

money. Mr. Baxter, in moving the motion, overlooked this aspect, and set out to make a party matter of the proposal.

I say that Kanowna as the chief polling place should be wiped out. There are only five votes in the town, and if I lost the lot of them, it would not make any difference to me. Kanowna is only ten miles from Kalgoorlie; it is the chief polling place, and with five voters, has a returning officer, poll clerk, motorcars to take officials there, and all the rest of it. This should not be tolerated. Norseman or even Esperance should be the centre. Some day we might get for Esperance the consideration necessary to make that port what it ought to be. In addition to a returning officer to cater for a handful of voters, there are scrutineers for the Labour Party and for the National Party—all for the sake of five votes. Kanowna was very much in the limelight when I was a lad, but since then it has declined. I should like to know what was the cost of taking those five votes. I have no desire, as a rule, to serve on Select Committees, but I would like to be a member of this Select Committee. Some 17 years ago I got 50 votes in the Kanowna electorate and despite a ruling by judges, the nit-wit of a returning officer would not admit the votes that were indicated by crosses. Mr. Cornell was present and will remember the occasion.

Hon. J. Cornell: I was not.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Then the hon. member has a poor memory.

The PRESIDENT: I ask members to hear the speaker in silence.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I approve of that. Every vote indicated by a cross on that occasion was against the views of the electoral officer. We should have a definite undertaking that when a cross or other mark is made on a ballot paper and indicates the intention of the voter to be either for or against the candidate, it should be accepted. I cannot agree with everything Mr. Baxter has said, but I do say that the chap wins who gets the best postal vote officer under the present system. One reason why I support the motion is that we ought not to stand on sentiment. We should not have a chief polling place at Kanowna when it has only five voters, notwithstanding that Mr. Heenan was born there. We should have the chief polling place either at Norseman

or Esperance, both of which are bigger places.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, debate adjourned.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation).
  - 2, Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
- Passed.*

*House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 3rd October, 1944.*

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

### QUESTIONS (2).

#### FENCING WIRE.

*As to Black and Galvanised.*

Mr. BERRY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it a fact that galvanised fencing material is available to primary producers in any of the Eastern States at the present time?

(2) Is there any substantiation of the persistent and prevalent rumour that the W.A. Netting and Wire Company, Ltd. refuses to galvanise fencing material until all stocks of black wire fencing material have been purchased by Western Australian primary producers, or otherwise disposed of, with profit to the company?

(3) If the answer to No. (2) is in the affirmative can he take steps to compel this firm to galvanise such fencing material and make same available without deliberately forcing surplus stocks of black wire fencing material on primary producers of this State?

(4) If the answer to No. (3) is in the negative will he endeavour to induce the

State Government to commence the manufacture of galvanised fencing material in this State as a State enterprise?

The **MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** replied:

(1) It is believed that Eastern States manufacturers are able to galvanise netting and fencing wire, but are unable to supply all requirements, owing to lack of necessary labour.

(2) The company is unable fully to meet demand for any type of fencing material. They advise that additional coal supplies and labour are necessary before galvanising can commence.

(3) See answer to No. (2).

(4) This suggestion will require considerable investigation.

### HOUSING.

#### *As to Pre-cast Concrete Patent.*

Mr. **WATTS** asked the Premier:

(1) Have representations been made by one J. C. Duncan-Raine concerning pre-cast concrete dwellings to be erected under methods patented by him?

(2) Have plans been submitted to the Workers' Homes Board of a five-roomed pre-cast concrete house, with garage, or of any other type of dwelling?

(3) Has a request been made that the Government should finance the erection of one dwelling of this patented type in the metropolitan area with a view to ascertaining the suitability and practicability of the methods proposed?

(4) If so, has a decision been arrived at on this request, and if it has, is that decision favourable or not?

(5) If unfavourable, why?

(6) Has he been informed that Eastern States interests are considering the acquisition of the patent rights and the consequent erection of such dwellings in numbers in the Eastern States?

(7) Whether he has been so informed or not, in the event of such an eventuality arising, does he consider the establishment of this industry should be allowed to go outside Western Australia?

(8) If not, what steps is the Government prepared to take to retain it here?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes, to the Public Works Department.

(3) Yes.

(4) and (5) The matter has yet to be decided.

(6) Yes, but only by Mr. Duncan-Raine himself. Private interests in Western Australia are at liberty to adopt the scheme.

(7) It is understood somewhat similar houses have been erected in some of the other States.

(8) See answer to questions (4) and (5).

### **BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

Report of Committee adopted.

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

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE** [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This is a short and readily understandable Bill designed to amend the Constitution Act of 1899. There is nothing difficult about the measure. Indeed, I believe that most members who spoke on the Electoral Act Amendment Bill have already admitted that more power should be given to the Legislative Assembly. The Bill really aims at preventing the Legislative Council from stultifying legislation submitted to it by this Chamber. Irrespective of the political colour of any party predominating here, a large proportion of Government Bills sent up to another place has been either rejected or mutilated beyond recognition.

Mr. Doney: Can you express that proportion in figures?

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: The hon. member is well aware that a goodly percentage of Government Bills has been thrown out by the Upper House without any cause whatever.

Mr. Doney: Now you are running away!

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: I am speaking the truth about another place, a truth of which all members in this Chamber have had experience. The great majority of Bills are introduced here, this being the appropriate democratic House with a wide franchise covering the whole of the people of Western Australia. On the other hand, the Legislative Council is not democratically constituted. It has a fixed franchise, which

we all perfectly understand. For a person to become a member of the Legislative Council he must possess, for a start, a property qualification and also be of mature age—over 30 years. No other qualification for membership of the Upper House is taken much heed of apart from the property qualification. Education is not considered; neither is intelligence. I repeat, the Legislative Council cannot be considered a democratic institution. That fact has been acknowledged by all members of this Chamber who have spoken on the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, irrespective of the side of the House from which they spoke. The deliberations of another place cannot be conducted on democratic principles, its members being elected more or less by their peers. And those members must serve those who elect them. The result is that the Upper House does not extend equal consideration to people on the lower rungs.

Mr. Doney: How do the electors become peers in this case?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In a certain sense they become peers by reason of the property qualification. Otherwise they would not have votes for another place. However, the Government thought the present time ripe for action. Most of the people have been awaiting an alteration in our bi-cameral system. Therefore we approach this, the people's Chamber, and ask it not to bear any longer the burden of obstructive tactics used elsewhere. The Bill is a simple one. It provides that if a money Bill is sent to another place a month before the end of the session—and it should be remembered that in accordance with Section 46 of the Constitution Act a money Bill may not be amended by the other place—and if the Council does not agree to the measure, it shall become law whether the Council likes it or not. The second and only other clause in the Bill provides that if for three successive sessions a Bill other than a money Bill is sent from this House to the other Chamber a month before the end of the session, and is not agreed to, it shall become law, irrespective of whether amendments are made by another place and agreed to or disagreed to by this House. The Bill is based on the best of all precedents, namely, the English Parliament Act of 1911.

It was the English Parliament that created the Western Australian Parlia-

ment and our Constitution Act is the child of the Mother of Parliaments. The English Parliament is our creator and it set us an example in 1911 when it took away power from the House of Lords. We are not asking for anything that is revolutionary. We are not asking for anything other than has been conceded to the House of Commons in the Old Country. Since 1911 the House of Commons has been emancipated. I have often wondered why the emancipation of the Legislative Assembly in this State has not taken place previously; why we have not emulated the example of the English Parliament in that respect. We now challenge the Legislative Council, and the Opposition to demonstrate their bona fides in the accusation they have often cast against this side of the House, that the Government has protected itself under the cloak of the Legislative Council in respect of legislation it has submitted. I deny the accusation and say such a thing has never happened. If the Opposition is genuine, its members will say that they are prepared without a murmur to pass this legislation, and thus deprive the Government of the protection it has been alleged to enjoy by submitting legislation which the Legislative Council would be sure to reject. It is a wonder that the Opposition has not submitted a measure of this kind.

Mr. Doney: We did not have much time.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the Opposition had had more time I am afraid it would not have given much consideration to this matter, although it would have had a better opportunity of getting such legislation through than has this side of the House, because most of the Opposition's colleagues are in the other Chamber.

Mr. Watts: You have been in power for 11 years and have done nothing up to date.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: All those who have spoken on the Electoral Act Amendment Bill have acknowledged—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is not in order in discussing a measure previously dealt with during the session.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am sorry. I wanted to give examples of utterances made by members opposite. If we study the statistical returns for the 1944 elections, we discover some rather amazing facts. Members can obtain these figures

themselves from the Electoral Department. I think I have already mentioned them. The people appearing on the electoral roll for the Legislative Assembly total 274,856, but for the Legislative Council only 79,889, or less than one-third of those on the Legislative Assembly roll. Voting for the Legislative Assembly is compulsory. Of those on the roll 86.53 per cent. recorded their votes. For the Legislative Council election only 49.48 per cent. voted. Getting down to mathematical fundamentals, the Legislative Council represents only about one-fifth of the electors of this State in comparison with the Legislative Assembly. It should also be noted that a number of provinces were uncontested. The total number of votes exercised was 33,374, nearly half the total enrolment. For the Assembly seats under this category there were 62,480 votes, which did not have to be recorded, this number being less than one-quarter of the total enrolment.

Another point—possibly of interest to the member for Subiaco because it gives an idea of the number of female voters—is that 34,519 males were entitled to vote for the Legislative Council and only 11,996 females. The figures for the Assembly were 104,127, and 108,492 respectively. Thus, so far as the Legislative Assembly is concerned, females predominate. In connection with the Legislative Council election 17,268 males voted and 5,453 females, or approximately 50 per cent. in each case. For the Assembly, including members of the Forces, 70,766 males voted, but 94,537 females went to the poll. These figures clearly demonstrate that the Legislative Assembly truly represents the Western Australian people. The Legislative Council represents a small exclusive portion of the population. Many Legislative Council Provinces are pocket boroughs where the representatives are too firmly established to be opposed and dislodged. So only a relatively small proportion of the voters bothers to go to the poll. The figures I have supplied make the position, I think, very clear. Members should have no compunction in passing the Bill. I hope it will be agreed to unanimously in this Chamber and that due consideration will be given to it in another place. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

## BILL—NATIVES (CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS).

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

**MR. LESLIE** (Mt. Marshall) [4.52]: I am sure the Minister for the North-West who moved the second reading of the Bill, will be glad to know that he has, at least from me—if that is worth anything much—sincere sympathy respecting the principle underlying the purpose for which the measure has been introduced, and he also has my assurance that in his efforts to improve the lot of the native people of Western Australia he will have every assistance from me. The purpose for which the Bill has been introduced is laudable; it deals with a matter that is long overdue. It appealed to me as rather strange that the Minister should mention in his introductory speech that this objective has been the policy of the Labour Party for over 10 years. Actually the Labour Party has been in control of the Government of the State for that period of time, yet this is the first attempt to place before Parliament a measure of this description, fully warranted as it undoubtedly is. In the Bill, however, many matters have been omitted and much has been included in a manner that I suggest indicates the issues have not received from the Minister the full consideration which they deserve.

The Commissioner of Native Affairs, in his latest report, stated that there is a definite increase in the native population. In consequence, I hold that a duty devolves upon us to endeavour to raise the natives to a higher standard of civilisation, even to that of the white population. However, we must be careful that we do not embark upon an undertaking that at a later stage we shall have cause to regret. We must be careful that we do not precipitate a condition of affairs that could possibly flood us with a mass of trouble and create difficulties that will be difficult to remove. In the course of his speech the Minister said that the Bill was in the nature of experimental legislation. I am inclined to think that we must remove from it any tendency towards the experimental. In the interests of the natives themselves, and in the interests of the white population, which is in an overwhelming majority, we must be sure that in the measures we adopt in endeavouring to raise

the natives to a higher standard we do not defeat the very object we set out to attain.

