

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—  
That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 5:—

5. paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section thirteen of the principal Act is repealed and re-enacted as follows:—

(a) Where before the commencement of the Adoption of Children Act Amendment Act, 1949, an order of adoption has been made under the provisions of this Act or a certified copy of an order of adoption has been filed in the Supreme Court under the provisions of the next succeeding section in respect of a child whose birth is registered pursuant to the provisions of Part IV of the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act, 1894-1948, the Registrar General on application being made to him in the prescribed form and on production of a certified copy of the order of adoption and on payment of the prescribed fee by the adopting parent or a person having knowledge of the true facts of the case shall in the prescribed form re-register the birth of the child in accordance with the particulars disclosed in the order of adoption, and in the first-mentioned prescribed form.

This repeals and redrafts paragraph (a) the present wording of which makes it appear that in all cases where a certified copy of an order of adoption has been filed in the Supreme Court under Section 13A application and payment of fee must be made before registration is effected by the Registrar General.

This was not the intention of the provision, which desired that only those orders which had been filed subsequent to the coming into operation of the amendment of 1945 and prior to the amendment of 1949 should be subject to such application and payment of fee. It is also considered undesirable to make any reference to the order of adoption as this is not done in Section 12A which also refers to registration of orders of adoption.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.9 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 3rd December, 1953.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

(a) As to Insurance Conditions.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Are buses used for carrying children to school under Education Department contracts licensed to carry a certain number of adult passengers?

(2) Is this number equal to the number of children the bus is authorised to carry by the Education Department or is it less than that number?

(3) If the latter, what would be the effect on the policy of insurance in the event of an accident?

(4) If there is any possibility of insurance policies being invalidated, will he take steps to ensure that a bus driver, adhering to his arrangements with the Education Department, runs no risk of being penalised?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) In some isolated cases, where school buses are also used for general omnibus purposes, the number of passengers to be carried is stated. Generally, however, school buses are licensed as if they were hire cars but the licence is endorsed "school omnibus" and no number of passengers is specified. The vehicle is insured for third party insurance as a class 3 (e) vehicle.

(2) The Local Government Department has no knowledge of the number of children a vehicle is authorised to carry by the Education Department.

(3) If the number being carried was in excess of that authorised by the Education Department then, provided no undue overloading was taken place, the third party policy of insurance would not be affected.

(4) In addition to the third party policy of insurance there is the comprehensive insurance and whether or not this would be effective is a matter for arrangement by the bus owner with the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association.

(b) *As to Compensation to Contractors.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Education:

Will he state when a decision is likely to be available regarding the compensation to be paid to school bus contractors referred to in questions yesterday?

The MINISTER replied:

The full impact of increased vacations will not be felt until 1955.

During 1954 the department will adjust the rates of various contracts having regard to all the circumstances connected with each service.

Contracts are let by tender and the conditions and rates vary greatly.

(c) *As to Investigation of Discrepancies.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

In view of his answer to the last of the questions I put forward today, as there are undoubted discrepancies between the number of passengers which some of these school buses are licensed to carry under the Traffic Act and the arrangement made with the Education Department as to the number of children to be carried, will he have the matter taken up with the Education Department, his own department and

the fire and accident insurance underwriters so that this question might be cleared up not individually but on the basis of full scale bus operations?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

If the hon. member will set out the nature of his queries, I will be pleased to have them passed on to the Minister for Local Government so that he may obtain the information sought by the hon. member.

## RAILWAYS.

### *As to Classification of Shooks.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware that in the new railway freight schedule the classification "shooks" has been deleted, and the freight is now charged at timber rates (Class A)?

(2) Is he aware that in view of this altered classification, plus the application of the full 35 per cent. increase to fruit and vegetable freights, it means that these industries now have to absorb an increase in freights of more than 35 per cent.?

(3) Is he aware that this freight increase has resulted in the cancellation of some orders for shooks?

(4) Does he realise that this freight increase alone on shooks to Geraldton amounts to about 1d. per lb. on the price of tomatoes from Geraldton?

(5) Does he suggest that these increased freight costs should be borne by the growers or by the consumers?

(6) Would he consider the reintroduction of the classification "shooks" in the railway rate book?

(7) Would he consider permitting growers to cart their own shook requirements by road without permit as is allowed with superphosphate?

(8) By how much per lb. does he estimate the new freight rates will increase the cost of putting tomatoes ex Geraldton on the Perth market?

(9) By how much per lb. does he estimate the new freight rates will increase the cost of putting apples ex Bridgetown on the Perth market?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) No.

(4) No.

(5) The extra costs will no doubt be passed on to the customer.

(6) This matter is at present under close examination.

(7) Under present exemptions primary producers can carry shooks without permit as back-loading against other commodities.

(8) One-tenth of a penny.

(9) One-thirtieth of a penny.

**DRUNKENNESS.***As to Convictions of Natives and Whites.*

Mr. HEAL asked the Minister for Police:

(1) What percentage of the native population has been convicted of being under the influence of liquor during the year 1953 to date, in the metropolitan area?

(2) What percentage of other population has been convicted for the same offence during the year 1953 to date, in the metropolitan area?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The number of convictions against natives for drunkenness in the metropolitan area during the year 1953 to date has been 339. The estimated population of natives in the metropolitan area, as supplied by the Department of Native Affairs, is 250.

The percentage basis cannot be arrived at as it is realised that a number of those convicted would be visitors from the country, who would possibly be only in the metropolitan area for a few days.

(2) The total number of convictions against other population was 3,622. The population being 351,000, which would be approximately 1 per cent.

**HOUSING.***(a) As to Commission's Responsibility for Lawns and Trees.*

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is the responsibility of the upkeep of the lawns and ornamental trees in front of the timber-framed flats at East Belmont and other areas that of the Housing Commission?

(2) If so, is he satisfied that these lawns and trees are receiving the attention necessary to keep them in a reasonably tidy condition?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes. Efforts are being directed to improve the lawns still further. Top dressing and manuring have been carried out this year. Regular watering is also being maintained.

*(b) As to Graylands Recreation Area.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has the recreation area adjoining the Graylands State school been dealt with by the commission to enable the Nedlands Road Board to take it over and effect improvements?

(2) If not, what is the delay?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. A subdivision is in course of preparation but before it can be completed a roadway will have to be pegged on the site.

(2) Some delay has occurred through the staff engaged on pegging and surveying being withdrawn for other urgent survey work in connection with this year's house-building programme. Every effort will be made to complete the transfer to the road board at the earliest possible date in the New Year.

*(c) As to Planting of Lawns and Trees, Allawah Grove.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

Is it possible to plant suitable trees and lawns in the Allawah Grove housing area to brighten the locality and make more amenable the conditions of residents?

The MINISTER replied:

It is not possible since the Allawah Grove flats are of a temporary nature and are situated in an area well provided with natural trees and other vegetation.

The rents charged are less than those which should be charged if assessed on an economic basis and include no provision for the planting and upkeep of lawns.

The tenure of this land by the State Housing Commission is also on a very temporary basis.

**NATIVE WELFARE.***As to Monetary Assistance to Missions.*

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

If the Aborigines Welfare Bill now before Parliament becomes law and caste natives are to be regarded as white people—

(1) To which department must the missions apply for monetary assistance for caste native children now in their care?

(2) What amount per head per week will be allowed the missions for these children?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) If and when the need arises the Government will make the necessary arrangements to satisfactorily provide for the missions and their coloured inmates.

(2) The amounts to be paid per week to missions will be no less than that paid at present and will be reviewed by the Government from time to time as circumstances may warrant.

**GOVERNMENT WORKSHOPS.***As to Shortage of Blacksmiths.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it a fact that the Government railways workshops are short of approximately 30 blacksmiths?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, what sections of maintenance on new works are being neglected as a result?

(3) Is he aware that numerous blacksmiths from Scotland are anxious to migrate to Western Australia to follow the trade if housing is available?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) There are vacancies for 15 tradesmen blacksmiths at present.

(2) No new work is being neglected, but the volume of maintenance repairs could be increased if the blacksmiths were available.

(3) I have no knowledge of the blacksmith situation in Scotland, but it would be inadvisable to promise departmental houses for immediate occupation by migrant blacksmiths while the housing position in respect of employee applicants is far from satisfactory.

### ROYAL VISIT.

#### *As to Provision of Vantage Points.*

Mr. YATES (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Are the Royal visit arrangements proceeding satisfactorily?

(2) Will sufficient vantage points be made available to organisations and the public generally?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The reply to the second question would, I think, depend a great deal upon the point of view. We are endeavouring to provide as many vantage points as possible, but nevertheless there will be many people who will be disappointed. However, the utmost is being attempted and we are hopeful that an adequate number of vantage points will be made available.

### BILL—ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—PERTH TOWN HALL AGREEMENT.

#### *Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren [2.28] in moving the second reading said: Most members in the House will recall that in 1950 Parliament ratified an agreement between the Perth City Council and the State Government for the exchange of Crown land and Council land. At that time the Perth City Council was desirous of building a town hall and, on the other hand, the State Government wished to extend the Royal Perth Hospital facilities in Wellington-st. and also to assist in making provision for the establishment of the town hall.

However, after Parliament had ratified this agreement it was found that some of the land required to be transferred by the

council was not included in the Bill, and a somewhat difficult situation has arisen as a result. For instance, matters relating to the widening of Wellington-st., which is part of the policy of the Perth City Council, have already cropped up, in addition to the possible closure of certain roads in that area, and a supplementary agreement has now become necessary. I think members will better be able to understand what the Bill actually means if they refer to the Fifth Schedule contained in it, which consists of a plan drawn up for the express purpose of explaining just exactly what is involved.

When the earlier negotiations took place between the State Government and the council with respect to this particular area, the council at that time desired to retain certain land with a frontage to Moore-st., which is marked brown on the plan. The reason for that was that the State Electricity Commission held the adjoining land at that time, and the council desired to retain possession of the narrow strip fronting Moore-st. in case of any further negotiations developing between the various parties concerned in that matter.

Subsequent to that, however, the Government of the day purchased this particular land from the commission for hospital extension purposes and therefore the council's reasons to retain this adjoining narrow strip marked brown no longer exist. But whilst the City of Perth remains the proprietor of this particular strip of land, the whole of the Government's plans in relation to hospital expansion come to a standstill, because not only will it be necessary to own this strip of land but also to close down Moore-st. entirely.

This is not possible at the present time so long as the Perth City Council owns that particular frontage. The matter resolved itself into a question of whether the State Government should expend money in buying this land from the Perth City Council. In the negotiations that took place it was found that part of the council's policy in that area was the widening of Wellington-st., taking in a strip some 24 feet wide in order to carry out its intention in that regard. The situation then quickly developed where both sides were able to agree on an exchange of land without any money whatsoever passing hands. That is all this Bill seeks to do.

The negotiations have been going on for quite a time between the Government and the Perth City Council in this connection and an agreement has at least been reached. The agreement has been signed by the Governor and the City of Perth, and the Bill now before the House is merely designed to ratify that agreement. To put it very briefly, it simply means that an agreement has now been

made between the Government, on the one hand, which wants to expand its hospital facilities and building programme, and the Perth City Council on the other, which desires to continue with its street widening policy. In each case land is owned by either party and an agreement has been made for an exchange of land in order that both parties shall have the opportunity to carry out their respective policies. That is all the Bill seeks to do. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

## **BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [2.35] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill that has passed another place and has been sent to us for approval. It contains only one small amendment, the object of which is to amend Section 436 of the Municipal Corporations Act. This deals with the sale of land for non-payment of rates. Because of non-payment of rates on certain properties, from time to time local authorities take action to forfeit the blocks which are then sold.

Subsequent to the sale—when the transfer of the land to the purchaser is lodged at the Titles Office for consideration—it is frequently found that the certificate of title cannot be located; I refer to the duplicate certificate of title. Under this particular section of the Municipal Corporations Act, the registrar is obliged to advertise his intention to register the transfer of the land to the new owner without the production of the duplicate certificate.

Because of the very high cost of advertising at present, many of the purchasers—who, of course, have to pay for the advertising of the registrar's intention to register the transfer without a duplicate certificate of title—complain about the costs involved in the advertising. In some instances the cost of advertising reaches the amount paid for the land in question. In the past there have not been many complaints about the cost of advertising because it was not as high then as it is today; in fact, the cost would only be a fraction of what is charged today.

The Road Districts Act, the sister Act to the Municipal Corporations Act, does not contain this provision, but it does include one which would be the equivalent of the intention implemented, if we decided to agree to the proposal contained in the Bill. The Commissioner of Titles does not consider the production of the duplicate certificate of title to be absolutely necessary, nor does he consider it necessary for the advertising to

be done. He feels that the transfer can be registered in many instances without the added expense of the advertising of his intention to do it, as is provided for in the Act.

We believe that the provision in the Road Districts Act should, in a similar manner, be incorporated in, or an alteration made to, Section 436 of the Municipal Corporations Act, which will give it the same meaning as the provision in the Road Districts Act; that is, to give the registrar discretionary power in cases of this kind as to whether he considers it necessary to advertise his intention to register the transfer without the production of a duplicate certificate of title. The registrar is of the opinion that in many cases it is quite unnecessary to do the advertising, and the secretary of the Local Government Department agrees with the Commissioner of Titles. The measure is brought down almost entirely to obviate the unnecessary expense involved in the advertising of the commissioner's intention to register the transfer without the duplicate. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Nalder, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—REPRINTING OF ACTS AUTHORISATION.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE** (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [2.41] in moving the second reading said: This is a very short and non-contentious Bill. It is introduced to right any wrongs which may have been done, and it also clarifies the position regarding the reprinting of Acts. When a Bill has been passed by both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, it is printed by the Government Printer, authenticated by the Clerk of Parliaments, and assented to. As so printed, authenticated and assented to, it becomes an Act.

Where Acts have been amended, Parliament has expressly authorised the reprinting of those Acts as amended, (a) by the Statutes Compilation Act, 1905, (b) by the Amendments Incorporation Act, 1938, and (c) by an express section in the particular Act concerned. Examples are—

Health Act Amendment Act, 1933 (No. 2), No. 38 of 1933.

Administration Act Amendment Act, 1934, Act No. 28 of 1934.

Transfer of Land Act Amendment Act, 1950, Act No. 17 of 1950.

Police Act Amendment Act, 1952, Act No. 15 of 1952.

However, Parliament has not expressly authorised the reprinting of an Act which has not been amended.

When stocks of Acts which have not been amended, and Acts which have been amended and reprinted as amended, are

about to become depleted, the practice has been for the Government Printer, of his own motion, to set up new type and reprint further copies. There are two grounds of objection to this practice, namely: (1) that there is no express authorisation by Parliament for the reprinting of Acts which have not been amended; and (2) that in the reprinting, whether of Acts which have not been amended, or of Acts which have already been reprinted as amended, there have been variations in the line spacings. These variations lead to difficulty and confusion.

Where an amendment to an Act is required, the Parliamentary Draftsman bases the draft of the amendment on the authorised Act. There have been occasions when the authorised Act in loose form, that is to say, unbound in the appropriate sessional volume, has been out of print, and members have obtained a reprint with variations from the line spacing of that of the authorised copy, thus adding to their difficulties in relating the amendment to the passages to be amended. With a view to removing the objections mentioned in these remarks, this present Bill is being introduced.

It is probable that the necessity for reprinting some Acts will arise before the 1954 session. Members will see that the Bill gives definite authority for the reprinting of Acts to be carried out in exactly the same form. Only where there had been no such authority, other than Acts that have been amended, did the Government have power to reprint them. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT** (Mt. Lawley) [2.45]: I am glad the Government has thought fit to bring down this Bill because personally I have had some difficulty in considering Bills which make amendments to Acts that have been reprinted. The Bill may refer to a word or a certain line, but when a loose copy of the Act is procured, that particular word cannot be found in the line mentioned. That is brought about because the printer has, on his own initiative, reprinted the loose copies and altered the spacing or the alignment of the original amending Act. Where the Parliamentary Draftsman is preparing an amendment to an Act he refers to the original Act of Parliament, and not to the consolidation of that Act. It is done automatically. The Bill will cause all reprinted Acts to be referred to the Attorney General or the Minister for Justice as the case may be, which will mean in actuality, to the Parliamentary Draftsman.

The Minister for Justice: It will mean that in future all Acts will be uniform.

**Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT**: Yes. Before Acts are reprinted they will have to be referred to the Parliamentary Draftsman

in actual fact. When referring to a new copy, there will be no doubt that a reference in an amending Bill will show the amendment correctly, as being in the line referred to in the loose copy. The measure will not only be of material assistance to the general public, but it will certainly prove advantageous to members of Parliament when dealing with amendments to Acts. I support the second reading.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### **BILL—CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS (VALIDATION).**

*Message.*

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

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS** (Hon. H. E. Graham—East Perth) [2.52] in moving the second reading said: So many words have been spoken in connection with the appointment to the position of Conservator of Forests that it is not my intention in introducing this small measure to recapitulate any of the circumstances attending the filling of that position. The Bill is merely designed to satisfy certain legal requirements. As members are aware, the seven-year term of office of the previous Conservator expired on the 31st January last. A new appointment was not made until the 19th October, and so, during the several months that intervened, there was, in fact, no Conservator of Forests, although Dr. Stoute continued to act in that capacity.

We feel that any action taken by the previous conservator during his term of office is not likely to be challenged, but I understand that certain doubts have arisen in respect of the extension of permits, leases and so on granted by the present conservator. The Act lays down that the conservator is a body corporate with perpetual succession and, because of circumstances with which members are familiar, there was a gap during which we had no conservator in accordance with the terms of the Act. The Bill will simply place beyond doubt any challenge that might be made, and satisfy the department that any dealings, such as the extension of concessions granted during that time, will be lawful in every respect. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. D. Brand, debate adjourned.

**BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND  
FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS ACT  
AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

*Second Reading.*

**MR. COURT (Nedlands)** [2.55] in moving the second reading said: The need for the amendment proposed by this short measure arises from a recent court case which disclosed a weakness in the principal Act. The magistrate gave his reserved decision on the 23rd October, 1953, resulting in the Chief Inspector of Factories being unable to sustain an action. Briefly, the position was as follows:—

The defendants were charged—

That on the 22nd day of June, 1953, by stating that certain furniture conformed with the specifications of the Standards Association of Australia published a statement to one Cuzens intended to promote the sale of personal property, to wit, one lounge suite, which statement was to their knowledge false in a material particular, contrary to Section 8(1) of the Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act, 1936.

Although the magistrate said that a strong prima facie case had been made out by the prosecution that the suite complained of was not made in accordance with the Standards Association of Australia specifications and was of very poor quality, the case failed because there was no evidence that on the 22nd June, 1953, the lounge suite under discussion had been manufactured at that date. The prosecution failed because the wrong use of the Standards Association label did not of itself amount to a publication of a false statement.

It is opportune to give some information regarding the Furniture Trade Convention of Australia. It comprises the Australian Council of Furniture Manufacturers, the Federal Council of Retail Furnishers Association, and the Federated Furnishing Trades Society or Union of Australia. That is a rather unique combination representing manufacturers, retailers and employee associations who meet in conference. In fact, the first general president of the body was the president of the Furniture Trades Union in New South Wales.

The convention agreed to administer a voluntary furniture-marking scheme for indicating to the Australian public where there had been compliance with the provisions of the Australian Standards Specification No. S1, Household Furniture, given to the trade by the Standards Association of Australia. The administration of the scheme is exercised through a central furniture labelling committee representative of the bodies making up the convention, as well as the Standards Association of Australia and assisted by a local committee set up in each State. The

central furniture labelling committee has prescribed a form of label which indicates compliance with the Australian Standard Specification No. S1, Household Furniture. Permits to use such labels are granted to the furniture manufacturers who make application on the prescribed form and sign a declaration, provided that the committee is satisfied as to the capabilities and bona fides of the applicant.

The State labelling committees have the power to suspend and withdraw permission for the use of labels issued to approved applicants whose product, in their opinion and after proper investigation, fails to comply with the provisions of the Australian Standard Specification No. S1, Household Furniture as amended from time to time by the Standards Association of Australia. It is important to realise that the decision to manufacture furniture to conform to the standard is quite voluntary, but once a firm has applied and been accepted as one which manufactures furniture conforming to the standard specification, it is then obligatory on the firm to conform to the standard for all its products.

