manning polling booths from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock at night.

The purpose of the Bill is to abolish the practice of handing out "how to vote" cards on polling day, and I think that is a good idea. There will be ways and means of overcoming the position and letting people know on polling day how to vote. For example, a party could advertise in the Press on the day of the election, or the day before, telling people to cut out the advertisement because it was an indication of how they ought to vote.

So there are many ways of obviating this practice and overcoming the difficulties that some parties might experience in getting information to their supporters. However, I think it is a good move because it will lead a little further along the road, and will, in some measure, ensure that people read a little more about elections. It will make them become conscious of their civic duty and their responsibilities under the Electoral Act.

The Minister for Justice: You would get more informal votes.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The Minister might be correct in that assumption, but that in itself is indicative of the fact that people should give far more thought to the problem of elections. That is part of the idea behind my support of the Bill. I think members could support the measure with full justification.

MR. YATES (South Perth—in reply) [2.4 a.m.]: The Minister, when speaking to the second reading, made several interesting observations, one of the most important of which was that he failed to see why the Bill was introduced. He gave the reason himself when he made the following remarks:—"In my opinion, the electors have already made up their minds before going to vote." If that is so, the handing out of "how to vote" cards on polling day is entirely unnecessary.

The Minister for Justice: People want to know how to vote intelligently.

Mr. YATES: Yes, but they have already made up their minds.

The Minister for Lands: They want to know how to vote Liberal or Labour.

Mr. YATES: Even with "how to vote" cards, there are 700 or 800 informal votes at different elections. Even at the last

lord mayoral election, when people were voting voluntarily—they wanted to vote—there were 700 informal votes. The question of handing out “how to vote” cards is a big problem for most metropolitan candidates and particularly for members in another place who represent such areas as the Suburban Province. There might be 50 or 60 polling booths in the province, and it would require 600 or 700 people, as has happened at recent elections, to man polling booths.

It is almost impossible these days to get people sufficiently interested in politics to spare the time to give up one day in three years or six years to help at an election. It is possible to get 50 or 60, or maybe a hundred, people to help, but it takes many more to man all the polling booths in a large electorate. They faced this problem in Victoria where the basic figure in a metropolitan electorate is 35,000 people, while our basic is about 10,000. Probably, they would have twice as many polling booths in their electorates to cater for the larger number of people.

Doing away with this unnecessary work does not mean that a candidate dispenses with his entire organisation. Cars would still be required to take old people and invalids to the booths. A candidate would still need his committee rooms with helpers arranging rosters for the cars, and checking the roll when people wanted information. In fact, a candidate could still have the same organisation but he would not need the same number of helpers because the need for people to hand out “how to vote” cards would disappear if the Bill became law.

The day before the election the candidate could have “how to vote” cards distributed in the letter boxes in his electorate. We all know that women invariably go to the letterbox first thing in the morning before they leave the house to go to town, and in that way a candidate would ensure that his “how to vote” card was seen. Sometimes two or three candidates do the same thing, but it would assist people without a candidate having to use so many helpers.

Another part of the Act was mentioned by the Minister. At present, the handing out of “how to vote” cards is only 50 per cent. effective because at least 50 per cent. of the people go to the booths in their own vehicles. Thus they cannot be contacted by a person standing 50 yards back from the polling place and handing out cards. If a person is driving a car down the road, he is usually going too fast to be stopped by a person handing out cards, and at many polling booths there are three or four roads leading to it and only two people handing out cards. There is no need for the canvassers to worry about them.

They need to concentrate only on pedestrians with their “how to vote” cards. Therefore, it is not possible to cater for all electors under the provisions of the Act because we are restricted in the distribution of cards. The Minister referred to custom. We know enough about custom in this Chamber to realise that many of the ideas in regard to traditions are ill-founded. The Minister also mentioned that it was a retrograde step. I do not think it is. It is a step in the right direction.

The Minister for Lands: What is your ultimate aim, if this is a step in the right direction?

Mr. YATES: It will make the electors a little more election-conscious.