I can speak with a measure of personal experience when I say it is an established fact that too often the native races, and the backward races generally, once introduced to the benefits and conveniences enjoyed by civilised people, are all too prone to adopt the vices in the system before they absorb the inherent virtues. I can speak with some experience because in the days of my youth in South Africa I mingled amongst native people and know very well the tendency on their part, no matter how virtuous we may try to make them, to be attracted to the vices we endeavour to keep from them. I suggest to the Minister that when the Bill is in Committee he should favourably consider amendments that will be moved and which have been designed to safeguard the natives whom we desire to enjoy the benefits conferred by the legislation, and also the white people of the State. Respecting every native who desires to obtain full citizenship rights, which, let me remind the House, are extremely valuable, we must arrange that the native is not allowed to attain the higher status open to him except after a period of probation. He must first prove that he is worthy to enjoy the benefits this House desires to confer upon him, and he must prove by actual example that he is worthy of elevation to the standard to which we desire to raise him.

The Minister for Justice: Many of them have already proved that.

Mr. LESLIE: That is so. Yet, candidly speaking, I was disappointed regarding the number mentioned by the Minister, who said that 275 natives had received certificates of exemption, 75 of which had to be cancelled. Those particulars rather incline me to a feeling of uneasiness. They indicate that over 27 per cent. of those who received certificates of exemption have acted in a manner that necessitated the revocation of their certificates. That applies to the number against whom some definite evidence was obtained that they were unworthy of the certificate of exemption. In addition, however, there must be another percentage that have escaped detection. Probably it means that well over 30 per cent. of the natives have proved themselves unworthy, and that must be disturbing to those who wish the natives well.

The Minister for Justice: Probably quite a number who are worthy have not made application for the certificate of exemption.

Mr. LESLIE: I agree with that. If those natives are sincerely desirous of attaining to the standards of the white race, they should be only too ready to avail themselves of the opportunities we extend to them. Naturally they may have some personal reason for not desiring to avail themselves of the opportunity to secure certificates of exemption.

The Minister for Justice: They have their dignity.

Mr. LESLIE: And I honour them for that. If they sincerely believe the dignity of their race is worth more than the privilege we extend to them to take advantage of the opportunity made available to enjoy all the conveniences, facilities and benefits of the white race, all honour to them; but it may be that that dignity is really animated by a desire to maintain tribal customs which are not in accord with our ideas of civilised standards. That fact also must be borne in mind. Therefore we must exercise extreme care in our efforts to raise these people up to a higher standard. Education is definitely necessary, and I suggest that we use the present law which gives the native the right to receive an exemption certificate and allow it to remain in force. Then, after the native has served a probationary period as an exempted native, to the satisfaction of the authority to whom the application is made, namely, the magistrate, and has shown that he is worthy of being elevated to a higher standard, we can extend the rights of citizenship to him; but to allow a native to apply immediately for a certificate of citizenship without having been subjected to any previous trial or probationary period would be, I believe, somewhat dangerous.

Mr. Doney: There must be two years' good behaviour.

Mr. LESLIE: That is so.

The Minister for the North-West: Are you sure you have read the Bill?

Mr. LESLIE: Yes. I feel that under the Minister's proposals the acquirement of citizenship rights will be far too easy. A native must be able to show good behaviour for two years, but I suggest that he should hold a certificate of exemption for two years. Under the certificate of exemption,

a native is entitled to certain privileges which he can abuse if he has not in him the stuff to make good.

The Minister for Justice: Do not you think the natives who served in the Armed Forces have served a probationary period?

Mr. LESLIE: To a certain extent they have served a probationary period. To say that a native who has served in the Armed Forces is entitled to the rights of citizenship by virtue of that service is stretching the point too far.

The Minister for the North-West: The Bill does not say that.

Mr. LESLIE: The Bill provides that a native with such service may apply and indicates that his service shall be taken into consideration when he applies for the rights of citizenship. The wearing of the King's uniform, however, does not sanctify a sinner.

The Minister for Mines: It makes a lot of sinners.

Mr. LESLIE: Perhaps so. I do not consider that anybody, white or black, is entitled to advance the plea that he has served his King in the Armed Forces as a mitigating circumstance in defence of misbehaviour. A man who has served in the right spirit should be a better citizen because of his service. I venture to say that the natives should not be considered more worthy because they have seen services with the Armed Forces. I refer the Minister to the report of the Commissioner of Native Affairs, where he deals with natives who have served in the Forces. He says—

A large number of half-castes were discharged from the Army because of their unsuitability for sustained service, with its attendant Army discipline. Those discharged were mostly half-castes who previously lived under camping conditions. They were half-castes of native habits and inclinations, and were unfitted for service in the Armed Forces due to the disabilities of their native ancestry. This was clearly borne out by the many discharges effected, and they proved that the authorities acted unwisely in enlisting such half-castes from rural employment.

In order to safeguard the position, I suggest that in the case of these men who have served in the Armed Forces and have proved satisfactory, there should be a definitely stated period of service which could be substituted for the period of good behaviour required for an exemption certificate. In other words, if a native on his

return from service in the Armed Forces could show a period of service of two years and an honourable discharge, that should count as equivalent to the holding of an exemption certificate for two years. This proposal would be fair and reasonable. I would be grossly unfair to provide that simply because a native volunteered to enter the Armed Forces and probably was employed on a menial job for a matter of, say, six months and then discharged as unsatisfactory, he should be entitled to the rights of citizenship.

The Commissioner points out in his report that the disabilities of native ancestry play a big part. That is a point we must bear in mind. A native might be quite satisfied even for a period of two years to settle down to civilised conditions, but in many instances there comes a time in his life when the urge of his ancestry will make itself felt. I know of natives in my own district, although we have few of them there, who have worked on farms for eight or nine years and then felt that they had to go on a walkabout and they consequently revert to the native state. They might have returned in a couple of months' time but they did not. Whether they obtained work with other farmers, I do not know. The call of their native ancestry was so great that, even after the lapse of years, it pulled them away from the benefits they were enjoying as members of civilised society.

The Minister for Justice: I think I must have a bit of that native feeling, because I like to go bush.

Mr. LESLIE: So do I. The next time the Minister feels like going bush, I hope he will allow me to accompany him, particularly if he makes use of the Railway Commissioner's coach. We must not lose sight of the fact that it will be dangerous without some pre-testing period, to extend this right of citizenship to natives. Once we do that—

The Minister for Justice: The magistrate will decide.

Mr. LESLIE: That is the proposal in the Bill, but the decision should not be left entirely to the magistrate. Under the Native Administration Act, peculiarly enough, the prerogative of granting a certificate of exemption to a native rests with the Minister. The Minister has the say; it is at his discretion whether a certificate of exemption shall be granted or not. I suggest it would be better if the Bill provided

that the native, at the end of that period, should apply to the magistrate for rights of citizenship and if the magistrate's recommendation was then submitted to the Minister for his endorsement or otherwise. I believe that the right of citizenship is one that Parliament or the Government should confer. I ask the Minister to include in the Bill a proposal that the Minister shall be the one to grant that right on the recommendation of the magistrate who has heard the case.

In the course of his speech, the Minister introduced many matters which really were not necessary to convince us of the need for a measure of this sort. What does concern us is the fact that the privilege proposed to be bestowed must not be too easily bestowed, but that it must be earned and offered only after trial. If the Minister reads the report of the Commissioner carefully, he will find that the necessity for education and training is emphasised throughout. Speaking on the question of native labour the Commissioner said—

The pool of this (native labour) is almost untouched as yet, and since it would be of great use if educated and trained to industrious occupations, there must be an increase in facilities for these purposes.

Throughout his report he emphasises the need for training and education in order to enable natives to attain the requisite standard. Our children have the rights of citizenship, but we put them to school for years and years and hope they will develop into good citizens. The whole of our educational system is based on the idea of making them good citizens who will abide by the laws of the land. It cannot be expected that a native, in a matter of two or three years, is going to realise fully the duties and responsibility of citizenship as set out in the Bill. In a matter of two years we cannot possibly expect a native to appreciate those responsibilities. While we all recognise the need for educating a native to a higher standard, I am afraid that many members might be swayed by sentiment or might feel an urge for this new order under which so-called justice will be done to men of all classes, creeds and colours. But we have to be very careful that we do not allow such sentiment to play too great a part and so influence our judgment and prevent its being as sound as it should be. Again I refer the Minister to

the report of the Commissioner, where he points out—

The war has had a disturbing effect. Our country white people have been called up for service, and since most of them have now experienced the conveniences and entertainments of city life, I doubt whether they will freely return to country life. Consequently we should look to the de-tribalised natives for our labour requirements in rural pursuits. If we defer to the inclinations of the natives and deal with them too sympathetically and sentimentally, I am afraid the sad story of their moral ineptitude will go on.

That is the point I wish to emphasise. We must be careful not to allow the natives to taste the joys of civilisation and then to fall by the wayside and revert to the state in which they previously lived. I therefore submit to the Minister that he should consider the inclusion in the Bill of a qualifying period under an exemption certificate. The holding of an exemption certificate should be a prerequisite. There are other provisions in the Bill with which I am not in agreement. Provision should be made for a certificate to be taken from a native not only if he commits an offence under the Native Administration Act, but also if he commits offences under the Police Act or the Criminal Code. Such a provision surely is necessary, because otherwise we shall find a native constantly offending against the Police Act or the Criminal Code and yet he could not be deprived of his citizenship rights. That is one provision which I suggest should be inserted in the Bill.

Another provision I wish included relates to vagrancy. There is a tendency on the part of the native to make an easy living and wander from place to place. He begs and does not cultivate industrious habits. If a native can find an easy way of making a living he will do so and there is the danger, if he is granted full citizenship rights, of his becoming a burden and a nuisance in the way I have suggested. No provision is made in the Bill to meet such a case. If a native becomes a vagrant he should be deprived of his citizenship rights until such time as he proves himself, under supervision, to be again able to live as an ordinary human being.

Mr. Doney: Vagrancy is already provided for.

Mr. LESLIE: But not in the Bill. The Bill merely provides that the native's citizenship rights shall be cancelled if he has con-

tracted a certain disease or has been convicted of an offence under the Native Administration Act, or has resumed tribal or native associations. He could be convicted of an offence under the Police Act or under the Criminal Code and still remain a citizen, and a bad one at that. If he knows that an offence on his part against the white man's laws will deprive him of his citizenship rights, that will tend to keep him on the straight and narrow path.

Mr. Watts: It would have value as a deterrent.

Mr. LESLIE: That is the main reason why I suggest this provision should be included in the Bill. To sum up, we must let the native understand that the citizenship rights which we wish to confer on him are something to which he must attain. He must prove his worthiness. Once he has proved his worthiness, we will welcome him in our midst; but we are not prepared to extend the privilege of citizenship to him until he proves his justification for it. We go further and say that because we know his weaknesses, which are due to his tribal ancestry, we shall place one or two deterrents in his way to keep him from offending and to help him on the road that he has decided to take. I am supporting the second reading, but I intend to submit amendments in the Committee stage that I hope the Minister will consider and adopt, as I believe they will be a definite improvement to the measure and of course will not interfere with its operations. On the other hand, they will make the measure something which is protective to the native, protective to the white, and far more workable than the Bill which the Minister has submitted to the House.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara): I support the second reading of the Bill, although, in agreement with the member for Mt. Marshall, I consider there is room for ample amendment in the Committee stage. However, I take a somewhat different view of the amendments which should be made. We are aware that during the founding of the Swan River Settlement about 115 years ago the natives contested every square mile for a time while the pioneering instincts of the early settlers prompted them to proceed, north, south, and east over the ranges in order to make a living. Actions such as that which took place at Pinjarra

in 1834 naturally tended to decrease the native population. Since that time, on occasions for self-preservation purposes and on other occasions unfortunately because of ill-treatment, the native population has to a great extent declined.