The standards were introduced to protect the public in the purchase of furniture. At the end of the war certain shoddy furniture reappeared on the market to the detriment of the public. The industry became concerned at the situation, and the Furniture Trades Convention of Australia, together with the Standards Association, drew up and declared the Australian standards. This approved label in respect of the standard is a guarantee that what a person is buying is of sound quality. Its sole function is to protect the public from shoddy furniture.

Members would do well to bear in mind that the Standards Association of Australia is financed by grants from the Federal and State Governments and the furniture trade itself. It is established under the aegis of the Commonwealth and State Governments for the promotion of standardisation and simplified practice. Its standards are minimum standards to be observed, and the observing of such minimum standards can do nothing but protect the public from exploitation.

The relevant part of Section 8 of the principal Act reads as follows:—

(1) Any person who publishes or causes to be published any statement which—

(a) is intended or apparently intended by such person or any other person to promote the sale or disposal of any real property or any personal property (including chattels real, or stocks, shares, bonds or other securities), or any services, or to increase the consumption or use of any such personal property, or to

induce any person or persons to enter into any obligations relating to any such real property or personal property or services or any interest in any such real or personal property; and

(b) is to his knowledge false in any material particular, shall be guilty of an offence.

Then follows a series of fairly heavy penalties. The subsection found to be deficient is Subsection (2). Although it sets out the different ways—and some are very wide—by which a statement shall be deemed to be published within the meaning of the section, the magistrate found that the mere fixing of this label did not of itself amount to a publication of a false statement within the meaning of Section 8. Paragraph (f) is the one being added by this measure and it will have the effect that a person who uses the S1. label, or an impressed stamp in lieu showing the appropriate words, will be deemed to have published a statement that the article in question has been made to the standard of the Standards Association of Australia.

Mr. YATES: Does this apply in the Eastern States?

Mr. COURT: The gold label system has been approved throughout Australia by the Standards Association which works in conjunction with the convention. I do not know whether the other State Acts are satisfactory in respect of the proposal covered by the amendment. Expressed another way, it means that the use of the label, or impressed stamp in lieu, will be sufficient to bring an offending person within the meaning of "false advertisements" as prescribed by Section 8 of the Act, if the goods concerned do not equal the minimum standard laid down by the Australian Standards specification.

Suffice to say that this amendment has the support of the Furniture Trade Convention, including the trade union component of that convention, which is very jealous that the industry's reputation be preserved because protection of the standard is not only protection of the public, but of the reputation of the artisans involved in the industry. I notice that an amendment has been placed on the notice paper, and I can see that it will do nothing but improve the effectiveness of the amendment proposed in the Bill. I have no further comment to make except to commend the measure to the House. The Bill has already passed through another place, having been introduced by a private member there. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

## BILL—AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

### Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren) [3.7] in moving the second reading said: Members will recall that quite a few years ago a Royal Commission was set up to inquire into vermin in this State, and to suggest the best method for its eradication or control. As a result, some years later, in 1950, Parliament passed the Agriculture Protection Board Act which set up a board known as the Agriculture Protection Board. At the same time Parliament also passed a new Noxious Weeds Act and amended the Vermin Act, both of which are administered by the Agriculture Protection Board.

Hon. L. Thorn: We have been amending them ever since.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Hon. L. Thorn: You have my sympathy.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I thought I would. For administrative purposes, provision is made in the Vermin Act for a chief vermin control officer to take charge of that section and in the Noxious Weeds Act there is provision for a chief weed control officer. The purpose of the Agriculture Protection Board is to assist local authorities to eradicate vermin of all kinds, as well as noxious weeds, and further—and this is more important—to co-ordinate the administration of the Noxious Weeds Act and the Vermin Act, and all the activities that take place in the State as a result of these two pieces of legislation.

The board consists of nine members who are the Chief Vermin Control Officer, who is chairman; the Chief Weed Control Officer; the Government Entomologist; the Chief Warden of Fauna; an officer of the State Treasury; and four members appointed by the Governor and nominated by the Minister. These four members consist of one representing the pastoral industry, one representing the agricultural industry and two representing local authorities. These members are selected from a panel of names submitted by the respective organisations.

There is no doubt, on reading the evidence and report of the Royal Commission, that it intended the Minister should, in fact, be chairman, and that was one of the recommendations, as the member for Stirling will recall. However, that intention was not implemented and was not incorporated in the Act, but the protection board was made directly responsible to the Minister and as a result of that a rather queer situation has developed. We have at present two officers of the Department of Agriculture sitting on the board who are the Chief Weed Control Officer and the Government Entomologist but they



do not come under the direction of their department, so far as their activities are concerned. That is an anomalous position.

The chairman of the Agriculture Protection Board, for instance, who is also Chief Vermin Control Officer, may by this Act appeal direct to the Minister on some technical matter which he, in turn, because of his ignorance, must of necessity refer to the officers of the Department of Agriculture for advice and yet nowhere in the Act is there any power for the chief administrative officer of the Department of Agriculture to have any say whatever in the operation or administration of this board.

In the working of the Act—I have noticed it particularly in the last eight months, while I have been in this office—quite frequently some suggestion or recommendation comes to me from the chairman of the Agriculture Protection Board and I, in turn, must pass it for advice to my own officer who has no control at all, so far as his own officers are concerned—those two who are members of the board—and there is that splitting up of control which is found to work in a most unsatisfactory manner.

Even the chairman is not completely satisfied with the present set-up because so much of his time is taken up with the administration of the board and the work associated with it that he has little time left for the real purpose for which his position was created—the position of chief vermin control officer. The Bill therefore suggests an alteration to bring the operations of this board more into line with what the Royal Commission recommended as the result of its inquiries.

The first proposal contained in the Bill is to make the Director of Agriculture chairman of this board and that will give him direct contact with his own Minister, as he is entitled to have, and will place him in a position, due to his own knowledge and status, to answer any queries that are likely to arise as the result of the activities of the board. This is not suggested in any haphazard manner and before a decision was made to ask Cabinet to agree to this Bill, I caused to be set up a committee to inquire into what I considered to be obvious weaknesses arising in the operation of this section of the Act. That committee, comprised of the chief administrative officer of the Department of Agriculture, the Assistant Under Treasurer and the secretary of the Public Service Commissioner's office, was appointed to inquire into and make recommendations in respect of a number of weaknesses, one of which I have already mentioned.

Some of the provisions of this measure resulted from the findings of that committee and have, indeed, also the endorsement of the Public Service Commissioner. The measure proposes first of all that the

chairman of the board shall be the Director of Agriculture and not the Chief Vermin Control Officer as at present. Provision is made for the Chief Vermin Control Officer to be the chief executive Officer of the board. That will relieve him of all the onerous responsibilities of chairmanship and make available to the State his full time as Chief Vermin Control Officer.

The Act at present provides for the Chief Weed Control Officer and the Government Entomologist to be members of the board and that, in itself, is a mistake, because by nominating a position rather than an individual, one could have, as we have now, two excellent officers serving on the board, but if one or both of them should die and their successors in office automatically became members of the board, it would not necessarily follow that those new members would have the capacity adequately to fill the places of their predecessors.

It is therefore proposed in the Bill to delete all reference to those offices and provide in lieu for two officers of the Department of Agriculture to be members of the board. That will overcome the difficulty that now exists. Perhaps I should not say that it exists at present, as we are very well served by the two officers who are now members of the board, but the provision that I have mentioned will ensure against some future contingency where these two officers, for one reason or another, will either pass away or go on to some other form of activity.

We want to make sure that there shall be latitude in the selection of the individuals when the time comes to select officers to fill vacancies on the board. The Chief Vermin Control Officer and the Chief Weed Control Officer will still carry out the decisions of the protection board in connection with the Acts which provide for their respective appointments. Under the Act—this is an entirely different subject but one which must be given consideration—there are certain sums of money paid into the Agriculture Protection Board trust fund each year from Consolidated Revenue and by the Railways Commission. Those moneys are earmarked for specific purposes such as noxious weeds control, vermin control or grasshopper control and may not be expended for any other purpose, under the Act, which is quite water-tight in that regard.

Once the Government has made a decision, through the Act to which I have referred, in respect of how money should be allocated to a certain fund, in no circumstances can it be used for any other purpose. In practice this means that the board may have funds at its disposal for the destruction of vermin which may not be very prevalent at a particular time while, at the same time, it may be ex-

tremely short of funds to deal with a serious problem caused by some infestation of vermin of a different kind.

While the Bill groups the revenue of the protection board into one trust fund, it in no way provides for any increase of revenue or contribution. Nothing of that kind is suggested in this legislation but we feel it would be in the interests of the protection board if it had power to utilise the total sum of money that is paid to it, partly from the Railways Commission but mostly from Consolidated Revenue, in any way it so desires within the State for the destruction of vermin or noxious weeds.

The principal Act provides that the Railways Commission shall pay £500 per annum for the control, prevention and eradication of noxious weeds, and £2,500 in relation to vermin. In addition, the Agriculture Protection Board receives £105,000 each year from Consolidated Revenue made up as follows:—

	£
Noxious Weeds .....	7,000
Vermin .....	44,000
Vermin in the specified area .....	12,000

That is, certain districts which are designated in the Act and which are north of the 26th parallel.

	£
Grasshoppers .....	30,000
General expenses of the board .....	12,000

While the Agriculture Protection Board has a considerable sum of money at its disposal, it could easily have a considerable credit balance for any one of those items and yet be in desperate need of funds to cope with some infestation in regard to noxious weeds, vermin in certain specified areas or under some other item.

So it is felt that it is a reasonable proposition to ask Parliament to agree to group the whole lot into one trust fund, instead of segregating the expenditure, and thus allow the board, as a result of its experience, to spend the money in any direction it so desires, under the powers provided in the Act.

Hon. L. Thorn: I think that is a good amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it is a good idea and it ought to receive the approval of the House. That is all the Bill seeks to do, and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Owen, debate adjourned.

## BILL—LAND AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 1st December.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) (3.23): As the Minister said when introducing this Bill, it will give additional protection to the public; consequently, I propose to support it. The Bill provides that the bond required of a land agent shall be increased from £500 to £2,000. My own view is that the sum could possibly have been increased a little further. However, a sum of £2,000 is a considerable increase over £500 and maybe some of the people who are carrying on business as land agents, and whose businesses are not large, would have been seriously affected had the bond required been increased beyond the £2,000 limit.

The Minister for Justice: I think it would have had the effect of putting a lot of the small men out of business.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. The next amendment is designed to prevent those people who engage in a form of business that cannot be recommended—namely making available to members of the public for reward information relative to the possibility of obtaining accommodation—from exploiting the public. Unfortunately, accommodation in houses, flats and rooms is still fairly restricted.

Many people, particularly those who come from overseas, find it difficult to obtain accommodation at a figure that is within their means and they have resorted to these people who hold out the hope that they will find accommodation when actually the information given is not worth the reward or charge that is made. Frequently advantage is taken of people who cannot obtain accommodation, and that is not in the best interests of the public.

To prevent this, a provision is to be inserted in the Act which will prohibit the information being supplied for remuneration. I consider that that is a good provision. I would point out to members that exactly the same provision has been inserted in an amendment to the Rents and Tenancies Act and it might possibly cause some confusion. It is not good practice for two Acts to place on record the same law.

The Minister for Justice: I think it was necessary as regards key money.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am inclined to differ on that point. I have no strong views on the subject, but it is not good practice to have exactly the same provision in two different Acts. I think it would have been sufficient to insert the provision in the Land Agents Act because that is an Act of a permanent nature, whereas the Bill to amend the rents and tenancies legislation seeks only to extend that Act for 12 months.

The next provision to which I wish to refer is one which proposes to set up what is to be known as the land agents supervisory committee of Western Australia. The Bill states—

Where the committee is informed or has reason to suspect that there are or may be grounds for objecting to the granting of a licence or the renewal of a licence or for applying for cancellation of a licence, the committee shall obtain such statements of the facts as are available and necessary to enable it to decide whether those grounds do or do not exist.

The committee would also have authority to examine witnesses on oath and penalties are provided for those who do not supply the information required. A provision has been inserted which states that a person is not obliged to answer a question put to him at an inquiry conducted by the committee if the answer to that question would tend to incriminate him.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is there any onus of proof in this?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No. The committee also has power to request the Commissioner of Police to investigate any matter and to supply it with information. It will be seen that the duties of this committee are of an executive nature. It will have to investigate the conduct of a land agent with a view to taking action. It will be its duty either to oppose the application for a licence or apply for a cancellation of one or deal adequately with any misconduct by a land agent. That is quite a good provision, but I am not in favour of the personnel of the committee. The members are to be a stipendiary, police or resident magistrate who is to be the chairman; a qualified accountant and auditor and a licensee.

As the duties of the proposed committee will not be judicial, but rather that of an investigatory nature, or the conducting of proceedings where misconduct has been proved, I do not think a police magistrate should be a member of the committee or its chairman. The ordinary duties of a police magistrate are of a judicial nature and I think he should not be called upon to take up the role of a prosecutor. It would be rather inadvisable for a police magistrate to submit to his colleague who was sitting on the bench in a judicial capacity, that a certain land agent should have his licence cancelled and then the following day the position be reversed. When in Committee I propose to move an amendment that the chairman shall be a person nominated by the Government without providing that he shall have any particular qualifications. That will leave it open.

The marginal notes in the Bill show that this provision was taken from the South Australian Act. The committee appointed under that Act has for one of its members a legal practitioner who has had seven years' experience and two other members, one of whom is a representative of the land agents. I would have preferred the South Australian provision to the one in the Bill. I do not propose to

make an effort to amend this measure so that it will follow the line of the South Australian legislation, nor will I move to amend the provision to provide that a member shall be a legal practitioner, but merely to remove the necessity for a magistrate being on the committee. However, it may be that such a legal man will be appointed if it is found that he will be of use to the committee.

The expense involved in this matter is to be a charge on revenue. The provisions in the Bill are to protect the public rather than to protect land agents and therefore, in those circumstances, the charge against revenue is probably justified, although it would not be so in normal circumstances. Those are the main provisions in the Bill and I support the second reading.

**THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING** (Hon. H. E. Graham—East Perth) [3.35]: I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without making some reference to the most extraordinary change of heart by the member for Mt. Lawley. On the 2nd October last year I moved an amendment to the Land Agents Bill then before us to increase the fidelity bond from £500 to £2,000. The member for Mt. Lawley, who was then the Attorney General, said among other things, "I feel that no increase is necessary." My amendment was put to the vote and as the voting was equal, the chairman gave his casting vote against the amendment and so the fidelity bond remains at £500 today. Now we have the spectacle this afternoon of the member for Mt. Lawley informing us that he is heartily in favour of increasing the fidelity bond from £500 to £2,000.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Which only goes to show the member for Mt. Lawley can be wrong sometimes.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands) [3.37]: I support the second reading because I feel, in the interests of the land agents themselves that some change in the legislation is necessary, so that there can be a better control of certain members to prevent them reflecting adversely on the majority of the members of that profession.

The Minister for Justice: And to protect the public.

Mr. COURT: I was coming to that. I will make some observations on the measure which I would like the Minister to take into account when reviewing the operation of the Act after it is amended. It could be that after a period of time and experience of the amended Act, he might want to extend this measure a little further.

Personally, I am pleased to see that the fidelity bond is to be raised from £500 to £2,000. I do not think that is an unreasonable amount to ask any man to obtain if he is to hold himself out to the public, realising that, in the ordinary course of trade, he will be handling a

large amount of money which is not his own but which is merely passing through his hands temporarily. Nevertheless, I do not feel that the increase in the amount of the bond is the final answer in affording protection to the public.

The provision that I would like to have seen introduced would have been one which insisted on a compulsory audit of the trust account. Most of us can recall the days when there was considerable uneasiness in Eastern Australia regarding two rather large defalcations in connection with sharebrokers. Had the existing provisions of the Stock Exchange prevailed at that time, those defalcations would not have taken place. Subsequently, the Stock Exchange, voluntarily and very effectively, made it obligatory for its members to have audits made by independent people approved by the Stock Exchange. In other words, a member could not go along and get his best friend to do his audit; he had to have an auditor approved by the Stock Exchange itself.

Furthermore, the Stock Exchange voluntarily prescribed a form of certificate which the auditor had to complete and forward with a certificate direct to the Stock Exchange—not via the member, but direct to the chairman. I think the Minister knows the form of certificate used, and it is a fairly stiff one. Among other things, one has to examine the trading activities of the sharebroker himself to see that he is not using clients' securities to operate or trade himself. In other words, it is made very difficult—I will not say impossible—for a sharebroker to handle his clients' securities in any way but in the correct and proper manner.

That has been a very effective method and it has not cost the country or the Government one penny, because it is part and parcel of the operation of a sharebroker's business to have records and trust accounts and clients' accounts, and accordingly it is not unreasonable to expect him to have those records audited. What I would like to have seen is this particular provision extended to land agents, whether the form of audit be such that the certificate is sent direct to the Minister, to this proposed committee, or to the Real Estate Institute.

I do believe that if this simple system were installed, all this supervisory business would be unnecessary because the Real Estate Institute could then be made responsible to the Minister for reporting on a certain date—say, 60 days after the 30th June—that it held all the certificates with respect to these trust accounts. Furthermore, I would like to have seen a provision which made it obligatory for the audit to be done at intervals not exceeding three months. It is one thing to have a bond for £2,000 and another to get sufficient cover to reimburse the public.

If an undesirable person carries on this calling, and he has the experience of all this money passing through his hands and decides he is going to do something wrong, he is not going to do it for £100; he will do it for something really worth while. For that reason, I think the bond could prove inadequate. But if there is a system of regular outside audit, which has no purpose but to ensure that the trust moneys and that the books are kept properly and up to date, we will have prevention which is so much nicer and better than cure; it is better for the agent himself and also better for the public.

Those are the main reasons why I would prefer to have seen an experimentation with audits by independent people approved by the Real Estate Institute, or by the Minister, or, if this becomes law, by the committee itself in order to make sure that each and every one of the agents is employing a proper double-entry system of book-keeping and has all the trust moneys properly segregated from that of his own finance. None of us has any quarrel regarding the question of key money. Apart from the remarks I have made, I support the Bill.

*Sitting suspended from 3.40 to 4.8 p.m.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Section 2 amended:

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE:** There is a small error here and to correct it, I move an amendment—

That in line 1 the word "three" be struck out and the word "two" inserted in lieu.

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

Clauses 4 and 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Section 14A repealed:

**HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT:** I said when speaking to the second reading of the Bill that I did not think a resident magistrate should be chairman of the advisory committee. I move an amendment—

That in lines 5 and 6 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 14A the words "a Stipendiary, Police or Resident Magistrate, to be" be struck out.

If this is agreed to, I shall move a consequential amendment.

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE:** I have no objection to the amendment. The Governor will be able to appoint any person as chairman.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That in line 6 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 14A the word "and" be struck out and the words "who shall be" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

That in line 8 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 14A, after the word "auditor," the words "who is a practising member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, or the Australian Society of Accountants" be inserted.

Under the present wording there could be doubt or argument at a later date. The two institutes I have named are, to the best of my knowledge, the only two major institutes in existence at the present time. The amendment will allow of a wide selection being made and, at the same time, it will ensure that the person selected will be properly qualified.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

That in line 10 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 14A, after the word "licensee," the words "who is a member of the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia" be inserted.

This will ensure that a member of the main recognised body of people who carry on the calling of land agents will be on the committee. I know there are others outside of the institute who practise the calling in a reputable manner, but the institute is a reputable and incorporated body, and so has permanence. Because of its rules and regulations, its representative would be subject to a degree of ethical control. It would be an asset to the Minister to make his selection from amongst the members of the institute.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I oppose this amendment as I do not think the choice should be confined to the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia. The field should not be narrowed down in that way.

Mr. COURT: I feel that we should encourage this body to exercise disciplinary control over the ethical conduct of its members, as that would make for increased protection to the public. One of the best ways of achieving that end would be to ensure that a member of that institute became a member of this committee. It is easy for any reputable agent to join the institute, and I think the amendment is a step in the right direction.