The Minister for Lands: You think that?

Mr. YATES: Of course I do. The electors will know, if this Bill is passed, that they will have no need to worry about how they shall vote because they will be fully aware that all they need to do is to go to their letter box and a “how to vote” card will be there for their guidance.

The Minister for Lands: The only thing you are worrying about is that the Liberal voters who go to the polling booths in cars will have no need to receive any “how to vote” cards from the canvassers.

Mr. YATES: No, that is not right. There are just as many Labour supporters carried to the polling booths in cars as there are Liberal supporters. During the last election the candidate who was opposing me had the same number of cars as I did. The organisation of each candidate's election campaign on polling day was a very big task, although I will admit that a sitting member always has a big advantage over a new candidate.

The Premier: I think you might have had a chance with this proposal if you had agreed to put the party designation on the “how to vote” card.

Mr. YATES: Unfortunately, that was not agreed to in another place and I am merely handling the Bill in this House. I think that the measure would affect members on both sides of the House equally. If passed, it would certainly save the organisations of both parties a considerable amount of money.

The Minister for Justice: It would save no expense whatsoever.

Mr. YATES: It would save the candidate £30 which was the cost of printing the required number of “how to vote” cards last time.

The Minister for Justice: You have only just stated that you would still need “how to vote” cards to place in letter boxes.

Mr. YATES: A candidate would know exactly how many cards he wanted for the houses if this Bill were passed, but under the existing legislation, in view of the great number of polling booths, it is necessary for him to print many thousands of "how to vote" cards so that he might have enough for distribution at each polling place. If it were necessary for me to place "how to vote" cards only in letter boxes, I would print 3,500 because that is the number of houses within my electorate.

Apart from the cost of printing, a candidate also has to meet the expense of providing refreshments and in some instances petrol for the cars if vehicles cannot be obtained voluntarily. Personally, I have never paid for the use of a car nor have I paid people to assist me at any polling place. Organisations of the parties in this House have had to pay for the use of cars in the conduct of an election campaign and also the cost of providing refreshments.

Therefore, this measure, if agreed to, would be of benefit to all parties because it would tend to keep election expenses down. Already these costs are reaching high proportions and every party is finding it difficult to furnish enough finance to conduct election campaigns. I think the Bill is a good one and hope it will receive the support of all members in this House.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	17
Majority against	5

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. North
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Owen
Mr. Manning	Mr. Watts
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Yates
Mr. Naider	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Styans
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. May
Mr. McCulloch	

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Brand	Mr. Hawke
Mr. Mann	Mr. Norton
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Thorn	Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Wild	Mr. Heal
Mr. Doney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hill	Mr. Brady

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILLS (4)—RETURNED.

- 1, Loan, £17,850,000.
 - 2, Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment (No. 2).
 - 3, Bulk Handling Act Amendment (No. 1).
 - 4, Parliamentary Superannuation Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

**BILL—GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
(PROMOTIONS APPEAL BOARD)
ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendment.

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

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and had appointed the Minister for the North-West, Hon. L. A. Logan and Hon. H. Hearn as managers for the Council, the President's room as the place of meeting and the time 10 a.m. on Friday, the 18th December.

*Sitting suspended from 2.9 a.m. (Friday)
to 11.20 p.m. (Friday).*

Friday, 18th December, 1953.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Native flora, as to protection, northern areas	3024
Native Welfare, as to Alvan House and McDonald House trainees	3024
Railways, (a) as to use of welded rails (b) as to welded versus jointed rail costs	3025
Royal visit, as to special session of Parliament	3025
Queen's gift fund, as to official's stipends	3025
Goldfields water supply, as to originators and Mr. W. Grayden's statement	3025
Airport, as to Commonwealth proposals	3026
Water supplies, as to inefficiency of metropolitan mains	3026
Traffic, as to theft of member's car	3026
Close of session, (a) as to probable date (b) as to Bills to be introduced	3026
Motions : Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code, to disallow legal costs regulation	3027
Fremantle harbour, as to proposed extension scheme	3029