Prior to the introduction of Responsible Government the British Government laid down a condition that at least £10,000 had to be appropriated from the Consolidated Revenue of the then Colony in the interests of the native population. The natives have declined, but we are faced with another problem still more acute and becoming more accentuated. I refer to what is termed the half-caste problem, which is more serious than the native problem. The half-caste problem has been brought about not by the natives but by the whites. One would be inclined to gather from the speech of the member for Mt. Marshall that the Bill is intended to give every coloured person in Western Australia full rights of citizenship. That is not the case. What it seeks to do is to give those who can face up to certain requirements the rights of an ordinary citizen. The member for Mt. Marshall mentioned that citizenship rights were valuable, and with that remark we are all in agreement. But we find that some of our white population must be compelled to exercise their rights of citizenship.

Mr. Leslie: One right.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yes, and that is the main right of citizenship.

Mr. Leslie: I agree with you.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I refer to the right to exercise a vote in the government of the country. While on that point, it is worth mentioning here—although I do not say that one swallow makes a summer—that while I was on a certain job some few years ago, I was at a meeting enrolling persons on the State and Federal rolls. Four half-castes were present who had had what I would call a primary school education. A number of white men were also present, of whom three refused to have their names put on the electoral roll because they said that if that were done they would be "slugged for income tax." This was prior to castes were demanding the right for equal-pay-as-you-earn taxation. The three half-castes were demanding the right for equality with their workmates. They contended they received award rates of pay and were subject to the laws of the country; that they fully understood their rights and re-



sponsibilities and that they were equally competent to exercise full rights of citizenship. They added, "We are not foreigners, we are Australian natives; we are living under the laws of the country and are entitled to vote." I have in mind that the Bill proposes to give to natives who can pass certain tests the rights of citizenship. Provision is made that magistrates shall be the final authority to determine whether an application shall be granted.

The Bill also provides that the applicant must actually stand up successfully to six tests, of which I believe three or four should be abolished for the time being. The magistrate must assure himself that, for two years immediately preceding the date of the application, the applicant has lived the ways of the white man. The magistrate must also be satisfied that the conferring of the rights of citizenship on the applicant will be for his welfare. Provision is also made that the applicant must be able to speak and understand the English language and that the applicant shall not be suffering from leprosy or syphilis. Suppose the test of syphilis were applied to the white population! That is the point! We are proposing to confer equal rights of citizenship on certain members of the community; yet we are providing that those members of the community cannot exercise such rights if they are suffering from a certain malady. The Bill also provides that the applicant must be of industrious habits and of good behaviour and reputation, and reasonably capable of managing his own affairs.

A person suffering from leprosy cannot travel south of the 20th parallel of latitude, and so it is obvious that he cannot exercise full rights of citizenship. I understand the other disease which I mentioned is hereditary. But a native must be able to pass successfully the other five tests. He may pass those tests, but he could not receive full citizenship rights if he were suffering from a malady over which he has no control. That is the way in which I interpret the Bill. My point is that we should not at this stage overload the Bill. We should provide that the magistrate, before he grants a certificate of citizenship, should use his discretion as to whether or not the native has been of industrious habits and of good behaviour. The Commissioner of Native Affairs has, under the Bill, a right to be represented

personally or by counsel, either in support of or against the application. So, the magistrate is entitled to call for all the relevant papers, documents, and the whole history of the applicant from his earliest days up to the time of his application.

Let us look at the other side. Once the native has been granted the rights of citizenship the Bill proposes to hang a sword of Damocles over his head. Having been granted the rights of citizenship the man is entitled to be treated on the same basis, as far as privileges and responsibilities are concerned, as any other citizen. If a white citizen commits one or two breaches of the Native Administration Act, he is not classed as a native but this Bill sets out that, once a man is granted these rights, if he commits two offences against the Native Administration Act he is liable to be classed as a native. I suggest that if an applicant desired to resume his tribal associations, or if it were proved that he contracted leprosy, it would be sufficient to justify cancelling his rights of citizenship. Mention has been made of the certificates of exemption. I know men in this country—two or three full-bloods and quite a number of half-castes—who would not condescend to apply for a certificate of exemption.

Mr. Marshall: Quite right, too!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yes, because the certificate of exemption does not confer the status of citizenship on a native and remove him entirely from the operations of the Native Administration Act. He is still a native under the law. Quite a number of men who have been educated at New Norcia and other places would not deign to apply for a certificate of exemption. They would say, "We have always lived the ways of a white man and earned our living throughout the country, and have had a reasonable education. Why should we look upon ourselves as natives?" The proposal that one should, for two years, hold a certificate of exemption, is hording on the ridiculous. The type of man who, we think, would apply for a certificate under this Bill would have enough sense, dignity and principle to refuse to apply for such a certificate under the present Native Administration Act. It has also been said that the fact that numbers of native are serving in the Forces is no reason why they should be granted certificates of citizenship.

I submit, as I have previously in this House that, generally speaking, lads under 21 years of age or over, if they are entitled to be in the Armed Forces to protect our country, and are prepared to lay down their lives for it, are entitled to a say in the government of the country. That is the way I view the position. It has been said that this is experimental legislation, and I contend we should lay down certain principles, and these are embodied in the first two requirements on which the magistrate has to satisfy himself. A previous speaker said that a native may desire to resume his native associations. If that is the case he would automatically, of course, have his citizenship rights cancelled. I am absolutely against any proposal which would indiscriminately confer the right of citizenship on every coloured person throughout the State, but I know of many men, of half-blood, who have reared families and who speak good English and know how to manage their own affairs. These men are teetotallers, have educated their children and have, in every way possible, lived up to the duties of citizenship. They pay rates and taxes in accordance with the laws of the country. They say, "Why should we be denied the right of being classed as citizens of this country?"

That is the type of person on whose behalf I speak. They are people who realise their responsibilities and understand the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship. I have no doubt that if these men apply for and are granted full rights of citizenship they will show by their demeanour and behaviour that it is warranted. The Bill makes provision for a photograph to be affixed to the certificate in the same way as one is mounted in a passport. Even if there is any justification for such action in the closely settled South-West Land Division, there is no warrant for it in the outlying districts, especially at the present time, when photographers and cameras are so short. On the stations there may be a number of men entitled to make application. When they discover that they have this right they may be in the middle of shearing, or the pastoralists may urgently want their services for some other purpose, and yet they would have to go 100 or 200 miles to have a photograph taken and affixed to their certificate of citizenship.

The police, who are the protectors in these districts, know practically the whole of the native and half-caste population. I do not see that there is much necessity for it, and I do not think there is any hope of an applicant trafficking in the certificates in the northern part of the State, even if there is any possibility of its being done in the South-West. In conclusion, I hope that the Bill will be very soon made law. There is room for improvement. This is a very big question. It is the first time, that I know of, that any principle of this character has been submitted to Parliament to bestow citizenship rights on what we call the members of the native population. Strong arguments could be put up in various directions in regard to the issue, but I believe that we should not adopt the attitude that we are 100 per cent. lily-white, and the natives and half-castes 100 per cent. black. Most of the vices that the natives have acquired have been learnt from the white population of this country. Some of us are apt to hold ourselves up as lily-white and point the finger of scorn at the whole of the native population. I have indicated my attitude towards this problem. I have no intention of submitting any proposal for the granting of citizenship rights for those members of the native population who do not understand their duties and responsibilities, but this House should give serious and sympathetic consideration to the claims of a number of men, who, by the accident of birth, happen to be coloured a little darker than we are, but who are otherwise entitled to enjoy certain rights of citizenship in this country.

**MR. McLARTY** (Murray-Wellington): I feel sure that all parties represented in this House have a desire to improve the well-being of the native, and I intend to support the second reading of this Bill. I feel that we have nothing to be particularly proud about in regard to the treatment of the natives of this State. They are certainly a very primitive race, and we have for the past 100 years, or for nearly 100 years, kept them in that state. I agree with the Minister that if this measure becomes law we cannot expect that any substantial number of natives will be able to obtain the full rights of citizenship. But I also agree with him that even if there are a few, and a very few, who can qualify

under the Bill, there are good grounds for the Bill becoming law. The Minister told us that there are 6,000 half-castes in the State. The upbringing and all other responsibilities of the half-castes have in the past devolved upon the natives. The white population has disclaimed very largely any such responsibility. Half-castes are to be found in the native camps, living with the natives and, indeed, quarter-castes as well in some cases. In fact, if a person is suspected of having any native colour at all, we are quite content to leave him in the native camps and let the natives carry the whole responsibility of him.

Where we have failed in the past is that we have not endeavoured to educate the native sufficiently. We have taken it for granted that he has lived under such primitive conditions that he could not be educated, and perhaps, some of us thought that it was not worth while educating him. But experience has proved that he can be educated, and education is to his advantage. There is no doubt that the half-caste can be a very useful citizen, but his environment has not led to that usefulness which we can expect of him. We have very largely looked down on him, and not encouraged him to carry responsibility. I think it is right that the Bill should contain provision for the native to lose his citizenship rights if he does not live up to his undertakings. It would be quite possible for us to give full rights of citizenship to some of these people but, if they go back to the camps, when of course they lose their rights as we know, they could be very detrimental to the native welfare generally. We know that the desire for drink is one of the native's weaknesses.

Mr. Triat: And of the white man, too!

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, but it has a more adverse effect upon the native population than it has on the white population. Any member who knows anything about native camps will bear out what I have to say. Wine is the drink which they go for, and it does not matter about quality either. If they get it a fight frequently starts. They knock each other about—women as well as men. We have had it proved over and over again that they simply cannot take it. So, we have to guard against that and see that as a result of any legislation we pass drink is not permitted or encouraged in native camps. So seriously does the law view this

that any person on a first conviction is subject to a minimum fine of £25, and the maximum is up to £100 and six months' imprisonment. That is a clear indication of how seriously the drink menace is regarded as it applies to the natives. The Minister told us that there is quite a number of these people engaged in the metropolitan area at present, and are working in a number of industries in the city. I did not know there were many of them in the city. Most of them, of course, are to be found in the rural and pastoral areas. He also told us that 400 had enlisted in the Forces.

I agree with the member for Mt. Marshall that the fact of these men enlisting does not necessarily mean they will be better qualified for full citizenship. In fact, I believe that in the case of many of them such a life will detract from their qualifications for full citizenship. Unfortunately army life does not improve some people. We know the pitfalls associated with it. I am not prepared to admit that on the whole army life should be regarded as a qualification for full citizenship for these people. The Minister also told us that during the past 10 years an additional sum of, I think, £30,000 had been found for improving the lot of the natives. In the camps I have seen I have not witnessed any resultant improvement from that increased amount. Probably in the missions and such-like places an improvement has taken place, but amongst the natives outside there is no improvement that one can see.

So far as I know natives are still living under the same primitive conditions. There is no improvement in sanitation, and only in rare cases have I known these people to show any desire to build their own houses. They seem quite content and happy to go on living in mia-mias and ordinary camps. I notice the Bill provides that every application must be accompanied by a recent reference from two reputable citizens certifying to the good character and the industrious habits of the applicant. The term "reputable citizen" has a very wide range. I suggest that the Minister should specify the particular type of people from whom references as to character can be accepted. I submit that the natives in most districts would have no difficulty in obtaining the necessary references, and I

also feel that some of them would not be deserving of such references. I have no doubt the people who would give them would consider that they themselves were reputable citizens.