The Minister for Justice: I am sorry, but I still feel I must oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negated.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subsection (8) of proposed new Section 14A the word "board" be struck out and the word "committee" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of paragraph (c) of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 14B the word "affidavit" be struck out and the word "affirmation" inserted in lieu.

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

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Section 3 of No. 13 of 1952 amended:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I must vote against this clause because, if it were agreed to, the Government, if it wanted to increase or reduce the fee, could do so only by Act of Parliament. It would be bad administration to require an Act of Parliament to alter a court fee. It means a great deal of work and expense. It is not a proper form of administration nor a proper Act of Parliament. Therefore, I propose to vote against the clause.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I can see no objection to the clause and I think it will be helpful to administration.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

## BILL—ABORIGINES WELFARE.

### Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th November.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [4.34]: At the outset, I do not doubt the Minister's belief in the desirability of the results which the Bill will achieve if it becomes an Act. I do not question his sincere belief in the provisions of the Bill as a means to achieve the result which apparently he has in mind, but I must crave leave to disagree with him as to the result he is likely to achieve and say straightaway that the Bill in its present form, to say the least of it, is 10 or 15 years before its time.

No one is more anxious than I or, I believe, those associated with me on these benches, to assimilate—and I will define the use of that word in a minute—the coloured population of this State. Where we differ is on the approach that should be made to this question; as to what should be done in the immediate future as a means to that end, not because we have any animus of any sort, but rather the contrary, towards the coloured population of this State.

I must confess—and my remarks must be taken as being modified by this factor—that I have a much more substantial acquaintance of the coloured population of the South-West Land Division than I have of those in the northern areas of the State. I would point out that the major number of other than full-bloods is to be found in the South-West Land Division and more particularly in what we usually refer to as the South-West of the State. There, the population consists of half and three-quarter castes and there are very few full-bloods. In fact, it is apparent, from the statistics given by the Minister himself, that the greater proportion of the full-blooded inhabitants of Western Australia are to be found north of the 26th parallel.

A moment ago I promised that I would define my use of the word "assimilate". I find, from a perusal of Webster's dictionary, which I think is regarded as fairly good authority, that the use of the word "assimilate" in the social sense means, "to render similar or alike by environmental influences as by the same or similar habitats, occupations, modes of life or cultural media." "Assimilation" in the same sense is "the process whereby previously divers cultural elements are assimilated."

In my opinion, it will be quite obvious, from the meanings given to those words, that the time is by no means ripe for the assimilation of the coloured population in the south-western portion of this State and, obviously, even less ripe for the assimilation of those who, in the main, are practically without contact with the other sections of our people. In more recent years, and in the last seven years in particular, there has been a considerable attempt to improve the environmental influences which surround the coloured population in the South-West of Western Australia.

The expansion of the activities of Christian missions of various denominations which was greatly encouraged—very rightly, in my opinion—by the Government of which I was a member, has made a very substantial contribution toward the end which we all have in mind. Undoubtedly, there would have been a great effort to improve the opportunities of reasonable habitation for these people where they were likely to take advantage of it and had it not been for the extraordinary increases which took place, substantially by migration, in the population of this State during that period and the consequent very heavy demand for housing which could not be fulfilled from the existing resources of labour and material for the supply, not only of housing, but also of public buildings and other facilities for the people who were either born in or brought to this country and into this State for a time during that period, at the rate of over 5 per cent. per annum.

An economist will assure us that in any period of 12 months it is beyond the material and physical resources of any community to absorb an increase of more than 3 per cent. of the population. So it becomes apparent from that angle, as it became apparent in actual fact, that it was impossible for an attempt to succeed. It is hardly possible as a result of that impact and as a result of the immigration policy, to carry out any programme of housing for desirable natives even today. So plans had to be postponed, and at present we can look at the question only in the light that something will be done in the reasonably near future.

There has never previously been as much activity as in recent years to educate the coloured population in the South-West areas. Very substantial strides have been made in that direction. There is no question that those activities can be extended if we allow the necessary hiatus of time to pass between the present and the coming into force of any law the Minister has in mind, so that there could be some reasonable prospect of the majority of these people being assimilated into the State's population. As has been indicated by more than one speaker who has addressed himself to this subject, at present there is as little hope of that assimilation taking place in those areas as there would be in attempting to assimilate full-blooded natives into the population in other electorates. The time is not yet ripe for that assimilation to take place.

The Bill contains three major provisions. In his address on the second reading, the Minister made a speech which I have heard referred to as somewhat theatrical. In my opinion the speech was conspicuous in one respect. That was that he made no reference to many of the provisions of the Bill. A search of the principal Act and the amendments was necessary in order to get a full idea of what the measure actually proposes. In my opinion, the majority of the provisions can be dealt with in other stages of this Bill.

Suffice it for me in the time at my disposal to make some reference to the three major propositions. Firstly, it is proposed to confine the word "aborigine" to those of full blood, except in such cases as the commissioner asks a magistrate, or such a person himself applies to the Minister, to classify him—being less than full-blood—as an aborigine. For myself I cannot see any advantage to be gained by calling a native an aborigine. The term "native" was applied after the passing of the Act in 1936, when legislation known as the Natives Administration Act was introduced. As indicated by other speakers, it seems to me that the change would only result in the full-blooded native being described as an "abo" by many people.

I do not think he deserves that name; I see nothing against the continued use of the word "native." After all, everyone of

us is a native of the country in which he is born. Viewed in that light, the objection to the continued use of the term "native" would immediately cease, and the objection to the changeover would become more significant. The effect of the proposal is that full-blooded natives will come under the Act, except in those cases where the commissioner might apply, or the person himself might ask to be classified as an aborigine.

I suggest that the commissioner would not be likely to make such an application except in a very few cases. Neither would I suppose, if the advantages to be obtained from the Bill are anything like those alleged by the Minister, that the person himself would make such an application. In effect, it will mean that the authority of the Native Affairs Department in the South-West area of the State will cease, because if this Bill becomes law there will be virtually nobody in the South-West coming under the control of that department.

As I mentioned, there are virtually no full-bloods in that area. In that respect I am convinced that this Bill is unwise and premature. I am convinced that the coloured population in that area is in no way fit to have withdrawn from it so suddenly, the authority and supervision of the department, without replacing that authority and supervision of natives by another welfare authority. The Bill does not propose to do anything of that nature.

I am satisfied that if this state of affairs were suddenly brought about by the passage of this Bill and the effect I have mentioned resulted, the position would be fraught with trouble for white and coloured persons alike because neither of them would be ready for the passage of the measure in its present form at this time. Such a step might succeed 10 or 15 years hence if we started to make preparations for it now or continued in an expanded way the preparations that were begun in a similar way five or six years ago.

If the authority of the Native Welfare Department is to be withdrawn from those areas, I believe it must be replaced by the establishment of missions wherever any substantial number of coloured people are to be found, and particular emphasis should be laid on the children and special steps should be taken to bring them within the mission sphere of influence. This proposal would demand that a considerable number of mission stations be opened up in the rural areas of the State. There is a substantial number of these people—and in some areas they are increasing in number—that will require care and attention and special steps to be taken to fit them into a future environment, which steps should be started in the near future, or we shall not be ready even at the expiration of the period to which I have referred.

Should the Native Welfare Department wish to get out of the responsibility of looking after the coloured population in the south-western portions of the State, then I suggest that it hand over its responsibilities to representatives of the missions and let them, with Government financial assistance and other forms of assistance as required, assume the care and the looking after of the coloured population there. If that were done, I am sure it would very quickly react in favour, not only of the coloured people themselves, but also of their relationship to the white people, because I believe the right approach would be made if these missions were given adequate assistance towards the process of assimilation, which I have endeavoured to define, rather than what we have had in the last few years, which I may class as an effort to drive a wedge between the coloured and white sections of the community in the rural areas.

I consider that there has been a complete lack of understanding of the attitude of the white people—I cannot define them in any other way. To a very large degree—and I am not going to confine my remarks to my own term of office because to do so would be unfair to the present incumbent of the office who was also my predecessor—the Education Department has solved the problem. There have been instances of difficulty, but in the main the problem has been solved by the diplomatic and reasonable approach made by the department and the white population in relation to the coloured children. On the other hand, there has been no such attempt in those areas, in my experience, by the Department of Native Affairs—and there are some hundreds of these people in various parts of my electorate—to bring about the same line of thought and co-operation between the adults on both sides.

In my opinion, this measure calls for a lot more inquiry and consideration before we can agree that the time is ripe to put it into operation. I stand second to none in a desire to improve the conditions of, and to assimilate, these people. As Christian people, it is part of our duty at least to try to do this, irrespective of whether we disagree as to the means to be directed to that end, or the time when those means should be put into operation. In every district where the coloured people congregate, the difficulty of taking control of the children would be minimised. The Minister made reference to this aspect the other night, and to a degree I sympathise with him.

I do not lack some knowledge of the affection that exists between these people and their children. On the other hand, it is necessary to take our own children away from their homes for a time, place them in a different environment and give them educational facilities in order to improve their opportunities for assimilation

into the business and industrial community of our country. If such places for natives were handy to the areas where the coloured people congregate, the greater part of the problem would be removed, because the children would then be within easy access of the parents, who would wish still to have close contact with them.

If these places were established as I have suggested, there would be ample opportunity over a period of years, with planning which I assume would be done, for teaching them handicrafts, the principles of good living and the principles of rural industry, so that as they attained more mature years, the majority might, with all those things inculcated into their minds, become useful and satisfactory citizens.

But this Bill will make no contribution towards that desirable end. It will throw into the melting-pot the whole of the difficulties that now exist and let them boil up, without the slightest attempt being made for any palliation or improvement of the position. If the department wishes to drop out of this work in the South-West Land Division—and, judging by the Bill, that is the wish of the department—the only way is to have recourse to Christian missions, with increasing support from the Government, and I am satisfied that increased support would be forthcoming from the white population in those areas. It is not mere colour that has made them unwelcome but, in the main, the fact that they have been living under circumstances and conditions that are not hygienic. As I said, it was desired to do what could be done to assist and remedy that position, but for the reasons that I have mentioned it became an increasingly difficult and, finally, an almost impossible problem for the time being.

I would suggest that if the mission desires to have its own school it should be allowed to do so subject to the Government either providing the teaching staff or, alternatively, allowing the mission to provide it so long as the Government department was satisfied with the qualifications of the teacher. In either case, it should be the responsibility of the Government to pay the salaries of the teachers and I think some plan should be laid down and some special finance put aside for the provision of assistance to suitable coloured people in the erection of modest homes.

There are some of them, I admit, who would not know what to do with homes at the present juncture. They come of a nomad race and are still, at heart, nomads. They have been unfortunate—and this is where we must take up our responsibility for other than the full-blood—in that they or their parents have had too close a contact with sections of the white population and that has resulted in the caste problem.

It is no use blinking our eyes to the fact, however, that there are some who would not be able to take advantage, with

any satisfactory result, of such a scheme, but ways and means could possibly be found to overcome their troubles and difficulties, if such means were sought. I am, unfortunately, unable, in respect of that problem, to suggest at this stage what the means should be, but in the meantime I am of the opinion that the existing law relating to citizenship rights should be continued.

I think the principals of the mission stations, if they were established, should be encouraged to put up these people for citizenship rights, if they themselves were satisfied that, as the result of the efforts that had been made, there was a reasonable prospect of these people adapting themselves to the life of the community. I think the principal of a mission should become the native welfare officer of the district if, as I have said, the Native Welfare Department wants to rid itself of this burden, as apparently it does.

The second proposal in the Bill is to repeal the anti-liquor law and rely on the provisions of the Licensing Act only to prevent persons of the full blood from obtaining alcoholic liquors. If there is anything premature in this measure it is that proposition. If the Minister genuinely desires to overcome the difficulty to which he referred, where coloured persons who have served in the armed forces of the Crown are prevented from entering, for any purpose, hotel premises and are unwelcome for other reasons in other and similar places, he need not endeavour to do it in this way but can make quite different provisions, if he desires to, in order to overcome that trouble.

He should proceed in this business piecemeal and should not endeavour in one fell swoop to demolish the whole of the provisions of the Act while replacing them by nothing but the somewhat sketchy provisions of the Licensing Act. I would like him to look at that Act—if this Bill passes into law—and see how effective it is going to be even for what he desires, because I suggest that the Licensing Act was, as it were, interlocked with the Native Administration Act.

If we remove the provisions of one it will require pretty shrewd legal opinion to tell us what we are to do with the provisions of the other. Yet the Minister has up to date, as far as I can gather, taken no steps to look closely into that aspect or inform the House about it. I confess that I can only agree with the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition and others as to what could be the disastrous effect of cutting out the anti-liquor provisions of the Native Administration Act in one fell swoop and the results it would have for both white and coloured people in the South-West Land Division.

I venture to say that there are people now giving any amount of publicity to the provisions of this Bill who would be fearful as to what their own position might



be if the measure should become an Act in the near future. Some people, in the lonelier parts of the rural districts of this State, would not feel safe in their beds at night and, while some of that trepidation might be unjustified, some of it, from past experience and police reports, obviously would be justified.

Are we right in trying to bring about suddenly a position such as I have outlined, when obviously there are other means that could be utilised over a reasonable period of years to achieve much better and really worth-while results with these people? Over a period of perhaps 100 years we have allowed this state of affairs to continue without adopting any overall plan, and are we now justified in repealing all the existing laws in this regard and leaving the future to pot-luck? I am firmly convinced that we are not and I repeat that this measure requires a lot more thought than, in my opinion, the Minister, in the short time he has been in office, has been able to give to all the aspects of the problem in the midst of the many other duties which I know anyone in his position has to perform.

The third most important proposal in the measure is to allow the Minister to develop land for full-blooded aborigines. If I ever failed to understand why a proposal of that nature should be extended to one section of the community, I fail to understand it now. If there was ever a time when it was desirable to bring about a sense of ownership and responsibility on the part of some of the coloured people of the South-West Land Division, it seems to me to be in the next few years.

Yet those people are to be cut out, if this Bill become law, from any assistance under that provision, although some of them, by their acquaintance with rural pursuits and their knowledge of shearing and things of that nature are perhaps partly qualified—given the right supervision—to take over land of this nature and make something of a success of it. At least they should be given the opportunities afforded full-bloods under this measure, and we should not confine the authority and responsibility of the Minister to the service of the full-blooded section of the community.

Mr. Brady: Will they not have the right to buy land, the same as anyone else?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Can our own people afford to buy land these days, when the cost is so high? Are there not half-a-dozen schemes in operation—with more contemplated—to assist our own people to buy land? Are we not spending £4,000,000 per year on the war service land settlement scheme because we know that our own people cannot acquire property from their own funds?

Mr. Brady: You are spoon-feeding the soldiers there.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Let us turn for a while, since the hon. member is so interested in the matter, and spoon-feed some of the coloured people of the South-West. I do not regard it as spoon-feeding.

Mr. Brady: Your Government could have spoon-fed them. Why did it not do so?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: We started to, as I endeavoured to explain while the hon. member was not present.

Mr. Brady: I have been here all the time.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Then the hon. member was not vociferous. The fact remains that I am convinced there is ample scope for activity among the coloured people of the South-West, without rejecting for one minute the idea of there being similar opportunities for the full-bloods of the North, or mainly of the North. I am not suggesting that they should be excluded. My complaint is that the others have been excluded.

As I have said, a lot more consideration should be given to this Bill at a later stage but I earnestly suggest to the Government that it withdraw this measure now and give the various suggestions that have been made the most careful consideration between now and the next session of Parliament, so that we might have some chance of having brought before us a measure which, unlike this one, could receive general support. I tell the Minister frankly that if I could give any assistance along those lines in any way, I should be most happy to do so but my position, unfortunately, is, as I have endeavoured to explain, that the Bill now before us is one that cannot be accepted in its present form and so, hoping that the Minister will agree to have the measure withdrawn and gone into, in the meantime, with regard to the various aspects that have been mentioned by members, I leave the matter at that.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) [5.12]: I rise with pleasure to support the second reading as I think this is the most important Bill we have had in this House since I entered Parliament in 1948. In this measure we are dealing with human and not material values and that is a point which I am afraid many members have overlooked. We are dealing here with souls to be saved and I think we should try to do something from that angle rather than approach the question from the point of view of dealing with material things or something in the nature of real estate.

Mr. Nalder: You could do all that without this Bill.

Mr. BRADY: I think the measure will put the native on the same footing as the member who interjected, because some of them are as good as he is, and perhaps even better.

Mr. Nalder: I do not doubt that.

Mr. BRADY: There is no reason why we should keep the shackles and chains on these people any longer. They have been there long enough and that is the reason why our coloured people are in their present condition today.

Mr. Nalder: Who put the shackles on them?

Mr. BRADY: At all events, the hon. member's Government helped to keep them there, and I will do everything I can to help remove them and I hope the hon. member will help me, in that regard. This Chamber has before it an opportunity and, as the member for Stirling said, this country, in 15 years' time, will rue the day if we turn our backs on the opportunity that is now presented to us. After all, this problem can be dealt with from a national or an international point of view. It can also be dealt with purely from a local point of view, and I am afraid that so far members who have discussed this question have dealt with it from a local viewpoint.

They have not shown an international outlook which, in some respects, is more important than looking at the question from the local angle because there are people all over the world who have their eyes on Australia today to see what we intend to do to help our natives. This question has been raised in the United Nations Organisation and it will continue to be raised until the legislators of this country realise that they have a job to do, and that they have an obligation to these people who have been suppressed for a hundred years or so.

I know that, unconsciously in some respects, the people in the early days kept the natives down. They meant well, but the natives did not understand them and the early pioneers did not understand the natives. The laws of survival were different in both respects and while the natives believed in share and share alike, the early pioneers of this country believed in looking after themselves, and worrying about tomorrow. To that extent the two peoples clashed. The member for Murray, during his speech on this subject, mentioned the fight at Pinjarra; that was the first civil war in Western Australia. It happened, not because the white people wanted to get even with the blacks or the blacks with the whites, but because they misunderstood each other and although they tried to agree, they could not arrive at any settlement of their disputes.

In those early days both the natives and the whites had their own leaders and unfortunately the leaders of the coloured people eventually found themselves in Fremantle gaol. In fact, one black person was transported to Rottnest but he was so powerful that he swam back to the mainland again and stood outside the gates of the Fremantle gaol and defied the warders to take him back to Rottnest. The

natives in those times were not encouraged; they were shot or incarcerated, and our white pioneers had the wrong conception. If the correct steps had been taken in the early days we would now be in the same glorious position as New Zealand where the Maoris are actually taking their seats in Parliament alongside the white men. They are making laws for the white people as well as for the Maoris and they are taking up professional positions in that country.

Unlike the members for Moore and Stirling, I have not been able to associate closely with the coloured people, but I have taken a keen interest in them over the last 20 years. I have had blacks working in my gang handling wheat in and out of trucks and they have carried bag for bag with the whites, day in and day out, week in and week out and month in and month out. They did the same job as the white man and surely they should be entitled to the same consideration. These people are working in the shearing sheds and in the droving camps throughout Western Australia; in fact, over the last 50 years they have been the backbone of the droving industry. We owe a lot to them and so I feel that this legislation is opportune because it will enable us to redeem ourselves in the eyes of the black people.

I agree that if this legislation is passed, a number of natives will run amok. But in the early days—it applies even today—white people ran amok from time to time; they are, in our own time, shooting down other white people and are committing all sorts of criminal acts. Why should we expect the natives to be any different from the white people? Why should we expect them to be on a plane above the whites and not commit some of these acts? It is ridiculous to expect them to be perfect.

Last year, when the question of native affairs was brought forward in this House, I remember speaking to a justice of the peace who had been on the bench for 20 years; he had presided over cases affecting natives and most of the charges concerned breaches of the liquor laws. He wrote to me and said that after sitting on the bench for so many years, and dealing with cases concerning natives, he realised that the time was opportune and that natives should be able to purchase liquor in the same way as white people. He said to me, "Mr. Brady, these men will abuse their privileges, but we must expect that. They must be gradually brought into line." I mention that for the benefit of some members who may have doubts about the advisability of permitting natives to obtain liquor.

If these people could go into a hotel and buy one or two pots of beer, they would rather do that than buy a bottle of plonk and sneak off in the bush to

drink it quickly with their womenfolk. That sort of conduct presents all sorts of difficulties. This legislation should be given a trial to see whether the natives will abuse the privileges granted to them. I think the majority of natives and coloured people are just as law-abiding, if not more so in many respects, than the white folk. Even those who might transgress the law could probably be brought into line if they were shown the way. This legislation will give them that opportunity.

Hon. D. Brand: Do you know if the Maoris are allowed to have liquor in New Zealand?

Mr. BRADY: I do not know. However, I cannot remember any restrictions in that regard.

Hon. D. Brand: I think you will find that they are not.

Mr. BRADY: I know that they have local option and that the people can vote to decide whether liquor shall be sold in a particular area or not. In this State all kinds of other nationals from overseas, such as Malaysians, Singalese, Maoris and others, can go into the hotels and obtain liquor. It is pathetic to see our natives hanging around the hotels and wine saloons hoping to get hold of a bottle of wine, surreptitiously, from some white man who will take the risk of giving it to them. Let us try the suggestion of this well-known justice of the peace and see how it works out. I hope I will not get blood pressure after this, but I realise that the legislation has to be transmitted to another House and I am a little fearful in my own heart as to what will happen to it when it reaches there.

While discussing this matter, I think I should bring to the notice of members a number of matters affecting the welfare of our natives. Many people who have tried to help them, as far back as 100 years ago, have encountered many difficulties and have received little encouragement. I have before me a book telling the story of the Swan district from 1843 to 1938. It was written by that well-known gentleman, the Rev. Canon A. Burton, an Anglican minister, who thought he would write a history of the early days of the Swan district.

From his story, it would appear that in the early days certain people were most anxious to help the natives, but because of misunderstanding on the part of many white people, they were not able to put their ideas into operation. As a result, many who had come from overseas to assist were forced to leave, whereas they were probably on the right track and would have been able to uplift our natives in many ways. One paragraph of the story of the Swan reads—

Through the efforts of the Col. & Con., this Missionary was sent out; he arrived in July, 1836, the Rev. Dr. Louis Giustiniani; the name is remarkable and the man not less so. He was born of a princely line and his family had formed an alliance with a branch of the English Earls of Newburgh. His accomplishments included ability to speak four languages fluently; and he had gained a degree in medicine. But with all his abilities, he had many disadvantages. He was a foreigner, and English was certainly not one of the four languages that he spoke fluently. Being an alien he could not obtain, by purchase or otherwise, any land. Difficulties beset his efforts to become a naturalised subject, and he grew impatient under these restrictions.

Then his zeal far outran his discretion in the cause of the natives. He assumed the office of protector, rather than pastor, and assailed not only the Government but Moore, Mackey and Irwin—

They were three of the first five legislators in this country.

—his best friends, who for years had been patiently battling with the native problem; and so there was no course open except the dismissal of Giustiniani, who left the colony in 1838 within two years of his arrival.

I felt that that should be on record because in the early days the church did its best to uplift the underdog. But there is a case where a reverend gentleman was misunderstood, and the early pioneers felt that they could not tolerate him any longer. Consequently, he had to leave the country, even though he was on the right track in trying to uplift our natives. The member for Stirling says, "Let us go on for another 15 years and we shall find that we will be on the right track." If something had been done 100 years ago, we would now be in the same position as New Zealand and our natives would have been in a far better position than they are today.

There is one other matter I want to discuss and this concerns the question of natives being mendicants and looking for charity and hand-outs. In the "Swan Express" of recent date—October of this year—there is an article relating to a native named Jackie Moore. I want to read this article because Jackie Moore was one of the natives in the Swan district and this is what appears in the newspaper—

The pathetic story of a native who scorned Government hand-outs—

Yet some people say that the natives always look for hand-outs and charity and do not want to work.

—and fought to keep his independence has been told by Mrs. Finlay, of Bassendean, daughter of the late Mr. Henry Passmore. The native, Jackie Moore, occupied a small home on Mrs. Finlay's late property at West Swan. He was a hard-working man who was prepared to lend settlers a hand with the grape harvest or the hundred and one jobs around the farms and vineyards. When he was advised to claim blankets and tobacco from the Government—articles always given free to natives—he said, "I don't want any hand-outs. And the Government can't have my kids either. I am going to keep them with me and not let them be taken away." (This was an allusion to the then Government's policy of taking the native children away from the parents and putting them in institutions.)

Jackie would turn his hand to anything. He would saw up large trees and sell the wood for firewood or kill kangaroos, in which West Swan abounded in those days and take the meat to sell to the butchers in Guildford. Later the purchase of kangaroo meat by butchers for re-sale was forbidden by law.

At that time, posters of linen were used with appropriate captions to advertise coming motion picture releases. Mrs. Finlay's son discovered that these sheets were thrown away when their purpose had been served and managed to secure a bagful of them for placing, instead of bags, under the grape drying racks.

Calling Jackie Moore, Mrs. Finlay gave him a poster depicting Greta Garbo at her most exotic and told him to use it to make his children a cubby house.

The next day she asked him whether he had done so but he shook his head. "No," he said. "Instead, I tacked it up between two trees, put some chairs in front for the kids, and they 'went to the pictures'. It was great fun to watch them."

The following day, Mrs. Finlay asked how the children liked the pictures on the previous night but Jackie shook his head. They hadn't been to the pictures again, he said. His wife had washed and washed the posters until all the paint had come out then she had cut them up for shirts.

These are the natives who cannot do anything for themselves; who want Government hand-outs; who cannot do any domestic work and want to live on Government charity! Here is the sad part of the story of this man—

Jackie Moore was not to see his children grow up. While performing a heavy piece of work, he strained his heart.

I suppose he was getting 10s. a week and his tucker.

He was taken to hospital and died shortly afterwards. His wife, a mission-bred girl who made her own jam and was capable in every way, and his children were cast under the protection of the State. With the early removal of the father, there would be no opportunity for his children to imbibе his independent views.

I suppose she was getting 15s. a week and her tucker, too.

Hon. V. Doney: Why should you suppose that?

Mr. BRADY: I would now like to quote from page 1280 of Volume II of "Hansard" for the year 1944. When speaking of the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Bill, Hon. L. B. Bolton had this to say—

Recently I met a native girl, or rather I knew where she was working in my district, who was 20 years of age and was most accomplished. There was practically nothing the girl could not do. In the house she would shame most white domestics. She was a wonderful cook. She could dress poultry, make cakes and bake bread. She had received her training somewhere in the Murchison district.

Hon. V. Hamersley: At an institution?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: No, but I am suggesting that if the natives could receive such a training in one of the institutions they could be made just as useful as this particular girl. Outside the homestead, the girl I speak of could milk, handle horses, and drive a motorcar or truck.

Apparently somebody had been trying her out to see if she was capable of doing all this. He continues—

In the shearing shed she was just as good as any other shearing hand, and could do the pressing and so on.

These are the people who look for hand-outs, who are mendicants and who should not be encouraged to live as we do; we are told that they should be sent back to their primitive state and kept there!

After many months of good service the farmer and his family went to the coast for a holiday and this native girl was allowed to return to the settlement for a month. Then folher return to the homestead her con-lowed tragedy. Some months after dition was noticed by the farmer's wife.

Of course the inevitable happened; as I said before she was a young girl of 20 years of age. I felt that in fairness to these natives somebody should quote these things so that they could be placed on record, even if those people in another

place decide that they should not be given their freedom and that they should be made to retain their shackles and chains.

I have met some of these young people and have conversed with them for hours. I have ridden in buses with them for three and four hours at a time and I am convinced that if they are given the opportunity they will make good. They will, of course, have to go through the transitional period. Some of them will go to the war as did the pioneers of old in this country; they were paid by rum and not with money, and they had to go and sleep with natives. These people will also go through certain of these difficulties, but thank God there are Christian people in our community who will try to see that they are kept on the right track. If they are given enough encouragement they will keep on the right track.

The other day I met a few of the boys from McDonald House up here and I introduced them to the Chief Secretary and some other members. Those boys have everything that we have got, and they should be given an opportunity to do what they desire in the professional lines. I had a talk with one of them and asked him what he wanted to do and he replied that he wanted to be an apprentice. His brother was in the glass industry and was making good. He is just as good a glass-blower as any other in that line and if he were in the Eastern States he would be earning £24 or £25 a week. I could go on and quote innumerable other cases.

I was in Alice Springs recently and I went into the home of a woman who runs a unique jewellery store. She told me that she had had Namatjira in her home and she said he was one of the finest people whom she had entertained. On my recent trip to the North-West, I made it my duty to watch the natives up there. I found they were accepting their responsibilities and carrying out their jobs as well as anybody else. If it were not for the native labour in the North-West ports, there would not be sufficient for the wharving work required to be done.

So why should we deny them the rights to which we are entitled? Why should we deny them the right of full wages; the right to be recognised for sick benefits; the right to marry whom they like; the right to go into a hotel or, if needs be, come into Parliament and put their cases before the legislators of this country? Those are my lines of thought quite apart from the international position.

We are being given an opportunity today to do something for these people before they become as dangerous as any first-rate fifth columnists that a country could have. If the necessity arises there are certainly people who would encourage them along those lines. In the majority of cases, however, people will try to encourage them along better lines, and they

should be given that to which they are entitled so that they may develop into the citizens we want them to be. I do not want to keep talking on the domestic issue too long.

I would like to touch on the missions and the work they do. I visited Roelands Mission and I saw 40 children, about 30 of whom were in one room and four or five in another and the school-teacher was an aboriginal. If I recollect, her name was Miss Foley and she came from Carnarvon. I have been at York on the occasion of the sports they hold there, and on the night before the sports for miles around one could see camp fires burning which indicated that the natives had come to see and take part in these sports. They are not wanted in the hotels; there is no room for them there and they are treated like mangy dogs, and have to do the best they can for themselves.

Some of them conduct themselves better than the whites. They do not go on the beer at all. They even take part in the sports and show a fair bit of ability in that line. Years ago some of these lads played in the metropolitan "A" grade football for South Fremantle, I think it was. I cannot remember their names, but they acquitted themselves very well indeed as footballers.

When I was in Darwin I saw natives who were driving trucks for the Public Works Department and I met one or two of them. One man had had a row with the boss at Tennant's Creek because the boss had put on what this fellow called "a mug driver" to be in charge of the droving team. This lad felt that if they continued with the droving the way they were, they would finish up losing all their cattle. Accordingly he refused to go as long as this "mug driver" was in charge.

A few hours later I met another native who had been in a different team. He wanted to go back to the mission just outside Alice Springs; all he had been paid was £5 a week and his tucker. These men are doing marvellous jobs in the economic field, and they should be recognised by this Parliament. I could go on speaking for hours about the natives of our country.

I do not want to get hot and bothered about this because there are people in another place who will try to prove that these unfortunates are no good and that they should not be encouraged; that we should allow the matter to ride for another 50 years; that they should be left in the state in which they are at the moment. Although I have said all I want to on this matter, I do not think it will do any good; nevertheless I have made the points that I wanted to. I would, however, like to draw the attention of the Minister in charge of the Bill as well as the attention of the Minister for Housing to one important feature. It is most

essential that these people should have decent homes. I do not suggest that they should be given five-roomed houses.

Hon. D. Brand: The Bill not does provide for that.

The Minister for Housing: No, but the Government will, if given a chance.

Mr. BRADY: They could be given one- or two-roomed houses with possibly a back verandah. While I was visiting Darwin, the secretary to the Administrator took me round and said, "See those places over there on the outskirts of Darwin?" I said, "Yes," and he replied, "We made those huts available to the natives; they think the world of them, but they do not sleep in them. They keep their goods inside the huts and sleep outside."

Three years ago when I went through Bassendean looking for a white man who was sleeping in a tent with a newly born baby that his wife had just had, I found the natives there living in mia-mias made of a few bits of bush and a few sheets of iron. If they can be given something good as a foundation, I feel sure they could build on it. All these young people who are being reared and brought up in McDonald House and Alvan House will seek to do better for themselves; I am sure of that.

I can understand the member for Stirling; he is closely associated with these people—probably more closely than I am. I do not suggest for one moment that we should make very close or dear friends of them because they might not understand such an attitude. I appreciate what the member for Moore has had to say. He very often gets excited and does not always mean the harsh things he says in this House. More often than not he apologises for what he has said. Accordingly I shall anticipate his apology and accept it so as to save him the trouble of apologising later in the session.

The member for Moore means well and I think he wishes to help the natives; he certainly said he did. He probably feels that it would be wrong to go the whole hog at this stage, but I think we should take the risk. Not a great deal more harm can be done to the natives than has already been done by restrictive legislation.

Lastly, I would like to say that there are people in this House—of whom I think the member for Stirling is one—who would like to see these natives be permitted to take up 50 or 100 acres of land. If they want to be citizens of Australia they must accept the obligations and responsibilities as well as the rights. They cannot expect to be made Australian citizens and the next minute be put on the dole. If white people—the thousand and one well-wishers—would advise the natives along those lines, I am sure they would respond. There would be a few failures and heartaches, but I believe the majority would make good. For obvious reasons, they still fraternise

with one another, the same as foreigners and new Australians. We Britishers of supposedly superior stock do not seem to want to assimilate them, and they have to mingle together and discuss matters amongst themselves.

If those advising them would tell them they must accept obligations with the rights conferred on them, I believe they would come good. A few would not, just the same as is the case with whites. But they should be given the opportunity, and the Bill is a most important step in that direction. If we want to avoid international as well as local conflict, let us accept the Bill. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

MR. MANNING (Harvey) [5.48]: The degree of welfare in this legislation is to some extent different from what the Minister led me to believe when he introduced the measure. It will have a variety of effects. Natives other than full-bloods will be termed white men. This will entitle them to all social service benefits. They will be free to seek employment wherever suitable work is offering. They will be entitled to vote. They will be allowed to go into hotels, and their drinking will be unrestricted. But they will be denied welfare under the aborigines welfare legislation, and the Christian missions caring for and training natives will have their assistance from the Government restricted to full-blood people only.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Who said that?

Mr. MANNING: I am speaking of the effect of the legislation. There is no provision for assistance to the missions other than for full-blood aborigines. The Minister cannot deny that. Some features of the Bill benefit the natives; others deny them benefits. I support the new definition of "aborigines" where it entitles people of mixed blood to social services and frees them from employment restrictions. But the Bill also makes it compulsory for caste natives to enrol under the Electoral Act, with no consideration of the fact that they may not be educationally or psychologically fitted to cast an intelligent vote. No doubt these unfortunate people will be fined if they fail to enrol or to cast a vote.

The right to consume unlimited quantities of liquor will bring trouble in its wake, especially in the South-West and Great Southern towns where the aborigines congregate. I know of half-castes who are living for the day when they can walk into a hotel and drink their fill and, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, a drunken native is a dangerous person.

Mr. J. Hegney: Not nearly as dangerous as a drunken white.

Mr. MANNING: There will be strange keg parties if this legislation goes through in its present form, and I think the Min-

ister for Police may be asking a bit too much if he requests some of his officers to go into the native camps and stop some of the mad brawls that will take place.

What of the Christian missions? How do they fare under the Bill? The Minister said they were doing a great and noble work, and he was going to raise the allowance that the Government provides for children cared for in the missions from approximately 16s. to 22s. 6d.

The Minister for Native Welfare: That has been done—long ago.

Mr. MANNING: I am pleased to hear that.

Mr. Andrew: You are a bit behind.

Mr. MANNING: I was pointing out what the Minister said he was going to do.

The Minister for Native Welfare: I said it had been done.

Mr. MANNING: I will accept that. However, the Bill, in excluding all children other than full-bloods, has dealt the missions what could be a serious blow, and one that could put them back many years—back to where they were under the previous Labour Government.

Several members interjected.

Mr. MANNING: Some members opposite are inexperienced and do not know what has happened. Let them go out and see what takes place in the country. The member for Victoria Park may have been in this country before I was, but he certainly has not got around to see what goes on. In the South-West and the Great Southern portions of the State there are approximately 4,000 caste natives and very few full-bloods. The alteration of the definition of "native" to cover only full-blood aborigines will mean that practically all of the natives in the South-West Land Division will be excluded from welfare from the department. It will mean, too, that half-caste children now declared white people, will not be allowed on native reserves; and I presume that a full-blood black mother would not be allowed to keep her half-caste children on a native reserve with her.

Over a period of years, the Christian missions have made a very considerable contribution to native welfare. Their work in the humanitarian field is of very great value. They give the children an up-bringing and training in citizenship that is of a very high moral standard and is equal to the best home training that white children receive from their parents. No one, except the missionaries, is able to give young aborigines that valuable training. The life of missionaries is not easy. Their work is done in a voluntary capacity, and they should be given every encouragement and help in that great work.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Hear, hear!

Mr MANNING: Under this legislation the Government is withdrawing practically the whole of the assistance given to the missions, particularly in the lower half of the State, by virtue of the fact that the number of full-bloods being cared for at the missions is almost nil. The Roelands Mission, which is in my electorate, is, as the member for Guildford-Midland said, doing a magnificent work under the existing legislation. It is raising the moral and living standard of the native children who pass through its school. That mission cares for some 80 children. Some of the senior pupils are attending the Bunbury High School, and some are day students at the agricultural wing of the Harvey Junior High School.

The standard of education at the mission is high, and most satisfactory results have been achieved with the boys and girls who have passed from the mission, and for whom the mission has found employment. Excellent reports of these young aborigines have been received from the people who employed them. But, if I understand the Bill, the Roelands Mission, because of the fact that the children are mainly caste natives, will be wiped off.

The Minister for Native Affairs: No; you have missed the target.

Mr. MANNING: The Minister has admitted that the missions are doing valuable work. All the credit for the general uplift of the natives must go to the missionaries.

Mr. Rhatigan: Do you not know that a lot of quadroon children are at present in missions under the existing Act and do not come within the meaning of the term "native".

Mr. MANNING: This Bill proposes to declare them white.

Mr. Rhatigan: They are at the missions now.

Mr. MANNING: In the course of his second reading speech, the Minister claimed that in the past the negative attitude had been adopted of trying to push the problem aside. I think the Minister must have been referring to Labour's previous attitude to this problem.

The Minister for Native Affairs: I did not refer to any Government.

Mr. MANNING: Why call it a negative attitude? The Minister must know that, since 1947, when Sir Ross McDonald became the Minister, and Mr. Middleton was appointed Commissioner of Native Affairs, a complete change came over the department, and the attitude has been very positive. Extensive beneficial steps have been taken to extend and increase welfare to natives, and I firmly believe that this assistance would have been far more extensive if the housing and other demands of a vigorous migration policy

had not been so pressing. I repeat that the attitude since 1947 has been a very positive one.

The Minister must remember that until 1947 native welfare had been dreadfully neglected and the incoming Liberal-Country Party Government had a tremendous problem to deal with. We cannot overlook that fact when we remember the speech made by the member for Moore on the subject. The missionaries were quick to notice the change that took place following the 1947 elections. I propose to read a paragraph from a report that has come to the Department of Native Affairs from Mr. R. S. Schenk, superintendent of the Mt. Margaret Mission. It is as follows:—

Now there is a different regime in power and we are receiving every help and encouragement. If we were able to do so much in spite of an unsympathetic department, how much should we do now with a department that co-operates with the missions?

I think that speaks volumes for the change that came over the department at that time.

The Bill has some good features. There is the desire to give natives the right to social services and the freedom to seek employment as and where they prefer it. But I cannot see my way clear to support legislation which allows dangerous natives unlimited quantities of liquor. I do not favour compulsory voting for natives, because I do not believe that they have been uplifted or educated to an extent that gives them an intelligent understanding of political policies and methods of voting.

Mr. McCulloch: Some of the whites are in that category.