The Minister for Mines: Would the member for the district be regarded as a reputable citizen?

Mr. McLARTY: The Minister should agree to an amendment that would define the persons who were eligible to give these references.

Mr. Needham: That could be done in the definition clauses.

Mr. McLARTY: I suggest that a justice of the peace or a constable in charge of a police station should be the type of person who would give these references. As pointed out by the member for Pilbara, the police have a good knowledge of the natives and their doings in their districts. I hope the Minister will agree to define more clearly from whom these references should come. I notice that a medical certificate is also required. The member for Mt. Marshall thinks there should be a period of probation. That suggestion is worthy of consideration. I know that before an application can be made there has to be a two-year period which has to be taken into consideration, but the suggestion of a probationary period is one that should be considered. I know it is desired by the Minister as well as the department to encourage the natives and raise their status. That is a worthy object, and I therefore support the second reading.

MR. MANN (Beverley): This is very experimental legislation. I suppose my electorate contains as many half-castes as are to be found in any other part of the State. In the Beverley, Brookton and Quairading areas there are at least 150 half-castes.

Hon P. Collier: Did they migrate to the district or were they born there?

Mr. MANN: Most of them migrated there. I have been approached by a large number of them with a view to getting them permits that would entitle them to the same privileges as are enjoyed by white men. They desire to be in a position to go into a hotel and buy a drink when they want to. This is what would happen: A man who, although a half-caste, conducts himself well may be given such a permit. He could then, armed with the permit, go into

a hotel and pass drink out to natives who were outside the establishment. If he did that, he would of course forfeit his permit at once. I do not think more than three or four of these people in my electorate would qualify for citizenship rights. The fact is we have not improved the general position of the natives or done anything to make their lot better, and for this Parliament is responsible. The present Government is also responsible, seeing that out of the last 20 years it has for 17 of them ruled the House in the matter of finance.

It is all very well to take a native child away from its parents and bring it up under totally different surroundings from that into which it was born, but so soon as it is again brought into contact with its people all the good that may have been done is undone. I know of a smart young native woman, really a quadroon, whose husband was sent to gaol for five years. She herself was sent to Mogumba, where apparently she was well looked after. She returned to Beverley quite a striking looking young woman. The husband was a well-educated quadroon who could speak as well as most members of this Chamber, and could also write a good letter. After his release the wife reverted to the condition of an ordinary half-caste or native. What we should endeavour to do is to improve the conditions of the natives.

I feel that legislation such as this is premature until such time as Parliament has moved in that direction. It is our responsibility to improve the living conditions of these people, after which some of them may have claims to citizenship. I feel sure that the average constable in charge of a district would not give these permits, and that magistrates would not be prepared to give a certificate in the case of most half-castes or quadroons. Unless we alter the conditions applying to natives it is futile to bring forward legislation providing for citizenship. Let us raise the standard of these people first of all. That is our job, but we have not yet done it. Until we do that we cannot hope to derive any benefit from this class of legislation. No doubt in some areas there are better classes of native, but in my own district I do not think in the case of more than three or four men would any magistrate be willing to grant citizenship rights. I hope the Bill will be drastically altered in Committee, but meanwhile I intend to support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. Shearn, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** [5.55] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is an attempt to gain more control over restaurants, eating-houses, boarding-houses, etc., and the opportunity is also taken further to amend the Health Act to enable us to deal with horse-flesh, venereal disease, and one or two other items. The measure is to a large extent of a machinery nature. It will continue to give powers to local governing bodies, the authorities constituted under the Health Act, the health boards to control many of the matters provided for in the Bill. The measure in itself is only, for the present, designed to operate in the Perth and Fremantle health districts, and any other district that may by proclamation be brought under this legislation and therefore under the control of the Commissioner of Public Health. It is not intended immediately to extend its provisions to cover the whole State.

During the last few months we have taken the opportunity to have many inspections made, especially in the Perth and Fremantle areas, of eating-houses in particular, and I am sorry to say that, in the centre of Perth, the back portions of most of the eating-houses are in a very shocking state. The first report I had rather astonished me. I sent it to the Commissioner of Public Health, who asked me to leave it with him so that he might look into things for himself. He, too, was horrified at what he saw. The report was subsequently verified by other health inspectors. Whilst I appreciate that in these times there is a shortage of accommodation and of manpower and materials I do not think the situation is such as to warrant the conditions referred to in the report.

Mr. Mann: Many of these establishments are kept by foreigners.

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** We will deal with that aspect. This Bill not only provides for the registration of eating-houses to an extent not provided for under the Act, but for the registration of the proprietors, and the cancellation of registration if necessary by the health board. The at-

tention of the Perth Municipal Council has been drawn to some reports which I have received, and which have been verified by that body. It had a Bill prepared to meet the position, but the Government has brought forward this Bill, adopting in it many of the views held by the council. A clause provides for the registration of all eating-houses and the licensing of their proprietors—matters not provided for in the Health Act to date. Power is taken to refuse registration and licensing in respect of improper premises. Further, it is provided that the licensing of premises does not necessarily imply licensing of the proprietor. The licensing of premises may be granted if there is nothing against them, but the licensing of their proprietor is a different matter altogether. Now I wish to quote a few of the large number of reports of inspections that have taken place. Many of the proprietors mentioned in the reports, upon being notified as to the condition of the premises, have put them in order; but other proprietors have not done so. The first report I wish to quote refers to a restaurant in Murray-street, Perth. It reads—

Scullery, storage and serving space behind shop very small. Storage cellar under closed by trap-door in the floor of this space.

Cooking done on two gas stoves in 3ft. wide passage way running to the rear. Same passage way contained a number of bottles of syrup used for milk bar drinks. Bottles grimy with stickiness and dirt. Rubbish bins containing food wastes in the small scullery portion. Bins have to be emptied through front of shop. No opportunity of cleaning such bins.

I proceed to quote other reports—

No. 2. Café, Barrack-street: Entered through right-of-way. The first point noted was that vegetables, including potatoes, for consumption were lying around in the back yard drain, and the second point the presence of tomatoes and other vegetables, the good and bad all mixed up: it was impossible to say what was condemned and what was to be used.

On entering the kitchen the absence of any storage space for food was noted. Adjacent to the door was a sink loosely set in a wooden framework. The sink was loose in its connection with the drain and drainage was dripping into a frying-pan set on a kerosene tin under the said sink. The frying-pan was full of lamb's fry—"Quite good food," said the cook. Under another table another frying-pan was noted half full of semi-cooked food—also quite good, according to the cook, but these and the whole kitchen were completely exposed to flies which were in evidence.

It should be noted that these premises have since been closed down by the local authority.

No. 3. Restaurant, Barrack-street: The kitchen was entered from the right-of-way which was composed of cobblestones, and the only separation from the kitchen of the drainage of the right-of-way was a coping some 10 inches high which represented the door sill. There was no fly-proofing and there were indications that the wall was in a shaky condition.

In front of the stoves a large hole had recently developed through sinkage, which had to be filled with sand and the floor cemented over.

Trays of cooked food were lying about this kitchen open to flies. No storage for food materials was provided; these were lying about the kitchen in bags and heaps.

Under an annexe to the kitchen was a cellar said to be unused by the occupier but containing debris, the result of years of depositing.

No. 4. Small goods room of a butcher's shop in the city: A fairly large room. Walls white-washed to a height of six or eight feet. Cement floor uneven, and pitted so that it almost inevitably contained pools of water, etc. Bench on which sausages were being made set over some of these pools and over the drainage outlet.

Two coppers in the room used for boiling black puddings, etc., caked half an inch deep with alternate layers of grease and white-wash.

The room was high—some 15 or 18 feet. The upper reaches of the walls were grimy. Across the ceiling ran a large pipe, 12 or 15 inches in diameter, which at one time had apparently formed portion of some air system to adjoining premises. The pipe was smothered in dust and was inaccessible in the ordinary way.

As part of the same smallgoods room, a staircase descended to a cellar below. This staircase was in bad shape and was used as a dump for firewood, which was thrown in here from the right-of-way. There was no separation between the firewood dump, the staircase and the smallgoods room.

No. 5. A well-known city restaurant; has two kitchens; one is in the basement. This kitchen has no natural light and no ventilation. The drainage therefrom goes to a sump, which is below sewer level and this sump has to be regularly pumped out by an electric pump. It is said that on these occasions bad smells are created, which is understandable.

No. 6. Another city restaurant likewise has two kitchens. In this case the natural lighting of the basement kitchen is from the right-of-way through a narrow light-well. When visited, two or three rubbish bins were standing on the grid which gave access to this light-well. The windows were wide open and trays of food were standing on the bench immediately below this.

No. 7. A small restaurant, occupied by foreigners, just north of railway line: Dining-room small and dingy. Kitchen small; no ceiling whatever, the covering being galvanised iron, a lean-to roof of an average height of about eight feet. The under side of the iron

was caked with smoke and grease. Kitchen altogether a most undesirable place. No conveniences for the storage of food, etc.

Those are some of the restaurants in the centre of our city. There has been no control over them because of a flaw in the Health Act, which this Bill seeks to rectify. The Act contains provisions dealing with lodging-houses and boarding-houses. A lodging-house does not come within the scope of the Act if it has fewer than six residents exclusive of the proprietor who is handling it. Now, however, it is argued that the extremely bad condition of some of these houses has been brought about by the shortage of housing accommodation. However, we intend to stop a lot of what is going on in connection with those places when opportunity for doing so is afforded by people moving out. I would like to know, though, just how much per week extra these houses are bringing in to the owners. During the last few months they have been giving up the practice of letting houses in lodgings. Where there is a house of two storeys and containing six or seven rooms, instead of lodgers being taken in, rooms are now let to the various residents. I will quote cases of houses in Hay-street which are let in lodgings—

A. Perth—House let in lodgings, Hay-street.

Two storeys, part of a terrace, no dining-room; tenants either dine out or prepare and eat food in their rooms.

Scullery is used as a kitchen; one bed here. Wood stove out of repair, walls smoke-blackened; area 10 feet by 9 feet, window area four square feet. Room dark, no artificial light installed.

Wash-house. Two troughs provided under back verandah. Copper lying on ground in yard.

Room originally designed as kitchen converted into bedroom, occupied by the keeper.

Room No. 1. Two beds here, 1,600 cubic capacity, ceiling damp and dirty; cobwebs hanging from ceiling.

Room No. 2. Two women use this room as bedroom, kitchen, and dining-room. Cooking done in open fireplace. 1,600 cubic space.

Room No. 7. Same capacity. Man and his wife, baby, and three children aged six, four and two, use this room for all purposes. One single and one double bed, mattress torn. Evidence here of vermin in beds.

Landing at top of stairs. Gas stove here set against wall. No hood or vent pipe over stove. Kerosene tin of soiled clothes boiling on stove. Ceiling stained and dirty; wall and floors greasy and dirty.

Room No. 3. Plaster broken over doorway. Cubic capacity approximately 350 cubic feet. A child sleeps here in a single bed. This room

is really a continuation of the passage and opens on to the front balcony. This balcony has been enclosed and partitioned off; a married couple with a baby and one other child two years old occupy this space; husband and wife and baby sleep on balcony and the child in the small room referred to. The child's room is used as a dining-room; food is cooked on the gas stove in passage. The enclosing of the verandah cuts off the natural light from the bedroom, while the placing of a door in the passage cuts the light off from the passage-way.

B. Perth—House let in lodgings, Hay-street.

Room No. 6. Continuation of passage leading to balcony, area 9ft. by 4ft. by 11ft., opening on to balcony, which is enclosed with asbestos and duck blinds. One bed in room. This room is very dark; the natural light is cut off by the enclosing of the balcony.