Mr. MANNING: Two wrongs do not make a right. The percentage of informal votes cast at recent elections has been high; but if these people vote, I venture to suggest that the number of informal votes will be higher. My chief objection to the Bill is to the unsatisfactory provisions for assistance to Christian missions. The Minister must know that under the measure the only "natives," so far as the department is concerned, will be the full-bloods. The caste natives will be regarded as white men, and the missions will not receive assistance in caring for such children. That will immediately put the mission in difficulties. With this in mind, I asked the Minister some questions, as follows:—

If the Aborigines Welfare Bill now before Parliament becomes law and caste natives are to be regarded as white people—

1. To which department must the missions apply for monetary assistance for caste native children now in their care?

2. What amount per head per week will be allowed the missions for these children?

The Minister's replies were as follows:—

1. If and when the need arises the Government will make the necessary arrangements to satisfactorily provide for the missions and their coloured inmates.

2. The amounts to be paid per week to missions will be no less than that paid at present and will be reviewed by the Government from time to time as circumstances may warrant.

This is a very unsatisfactory position from the point of view of the missions. For some seven years now, monetary help has been granted to them in regular payments—inadequate perhaps, but valuable because of the regularity. Now it is proposed to assist the missions if and when the need arises.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Has any missionary society protested to you about the provisions in the Bill?

Mr. MANNING: No.

Mr. Bovell: They do not have to.

Mr. MANNING: I am fully aware of the position of the missions in this regard. The Bill could practically break the missions and ruin the spiritual and humanitarian work they are doing. Unfortunately, the good points of the Bill are far outweighed by this one objectionable feature. The missions should receive every possible encouragement.

The Minister for Native Welfare: And they will get it. You have my assurance on that point.

Mr. MANNING: If the Minister is prepared to put the Christian missions on the same basis as institutions caring for white children—and these will be white children, according to the Bill—and pay them the same allowance, then I shall be more inclined to take a risk on my other objections, and support the measure, but I have received no such assurance in the replies to my questions. Assistance will only be given if and when the need arises.

I have always admired the missionaries and recognised the value of their work, and I have supported them in a practical way. I have taken every opportunity to advocate to the Government that all possible assistance should be given to them. It has long been my belief that the Christian missions are the solution of the native problem. They would, if given adequate help, by the very nature of their work, raise the living standards of the natives to a degree where the native problem would cease to exist, and then all legislation affecting these people could be removed from the statute book for ever. This pruning of Government assistance to the missions is, to my way of thinking, a retrograde step.



The Minister for Native Welfare: Is that your main objection to the Bill?

Mr. MANNING: Yes. This Bill is not the solution of the problem. It is a casting aside of the problem. The Christian missions are the only answer to the question. If we work through them, the problem will be solved. As the member for Stirling suggested, I would like the Minister to withdraw the Bill and put some element of more equitable welfare into it. I shall not cover the ground that was covered by the member for Stirling when he said the Bill was setting aside the caste native and giving assistance to the full-blood. That is what I referred to when I said the Minister should withdraw the Bill and put some equitable welfare into it.

MR. LAWRENCE (South Fremantle) [6.41: I make a modest approach to this question. I do not suggest that I am as knowledgeable on this subject, having regard to the overall situation in the State, as are some of the previous speakers, but I have taken note of the native population around the city area. I feel that a grave social problem confronts us. I had to sit here the other night and listen to the unprovoked, unprincipled and vicious attack by the member for Moore on a certain section of our community, and I marvelled at his temerity in attacking these people who, if everyone had his just rights, should be known as "Early Australians", because they were here first.

It is interesting to note that whilst this attack was made on a minor section of the community, no such attack was made on the enemies who fought against us in the last war—I refer to the Japanese. We accept Japanese war brides into the State, and we accept all sorts of other foreign elements here. Some who have come have been known to be criminals, and they have been deported, but we have accepted them without a word of protest. But these brothers in our community, as I might call them, have to be subjected to the ignominy of the attack made by the member for Moore.

It is also interesting to note that after the war this country has turned round and spent millions of pounds on the rehabilitation of an enemy nation that killed thousands of our young men and, in fact, even some of our young women. But we spend a mere penny, in comparison, to uplift the natives who are rightly part of our community; in fact, perhaps more rightly a part of it than are many of our own people. Every member who speaks on this question should try to be constructive in order to assist in bringing down legislation to uplift and help the natives.

I suggest that the member for Kimberley is more knowledgeable on the native welfare position than is any other member in the Chamber. The member for Guildford-Midland would probably know a lot about

the social problem in the metropolitan area, and I was most interested to note the approach these two members made to the problem from the angle of housing. Personally, I think that is the main move that we, as legislators, ought to make. It is well to know that the missions have done a magnificent job in Western Australia, and I congratulate them for it.

Personally, I trust that this legislation will be allowed to pass so that progress can be made, because we do not want to do as the member for Stirling suggests, namely, wait for 15 years before we alter the Act. We have many other measures on the statute book dealing with social problems, and these laws have to be amended from time to time—practically year by year. It should not be suggested that we should just cast this problem aside and let it remain stagnant for 15 years, because if that were done the good work of the missions over the last decade would possibly be undone.

I was interested to hear the member for Moore say that no vote should be given to the aborigines. I deplore that remark, and I also deplore the suggestion of the member for Harvey that the native people are not sufficiently educated to exercise a vote.

Mr. Manning: As a people, I said.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I suggest that when we take stock of the remarks of the member for Harvey, we find that these people are entitled to a vote and will be able to vote more intelligently than the hon. member himself. It is well to remember that we legislate and bring down Acts which control their lives and every movement. Surely it is not asking too much to allow them to have a vote.

The only excuse put forward by the member for Moore was that the natives would vote en bloc in a certain area—I take it the hon. member referred to Port Hedland—in support of a fellow named McLeod. When I asked the hon. member who McLeod was, he suggested I should know better than he did. Apparently, the hon. member knows. To my knowledge, McLeod is supposed to be a communist, which means that these natives, if they voted for McLeod, would be placed in the category of communists. That is a vile insinuation against those people. Now that I have taken stock of the remarks of the member for Kimberley, whose area covers Port Hedland—

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: It is not in his area.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It is in the district represented by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not think you, Mr. Speaker, have anything to worry about in retaining your seat for a long time, because I do not think Mr. McLeod would have a chance against you.

Hon. L. Thorn: It was not put that way.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I think it was.

Hon. L. Thorn: The member for Moore said he would influence the vote of the natives.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I suggest that if the member for Toodyay reads the "Hansard" report, he will find he is making a mistake.

Hon. L. Thorn: I was here and heard what was said.

Mr. LAWRENCE: You are not suggesting that "Hansard" misquoted him?

Hon. L. Thorn: No, not at all. I suggest you misread the report.

Mr. LAWRENCE: It is very good to be able to read. I do not know whether the member for Toodyay can.

Hon. L. Thorn: You are dodging the issue.

Mr. Brady: He used to work on the wharves, so must have done something.

Hon. L. Thorn: Unlike you, I have not had a white collar job all my life!

Mr. LAWRENCE: Members on the Opposition side have spoken of the very good work done since 1947. Therefore, it is logical to assume that they consider the good work should continue. It is the fervent wish of members on the Government side that the good work shall continue.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I cannot see it continuing in the South-West, under this Bill.

Mr. LAWRENCE: That is not the point. The Bill has been thrown overboard by members opposite. The member for Harvey is the only speaker on the Opposition side who has suggested that there is any merit in the Bill.

Hon. A. F. Watts: The member for Narrogin said he would support the second reading, so he must think there is some merit in it.

Mr. LAWRENCE: In order to make progress, it is only natural that these measures must be amended from time to time. As I suggested before, we surely do not want the position to develop where this grave social problem will stagnate.

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

Mr. LAWRENCE: As I was saying before the suspension, much good work has been done by missions and missionaries prior to and since 1947. I consider that that good work should continue. After listening to the various speakers, I feel that it would be a good thing if we were to make some progress and improve the legislation as it exists at present. It is imperative that we should move forward and not stagnate, as has been the position in the past.

One aspect of the problem that disturbs me is the consumption of liquor by our coloured brothers. We should not worry

much about the liquor question because eventually the position will work itself out. We have heard many reports of the behaviour of natives whilst under the influence of liquor, but I suggest to members that in many instances the complaints that we hear in this House have not been based on solid foundations, because often I have watched what happens in this regard in the city area.

If an aborigine, as we wish to call him under this Bill, were permitted to enter a hotel and have one glass of wine or beer, which would not affect him to any great degree, no trouble would be caused. However, as the legislation stands at the moment, if a native were seen by a member of the police force under the influence of liquor or with liquor in his possession, he would be arrested. On some occasions a few of these unfortunate people have been arrested when they have consumed no liquor whatsoever.

It is only natural that they will be incensed when they are denied the right to go into a hotel to have a drink in proper surroundings whilst they witness people of our own colour rolling around the streets without being apprehended by the police. Would it not be better to grant these people full citizenship rights which would permit them to go into a hotel and stand alongside myself or any other member of this Chamber who has a glass of ale or any other beverage?

Would not such an act instil a feeling of confidence in them when they knew that they did not have to go into a dark lane or alleyway to hurriedly consume a bottle of plonk because they were in constant fear of arrest? Naturally, by drinking in such circumstances they become unbalanced and the same thing would happen to anyone of our colour if he drank a bottle of wine in such a hurried fashion. We should give that aspect of the question serious thought and also realise that we will have to make a move in that direction in the near future. We should be bold and say to ourselves that now is the time to improve the position.

Some members have suggested that we would have to double the police force if natives were granted full citizenship rights, and the member for Harvey suggested tonight that it would be unfair to send a policeman into an aborigines' camp. I do not think it would, because on occasions police have to enter the private dwellings of our own people who have committed a worse sin than that of an aborigine having a drink. Therefore the psychological aspect should be given consideration and the time has arrived when these people should be granted citizenship rights. There may be some trouble for a short time, but I feel sure that that would only occur with a minority of the coloured population.

I defy contradiction of that statement because from the answers given to questions asked this afternoon, it is noted that in the year 1953 there have been 339 prosecutions of natives in the metropolitan area. It was also mentioned that the coloured population of the metropolitan area is only 250. It is evident, therefore, that some of those people who were charged came from country areas. Naturally they would do as you, Mr. Speaker, or I would do when we came to town, and that is that possibly we would have one over the eight.

We would be just as liable to be apprehended by the constabulary as would an aborigine in the same circumstances. It is remarkable, however, that the total number of convictions among the white population is 3,622, and I contend that that number would not constitute one-tenth or possibly one-twentieth of the people who come under the influence of liquor and are seen in public places.

When we consider these cold facts I think it must be admitted that the coloured population is not given a fair go and any repressive legislation can do nothing but harm to our coloured brothers. It is only recently that what could have developed into one of the nastiest scenes in this State took place among new Australians in James-st. I do not think any aborigine names were included among those of the men who were arrested. Yet many new Australians have been granted citizenship rights and they are allowed to enter hotels, hotel lounges and dining rooms.

We should dispel from our minds the thought that we must take repressive steps to handle this problem and say instead, "Now is the time to make a move in the right direction to improve the status of our coloured brothers and accept this amendment to the Act which is eagerly sought by the various missions." I would also point out that I frequently visit the Fremantle gaol. I went there only a few weeks ago and found that there were, but a few prisoners of any native caste. That strengthens my belief that the moral and physical standards of natives in this State are improving.

The other suggestion I make is that these people be allowed to have the same right as we have to consume liquor. If the measure which debars them from having a drink is abolished, it will have a good effect, in that the natives will not have to gather in dark alleyways and in the bush to drink furtively, liquor in their possession. We could give the Bill a trial, fortified by the knowledge that a coloured person could be dealt with on the same basis as a white man charged with drunkenness. He could be brought under the same restriction as a white man, namely under what is commonly termed the "dog Act."

I take strong exception to one reference by the member for Moore. This had a destructive effect on the minds of everyone listening. I refer to his remarks on prostitution, venereal disease and pregnancy among natives girls in a certain home.

Mr. Manning: Have you read the reports that come from the Commissioner for Native Affairs?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I have not.

Mr. Manning: Perhaps you should.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I am the best judge of what I should do.

Mr. Manning: The facts are contained in those reports.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not argue that they are the facts. I do not suggest for one moment that they are not. The point I stress is that the member for Moore was vicious in his attack.

Mr. Manning: His remarks were reasonable.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I would remind the member for Harvey that he should show a bit of reason.

Mr. Ackland: Action speaks louder than words. If you had taken as much notice of the conditions of the natives as I have, you would have a clearer conscience.

Mr. LAWRENCE: If the member for Moore had listened to my opening remarks, he would have heard me say that I confessed I did not know much about the natives, except those who live around the metropolitan area. I take exception to the remarks of the member for Moore because they cloud the real issue. Wherever we go, whatever foreign country we may enter—whether it be Egypt, Palestine, India, Germany or France—we find that the social problem of prostitution exists. The problem of v.d. also exists.

Hon. D. Brand: The member for Moore was not citing those things against natives, but against the existing administration by the Government.

Mr. LAWRENCE: That does not appear to me to be the position. There are always cases where pregnancy takes place outside of wedlock among young girls. I ask members: Is it not high time that we took cognisance of this fact?

We cannot wipe out that problem completely, and no member of this Chamber can convince me that this social problem can be eliminated one hundred per cent. The situation can be improved, and it is our job to do that. I do not see anything in the legislation before us which tends to foster any of the evils mentioned by the member for Moore. Certainly they will not be worsened in the slightest degree by the measure. No member can challenge me on that point.

It is remarkable, when we see the things going on around this city that no legislation has been introduced in this House to ban a centre not far from here, namely Railway Parade, where the authorities ordered that 7ft. high closed fence be erected to hide from the people and from our own children passing by in trains the sight of white people engaged in this nefarious trade. Cognisance should be taken of that. It is well to look at one's conscience and have regard to misdoings of the white coloured people, when we consider the misdeeds of dark-coloured people.

Another remark by the member for Moore gave me some ground for thought. He said that portions of houses built for natives had been used as firewood, but that is no argument to deny natives the right to have proper housing. Surely we cannot expect them to know how to treat houses until we provide them with their own. If some members here had the bitter experience that I have had of seeing people put into camps like Base flats, Melville Camp or Smelter's Camp they would realise there is little chance for those people to uplift themselves.

Mr. Hutchinson: Will this Bill give natives any houses?

Mr. LAWRENCE: No; I am only making a suggestion. It possibly may in the future. The Minister for Housing and the Minister for Native Affairs have advised me that at the first opportunity when it can be done, the houses will be provided. It is up to us to do our best now to instil confidence in the natives by dispensing with the existing repressive measures, and then giving them a further uplift later on by providing housing.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is the wrong way round.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not think so. Is it not better to treat natives in the same manner as we would treat our children at home by saying, "I am not going to thrash you for this sort of thing. I am going to teach you. I am not going to use repressive measures?" This problem should be attacked from that angle. I would point out, and this can be borne out by the Minister for Housing, that a number of white people have maltreated houses of the State Housing Commission. I can quote one instance where a floor was pulled up and the wood used in the copper.

Mr. Manning: Does the Minister for Housing know about that?

The Minister for Housing: About £200 worth of damage in six weeks.

Mr. Hutchinson: That has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The remarks of the member for Moore tended to cloud the issue by implying that only coloured people

are capable of such misdeeds. I am drawing a parallel and pointing out that white people also do these things. Therefore it is not a fair argument to bring forward instances of misdeeds by coloured people to condemn the Bill. The coloured people of the country are entitled to act as any one of us in this Chamber. I have always maintained that. I can accept no differentiation except where some breach of the law has been committed.

I listened with interest to the story by the member for Moore concerning the native girl who wished that she could come down to Perth without suffering the ignominy of producing a permit. I thought she showed the right spirit when she said she did not want to come down to Perth, which she is justly entitled to do, because everywhere she went she would have to produce her permit. Is it not reasonable that the girl should be allowed to come down here holding the same rights as the member for Moore when he comes to Perth?

Mr. Ackland: In Canada a person cannot get a drink unless he holds a licence, and that would apply to everyone.

Mr. LAWRENCE: If Canada wishes to carry on that way, it is no reason why we should follow.

Mr. Brady: Canada is assimilating the natives better than we are.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The member for Greenough mentioned that particular point. During the war I knew a full-blooded Maori at Westonia, and he had full citizenship rights. He was entitled to go into any restaurant or hotel without restriction. There was no bar against the Maoris here, so I do not think there should be any differentiation between these two coloured races. A very good lesson can be learnt from the story told by the member for Moore regarding the native girl. I am only sorry she is put to ignominy in having to produce a certificate.

Mr. Ackland: She is a very happy person.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not think so. She said to the member for Moore that she wished she did not have to produce that certificate. That was her innermost desire.

Hon. D. Brand: Many speeches made tonight would lead that girl to believe she was not happy.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The point is that the girl said she was not happy in producing the permit when asked to.

Mr. Manning: The hon. member does not object to producing his gold pass when travelling on a train?

Mr. LAWRENCE: If I had enough money, I would buy the member for Harvey a bag of chaff for Christmas. In conclusion, I would point out that according to the Minister the Bill was drawn up on the

advice of people working in Government departments who have studied this social problem of ours, and who worked for the common good of the citizens of this State, especially the coloured section.

There are societies whose members have a thorough knowledge of all the difficulties associated with this problem, and I would be more inclined to accept their views and take advantage of their knowledge, which some members apparently are not prepared to do, than to pay regard to the wild statements made by some of the speakers on this Bill. We can only hope to assimilate the coloured section of the community if we lift repressive legislation, and I trust that members will consider the Bill in that light.

I have no axe to grind, but I would not feel dishonoured or dismayed if I had to sit with one of my coloured brethren in a restaurant, in a hotel dining-room or in a hotel bar, because I consider them to be people who, at least since 1947, have shown that in many instances they are fit and worthy to be granted citizenship rights such as we enjoy. It is well to remember that there would be little difficulty in finding whites who should be denied citizenship rights; in fact, there are many of them.

If we desire to bring about the assimilation of the coloured section of our population, we should grant them this legislation, especially as the measure contains ample provision for protection in the event of any delinquency. I trust that the Bill will be passed by this House and that another place will approve of it, and then we shall be in a position to judge whether the views of those responsible for the introduction of the measure have been sound or otherwise.

**MR. PERKINS (Roe) [8.2]:** Obviously there is room for considerable difference of opinion on the question of the best approach to the subject matter of this Bill. Quite a number of the provisions of the measure relate to portions of the parent Act that have not been put into operation to any extent for a considerable time, and it could be that some of the sections in the parent Act are obnoxious to the aboriginal community. Be that as it may, it is not a difficult phase of the measure to deal with, but I suggest to the Minister that although those provisions in the Act do not seem to have much application nowadays, they were probably very useful when they were first adopted.

As to many other features of the existing law, the Minister mentioned with a good deal of scorn that they have not been enforced for a very long time. Following that line of argument, the fact is that they have not been put into effect and therefore have not operated to the detriment of the native people. The major point in the Bill and the one on which

we must judge the measure—other provisions can be corrected with comparatively little debate—involves the question of citizenship rights.

The position has been that natives of part or full aboriginal blood had to make application in order to obtain full citizenship rights. Now the Minister wishes to turn round and automatically give citizenship rights to all people of part blood. Inferentially, I conclude, although the Minister did not say much about it, that a full-blood will still be entitled to apply for and obtain citizenship rights as at present. The Minister did not make that point clear.

**The Minister for Native Welfare:** That is in the Act now.

**Mr. PERKINS:** I hope the Minister does not intend to alter that provision.

**The Minister for Native Welfare:** It is not amongst the questions before the House.

**Mr. PERKINS:** I know that a great many full-bloods are more worthy of receiving citizenship rights than are some of the half-bloods. However, I take it from the Minister's interjection that he does not intend to interfere with that provision.

**The Minister for Native Welfare:** Not at this stage. That is in the citizenship Act.

**Mr. PERKINS:** Under this measure, the position will be that people of part blood will automatically obtain citizenship rights. If it be proved that some of those people, for any reason, are not suitable to have those rights, they can be taken away by process of law as provided in the Bill. If that happened in a sufficient number of cases, we would revert to a position similar to that which obtains at present. Some of us fear that many of the half-bloods may prove to be unsuitable for full citizenship rights and it may be necessary, not only in their own interest, but also in the public interest, to put them back into the position they now occupy. I notice that the Minister is proposing fairly restrictive provisions for bringing that about, and the member for Narrogin has placed amendments on the notice paper that seem to make a more realistic approach to the problem.

**The Minister for Native Welfare:** That restriction has been in the Act for years.

**Mr. PERKINS:** One thing that strikes anybody with any knowledge of the native population is the diversity of the problem. We have the problem as it occurs in the pastoral areas of the North; we have it as it occurs in different parts of the agricultural areas, and even within the agricultural areas, the problem is not a straight-ahead one. It can vary greatly from district to district according to the number of natives in the locality and the manner in which they live.

Then, too, the debate has revealed a wide diversity of opinion amongst members of this Chamber, and even amongst members on the Government side of the House. One could hardly imagine a more divergent approach to the problem than that of the member for Kimberley and that of the member for Guildford-Midland. I have read the speech of the member for Kimberley and have a good deal of respect for the opinions he expressed. At least he has made a realistic approach to the subject. On the other hand, the member for Guildford-Midland approached the problem in a rather theatrical manner. An approach of that sort will not get us anywhere. If we are going to put on the statute book a measure that will ensure the right thing being done by the native population, we must approach the problem in a realistic manner.

Mr. Norton: Tell us what you would do.

Mr. PERKINS: The hon. member should be patient. We have read in the newspaper and heard opinions expressed as to the best manner in which to make proper provision in our legislation for the aboriginal population, and a noticeable feature is that opinions have been expressed by people who obviously have had very little contact indeed with the native population. Doubtless their intentions are of the very best; I give them full marks on that score, but I am afraid that well-intentioned but ill-informed people have done as much damage in this world to the particular cause they have been sponsoring as have people actuated by evil intentions.

Unfortunately, so much sentiment has been introduced into the discussion that the issues have tended to become clouded. Anyone who has had much to do with the native population appreciates how difficult the problem is. I think we should give every speaker who has addressed himself to the Bill credit for wishing to do the right thing by the native people. By reason of the settlement of Australia by the white race, we have absolutely uprooted the old native way of life and, unfortunately, have been able to put very little in its place.

Certainly the major effort towards providing a substitute has been the work of the missions. I have the greatest respect for the work that the missions are doing. I consider that there is no way of tackling this problem other than that being followed by the missions. This perhaps applies to a greater extent in the territory in which the member for Kimberley is particularly interested. When one gets down to the agricultural areas, however, the problem presents further complications.

This who live in the rural areas where natives are found understand the problem only too well. For instance, in the part of the country where I live, there is a substantial native population. The white

children attend school with the native children and, as the member for Stirling has pointed out, the Education Department has dealt with that phase of the problem very successfully indeed. I can state definitely from personal experience that at present there are very few complaints from parents and very little discrimination in the schools against the native children.

If the problem of dealing with the teenage and other natives were as easy as that of dealing with the coloured children in the schools the difficulty would be overcome far more easily than I think is likely. Those of us who have had contact with full and part-bloods in the agricultural areas realise only too well the magnitude of the problem. It is, generally speaking, far easier to deal with full-bloods than with half-castes.

I have discussed this question with many police officers who have been stationed in country districts and have had dealings with the native population there. They all agree that, as a general rule, it is much easier to handle full-bloods than the half-castes. Perhaps that is only natural in view of the fact that the half-castes are often the product of unions between a very poor type of white man and native woman. In many of the half-castes the bad traits of the white have been handed down and predominate over some of the better traits of the aborigine.

Many of the characteristics that we are inclined to criticise in the aborigine, although they are not to be commended from our point of view, are natural traits of the race, developed over many thousands of years before the white man set foot in Australia. We may say that the native is lazy and not to be relied on, but under the conditions of life as he led it before he came into contact with the whites there was no point in his doing more than provide for his immediate needs.

We must face up to that fact in deciding what should be done to provide for the future of the native population. Many of them see no point in endeavouring to provide for tomorrow as we try to encourage our own people to do and that brings them into conflict with our community and earns them a bad name with employers. From my own experience of employing aborigines as shearers, I know that one cannot rely on them as one would expect to rely on a person who had been employed reasonably regularly.

Mr. May: Do you not think that could be improved in the course of time?

Mr. PERKINS: I have not seen much evidence of it and I doubt whether that characteristic of the native has altered appreciably within living memory.

Mr. McCulloch: You cannot depend upon all white men.

Mr. PERKINS: I agree with the member for Hannans. However, I do not wish to stress that problem as the other is far greater. So far as one can judge the varying qualities of the natives that we have to deal with—particularly in the agricultural areas—they are such that whatever set-up we arrive at must obviously be flexible in order to deal successfully with the individual, and I believe the only true approach to the problem is to help first of all those who will do something to help themselves.

From some of the remarks heard in this Chamber one would gather that nothing was being done in that regard at present except by the Department of Native Affairs and the State Government, apart from the missions, whereas actually a great many people in country districts are trying to do the right thing by the native population and particularly those that they regard as deserving cases.

I know of one native family that lived for a long time under bad conditions in what was little better than a bush shelter, but because that man was regarded in the district as a reasonably reliable worker and his children attended the local school, everyone in that area was anxious to help the family. The result is that an approach has been made by the local authority, together with citizens in the district, in order to get a house provided for this man.

A farmer in the district who has no interest in the individual other than a general interest, agreed to find the galvanised iron and cement necessary to build a house for this native family and I understand that, following discussions with the State Housing Commission the plan is being successfully carried through. If success is possible in an individual case such as that I am hopeful that at least the more deserving of the coloured population can be helped and that that will be an example to the more marginal cases. I feel that that is a worth-while approach to the problem.

The most important provision in the Bill is that which seeks to grant citizenship rights, which means the right to obtain liquor. Some members who have spoken in this House about the unnecessary fears expressed from this side of the Chamber as to the effect liquor may have on natives should, I suggest, examine the question more closely, as I do not think they know what they are talking about. I would advise them to discuss the matter with those members of the police force who have been responsible for keeping order in districts where there is a considerable native population.

Mr. May: The natives do not all drink.

Mr. PERKINS: Of course not. I am glad of that interjection because a great many natives at present—including full-bloods—have citizenship rights and do not

abuse them. Many have a drink without ill effect, but if we grant citizenship rights to all half-bloods indiscriminately, we will have a vastly different problem on our hands.

Mr. May: The same ones will drink then as drink now. It will make no difference.

Mr. PERKINS: I advise the member for Collie to have another look at that point. If the Bill is passed in its present form, some members will be due for a rude awakening and none more so than the member for Guildford-Midland.

Mr. Brady: Why?

Mr. PERKINS: Because he has native camps on the outskirts of his electorate.

Mr. Brady: They misbehave themselves now and they could not be much worse if they could obtain drink.

Mr. PERKINS: That shows how little the hon. member knows of the question. I have discussed the matter with police officers who have been stationed in that area and have been informed that some of the brawls that take place there when the natives get hold of drink are really frightening.

Mr. Brady: That is a Father Christmas story.

The Minister for Education: This sounds like an argument for prohibition.

Mr. PERKINS: The Minister may take that view if he wishes but I am stressing what the ill-effects may be.

Mr. Brady: Do they get out of hand in your own district?

Mr. PERKINS: Members will recall that not long ago there was a murder at Quairading. Two young natives obtained drink and unfortunately a murder was committed in the schoolyard there. I think those men are in Fremantle gaol at present, and from what I know of the circumstances I have not the slightest doubt that those two young chaps were law abiding citizens until they got hold of some drink. Unfortunately liquor has a far greater effect on many of these people than it has on even the poorer type of the white population.

The Minister for Lands: Then God help them!

Mr. PERKINS: I say that as a well-considered opinion and if the Minister discussed this question with police officers who have been stationed in the areas to which I have referred and where natives had access to drink, he would find that it is a very serious problem indeed.

Mr. J. Hegney: Many of them can obtain drink now from the vineyards.

Mr. PERKINS: It is illegal for them to obtain it and making it legal would simply mean that the police could do nothing until a brawl started while at present they

can try to control the situation by preventing the natives, other than those with citizenship rights, from obtaining drink.

Mr. J. Hegney: But unfortunately these people generally have no homes and hardly any shelter.

Mr. PERKINS: No one would like to see them sheltered and housed more than I would, but we cannot alter the way of life of a lot of these people overnight. They have no inclination to alter it themselves and that adds to the difficulty. I know of a full-blood native family who are excellent types, mission-trained and from the North-West.

They have brought up their family well and residents of the centre where they live encouraged them to get a house in the town and they lived in it decently for a considerable time. The woman is an excellent type. She is a good housewife and keeps her home as clean as that of any white woman in the community, but unfortunately after a time the less desirable types of natives started congregating there until eventually 20 or 30 of them were camped in the house. It was not the fault of the family that I mentioned, but the others practically wrecked the place. Knowing that such things are likely to happen landlords do their best to prevent native families from getting into houses in country towns and, in the circumstances, that is a natural reaction.

I think the only solution of the difficulty is to help the natives who endeavour to help themselves. The member for Middle Swan referred to the poor conditions under which many of them live at the back of his electorate, and I believe it may be possible to do something for some of them. If we want to start and do something for these people, well and good. But I should say that the first step in improving their life generally would be to provide housing for them.

Mr. Brady: That is what I said:

Mr. PERKINS: We must realise that with a considerable number of these people we would have little success, but we would see the results in the succeeding generations.

Mr. Brady: That is what I said earlier tonight.

Mr. Rhatigan: Evidently the member for Cottesloe does not agree with the idea of providing houses.

Mr. PERKINS: The hon. member had something to say along those lines and I entirely agree; we cannot expect natives to live a civilised life, as we understand it, if they continue to exist under such primitive conditions as many of them in the bush do at present. But the point is that this Bill is not helping much in that direction. I believe that some provisions in it could operate in exactly the opposite direction. If we encourage

natives to indulge in orgies because of the quantity of strong drink that they can obtain, I say that we will push them down rather than lift them up.

There is no shortage of money. Many natives are earning large sums of money; shearers can earn anything up to £30 or £40 a week. Many of them are good shearers although there are certain difficulties about their employment because they do not like sticking at a job for a great length of time. On the other hand, there is plenty of work available. I do not want to speak at length on this Bill because the subject has been fairly well canvassed. But the point I want to make is that Acts of Parliament will not do what many members want to do—that is, generally to improve the way of life of the natives. Personally I have a fear that some of the provisions in this Bill could operate in exactly the opposite direction to what they are intended to.

MR. MAY (Collie) [8.32]: I believe that this Bill has given more food for thought to individual members than any other Bill that has been introduced during my parliamentary experience. I am one who believes that the propositions contained in this measure should be given a go. The editorial of the "Sunday Times" of the 29th November sums up my views on this Bill. The editorial is headed, "Looking for It" and reads—

Most noticeable about the attitude of those who are opposed to the Aborigines Welfare Bill is their insistence on looking for trouble.

That has been proved during the course of the debate. The editorial continues—

Pathetic emphasis has been laid on the possibility of natives who are citizens abusing our licensing laws.

If we were to apply the same to white citizens, we would abolish all drinking because some people get drunk every Saturday, some beat their wives and some resist arrest and some break windows.

The writer is speaking of the white population.

It is inevitable that certain natives will abuse the privileges of citizenship, just as some whites abuse the rights we all should enjoy. But that isn't sufficient reason for refusing to elevate to citizenship a lot of decent people whose only handicap today is that they are only partly white.

I think we all realise that some natives would abuse the privileges of citizenship.

And after all, the objectors have seen fit to carefully skim over the fact that the proportion of part-natives in our population is largely the result of the white man's sins.



As we profess to be so concerned about under-privileged minorities in other countries, we should face squarely the difficulties under which our own minorities, represented by our aboriginal population, has laboured for years.

The Bill is not perfect but it is an honest endeavour to remove certain disabilities and if it proves to be premature or disadvantageous it can be speedily amended or even removed from the statute book altogether.

But if we have any sense of common justice and if we are not to be labelled as canting hypocrites in our advocacy of the rights of minorities, this legislation should at least be given a fair trial.

That aptly sums up my thoughts on this measure. During the course of the debate we have heard many divergent views expressed, and that is all to the good because I believe that if all members spoke in the same strain we would not get to the bottom of the question. The Leader of the Opposition said that during the six years his Government occupied the Treasury Bench, a sum of £825,000 was spent on native welfare. I congratulate him for having made that money available but £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 could have been spent and, if it had been spent in the wrong way, it would not have done any more good than the £825,000.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Did not the larger portion of that sum go to the missions? Was that a waste of money?

Mr. MAY: I do not want the hon. member to bite yet; at the moment I am a little on his side. The point I was trying to make was that even if no money had been spent on native welfare we would be much better off, and we would have obtained better results, with a little human understanding.

Mr. Andrew: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAY: I believe that the money referred to by the Leader of the Opposition was set aside in all good faith, and possibly it was spent in the right direction. But without the human touch and human understanding by the white race, we will not get anywhere with the problem, no matter how much money is spent.

Mr. Hutchinson: I agree that that is what is wanted, but do you think that we all have it?

Mr. MAY: I think at least we could make some attempt to understand the problem. Every member should at least do his best to understand it and, in fact, every white person should do his best in that direction. After all the black people occupied this country long before the whites arrived. The Leader of the Country Party said that he believed this legislation was introduced about 15 years before

its time. I would remind the House that white people have been living in this State for nearly 150 years and what have we, as white people, done to overcome the problem of these native people?

Mr. Ackland: More has been done in the last six years than in the previous 144.

Mr. MAY: That may be so. The hon. member likes to claim that honour, if he can call it such. But I would ask members: What have we, as white people, done to overcome this problem?

The Minister for Lands: Nothing at all.

Mr. MAY: Yet we have a member in this House saying that the legislation is introduced 15 years ahead of its time. I say it is 100 years too late. Had the steps envisaged in this legislation been taken in the early days of this State, there would have been fewer caste people for us to worry about.

Mr. Hutchinson: This Bill will not give them any more houses.

Mr. MAY: The natives have been referred to as shirkers, so far as work is concerned. I have listened intently to what has been said during the course of the debate, and it appears that some members expect to make a citizen of the black man today and then tomorrow they expect him to go to work at eight o'clock in the morning and work the same hours as a white man. We can only assimilate these people into our way of life by the evolution of time.

I know half-caste people who are working the same hours as white people, and in my district there are half-castes who are receiving a margin over the basic wage because of the intelligent way in which they do their work. I know that some natives work only three days a week and then get tired and lay off for the rest of the week. But in the course of time those people will learn in the same way as white people have to learn—the hard way—that it will be necessary for them to manage their families without outside help. That will necessitate their working fulltime and under the conditions that apply to other workers.

For my part, I have no fear, because I believe that these people will learn and they will appreciate the fact that in order to get a week's wages they will have to give a week's work. There are some individuals in various districts who do not want to work at all, but it is our job to encourage those people and to make them understand that if they want to become citizens of this country, they will have to do their share of work.

The question of cleanliness was also mentioned. Some members will not believe this; but in Collie the miners, among whom are carpenters and other tradesmen, made application for 10 acres of bush land with

the idea of building houses for a settlement for coloured people. Eventually the first house was finished. It was erected by voluntary labour and the tradespeople of the town were kind enough to let that band of workers have the necessary material at a reduced rate. It was decided that Jimmy Cockie and Flossie, his wife, and their eight kids would be the family to occupy that house. Jimmy works at the timber mill and he has a bit of a margin over the basic wage on account of his ability to handle a particular saw. They were installed in that house 18 months ago. Jimmie pays his 30s. a week rent regularly to the treasurer of the organisation concerned. That money is being banked and will be used to purchase materials for the second house, which is three parts built at the present time.

It was my privilege last Sunday evening to be taken to that place; Jimmie and his wife did not know we were coming. I do not mind telling members that I was expecting anything. I was taken through the house and I admit that it was not as a white person would like to find a house, but I could see the difference between the ordinary native persons living in the camps in which they do and those people living in that house. There was a remarkable difference in that family's outlook over the period of 18 months during which they had been domiciled in that house. I could see that they had been learning how to treat a house, how to run a home, although, as I have said, it was not up to the standard of a white man's dwelling.

The Minister for Lands: I suppose they have developed pride in it.

Mr. MAY: Jimmy and his wife are very proud of their house. Their eldest girl is 14 years old and she is looking for employment, and members may make no mistake for she will soon be found employment, and I know she will be a credit to whoever employs her. The kiddies were contented and Jimmy and his wife were quite happy and content as well. One could not find anything nicer; but 18 months ago that family was very much the same as some of those that have been mentioned tonight.

It is wrong to suggest that it is quite impossible for these people to become civilised and be taught the way of life of white people. I only wish some members here who have spoken on this Bill could have seen what I saw last Sunday evening; it would have done them good. If this Bill does anything to create contentment and a better way of life among these people, it will have done a great deal; some of the shortcomings which they have are probably provided for in this Bill.

Mr. Nalder: Tell us what you saw last Sunday.

Mr. MAY: I have just told the hon. member; I saw one of the happiest families I could ever wish to see, and I do not think there is anything greater than that. Eighteen months ago, Jimmy and his wife were just blackfellows. Now they are living in a 5-roomed house, and were inordinately proud to show me round, and I was proud to see what they had done for themselves.

Mr. Ackland: Will this Bill give them anything they cannot get under the present legislation?

Mr. MAY: I will not argue with the member for Moore; I was terribly disappointed with his description of the Bill.

Mr. Ackland: What, a second time? You were, the other day.

Mr. MAY: If the hon. member wants some more, I will give it to him, and he need not make any mistake about it. I am afraid the hon. member has never plumbed the depths of understanding of human nature.

Mr. Ackland: That you have.

The Minister for Housing: He ought to be ashamed of himself!

Mr. MAY: I do not think it does the member for Moore any good to carry on in that way. Some reference has been made to thrift as it relates to these people. I ask members: Can we expect people who, before the last war at any rate, had no idea of the value of money and never worried about it, to appreciate thrift now? Can we expect these people in the few short years that have elapsed since the completion of the war to appreciate money values as we do? That understanding will come only through the evolution of time. I believe the day will come when these people will appreciate the value of money as we white people do.

Next I would like to refer to the vexed question of alcoholism. I live in a centre where this particular caste fraternity may be greater in number than in some other places of which members have spoken. I know the local police can put their finger on the particular individuals who over-indulge in drink. A lot of those aborigines have been securing liquor through the machinations of the white population. I know of people with utilities who, after the aborigines have received their weekly or fortnightly pay, collect them and take them to a hotel some miles away in the bush. I will not mention the name of the hotel. I know that those natives have been dumped in the bush and the white individual with the utility has gone to the hotel, got the drink and sold it to the natives, and has taken away their hard-earned wages. I do not think there is much to be proud of in that.

Mr. Oldfield. Do not the police know about it?

Mr. MAY: The police do, but the trouble is to catch the people concerned.

Mr. Oldfield: If you know the hotel the police should know of it.

Mr. MAY: The fact that they are going to be given citizenship rights will not affect their drinking habits one iota. We all know that among the white population there are certain individuals who drink, and it does not matter what we do, they will still drink. The same thing will apply to aborigines and half-castes who at present indulge in drink. It will not stop them from drinking, but I do not think it will encourage those who abstain from drink to rush off into hotels and get drunk.

The Minister for Lands: It will probably improve the situation.

Mr. MAY: That expresses my view. Once these people have been given citizenship rights, they will be at liberty to go to hotels and buy their drink openly, and drink it openly. The reason why so many of these people get drunk now is that they get the most awful stuff to drink—in most cases, sold to them by white people. They drink it in a hurry, because they are afraid of being caught, and, of course, we know the effect it has on them. We know the effect it would have on white people.

If the natives are permitted to drink at their leisure, it will not have nearly the same bad effect as is the case at the moment. Even when white people rush into an hotel and try to get down six schooners in a hurry, they find themselves drunk. The aborigines cannot get the same quality of drink that the white man can, and the stuff they get has a terrific effect on them. It affects the white people, so how much more will it affect the natives? I can appreciate why these natives get into the state they do after they have been drinking the stuff supplied to them.