Gas stoves on landing at head of stairs; no hood or vent-pipe is provided; walls around stove fouled with grease.

Bathroom. Walls dirty; back vent-pipe from wash-hand basin disconnected; trap under basin battered out of shape and connected to waste-pipe with rag and string.

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

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** Before tea, I was dealing with places known as rooms and lodgings. I have numerous examples which I could give the House, but have no desire to weary members, especially as the examples are more or less alike. There is one, however, particulars of which I would like to read. These are as follows:—

Premises three storeys, namely, semi-basement, ground floor and first floor. Each room let separately. Only water supply in house bathroom tap, first floor, or tap from standpipe near front verandah. Cooking appliances provided by gas stove, three of these in front hall, two on top landing. No hoods and no ventilation to carry off fumes.

No kitchen appurtenances with sinks; no facilities for washing up or disposal of waste water. In basement old kitchen turned into bedroom with gas stove in the same room. For whole premises one W.C. in back yard, 20 or 30 feet distant from back door. No artificial light.

This will serve to give members an idea of what has been happening during the last year or two. It has been brought about to a very large extent because people are forced to find cover of some sort for themselves; and, unfortunately, people who are not willing to take in lodgers at a reasonable rental evidently let rooms at rents which the people are prepared to pay in order to obtain cover. As I have said, it might easily be contended that the present time is not opportune to take action of

the kind proposed by the Bill; but we do not intend to take such action until the time is ripe to do so. The state of affairs I have outlined cannot be tolerated any longer, although we cannot possibly help it, as we have no authority to take action at the moment.

There is another type of house known as the sub-standard house. One or two of these houses may be inspected at a town named Fremantle; we find them mostly in the older towns. I hope you, Mr. Speaker, are not going to interject, but I suggest Fremantle is one of the older towns. Unfortunately, these sub-standard houses are common. They have no cooking appliances or sinks, while the water is often delivered only to the front verandah. Sometimes it is laid on to the back of the premises, but very rarely. In many of these houses there is but one tap and that is on the front verandah. The Bill will give the local governing body power to alter these things, which will not be permitted in the case of houses being erected or to be erected.

We have taken advantage, while amending the parent Act, to deal briefly with venereal disease. We are seeking merely to amplify some of the already existing provisions. We find ourselves now up against trouble in endeavouring to do something to control these diseases. For instance, a woman suffering from venereal disease may be an occupant of a brothel and it is obvious that she can infect other people. Under the parent Act it is difficult to deal with such a woman without arresting her and putting her into hospital or in some other place. We are widening the scope of the Act to give the Commissioner of Public Health power to deal with such cases. It is also proposed to insert a new section in the Act to deal with the slaughtering of horses. Since meat was rationed—

Member: Are horses rationed?

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** Most of the horses do not require to be slaughtered. I am merely telling members what I am told. The member for Murchison may be able to answer the interjector. Horses are slaughtered for the purpose of providing food for pets. I am not suggesting they are killed for any other purpose; but there is no provision in the parent Act for a continuous inspection to be made of the horse from the time it is slaughtered. Horses can be slaughtered anywhere, and

it will be difficult and expensive to ensure a proper system of inspection. We are therefore inserting this new part in the parent Act in order to safeguard the public against the possibility of horseflesh being sold for human consumption. Victoria introduced a Bill for a similar purpose and this section follows it to a large extent.

The only other section we propose to insert deals with private hospitals. At present, these are under the administration of municipalities and road boards, and we propose to remove them from that control, as the local governing bodies have neither the experience nor the staff to supervise private hospitals, many of which take midwifery cases. Further, should the Federal hospital scheme of a subsidy of 6s. per day come into operation and be applied to both public and private hospitals, the onus will be thrown on the State Health Department to certify whether the private hospitals are so efficient as to warrant the payment of the 6s. per day. Should a dispute arise between the department and the proprietor of the hospital, it will be decided by a Federal committee. We feel therefore that in all the circumstances it would be better to bring private hospitals under the control of the Health Department. The other provisions of the Bill are largely machinery clauses. I feel members will agree that, although the present is not the time to put this legislation into force, because we do not want to harass many people, we should have everything ready as soon as men and materials are available for reconstruction purposes in order to get these various places put into good order. The power proposed to be conferred by this legislation will be widely used when the time arrives and it will be used efficiently. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. McLarty, debate adjourned.

### **ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.**

*In Committee of Supply.*

Debate resumed from the 28th September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

*Vote—Legislative Council, £2,265:*

**MR. NEEDHAM** (Perth) [7.40]: Interest in the Budget Speech in recent years

has waned considerably. There was a time when the Budget Speech in the State Parliament was looked forward to with very great interest, but in late years it has become somewhat commonplace and the reasons are not far to seek. When the Financial Agreement was entered into the Commonwealth authority at once became the centre of money power. Later, the State Savings Bank was transferred to the Commonwealth and in recent times the institution of uniform taxation has confirmed the financial authority of the Commonwealth. Consequently, as I said, interest in the Budget Speech by the State Treasurer has waned considerably and all interest now centres in the Budget Speech of the Federal Treasurer.

I congratulate the Government on being able to announce another surplus, the fourth during the term of office of the Willcock administration. I paid attention to the speech of the member for West Perth and took note of his excellent and very valuable suggestions. He considered that the time was ripe for a review of the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States. I quite agree with him. Uniform taxation will continue during the period of hostilities, at the end of which, I presume, the power of taxation will revert to the States. But it would be inadvisable to wait until hostilities have ceased before arrangements are made for an inquiry into the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and States. So long as we are a Federation, it is imperative that the smaller States at least should have better treatment than in the past. When this struggle in which we are engaged is finished, everyone will be looking to the State Treasurer for improvements in many ways.

The new order which has been so glibly talked about will be uppermost in everyone's mind. The State Treasurer will find himself handicapped when he has to depend upon the Federal Treasurer for whatever financial assistance he can get. The suggestion made by the member for West Perth is worthy of consideration. Let the State Premiers get together and make representations to the Federal authorities for a thorough inquiry into the financial position so far as the States are concerned. Another suggestion the hon. member made was for the reconstitution of the interstate commission. Since the time the High Court ruled



out the commission as being ultra vires the Constitution nothing has been done, but I think a commission could be created which could work beneficially for the States within the ambit of the Constitution. That is another suggestion that was made by the hon. member which I think is worthy of favourable consideration.

A few days ago I asked a number of questions of the Minister for Railways concerning the position of the Traffic Branch of the tramway service of the State. I inquired as to the number of employees who had left the service during the last nine months, the arrears of annual leave and other questions. The answers have not been very helpful. They disclose a regrettable state of affairs. Many employees have been waiting for two years for their annual holidays and the answers given by the Minister also disclosed a very serious shortage in the staff. As a matter of fact, there is a shortage of 61 employees. I was surprised also to learn that 100 had left the service during the last nine months. I do not know why the tramway service was not made a protected industry, because it is an essential part of our transport system. I think that most of the transport systems throughout the Commonwealth have been declared protected industries. I understand that the railways are in that category; why the tramways were left out I do not know.

Mr. Thorn: Private bus services are regarded as a protected industry. A man cannot leave a private bus service without permission.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I contend that if the tramway service—and particularly the traffic branch—had been declared a protected industry we would not have had so many employees leaving the service. A few people obtain employment on the tramways for a while and then disappear. I think it might be well even now to have the traffic branch of the tramway service declared a protected industry. There is another feature to which I would like to refer and that is in connection with the amenities that are lacking for tramway employees in this State. Amenities of any kind are particularly hard to find at the car barn. I cannot understand why there is no rest-room for the employees who have to work from 12 to 14 hours to get in an 8-hour shift. I ask the Minister for Railways to take notice of the matter, and to

see whether the Commissioner can do something better for these employees than has been done in the past. It may be that amenities similar to those in the tramway services of the Eastern States and of Great Britain could be provided. Possibly the cost of erecting these rest-rooms is too great, or perhaps they have not been provided because of shortage of material and labour. When we again approach normal times, I would ask the Minister to provide a rest-room for these people while they fill in their time because of the long shifts.

Another subject referred to in the Budget Speech is that of education. A pleasing feature is the announcement that the Education Vote will provide for increased expenditure on technical education, an increase in scholarships from 50 to 150 and, in addition, the extension of the training period of teachers from one to two years. That is very good news, and I commend the Government for making the statement that it will extend the training period from one to two years. At the same time, I venture to say that it might be better if that period were extended to three years. After all, the teacher has a very important job and he should be fully equipped before he goes out to teach. I do not think that two years is sufficiently long. In Great Britain, a period of three years is allowed for the training of the teacher. The increased number of scholarships allowed will not solve the problem of providing accommodation and facilities for senior students; on the contrary, it will add to the difficulty. When the school-leaving age is raised to 15 years, that difficulty will be considerably intensified. The provision of extra accommodation for the additional schools should be a high priority when the war is over.

We look to the time when the school-leaving age will be raised to 16 years. That is the target I think we should aim for. I realise that that target entails responsibilities. When we have the necessary building accommodation for the increased number of students resulting from the increase in age to 15 years, the parents will be faced with a serious economic problem. I cannot see how the father of a family, on the basic wage, can afford to allow his children to remain at school up to the age of 15 years without some assistance. The ambition of every father and mother is to

give their child a better chance in life than they themselves had although, of course, the economic question has compelled them in the past to avail themselves of the financial capabilities of the child in order to carry on the home; and the child has been sent to work at a very tender age. The tendency to raise the age to 15 years is laudable, but at the same time an economic difficulty faces the parents. That question will be intensified when we come to the target of making 16 years the school-leaving age for children. Provision should be made for financial assistance to parents whose children have reached the age of 15 years but remain at school. Financial assistance is provided in some American States for parents of children who remain at school beyond the age of 15.

If we are going to make a success of this phase of our educational system, it will be necessary for this Parliament and the Government of this State to give serious consideration to the matter. The only way I can see to meet the problem is by Federal assistance. We already know our limitations so far as finance is concerned. Every State Treasurer knows that. This much-needed reform was mentioned in the Budget speech, and it will cost a fair amount of money. I think, therefore, that representations should be made to the Commonwealth Government to render financial assistance to the State and, through the State Government, to the parents of the children so that the fact that a child remains longer at school, and thus gains a better educational foundation than hitherto, will not redound to the discomfort and expense of the parents, but rather that the parents should be immune from any economic disadvantage. As a matter of fact, it is a long time since I advocated that our educational system should be entirely a Federal matter. It is time we recognised that it is difficult to carry on six different systems of education in six different States. If there is one subject more than any other that should come within the ambit and authority of the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth Parliament, it is that of education.

Mr. Perkins: In England it comes under municipal control.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I hope the day is not far distant when that state of affairs will be brought about. I have already referred to the extension of the training period for

teachers, and I hope it will not be long before the period is increased from two years to three years. Twenty years ago some of the trainees were given a two years' course, some a three years' course, and some a four years' course, and I think we have reached the stage when three years should be made the standard for training.

In the course of the Budget debate in the House of Representatives a few days ago the Treasurer stated that Australia had spent £1,651,000,000 on the war. Of this £529,000,000 had come from revenue, £739,000,000 from loan, and £381,000,000 from Treasury Bills. The per capita expenditure was £230. The Treasurer also said that the total war expenditure of the United Kingdom had been £22,794,000,000, a per capita expenditure of £478. Those figures deal only with the war expenditure of Great Britain and Australia. We have no figures to show the expenditure of Canada, New Zealand, South Africa or our other great ally, the United States of America. The figures are astounding, but what is more astounding is that although Great Britain and Australia for the past five years have been engaged in the wealth-wasting enterprise of war the people of both countries have more money in their possession than when their energies were concentrated on the profitable tasks of peace. There is an anomaly; the more we waste on war, which is a wealth-wasting enterprise, the more money the people of this country possess. Thus we appear to be living under a financial system that increases the amount of money held by the people in proportion to the amount of wealth destroyed.