The aborigine or native who may be granted citizenship rights should be made to understand that he will be treated in the same way as a white person who does the same thing. When a white person gets drunk and behaves badly, the police take action against him; the same would apply in the case of aborigines. But I do not believe for one moment that this legislation will have the effect of making drinkers of those people who do not get drunk at the moment.

Hon. L. Thorn: There is no need to get angry about it.

Mr. MAY: I am sorry I awoke the member for Toodyay, and I promise to lower my voice.

Hon. L. Thorn: I do not like to see you get angry.

Mr. MAY: I am not angry, but I was sorry to have to listen to some of the stories that have been told on this subject. I know the feelings of some members

in relation to this matter, but nobody can tell me anything about natives in this State over the last 31 years.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I think they can.

Mr. MAY: I have lived amongst them. I would like to mention the people to whom the Leader of the Opposition referred the other night, and to whom I think he is referring now. Those people will continue to drink after they get citizenship rights but they will come within the ambit of the law, and the law will take its course. I know the fears of the hon. member, but I do not believe they are justified. I sincerely hope that what he fears will happen will not occur. Suppose I was one of the people to whom I have been referring and I was told that I was being given citizenship rights and could go into any hotel and have a drink. Do members really suggest that I would rush in and start drinking at once?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That is convincing!

Mr. MAY: These people about whom I have been talking have the same feelings and understanding that we do, and it is our job to point a better way of life to them. If the towns in which these people congregate adopted the same attitude as the people in Collie have done, we would go far towards the assimilation of these people into our way of life.

The missions are doing good work. Last Friday evening, my wife and I were going home and at Roelands there were three girls, aged about 14, going to the mission. My wife said, "Those girls could go anywhere, the way they are dressed and the way they conduct themselves." One could not have found three girls who were better dressed and better conducted than those I have mentioned. It is for us to encourage that. If there is something in the Bill which proves not to be in the best interests of these people, then let us strike it out.

Mr. Manning: We are doing that in the present legislation.

Mr. MAY: But it does not go far enough. In the past we have relied on pounds, shillings and pence and on the missions to do what every individual in the white community should be doing.

Mr. Manning: Those girls are proof of what the missions will do.

Mr. MAY: I believe in the missions. They are doing a very good job. One can imagine the better job that would be done if we all constituted ourselves as missionaries and tried to do the same towards these people. We have to take stock of ourselves. We are ever ready to cast aspersions on these folk, who have never had a fair go from whites. We have made individual attempts to do something for

them, but let us make some really big effort to achieve the objective to which the Bill points. I support the Bill.

**MR. YATES** (South Perth) [9.1]: When introducing the Bill, the Minister said that it was a sincere attempt, not only by him but on the part of the Government, to try to correct certain anomalies in the existing Act and to assist the native population to receive a better deal. He also said—and I think he was very sincere, too—that he wanted the Bill to be treated on a non-party basis. I feel, however, that the drift of the debate has tended to be along party lines. I do not propose to treat the measure in that way, but to deal with it entirely on its merits, and to support anything in it which I feel requires support.

The Minister for Lands: That is the proper approach.

**Mr. YATES:** Many comments have been made—both heated and otherwise—about individual cases. I do not believe that individual cases affect the issue very much. It is the overall position of the 20,000 natives who live in the State that we must legislate for. We must protect and assist them, not only now but in the future.

Quite a number of members have prided themselves on the experience they have had not only in country electorates but in other parts of the State, and on the knowledge they have of the native problem. None of us knows very much about the matter. Unless we were native ourselves, we would not really know the true problem. We can see it only from the outside, however much we have had to do with natives.

Like others, I have taken an interest in the welfare of natives, and have been interested in their problems for many years. My first real experience was back in 1925, when I was on a station at Gingin, and had a lot to do with the young native boys who worked on the property. Later I came in contact with others when I travelled throughout Western Australia, both in the North-West and in the South-West, and subsequently when I lived on the Goldfields for a number of years. I met many native families and native boys and girls. When I had dealings with them, I never found them to be arrogant or wilful breakers of the law. I found them docile and amenable, but in most cases dirty.

I have read the annual reports of the Commissioner of Native Affairs that have been tabled in this Chamber year by year, and I intend to make reference to the recent report which deals with the commissioner's work to the end of June, 1952. Some of his comments are very interesting. In conformity with Section 73 of the Native Administration Act, the commissioner has to submit a report to Parliament on the activities of his department

for the year. We, as members, receive this report, and I am always interested to compare each one with that of the previous year with a view to seeing what progress has been made in connection with this problem.

Progress has been made in the last six years—quite substantial progress. In fact, more has been done during that period than in previous years. I am not saying that the Government I supported had the welfare of the natives more at heart than did previous Governments. But owing to the changed conditions as a result of the war, we found ourselves not only with much more money to spend but also with different ideas. Naturally a change of Government led to changed ideas and different Acts of Parliament. During the six years in which the previous Government was in office, it endeavoured to assist the commissioner to do a better job in his department, and also to help the various missions and people throughout Western Australia who had the interests of the natives at heart.

I trust that work will continue. I honestly believe that the present Minister intends to do everything in his power to see that it does. Even before he came into this Chamber he convinced me that he was interested in the welfare of the natives. He has spoken on the subject in this House on a number of occasions, and his knowledge of the natives is fairly extensive. I commend the Minister for any attempt he may make to help, not only the Commissioner of Native Affairs, but all those who are assisting to bring about a happier relationship between the white population of Western Australia and the natives.

Here is what Mr. Middleton had to say in the report to which I have referred:—

Before going on to discuss these matters in greater detail, however, it is perhaps worthwhile to point out that the vast majority of aborigines in this State, of both full and mixed blood descent, seldom if ever require the special treatment which the Department is authorised by its legislation to give them. A safe estimate of those who do would be not more than twenty per cent. There are approximately 21,000 aboriginal natives in Western Australia at the present time and of these 2,700 mostly children, are cared for and maintained in Mission and Government Institutions at part or whole Government expense respectively. One hundred and fifty others are provided with food, clothing and blankets by the Department through ration depots and other centres. The remainder are either independent or willy nilly so far as they are concerned, dependent upon their employers. Under existing

legislation it is an offence to employ an aborigine excepting under permit issued by an officer of the Department. The inconvenience of this system to employers, particularly those resident in the more remote localities is immediately obvious and because of this aboriginal workers are sometimes deprived of the opportunity to work because the employer is unable or unwilling to comply with the statutory requirement. Aboriginal workers detest the system; to them it connotes a state of inferiority and discrimination against them merely because of their colour and legal classification and not because of inefficiency on their part.

These comments were made by Mr. Middleton. He made them after having had several years' experience in Western Australia in handling our native problem and he was a man not new to the game when he took over this position. He also mentioned in his report a visit to the Eastern States when, in conjunction with the then Minister for Native Affairs, Hon. V. Doney, he attended a conference on the 3rd and 4th September, 1951. At that conference he read a report dealing with the subject of citizenship for natives and this is what he said—

This (citizenship status) is probably the most important item on the agenda for our consideration, because it deals with certain aspects of our administration which do not appear to be clearly understood, even by ourselves. This is clearly evidenced on page 1 of agenda 1, wherein it is seen that the term "aborigine" does not appear ever to have been satisfactorily defined in existing legislation. In Western Australia any person possessing more than a quarter degree of aboriginal blood is classified as a native (not as an aborigine) for the purposes of the Native Administration Act, but in some circumstances a quadroon may be classed as a native—on application or by order of a Magistrate.

I discussed this subject briefly with the Solicitor General last week, and he quoted a lengthy judgment in a case involving the definition of an aboriginal resident of a State; it ruled that an aboriginal native may be a person who is in any part a descendant of the original inhabitants of a country, in Australia the "original inhabitants" would be those who inhabited the continent at the time of the arrival of the first white navigators and settlers. The South Australian definition appears to conform with this ruling.

Under the provisions of the Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1948, all Australian aboriginal natives are the subjects of Her Majesty. They are citizens of Australia and may exercise

such rights as are not denied them as natives by special references in other legislation (State or Commonwealth). Whilst these references are to natives, that is, aborigines, and their descendants generally and not particularly to the natives of any one State, such a condition does not contravene the Commonwealth Constitution.

From this fact emerges the conclusion that the only bar to full citizenship rights for aboriginal natives is the discriminatory clauses contained in some legislation, such as, for example: The Commonwealth Social Service Benefits Consolidation Act in respect to aboriginal natives having a preponderance of aboriginal blood; the State Electoral Act of Western Australia in respect to full-blood aboriginals and aboriginal natives of the half blood; and the Native Administration Act, the Licensing Act, the Dog Act, and other pieces of legislation in the case of all people classified as natives.

In Western Australia we have the largest aboriginal population in Australia, ranging in caste from the primitive nomad to the very near white. We consider it is impossible to cater satisfactorily for them all by any one Act and we feel therefore that the obstacles must be removed, particularly in respect to the native residents of the south of the State, who in every material way now live after the manner of whites and not as aborigines.

There are two methods of removing these obstacles. The first is by the amendment of all legislation which discriminates for or against natives, and the second is by the passage of a single piece of legislation which will automatically supersede the discriminatory clauses in other legislation.

In Western Australia the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act of 1944 attempts to execute the second method, but there are unsatisfactory and limiting features of this Act. The method used is to declare the successful applicant for citizenship rights to be deemed to be no longer a native. This is obviously unjust and quite wrong in principle since it implies that black is made white by an Act of Parliament. It requires that a successful applicant shall no longer associate with members of his own race, and it therefore tends to emphasise the implied inferiority of natives, and so destroys pride of race. The qualifications as laid down by the Citizenship Rights Act are unsatisfactory, and the granting of citizenship rights under this Act seldom if ever improves a native's status in the white community but—and this is a very important point

—it denies him the advantages of special legislation enacted for his benefit. Whatever the original intention of the legislators may have been the effect of this Act has been to leave the successful applicant suspended, as it were, between two communities, that of the white man on the one side and of the aboriginal native on the other. Naturally, the conditions under which citizenship rights are granted are in the vast majority of cases more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

There we have the comments of the present commissioner, made when he attended the conference in the Eastern States; and the subject was so important that he decided to include a reference to it in his report to Parliament.

Certain passages in this report have convinced me that not only did the previous Government attempt, during the last two years, to alter the Act for the betterment of the natives, but the present Government is attempting to alter it still further. We do not know whether the alteration will be for the benefit of these people until such time as the suggestions have been given a trial. We can only achieve a successful Act by trial and error. We have on our statute book thousands of Acts, some good and some bad. The bad ones are amended year by year until such time as they are left alone because they are near-perfect.

I would say this present piece of legislation is at least a step in the direction in which the Government honestly feels it will uplift the natives and achieve the harmonious relationships that we all want to see between the white and the black races. In the commissioner's report we find a number of individual reports by the various district officers. Mr. Beharell, the district officer for the northern district, had this to say—

The hygiene at many native camps I have visited was deplorable. This reflects directly on the person in charge. No attempt in many instances is made to supply the employee with any sanitary or washing facilities nor is he supervised in the cleansing of his camp area. The exceptions that I found were an indication of what all could be if proper facilities were provided and supervision maintained.

Several months ago I had the good fortune, in company with two other members of this Chamber, to visit the Derby leprosarium. We were amazed to find so far from civilisation as we call it and so many miles from the coast a real oasis in an arid area. We entered the gates of the leprosarium and the drive in was bordered by gardens and lawns which were tended by the natives who were suffering from leprosy. We spent the afternoon going through the various wards.

We went into the living quarters of the girls and also those of the men and I take my hat off to Mr. Arnold, the superintendent of the leprosarium, for the outstanding job he has done. I would say his job of working amongst the native lepers would be one of the most difficult in Australia.

The grounds of the leprosarium are kept in particularly good order, and the amenities for the natives are excellent. In fact, so enthusiastic are these leper natives that they have their own band and they play good music. The Roman Catholic sisters there are doing a magnificent job. They look after the hospital and attend to the wants of the sick.

Not all the lepers in the institution are bedridden. Quite a large number of them are able to move around quite normally. A native must remain there 12 months after the complaint is cleaned up so that the medical director has no doubt that he has completely lost the disease. I, and the other two members, were impressed with what was done there with the aid of Government assistance, through the administrator and his staff, at a place so far distant as is Derby.

I was particularly keen to visit the leprosarium, because I have taken quite an interest through the years in natives. In 1947, I introduced a deputation from the Defence of Native Rights Association to the Minister, and we dealt with many problems affecting the natives of Port Hedland and other parts of the North-West. I also served at the war with the member for South Fremantle, and he will bear me out when I say that we had several natives in our unit, and they were outstanding soldiers.

When they came back they were able to hold their heads as high as any other man in the battalion. I think the same remark is applicable to the other branches of the armed services in which aborigines served. They have convinced me, through my association with them, that there is a place in this community for them.

The understanding the natives require is far different from what we think they should have, because the gap between white and black is, and always has been, so vast. It is difficult to bridge that gap, but we in Parliament can do a lot towards bridging it, not only by this type of legislation, but by adopting a sane manner whenever an amending Bill for the betterment of the natives is brought down. I honestly believe it was the Minister's intention to do that on this occasion, and that is why I propose to support the Bill.

I think the natives deserve the support that the Government intends to extend to them. I supported my Government when any measure affecting the welfare of the natives was introduced, and I do not on this occasion intend to alter my views. I

certainly disagree with some of the clauses in the Bill, but they will be a matter for discussion when we are in Committee.

Mr. F. E. Gare, district officer, north-west district, has this to say in his report—

A great deal remains to be done in the promotion of native welfare in the North-West district, and the present staff looks forward to a year of endeavour, and it is hoped, worth-while achievement.

This officer is doing a job of work in the North-West. He probably is not known to many of us down here, but he is looking forward to a year of endeavour and achievement on behalf of the many natives in his district. Mr. B. A. McLarty, district officer, central division, made these comments—

The effect of poor living conditions on native welfare has been too often expressed to require any further emphasis and any attempt to review the position again would be only useless reiteration. I must emphasise, however, that the continued absence of any concrete evidence of a desire to see native people properly housed is having an adverse effect on field officers' relations with them and is contributing largely to the bitter cynicism they exhibit whenever the matter of housing is discussed.

Mr. C. R. Wright Webster, district officer, southern district, had this to say—

The native people of the south are keen followers of press and radio references to themselves, their problems and the suggested solutions. Keenly discussed amongst themselves is the prospect of their acquiring a civic or national status in the not too distant future. Citizenship Rights—magic words to the native—the open sesame to a brave new world to their way of thinking, if granted as a birthright is not going to make a great deal of difference other than conferring on the native a status which should be his by right. The native will still need guidance and tutelage and a considerable amount of prodding towards acquiring a better standard of living and all that goes with it.

These comprehensive reports indicate that the district officers are striving to achieve a common object. The reports come from far afield. One is from the south and another from 1,200 miles north. Probably these officers do not see each other except on rare occasions, yet their thoughts and views are the same. They have a directing staff and Government financial support, as far as it is possible, behind them, but it is not sufficient.

The member for Collie said that £2,000,000 would not be enough to spend on the natives. I think we all agree with

that. Too little has been spent in the past to see what could be done to improve the conditions not only of the natives in the metropolitan area but of those in other parts of the State. Mention is made in this report of a medical officer not being in a particular district for a year and then a visiting doctor going through the district and remaining a few days to help the superintendent out of a difficulty by inspecting a number of the natives.

He enjoyed his experience so much that he stayed on and cleaned up all the sick natives in the area and said he would be back again as soon as he could. It was probably the first time that doctor had been there, and he found that the work he did was received with gratitude by those who had experienced very little of that sort of treatment. If more honorary work were done by those capable of doing it, we would have a better understanding between the Government, the administration and the natives themselves. The individual cases of drunkenness do not affect me at all.

The departmental report mentions the incidence of crime, and Mr. Middleton's statement, which is as follows, is most interesting—

A total of 673 natives were convicted on 822 charges in the Courts throughout the State during the year. Offences connected with the obtaining or consuming of liquor numbered 528 and disorderly offences totalled 121. Offences against the person numbered 49 (including two murder and one manslaughter) convictions; offences against property totalled 102 (including 47 for stealing).

Of the 673 natives convicted—

- 206 were full-blood natives;
- 467 were other than full-blood natives;
- 602 were male natives;
- 71 were female natives;
- 658 were over 18 years of age;
- 15 were under 18 years of age.

Much has been said about the liquor question. Because of the restrictions placed on natives, it is only natural to assume that many of them would be apprehended by the police. This does not mean to say that they are all drunk or disorderly. The moment a native has liquor in his or her possession, he or she has broken the law and is apprehended. A white person can be as drunk as possible and stagger all over the roads, and still not be apprehended by the police unless he causes a disturbance.

I do not think the granting of citizenship rights will mean that we will have streets full of drunken natives. If, however, that does seem likely to happen the Government can alter the Act. I assume,

that the Government, because of the complaints it would receive, would move in the matter. The Government does not want to see streets in country towns filled with drunken natives, any more than anyone else does, but we do not know that that will happen until we give this measure a trial.

I know that natives like to drink. I also know that there are many white people who like to drink, who drink plenty and who become real beasts when under the influence of liquor. Some of the natives that become intoxicated are not half as bad as some whites when in a drunken state. It is unreasonable to compare a drunken native with an intoxicated white man. However, that is only a minor point in relation to the Bill. There is only one solution and that is to close all breweries and wine distilleries.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is nonsense!

Mr. YATES: Although I am not suggesting that we should, that is the only way that the evil could be removed.

Hon. L. Thorn: You would have all the sly grog shops under the sun.

Mr. YATES: We know that such happenings occur among whites as well as among natives.

Hon. L. Thorn: You speak for yourself.

Mr. YATES: It is only natural for the member for Toodyay to interject along those lines because he is interested in the growing of grapes for wine making. A magazine called "People" recently published an article headed "Champion of the Aborigines." It deals with the work of Mr. Middleton, the Commissioner of Native Affairs in Western Australia. His photograph is published alongside the article and underneath it is the caption, "Stanley Guise Middleton, as Commissioner of Native Affairs in W.A., is winning his fight against the oppression of the aborigines." This article gives some idea of the work Mr. Middleton is doing and although some of the statements made are exaggerated, I will quote a few them for the information of the House. They are as follows:—

Although in Western Australia Middleton is perhaps the most maligned of public figures, his fight for native rights has won the respect of many prominent citizens of other States. Archdeacon C. S. Robertson, chairman of the Australian Board of Missions, pays high tribute to his work. Commenting on the difficulties confronting Middleton, he says, "Unfortunately Middleton is somewhat blocked by the limitations imposed on him by his own Government. There is still a tremendous amount to be done in Western Australia. The aborigines live under simply appalling conditions. I have never seen anything worse than the aboriginal settlements around Perth. Their camps are beside a sanitary disposal area and the water sup-

ply is half-a-mile away. Western Australia is the only State in which aborigines are forbidden to enter the cities without a permit.

Middleton's crusade has brought new hope to the aborigines of Western Australia. He has proved to them that a dark skin does not necessarily divest a man of worth and dignity. But no one is more conscious that much still remains to be done.

In his annual report, presented in June, 1953, he charges that aborigines on some West Kimberley stations are still living under conditions tantamount to slavery. The report discloses that some aboriginal stockmen and rural workers are receiving little or no wages and are compelled to live in poorly built humpies. Middleton's immediate objective is to ensure that such abuses do not appear on his next report.

Further on the article continues—

When, in 1948, the West Australian Government was seeking a Commissioner for Native Affairs, A. P. Elkin, professor of anthropology at Sydney University and one of Australia's leading authorities on aborigines, recommended Middleton for the post. He was pleased to accept the appointment because it enabled him to provide his wife and three children with the amenities of city life.

It was not long, however, before he realised his new job was going to be the toughest of his career. More than 100 years of uninterrupted repression of the black race had led the white people of Western Australia to accept subjugation of the aborigines as the norm. He soon realised that the supposed inferiority of the native was an unquestioned and fundamental concept deeply ingrained in the minds of a large proportion of the rural whites—the people with whom most aborigines had to deal.