I venture to say that what is still more outstanding is the fact that a majority of the people have complete faith in the value of the money they hold. There has been no anxiety at all about the value of the money held by the people. There was a time when some anxiety existed. I remind members that during the regime of the Scullin Government at the beginning of 1930, namely when the depression had hit us, the then Commonwealth Treasurer, Mr. E. G. Theodore, proposed a fiduciary issue of £18,000,000 to provide work for the unemployed. That proposal created a great furore. It was condemned in the Parliament of the Commonwealth, in the Parliaments of the States, in the Press and from

the public platform. When the measure was sent up from the House of Representatives, the Senate objected strongly to it and rejected it. There was strong criticism on the score of the danger of issuing fiduciary money to the extent of £18,000,000. Had that measure been agreed to by the Senate, and had we had an issue of £18,000,000 at that time, it would have minimised considerably the unemployment crisis that we experienced shortly afterwards. If it had not prevented mass unemployment, it certainly would have reduced considerably the number of unemployed with which we were faced during the depression years of 1930 to 1935.

Among the army of financial critics of the proposal was Sir Hal Colebatch. He was very strong in his criticism of the proposal. He objected on the ground of the danger of inflation and of the reduction of the value of money. He warned the people to stand fast by the pound sterling and scorn the pound Theodore. He described the proposed fiduciary issue as the pound Theodore and contended that the issue would endanger the pound sterling. The Government did not issue those notes, but soon afterwards Australia went off the gold standard on the advent of an anti-Labour Government. And what has been the result? In the depression years it was contended that there could be no public confidence in a £1 note that was not substantially backed by gold. That was the burden of the song broadcast throughout the Commonwealth at the time of the Scullin-Theodore proposal. The gold reserve which is provided for in the Australian Notes Act would not have been available.

The critics of the Theodore proposal found that £18,000,000 of fiduciary notes would make our currency worthless and would produce inflation in the first degree. At that time the critics, one of whom was Sir Hal Colebatch, warned us about the position of Germany and Germany's fate as the result of inflation, and that if that fiduciary issue had become a fact, our position would have been similar. Our own issue is virtually without a gold backing; it is really without the support of a gold reserve. I may add that the same position obtains in Great Britain. I have instanced the amount of money it has cost Britain so far to wage this world war. And what is the position

of Australia? In neither of the two countries is the note issue backed by anything worth while of a gold reserve. According to the argument of the depression years, our notes and Britain's notes are worthless, though no-one appears to know it. I find the critics such as Sir Hal Colebatch are silent today. There is no country against the fiduciary issue now operating, an issue which was so roundly condemned and denounced 14 years ago. In my opinion that proves conclusively that if the policy of the Scullin Government at that time had been put into operation, the distress and anxiety which ruled through all those depression years would have been, if not entirely avoided, at least considerably reduced. A fiduciary issue is now accepted as a fact, and no-one talks of inflation as a result of it.

The figures I have quoted are astounding. When the Fisher Government introduced the note issue it was contemptuously spoken of as "Fisher's flimsies." At the same time the Commonwealth Bank was established, and we have travelled a long way in that regard. Today we are really living on a fiduciary issue of notes which have not a gold reserve of any worth. We are simply living on the credit of the Australian nation. Even those who condemned the fiduciary issue of the depression years are amassing a fortune today. They are taking the risk, and they are also taking the profit; and I venture to say that many of those fiduciary notes were extensively used during the recent Referendum, when additional powers were sought for the Commonwealth Parliament. I admit that one side always advocated at a critical period of Australia's history the need for the issue of fiduciary notes. The other side, however, roundly condemned the fiduciary issue during the years of depression, but during five years of war the other side availed itself of the issue in every regard. Recently there appeared in the Press a statement worthy of quotation. It came from Canberra, and mentions Mr. Lazzarini. I quote it—

Mr. Lazzarini, who urges the complete control of the banking system, said the private banks during 1938 operated the colossal amount of banking business of £2,607,000,000 upon a legal currency holding of only £29,000,000. The views set out in Mr. Lazzarini's pamphlet are interesting in view of forthcoming Cabinet discussions on post-war banking policy.

Those figures are incontrovertible. There was a banking business of £2,607,000,000 upon a legal currency of £29,000,000! There is no use talking about the danger of inflation. Those figures have never been controverted; they cannot be contradicted. As I have already said, thousands of these notes have been used in order to defeat the recent Referendum and the control of prices, investments and consumption when this danger is over. If the control is not continued, there will still be the necessity for the fiduciary notes. The main idea, of course, is the question of post-war reconstruction. It has been said that if regular employment can be assured, public confidence will be restored. That was the story told many years ago, and it is told again today. The story was told daily in the Press, over the air, and on the platform from one end of Australia to the other by financial experts and political economists of the day. And I repeat, the same story is being told now.

The majority of the experts and economists avoided details, but the few that did attempt to explain how public confidence could be restored got a little mixed. The burden of their story was that, the depression being worldwide, no country could escape its effect, but that Australia would be all right if our conduct was such as to win the approval of the world at large; that if we did that, prosperity would be our reward. But how are we to secure that feeling of confidence? Are our ideas to be subservient to those of the financiers? I do not think so. Unfortunately we took their advice after the last war and at the beginning of the depression years. We were good children; we did everything the international financiers told us to do. We reduced wages and salaries, and our standard of living was lowered, on the order of financial wizards and the representatives of big business. When this war started we were still suffering from the curse of unemployment and all the evils it brought in its train. That was the result of acting upon the advice of international financial wizards. Now we find that, after another world war, we are being told that in the post-war period our conduct must be such as to win the approval of the financial authorities, if there is to be confidence in our future. I am very chary about it. Once bitten, twice shy! I think our main trouble in the depression years of the thirties was lack of confidence

in ourselves. That is where we failed. We should not have bothered about getting the confidence of people outside Australia and we should have rejected the advice of the international financial wizards.

If we are to get anywhere in the new order promised after this war, we must have confidence in ourselves; and, having confidence in ourselves, we can get the confidence of other people. We must turn a deaf ear to the agents of international finance; if we do not, we will find ourselves the victims of another confidence trick, because undoubtedly we were the victims of a financial confidence trick from 1929 until this war started. You yourself, Mr. Chairman, dealt very ably with the advice or suggestions of international financiers in a speech which you delivered in this Chamber recently. We are now told that we must play a part in this war to entitle us to a seat at the Peace Conference. Entitle us to a seat at the Peace Conference! I think we have already earned that reward, if reward it can be called, to be represented at the Peace Conference. We are threatened by financial overlords with the loss of what financial autonomy we possess, if we fail in the post-war period to conduct our affairs in the manner they prescribe.

Mr. McLarty: Who made that threat?

Mr. NEEDHAM: If the hon. member had paid close attention to the Press, he would know that the threat is made almost every day. Did the hon. member read the deliberations that took place at Dumbarton Oaks? The member for Murchison could inform the member for Pinjarra—

Mr. Fox: Murray-Wellington!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. NEEDHAM: The member for Murchison could inform the hon. member where the suggestion came from. I would not be surprised to see an attempt made to fix Australia's place in the scheme of things with little or no reference to Australia. If ever any country earned its place at a peace table, it is this country of ours. It has a proud record in peace and war. It was the first to take up arms against the aggressor; and if I understand the spirit of the Australian people it will be the last to lay down its arms until the aggressors are defeated. I repeat that Australia has won her right to be represented at the councils of peace. I say also that when we come to the con-

sideration of peace—when that happy day dawns and when the conference assembles to try to draft some kind of scheme which we all hope will prevent a recurrence of this slaughter that has been going on now for five years—the workers of the Allied nations should be represented at the peace table. I venture to say that those workers have played their part, at the battle front, in the factories, everywhere. They did everything required of them to bring this dreadful struggle to a victorious conclusion, and it is but right that when the peace conference takes place they should be represented directly at the conference table. All I wish to say in conclusion is that whatever arrangements are made for the future, Australia must be represented at all times. We must be willing to put confidence in ourselves and in whatever we do we should not sacrifice one jot or tittle of the nationhood that Australia has so dearly and so nobly won.

**MR. SMITH** (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe): The day might come, if I live long enough, when I will be called upon to defend the Commonwealth Government and the decisions which it made in March, 1942, with respect to the goldmining industry in this State, decisions which were made when Australia was on the verge of invasion by Japanese hordes and when it looked as though every man, fit and unfit, would be wanted to defend Australia on the Brisbane line in the east and on the Moore River line in the west. So if at some future date I am called on to defend the Commonwealth Government in those decisions, I want to have some accurate knowledge of the effect of those decisions on our goldmining industry and some accurate knowledge, too, of how many men were taken out of the industry after 1939. It may be that at some future date I might feel like becoming an investor in the goldmining industry.

At that stage, before I invest my money I will wish to know something about the goldmining industry in this State and to have some accurate knowledge of its extent, its potentialities and its possibilities. So I want to thank the Minister for Mines for the invitation he extended to me, when he last spoke in this Chamber on this matter, to examine the report of the Department of Mines for the year ended the 31st December, 1939. Members will probably recall that I raised the question of the number of men

employed in the goldmining industry in 1939, as shown in the departmental returns, and expressed some doubt with regard to its accuracy. My interest in this question of how many men were employed in the industry in 1939 was awakened by various statements made by the Minister in this House in reference to employment in the industry. I will quote some of those statements. On the 12th May, 1942, the Minister said—

A very few months ago not less than 15,000 men were employed in the industry and those 15,000 would be contributors to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. Today the number is down to 10,000.

In the same speech he said—

I want it to be remembered that 60 per cent. of the men in the industry are under 45. I am speaking of those who are left, for 7,000 have gone into the Services.

On the 2nd February, 1943, the Minister said—

Less than three years ago we had 15,000 men working in the goldmining industry. Every one of those was a potential liability on the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

More recently the Minister said—

The figures I have before me show that in 1938 and 1939 the totals were 16,418 and 16,199,

actually bringing into the totals those who were working in the coalmining industry to make it appear that a large number of men were working in the goldmining industry. There are three important factors that determine the value of the goldmining industry of this State. They are the tonnage of ore that is raised and treated, the ounces of gold that are recovered, and the number of men whose services are required throughout the year to raise and treat the tonnage and to recover the ensuing ounces of gold. Any exaggeration of any one of those factors misrepresents the true position and does discredit to the goldmining industry. An article appeared in the "Mining and Commercial Review" of May, 1942. This is a journal mainly devoted to goldmining. Inter alia, apparently by the context referring to 1939, the article states—

Last year nearly 15,000 men were employed in the industry and their wages bill would be around £3,500,000.

That seems a very princely figure, but when it is worked out it will be seen that the men mentioned received almost exactly £4 9s. 8d. per week. The report of the Department of Mines for 1939 has a table headed, "Average number of men reported as engaged in mining during 1939." The

average number is stated to be, as to gold-mining—reef or lode mining, 14,961, alluvial mining, 255, total 15,216. In addition to these, 231 men were reported to be engaged on the production of minerals other than coal or gold. As none exclusively employed on the production of minerals paid into the Mine Workers' Relief Fund in 1939, some of those 231 at least would be engaged on the production of minerals in association with the production of gold and would be paying into the fund. I will let it go at that. What we have to discover is where those 15,216 men reported to be engaged in goldmining in 1939 were so engaged. I propose to submit it to several tests, particulars of which I have gleaned from the Mines Department's report and from other sources.

The first test is that every person employed under a contract of service on, in or about a mine to perform manual or other labour, either on the surface or underground, in and as part of general mining operations, including tributers, shall be liable to contribute to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund at the rate prescribed. The employers and the Treasury are obliged to pay in an amount equal to that paid in by the employees. The average number of employees who paid into the fund in 1939 was 9,832, according to a reply that I received from the Minister for Mines in response to a question I asked in this House. But he also told me that the Government was liable for the amount of £17,452 for that year, although it carried on till the 31st January of the next year, which is the end of the financial year of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. I was also under the impression that the Government was paying in slightly more than the employers and the employees. This amount of £17,452 would be for only 9,696. I am taking 9,832 as the base. Of those, 123 were miner's phthisis contributors who would not be working in the industry, thus leaving 9,709. So we have these figures—

Contributors to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund .. .. .	9,709
Average number of assisted prospectors 700, reduced because 20 prospectors paid into the fund to State Battery employees who apparently do not contribute ..	680
	250
Total .. .. .	<u>10,639</u>

That figure leaves 4,577 unaccounted for. Those 4,577, according to the Minister for Mines, have to be looked for among the small mine-owners and unassisted prospectors. The next best is that 1,188,286 ozs. were recovered valued at £11,594,221 in the year 1939. Taking the number of men engaged in the goldmining industry at the official figure of 15,216, we find that the average return per year per man engaged was £762, or less than £15 per week per man engaged. Now, a return of £15 per week per man over the whole industry discloses, in view of the very much higher returns in certain sections of the industry, an industry of which a very large part is impoverished. It is admitted that the cost of producing an ounce of gold in the mining industry varies. I drew attention to that the last time I spoke on this subject in the House and quoted certain figures with reference to the cost of producing an ounce of gold in South Africa and showing the variation that exists in that connection. But I have not been able to discover anywhere in this State any figures in relation to it, but the Lake View and Star Ltd., which, I suppose, has one of the most efficient plants in Western Australia, in 1938 produced 172,703 ozs. valued at £1,532,739.

In an article in the "Mining and Commercial Review"—the same article that I previously referred to—the expenditure of the Lake View and Star Ltd., for the year ended the 30th June, 1939, is given as £1,138,391. Applying these figures to the 1938 production—and I admit here that they are not quite comparable because the year ended, so far as the Department of Mines is concerned, on the 31st December, whereas some of these figures refer to the 30th June—a profit of £394,348 is disclosed, and we find in the Department of Mines' report for 1939 that the Lake View and Star, Ltd. paid a dividend of £280,000 for that year. But we can go further with the Lake View and Star figures and find that if it employed 1,200 men, which would be about the average that it employs, in 1938 it had a production equivalent to £24 per week per man employed. If we apply the production costs which I have quoted, we find that it had an expenditure of £18 per week per man employed. It may be said, of course, that this company treated ore of a low grade. But the average of the ore treated

both in 1938 and 1939 over the whole of the goldmining industry was generally of a low grade.

The Department of Mines' report states that there were 730 producers in 1939, plus some sundry producers. But only 619 got a mention in the tabulated returns, plus others given under the heading of "Voided and Sundry Leases," and some batteries that got production mostly from tailings. Of the 619 producers, 81 are designated as companies, 38 as producers of over 1,000 tons, and 62 as producers of over 500 tons. Of the 81 designated as companies there were, below 1,000 tons, 28, and below 500 tons, 20. The report of the Department for 1939 gives the following particulars, or they can be derived from it: All producers, 4,095,257 tons; 1,188,286 oz. valued at £11,594,221. Of the companies listed, 81 produced 3,821,648 tons for 1,039,666 oz., valued at £10,144,122. Thirty-eight listed as producers of over 1,000 tons produced 97,638 tons for 34,286 ounces valued at £339,800. Sixty-two listed as producers of 500 tons produced 42,533 tons for 16,114 ounces valued at £157,226. The others produced 113,438 tons for 97,680 ounces valued at £953,073.

Assuming that these companies with all their efficiency and up-to-date equipment could produce only the same average tonnage as was produced over the whole industry, they would employ 13,962 men and have an income of £14 per week per man employed, and the other producers would engage 1,254 men and have an average of £22 per week per man employed. Suppose we get down to something reasonable and say that if 10,000 men were employed by the companies there would be an income of £19 10s. per week per man employed, and the other 5,000 men would have an income of £5 11s. per week per man employed. I want members to understand that the £5 11s. per week referred to not only covers wages but is the whole of the revenue derived from the production of the 5,000 men against all the costs involved in producing the tonnage obtained. If 10,000 men were employed by the companies and the 38 producers of over 1,000 tons, there would be an income of £20 per week per man employed, and the other 5,000 men would have an income of £4 5s. per week per man employed. If 10,000 men were employed by the companies and

all producers of over 500 tons, there would be an income of £20 9s. per week per man employed, and the other 5,000 would have an income of £3 13s. per week per man employed.

In 1937 the "Sunday Times" issued a special supplement dealing with the mining industry. Among other things it published a list of men employed by 21 of the principal producing gold mines in this State, and all that it could muster was 6,273 men. It gave the total employees in the mining industry in 1936 as 15,696, but I have not checked that with the departmental returns. So the Mines Department can build up the number of men engaged in the goldmining industry if it likes, but cannot have it both ways. If there were 700 prospectors assisted by the Government in 1939, 445 of them must have been engaged on reef or lode mining because the report shows that only 255 were engaged on alluvial mining. If the 255 men shared the alluvial gold won for the year, they would have averaged a little over 12 ounces, because the alluvial gold won was 3,146 ounces.

Mr. Triat: That would not be uncommon.

Mr. SMITH: If they shared the alluvial and dollied gold, which they did not, the average for men employed on alluvial mining would have been 61 ounces. A great play is made in the departmental report in connection with the term "engaged in mining and employed in mining." A great play can be made in the use of those words. The Mines Department makes full use of the term. When the department in its report refers to totals, it uses the term "engaged in mining"; when it refers to the number of men engaged in reef or lode mining to produce figures relating to tonnages and ounces raised and treated per man underground and per man above and underground, it ascribes the results to the men "employed above and underground." In 1939, when more than 60 per cent. of the men were under 45 years of age, the results obtained were 490.30 tons for 142.29 ounces per man employed underground and 273.73 tons for 79.43 ounces per man employed above and underground. In 1942 the State Mining Engineer, in his report, said—

The somewhat sharp rise in the accident rate generally is possibly due to the presence of older men and less fit men on the mines owing to the call-up of the young and fit men for the Armed Forces and essential services.

In that year we get these results—753.85 tons for 197.66 ounces per man employed underground, and 401.56 tons for 105.29 ounces per man employed above and underground. Of course there is an explanation for everything, provided one gets the right explanation. It is like the Frenchman who said, "To know all is to forgive all." When the Minister for Mines on the 3rd December, 1942, was speaking on the Estimates of his department, the then member for Greenough, Mr. Patrick, interjected—

Considering the reduced staffs, the output is marvellous.

The Minister replied—

They have millions of tons in reserve, and are breaking that. Unfortunately there is no development work going on, and once the ore reserves are worked out there will not be any output.

Let us see what the Mines Department's report of 1939 has to say about that—

Development work recorded by the principal mines for 1939 includes shaft sinking 8,861 feet, driving 111,732 feet, cross-cutting 29,753 feet, rising and winzing 54,000 feet, diamond drilling 141,603 feet; or a total of 345,949 feet.

Now I take the report for 1942, when the Minister said there was no development work going on—

Shaft sinking 500 feet, driving 40,362 feet, cross-cutting 11,878 feet, rising and winzing 23,693 feet, diamond drilling 61,661 feet; or a total of 138,094 feet.

The men employed underground in 1939 can be calculated from the Mines Department's report giving the figures as 8,351; and the men employed or engaged in 1942, calculated in the same way, numbered 4,279. So there is a reduction shown of 49 per cent. in the number of men employed underground, and a reduction in the development footage, excluding diamond drilling, of 63 per cent.; and if diamond drilling is included the reduction is 60 per cent. Recently there appeared in "The West Australian" a report dealing with the Great Boulder Proprietary mine, which *inter alia* said—

Nevertheless development results have been satisfactory, as is demonstrated by the ore reserve position. The reserves are 2,471,700 tons, average 5.5 dwts.—a decline of only 34,900 tons on the September, 1942, figures.

The Mines Department's report shows 14,961 men engaged on reef or lode mining, of whom it may be calculated that 6,610 were employed on the surface. In 1942 the Mines Department report shows 8,033 men en-

gaged on reef or lode mining, of whom 3,754 were employed on the surface. In 1939 the surface men managed to deal with only 619 tons per man. In 1942 the older and less fit surface men managed to deal with 859 tons per man. On the East Murchison field the results were even more astonishing. In 1939 the 714 surface men managed to deal with 1,169 tons per man, which, by the way, was 550 tons above the average. In 1942 the 397 men employed on the surface managed to deal with 1,770 tons per man, or 600 tons per man more than in 1939. And there were four big producers on the East Murchison field in 1939, and only three in 1942. So these figures show that if the men employed in 1939, these men of whom 60 per cent. were under 45 years of age, had shown the same efficiency as the less fit men of 1942, then 10,198 men would have treated the 4,090,257 tons raised and treated in 1939, instead of 14,961 men being needed to do it—a difference of 4,763 men, which is very much like the figure we are looking for. The average number of men employed in an undertaking of any kind is neither the highest nor the lowest figure, but a mean or medial number, and certainly has no reference to the number of men who have to be engaged in order to maintain the average staff.

Without pleading the fine points of discourse, I think I can say that when we use the term "employed" in relation to an industry, we naturally think of these persons being employed under a contract of service; and, further, when we are thinking of men being employed in an industry and are told how many men are employed in the industry, we do not think of their being employed as they would be on relief works, six weeks on and seven weeks off, but employed or engaged throughout the whole of the year to which the particular return relates. In the A.W.U. Mining Branch arbitration case in 1934, a document was put in, as part of the evidence, showing that the average number of men employed on one mine was 1,191, but that the number of men who passed through the books to maintain that employment figure was 2,322. Actually 1,191 men were employed on the average; but, according to the Mines Department, 2,322 were engaged. At the hearing of the mine workers' case there was a deal of discussion as to the terms "engaged" and "employed," and also regard-



ing the numbers. I will quote some of the evidence that was given in that case—

Mr. Carter: This question you asked the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, "Would the figures submitted be correct as to the total number of men employed above and underground in goldmining in W.A.?" and in answer the Secretary said: "I regret not being in a position to answer that question?"

Witness: I took the figures contained in the statistical records and in order to show the court that there is a big difference between the figures stated there as men employed in the industry and what was actually supplied by the board. I thought it advisable to place those figures there.

Mr. Carter: You achieved a result—I do not know how—in this column No. 2 which does not bear comparison with the official table you say you have there. Take this statement for 1933, you show 10,018 men being employed in the industry.

Witness: That is right.

Mr. Carter: Here we have the report of the Department of Mines for 1933. On page 13 is the heading, "Average number of men engaged in the mining industry during 1932 and 1933, 9,900."

Witness: This list, 1933, shows 10,018.

Mr. Carter: That is rather an extraordinary document. It is not signed by anybody and is not an official publication of any sort?

The President: Was it sent with an accompanying letter?

Mr. Carter: Or someone. It is stamped and initialled by the Statistical Branch of the Mines Department.

Mr. Triat: I have a letter accompanying it which I shall put in later.

The President: Assume for a moment that it is from the Mines Department.

Witness: That is the information I have relied upon.

The President: In that case there is a discrepancy in that figure and what they publish in their annual report.

Mr. Carter: There is.

Witness: These years can be verified with the exception of 1933.

Mr. Carter: The document itself has no other heading than at the top of each column it has "Men employed." Again that differs from the official document I have been quoting from. This says, "Men engaged in mining." I submit that until we see the letter itself, it is rather difficult for me to help the court to assess the value of the document.

The President: You can take it for the time being it means what it says. What is the heading on the other return?

Mr. Carter: "Men employed on the mines."

The President: There is the word "employed" there.

So, Mr. Chairman, there is the evidence given in connection with a document which this witness, who is referred to in that evidence, got as the result of making application to the Statistical Branch of the

Mines Department. He was supplied with the figure, with reference to men employed in the industry, of 10,018, whereas it was demonstrated in the court that the official publication showed only 9,900. There was all that evidence and all that discussion, and a lot more that I have not quoted, seeking to discredit this witness because of that difference of 118 in his figures. And yet the Minister for Mines said here the other evening, "What is the difference between 16,000 and 17,000? There is not much difference between 16,000 and 17,000." It therefore seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that, with all our vaunted education, accuracy in figures is still a matter of taste. It is clear, however, from the evidence which I have quoted that this Mines' report that the figures used are used for more purposes than trying to deceive investors, who would not be deceived anyhow. It is clear, too, that there is great necessity for accuracy with respect to them.

As I have already stated, the Mines' report plays about quite a lot with these words "engaged" and "employed." When the total number of men in the goldmining industry is given, we are told it is the average number reported to be engaged. When these same figures are used for average tonnages, we are told they are the average tonnages raised and treated per man employed. In the total gold production statistics, the total number of men engaged is referred to as the men employed. When the State Mining Engineer refers to the men, he refers to them as employed, and he works out how many fatal accidents there are per thousand men employed. So I think there is room for improvement in the report of the Department of Mines. If there were 10,000 men employed in the goldmining industry in 1931—and when I say "employed," I mean maintained in it—throughout the year it is about as many as there were. That would have given us a revenue of £22 per week per man employed and would have indicated a reasonably prosperous industry, which I believe it is. But the Mines Department, or someone, seems to think numbers employed are more important than output and recovery per man, with the result that we have a showing which over all does not disclose the true position, or what a valuable asset the gold mining industry is to this State. I want to have a few words to say on the Mine

Workers' Relief Fund. Recently I received a letter from the secretary of the A.W.U. (mining branch) in which he stated, *inter alia*—

After considerable discussion of the Government Actuary's report on the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, the committee has rejected it as a true reflection of the actual position, being based on pure conjecture.

When I last spoke on this matter I said that if the actuary had more data and less conjecture he might find a greater deficiency and I would say that again, because the work and methods of an actuary are in the sphere of the higher mathematics. There are very few, I think, who understand what are called actuarial principles. The actuary was handicapped, he said, in making this report by insufficient data and the fact that the benefit had been fixed in a rough and ready way. However, with the help of the board he managed to get some data together having a relation to the experience of the fund for the eight years preceding the valuation date, and, again with the help of the board, some estimates of future liabilities arising out of probable claims. Insufficient as these may have been and conjectural as the board's estimates of future claims may have been, the actuary, after a great deal of work, I should imagine, produced a valuation of the position at the date of valuation, and the future experience. It was interesting to note from this report that the ages of the 126 male beneficiaries under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, as distinct from the old fund, ranged from 29 to 77 years, and that 28 of them were 60 years and over.

It was ascertained, so the actuary states, that the average duration of life of beneficiaries from the time of commencement of weekly benefits to the date of death was less than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years in cases arising under Section 48, which is the tuberculosis plus silicosis section, about 2.3 years under Section 49, which is the tuberculosis only section, and 1.5 years under Sections 54, 56 and 57. However, as he points out, these figures do not represent full durations because some beneficiaries are still living. But on the average, according to experience, a man will be aged about 56 by the time he has exhausted his workers' compensation and comes on the fund under Section 48. Under Section 49 he comes on the fund

immediately and the average age at commencement of benefits was found to be 40. The actuary, as a result of this data which he procured from the board with reference to its past experience and the probabilities of the future, produced a balance sheet and under the heading of "Liabilities, Mine Workers' Relief Act," he estimated that the present value of benefits to existing cases, including males, wives, widows and children, was £121,557. Under the old fund the present value of benefits to present beneficiaries, including married couples, single men and widows, was £111,644. That is a total of £233,201.

The present value of future contingent liabilities was £669,598, making a total of £902,799. On the assets side the fund has £250,464 in hand, either in money or investment. It is estimated that the present value of future contributions is £384,050, showing a deficiency at the end of the 15 years, or an estimated deficiency, of £268,285. So there is a picture of the fund and its probable experience for 15 years from the valuation date, the 31st January, 1943. A deficiency of £268,285 is shown. All I want to say about that balance sheet or the figures that it contains, is this: It was shown by certain figures given by the actuary in his report that the total of the future liabilities spread over the 15 years was £872,100, and that the actual amount of contributions that are estimated to be collected for the 15 years is £500,000. Both of those totals have been reduced in the balance sheet to present-day values calculated at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. If £872,100 equals at present-day values £669,598, then £500,000 does not equal £384,050. I am not saying that the difference is much, but there is a difference, and it is such that if one misappropriated the amount of the difference one would probably get six months in gaol for it.

The ordinary man would probably say, "Why reduce the figure? Why reduce the future contingent liabilities and the estimated future contributions to present-day values? Why not say that it has been estimated that during the next 15 years we shall have to meet liabilities amounting to £872,100, and that we hope to collect in that period the sum of £500,000, and further, that it is not unlikely that we might earn some interest on any funds not immediately

in use, and such interest apparently has not been taken into consideration in the actuarial balance sheet?" But the actuary, as I pointed out before, was handicapped by insufficient data and by the character of the fund. I notice that the board that gave him the data was not very optimistic about the contributions that would be collected in the next 15 years. Perhaps the greater part of the goldmining industry in the future is going to be conducted by the small mine-owners and prospectors. The board's estimate was that 3,703 contributors would pay in each of the first three years from the 31st January, 1943, 5,555 would pay into the fund in the fourth year, 9,259 for the next five years, 5,555 for the next four years, and 3,703 for the last two years.

When the actuary referred to the actuarial balance sheet—that is in some of the comments in his report—he said that the fund, that is, the £250,464 now in hand, was available to meet the claims which have actually arisen, but it also includes reserves to an unknown extent which have been paid by contributors who have not made any claims; but claims by existing contributors are obviously bound to arise. I would have thought, and I do think, that these claims which will make demands on the reserves—that is the reserves now in the funds or that were in the funds at the valuation date—are included in the claims which it has been estimated will arise in the next 15 years. Where else are they? Furthermore I would have thought and do think that at the end of 15 years on this reasoning there will be claims which will make demands on reserves, non-existent then according to the actuary, which had been paid in by the contributors who at that time will not have made any claim, but whose claims will obviously arise after the end of the 15 year period. I think that position is pretty clear. We must expect certain claims to arise on these reserves, if there are any reserves at the end of the 15 year period. But what better guide could we have to the experience of the next 15 years than the experience of the past 10 years, or since the fund began in its present form?

What is this experience? We find from the actuarial balance sheet that the fund had in hand at the date of valuation, the sum of £250,464. We find from the same balance sheet that the fund's experience to the valua-

tion date has been such that the present value of the benefits to existing cases, both under the Mine Workers' Relief Act and the old fund—or in other words the value of the existing liabilities at the valuation date was £233,201 and that it had in the fund the sum of £250,464 with which to meet those liabilities. In other words, in its activities to the valuation date it has shown a surplus of £17,263. But against that contention it will be said, "You are not making allowances for those reserves and the future claims that will be made upon those reserves." But what was the position of this fund at its commencement in 1933? It had to take over all the liabilities of the old fund and all the liabilities associated not only with existing payments under the Mine Workers' Relief Act, but liabilities under that Act in the shape of claims that existed then because of men who were progressively affected by diseases through which they would soon become claimants but had not become claimants at that date.

This fund is not like one that commences with all its members being clean-skins. It did not commence with contributors who were free from industrial and compensable diseases. So, at its very commencement whatever funds it had contained reserves upon which not only existing claims were being paid, but reserves which had been paid in by contributors who had not made any claims, but those claims would obviously soon arise. With all this handicap, however, the fund showed a surplus of £17,263 at the valuation date. At the 1933 examination of men, only 3,337 of the 9,900 men alleged to be engaged in goldmining that year were examined. Of these, 379 were shown to be early silicosis, 60 advanced silicosis, 15 silicosis plus tuberculosis and three tuberculosis only. Some of these men represent the type who would make demands on the fund in 1933, and some would represent claims that were bound to arise soon. So I agree with the union secretary that the actuarial balance sheet is not a true reflection of the actual position.

When I referred to this matter last time I spoke of the mining industry and of Section 56 of the Act and the claims that had been admitted under that section. I quoted both the member for Mt. Magnet, who had been a member of the board, and the late Hon. J. Scaddan. When I quoted from Mr.

Scaddan's remarks. I quoted from his second reading speech in connection with the provisions of the Mine Workers' Relief Act. So I was under no misapprehension as to what that Act contained, as the Minister for Mines inferred. But when the Minister for Mines replied to me he produced a table in connection with these cases which purposely carried over from one year to another the cases existing the previous year, making it appear that there were quite a number of cases. The Minister gave the number of miners receiving benefits under Section 56 as follows:—Three in 1936, 12 in 1937, 10 in 1938 and so on down to 1944. But the table prepared by the board, from which the actuary made his calculations, stated, in connection with Section 56, that there were three in 1936, four in 1937, one in 1938 and so on down to 1943. There were no more than two in any subsequent year. So even in this table submitted by the Minister we are apt to be misled.

I regret that I have had to deal with so many figures in connection with this subject this evening because figures become boring. But I reiterate at this stage that the value of the goldmining industry to this State is determined not only by the tonnage of ore raised and the ounces of gold recovered. It is not attractive to investors only on that account. We also have to consider the number of men whose services are required in any one year to raise and treat the tonnage that is raised and to recover the ounces of gold that are recovered.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Wednesday, 4th October, 1944.*

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

## QUESTIONS (2).

### ECONOMIC WASTE.

*As to Complaint from Wiluna.*

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(i) Has the Minister's attention been drawn to a letter appearing in the "Daily News" over the signature of F. C. Overheu, Meekatharra:—"A large poultry farmer at Wiluna closed up because he had to send his eggs to Perth to be branded before he could sell at Wiluna. A pastoralist making 20 lbs. of butter a month could not dispose of it to a local store. He has turned his cows out and is now on boxed butter. He was trying to alleviate the local shortage. Why cannot there be some compromise in war time, such as there is in private enterprise, instead of red tape and bureaucratic stupidity. Fred C. Overheu, Meekatharra"?

(ii) If this statement is correct, will the Government take the necessary steps to prevent this economic waste?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(i) Not until this question was asked.

(ii) The information contained in the letter is very vague, and if the hon. member can supply the names of the parties concerned, further investigations will be made.

### GOLD SALES.

*As to Prices.*

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the importance of gold mining to Western Australia, will the State Government ascertain—

(i) What was the price per ounce received by the Commonwealth Government for gold?

(ii) What amount was received as a result of the sale of gold to India and other countries in which the price of gold exceeded the Australian price?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(i) and (ii) Consideration will be given to these questions by the Government.

### RESOLUTION—COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS.

*As to Extension of Appointment.*

Debate resumed from the 20th September on the motion by the Chief Secretary to concur