Two years before his appointment animosity between white and black, which for some time had been simmering beneath the surface, had flared into open hostilities. Aboriginal stockmen had presented to the Premier a claim for a minimum wage of £1 10s. a week, improved rations and better housing and sanitary conditions. No reply being made to the petition, more than 200 aboriginal stockmen left their jobs and established a self-supporting community camp in the Pilbara district, 12 miles from Port Hedland. A few months later 10 of them were arrested and sentenced to terms of imprisonment. The charges were under Section 47 of the Native Administration Act which makes it an offence to entice natives away from their lawful place of employment.



As soon as he received news of the aborigines walk-out, Rev. F. H. V. Hodge, Church of England minister and secretary of the Defence of Native Rights Association, flew from Adelaide to Port Hedland to investigate their grievances. He met the aborigines outside their camp and was arrested by police and charged with unlawful association with natives under Section 39 of the Act. Hodge was fined £10 by a magistrate at Port Hedland and failed in an appeal to the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Later he appealed successfully to the High Court of Australia which held he had committed no offence and dismissed the charge against him.

On taking office, Middleton gave first priority to investigating the complaints of aborigines employed in the pastoral industry. He found that many aboriginal stockmen were working a seven-day week without pay and that many of them on the bigger cattle stations were living in filthy, broken-down shanties because no regular housing was provided for them.

Shocked by the white employers' indifference to the welfare of their aboriginal workers, Middleton called a meeting of the pastoralists and told the packed gathering that in future they would have to pay their aboriginal stockmen. He emphasised in strong terms his determination to secure just treatment for the natives. "This industry," he said, "returns £25,000,000 a year to your pockets and yet your conditions of employment for aborigines are tantamount to slavery. I will not stand for slavery of any individual, let alone our aborigines."

Many of the pastoralists who attended the meeting were incensed by this challenge to their long-accepted right to free labour. While some agreed to give their aborigines a better deal, others, as Middleton's 1953 report shows, are still refusing to co-operate.

Mr. Nalder: The member for Kimberley said nothing about such conditions. He said the natives were being treated very well by the stockowners.

Mr. YATES: That is what the Commissioner said in the report.

Mr. Nalder: And that is what the member for Kimberley said.

Mr. YATES: I mentioned that I consider that some of those statements might be exaggerated because I know for a fact that the pastoral industry does not produce £25,000,000 a year. I think the figure would be round about £8,000,000 a year. Nevertheless, in the main, the report must be given consideration because it is evidently submitted by Mr. Middleton, who is the Commissioner of Native Affairs and

a lot of his statements must be true. Mr. Middleton had experience with natives in Papua before he came to Western Australia.

Towards the end of the war, I had experience of the natives of New Guinea when I was at a place north of Finschhafen. My battalion was in a position on a hill called Christmas Hill in the heart of the jungle. I had 160 natives under me who were engaged to carry supplies through the steaming jungle to the soldiers on top of the hill. They performed a superhuman task and one which would have been impossible for any white man to have undertaken. They carried out their duties knowing full well that they might be attacked by the Japanese at any moment.

The Australian Government presented 368 decorations to those natives for bravery in World War I and had a number of Australian natives been assigned similar tasks, I am sure that they also would have figured high in the decorations list. Those with whom I associated in the A.I.F. did all that was required of them. All we ask of them as citizens is to obey our laws, live decently, raise their families and be able to play their part in society. The Government will do everything possible to make their home life complete.

One form of assistance would be to provide housing for them as has been mentioned by several members tonight. I know the Minister for Housing has the problem in hand. He has mentioned that it is his intention that, if possible, natives will be given a chance to acquire some of the homes being built by the State Housing Commission after they have been granted citizenship rights under the provisions of this Bill. I trust that next year Mr. Middleton will be able to present to this House a much more favourable report on the conditions of natives; a more confident report on the progress of native children after their parents have been granted citizenship rights because they will then have to care for their families and maintain them in a proper manner.

All round, I hope they fulfil the expectations of the Government after introducing a measure such as this. I would like to receive an undertaking from the Minister that, within the next 12 months, if any of these provisions fail to come up to expectations, he will amend the Act accordingly to show that members of this House will not have placed their confidence in him in vain.

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park) [9.40]: I congratulate the Minister on bringing the Bill forward because I knew that when he did so he would meet with a great deal of prejudice. That is one of the greatest factors he will have to overcome. It is rather refreshing to hear the remarks made by the member for South Perth because they were in a different strain from those made by several members on the other side of the House.

We do not want this Bill dealt with on party lines. It seems to me that we are endeavouring to help a class of people in Western Australia to solve a problem which is actually one that is facing both the native and white sections of the community. The arguments put forward by certain members who have spoken previously are similar to those that I heard and read about many years ago in regard to workers.

Such statements were made against our own people who were living in slums in manufacturing towns before they were even granted the franchise. It was said that they were not fit to have a vote; that they were incapable of understanding what they were voting for and, furthermore, that if they were put into decent houses they would turn them into slums within a short space of time and be back in the same position from which they started. It was also said that their children were not worth educating.

History has shown that there were certain men, who were in the minority, who fought for better conditions for themselves and their fellowmen. Over the years this minority has continued to battle to improve the conditions of workers generally, and today we find that the average worker—except in a crisis such as that through which we are now passing—is well housed and the majority of the workers keep their homes clean and in good order.

Many men have risen from the ranks of the working class to fill high executive positions after having availed themselves of the opportunity of a good education and some have even attained the highest office in the land even including that of the Prime Ministership. We now find that the remarks that were made about our workers many years ago are being used against the natives. It is a reflection on our own race that whenever we so-called whites come in contact with any of our dark brethren, we do not uplift them but, on the contrary, we contaminate them. That has been the trend throughout the world.

Mr. Manning: I hope you do not include missionaries in that statement.

Mr. ANDREW: They are the few who do the cleaning up.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You would not say that was the case in India. The whites did a great deal for India.

Mr. ANDREW: The whites are overwhelmed in India; that is not the case here. There are, in fact, no white people. We are all coloured to some extent; in order to be white one would have to be like a snow man. Amongst other speakers, the member for Narrogin opposed the Bill. He said he desired to do everything he could to help the natives, and he backed that up by giving his reasons as to why he would not support the Bill!

The main argument put up by speakers opposing the measure is that it would result in freedom to drink liquor, and that no good would result. With regard to the freedom to drink, all the arguments put up can be levelled against the white population, as was amply demonstrated by speakers on this side. Then the member for Narrogin gave the figures of 7,000 odd half-bloods and 13,000 odd full-bloods. He said that only 7,000 would enjoy any benefit under the Bill, but then contradicted himself later on and said that the only benefit would be to the full-bloods with regard to land settlement.

I realise that this Bill is not a magic wand which can be waved and conditions will change overnight for the better for the natives. The member for Narrogin said that when the day of emancipation comes, these people will still remain in their camp on the sanitary dumps and the only difference that will result will be their ability to get liquor. He said it would take 20 years to emancipate them. I would be quite happy if it took only 20 years, because in any change there is a period of transition in which difficulties will arise. We should have the courage to face up to those difficulties. The good that will result will outweigh the bad.

The member for Narrogin could not understand what the Minister was getting at when he said natives would not drink so much wine when they were permitted to purchase liquor. The hon. member did not think that a native could change from a wine drinker to a beer drinker. He misconstrued the remark of the Minister who said that because of the convenience of carrying wine, natives preferred this drink, particularly as there is a greater number of drinks in a bottle of wine than in several bottles of beer, and it is easier to conceal one bottle. In the North-West the stockmen drink quite a lot of whisky because of the ease with which it can be carried; there are 40 nips of whisky to the bottle, and it will take many bottles of beer to provide the same amount of drink.

The Leader of the Opposition commenced by saying that he did not think that other members were acquainted with the native question, and said, "I do not know what the member for Victoria Park knows about the native question." I could pose the same question to the Leader of the Opposition and infer that he knows nothing about the question either. But that is not a sound argument on the very serious question which is before us.

I quote from "The West Australian" of the 26th November, 1953, which contains a letter from the president of the Coolbaroo League for Natives to the editor. It reads—

In his speech in the Legislative Assembly last week Sir Ross McLarty cleverly drew a red herring across the path of our progress by saying

that if Mr. Hegney's Bill was passed natives would fill the hotels and there would be terrible brawls. I would like to ask him whether natives were responsible for the terrible brawls which occur in Perth so frequently.

Last Saturday night over 200 whites took part in one and attacked a police officer who tried to break it up. Sir Ross may have fooled his fellow members but he has not fooled us. He is the leader of the old brigade and it is colour prejudice and nothing else that makes him and them so unjustifiably determined to keep us down. Considering what followed he might at least have spared us the opening remark that nobody was more anxious than he to uplift the natives.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The President is right off the beam.

Mr. ANDREW: The Leader of the Opposition questioned why natives should not prove themselves before they got citizenship rights. The Leader of the Opposition did not have to prove himself and neither did I. It would be an indignity if we had to. It is an indignity to inflict a condition on natives which is not imposed on us.

Then again, the Leader of the Opposition also said that the present procedure to obtain citizenship rights is not harder than was the position before the last amendment. I would point out that the magistrate on his own accord was empowered to grant citizenship rights, and the applicant had to obtain two certificates from citizens of the district. Under the alteration to the Act made by the previous Government the chairman of a road board or nominated member had to sit with the magistrate to hear applications. The decision has to be unanimous. It is logical to assume that it is harder to convince two persons than one.

I have some figures here relating to applications for citizenship rights. The applicants had to wait for a considerable time before the magistrate and the then member of the court could be at the town at the same time. In the case of G. K. Fraser, his application was lodged on the 28th April, 1952, and it was heard on the 24th November, 1952, seven months later; V. Bennett's application was lodged on the 16th May, 1952, and was heard on the 6th April, 1953, 11 months later; P. Fletcher's application was lodged on the 20th February, 1952 and was heard on the 6th September, 1953, nineteen months later. There is a list of cases and the period ranged from six months upwards before the applications were heard.

Some of the instances concerning the treatment of natives in this State are disgraceful. I know of a case in Bunbury, which can be authenticated

by one of my colleagues, regarding a girl who was classified as coloured, yet if she was seen beside a girl of European descent, no difference could be detected. Going from Bunbury to Brunswick Junction she would have to walk out of town to catch a bus.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Is that provision enforced?

Mr. ANDREW: No.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Then do not mislead us.

Mr. ANDREW: I am talking about the prejudice that has to be overcome. The member for Harvey said there was nothing wrong when a native girl had to apply for a permit to come to Perth and he compared that with the case of members of Parliament having to show their gold passes when travelling on trains. The gold pass is not a good comparison because it is a badge of privilege, but a permit for a native to enter Perth is a badge of servitude. If all the remarks of this member are taken on that level, we can discount his arguments.

Mr. Manning: Your Government did not think about that when it introduced the existing legislation.

Mr. ANDREW: The member for South Fremantle spoke very strongly against the remarks of the member for Moore and I think the latter deserved it. The member for Moore made no attempt to approach this Bill in a constructive manner. He assailed it; he did not see one good feature in it and he said if one member said "No" in this Chamber he would call for a division. He said that the Bill has been prompted by idealists.

The hon. member proceeded to make further remarks and when asked whether he believed in the Four Freedoms he replied, "I am a practical man" and so he really implied that he did not believe in them. Those Four Freedoms are Freedom of Speech, Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear and Freedom of Religion, and surely they are the ideals to which we should aspire! Yet the member for Moore spoke as he did.

The difference between the human animal and other animals is that the human animal is forever striving to attain something better. The hon. member by his own words, has classified himself. His action in viciously assailing the natives prompted a memory of something I had read to this effect, "The trouble with the world is that there are too many ignorant people who are so cocksure".

A good deal has been said about the drinking and other bad habits of the coloured people, but surely much of that has been the result of the restrictions we have imposed upon them! We ought to approach the consideration of this question with an appreciation of the reaction that such restrictions have had upon these

people. If a boy were put into a confectionery shop and allowed to eat all the sweets he liked, he would soon learn the unwisdom of going to extremes.

All the arguments that have been advanced against the natives could be applied equally to many whites. Speakers on this side of the House, as well as the member for South Perth, have pointed out that the number of offenders amongst the coloured people is relatively small, and I feel that if the present discrimination were removed they would take a pride in themselves. I visited a hotel not far from Perth one Sunday. It was a very hot day and I thought I would like a drink, but the happenings at that hotel disgusted me. It was just a drinking-shop as full as a beehive and everyone was swilling beer and most had been doing so all day.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That could not have been done within the law.

Mr. ANDREW: That is so, but I am speaking of the bad habits of the whites. We have recently read of brawls in Perth and coloured people have not been involved in them. The newspaper reports numerous instances of the prosecution of drunken drivers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is too much loud conversation going on.

Mr. ANDREW: Then there are many of our people who go to drinking parties. A friend of mine who is on the land in the South-West informed me that he had given up going to Saturday night parties because there was too much drinking. We read of a man who was kicked to death in one of Melbourne's streets and that was not the worst part of the occurrence because there was a crowd of 200 people looking on at the time. Then there was the case of a woman who was killed for the sake of a few pounds and her body thrown in the river. We have juvenile thieves and vandals about Perth who are creating a problem and they are not natives. Members who have spoken against the Bill seem to have picked out the worst cases in order to condemn the natives, which is quite unfair.

Many of these people have proved themselves and shown of what they are capable. Let us consider the young children who are attending school. I have had a lot to do with school teachers and have found that the general consensus of opinion amongst them is that the coloured children attending country schools are just as intelligent and able as are the white. If they are given the opportunity, they will do just as well as the white children, notwithstanding the handicap of having made a late start.

Then we might consider a man like Captain Saunders who fought in New Guinea and proved himself an able officer. I might also mention Mr. Des Parfit, Mr. Don Blair and Mr. Groves of Sydney; and others could be cited. I should like to

quote another authority, the member for Narrogin, who spoke of having attended a conference where one of those present was a coloured man of slightly less than full blood and said that he had conducted himself well and spoken intelligently and would have been a credit amongst any body of men and could have taken a place in this Chamber with distinction. I mention these instances to indicate what these people can do if only they are given an opportunity.

There is one point which has almost been overlooked, though indirect reference has been made to it. If an individual is made to feel inferior, he has not the chance to forge ahead such as he would have if he were made to feel superior. If a native man has to apply for full citizenship, instead of obtaining the benefit as a right, he feels that he is being classified as being inferior to others and so he is being put behind scratch for a start. We should endeavour to build up the self-respect of these people and treat them on an equal basis. The dice should not be loaded against them. Admittedly some of these people would not be able to make good, but that would not matter so much if the majority could succeed, as I believe they would. This Bill aims at giving the coloured people just the opportunity they need. I consider that we should follow the line indicated by the member for South Perth. We should pass the Bill and if later we find that some parts need amending, we can consider making amendments next session, but we should not take a retrograde step by denying these people the benefits that this measure will confer.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [10.10]: As the hour is late, I do not intend to speak at length. I have listened to the various speeches that have been delivered on this Bill and some of them can only be described as twaddling sentiment. The member for Guildford-Midland, the member for Collie and the member for South Perth have had quite a lot to say, only to reveal that they have no idea of what is needed. I speak as one with some knowledge of the native question in the southern part of the State, having attended the school at Beverley when coloured children were in attendance and having been the member for Avon Valley for 24 years.

All Governments must accept responsibility for the position of the natives to-day, and I am satisfied that this Bill will achieve nothing towards uplifting these people. Many coloured women have come to me and asked me to exert my efforts in the direction of not permitting their husbands to obtain citizenship rights. The reason for this is the women's fear of the drink and the resultant upset that would occur in camp life. We ought to realise that these people are living a thousand years behind our times. The men are very unreliable from a labour point of view for

working on farms or anywhere else. Many of these men ask. "What right have you to interfere with our way of living?" The two greatest things in life to them are drink and gambling. For my part, I would say that they have a perfect right to gamble so long as white people do not form part of the school.

Mr. Brady: Does that apply to all?

Mr. MANN: It does in my area. During the shearing season, when money is plentiful, these boys make £8 to £10 a day. The result is that there is plenty of money in the gambling school at week-ends. Give them citizenship rights, which they do not want, and there will be nothing but strife from the fact that they will be providing themselves with barrels of beer. The natives cannot take liquor as a white man can; there seems to be some weakness in their constitution that makes it impossible for them to carry liquor. All that this Bill will do will be to give them the right to drink and gamble.

The Minister for Native Welfare: That is not so.

Mr. MANN: Well, what else will it do? It strikes me that this measure has been conceived as a result of pressure tactics on the part of the Press and propaganda on the part of the public, largely by people in the city who have not the faintest knowledge of the subject. The member for Kimberley knows what he is talking about when he speaks of the natives in the North. I do not profess to have any knowledge of the conditions in that part of the State, but I have a good knowledge of the conditions in the South, having lived amongst these people for so long. I am safe in saying that no half-caste in the district would say that I had not tried to help him.

What can the Bill accomplish? These people have the right now, Mr. Speaker, to live as you and I do, but will they work on the farms? No! One can no more rely on them to work consistently for even a fortnight than one could expect children to do so, yet they are paid £2 per day, plus their board. This is a matter that must be approached in a practical way, and in my view the old Act was right.

I feel that the element of the coloured population that has permits could be the basis of a new people, but the first question is that of housing. Members could see, in the district I represent, the miserable shacks in which these people live. The Government recently built two houses at York for the use of half-castes. I inspected them a couple of weeks ago, after a fortnight's occupation, and I say that these people have little idea what a house is for. Already the condition of one of these dwellings is not good. What half-castes need is instruction in how to keep their houses in order.

The Premier: Some white people are like that, too.

Mr. MANN: I agree, but I am trying to help the coloured people, and I say they must have supervision until they learn to live in houses. I understand that the Department of Native Affairs allotted these two houses to couples with the largest families, but I would not have done that. I would have picked out the best of the men and women to live in the houses, as an example for others to follow, and would have allowed the rest to continue living as they had before.

These people are by no means beyond hope. I have suggested at Beverley that an area of about 50 acres should be used for the construction of four cottages, the land to be fenced and the occupants to buy a few fowls and a cow each, which I think would be a real start towards bringing them to a new way of life; but nothing has so far been done. The houses at York are well built, with lavatories and bathrooms attached, but I know what will happen to them. That type of house is far too good for the coloured people at their present stage of development.

By that I mean no reflection on the half-castes, but in the pioneering days houses were built of mud bricks, and that is the type of dwelling which I think should be provided for these people to begin with. Much has been said of Alvan House, but that institution is simply giving the girls there false ideas of what to expect from life. The feeling of city dwellers is different from that of country people in regard to this question, but we in the country are being blamed for the misdeeds of the State. I suggest to the Government that if it believes the country people are not giving the coloured section of the population fair treatment, it should transfer all the half-castes and natives to the city area, house them at Midland Junction, Bassendean or Mt. Hawthorn, and put them to work in industry. It will then see how it gets on in handling the problem.

If we of the country areas have failed in handling the situation, the Government should try setting these people up in city life. My remarks represent the views of all political parties in my electorate—Liberal, Labour and Country Party. We believe that this Bill, if passed, will produce a shambles and make the condition of the people whom it seeks to help much worse than it is at present. The most pitiful aspect of the position is that once these natives are granted citizenship rights they will have to shoulder the full responsibilities of citizens, and adults though they may be, the vast majority of them are still only children, mentally.

Ninety per cent. of the half-castes in my district have the minds of children, as their actions demonstrate. They are

the product of millions of years of a certain way of life, and yet we expect overnight to raise them to our level. We must be careful that we do not enact legislation that will produce a terrible state of affairs for them. As the police in my area know, it is all eyewash about a half-caste, granted citizenship rights, having about three drinks in a hotel and no more.

If they are given the right to drink, they will drink and, under the new freedom, I fear to think what will happen to the unfortunate mothers and children. In many cases, they will simply starve. I went to school with these people; I have lived among them and know that I have the respect of those of them that live in my district, but I say this Bill will do nothing for them, if passed. It has been conceived through propaganda from the Press and various organisations and people in the city of Perth who are trying to do the impossible.

There is not a single clergyman in the country areas who is prepared, if he knows these people, to sponsor the Bill. I have discussed it with representatives of all denominations and without exception they realise what the position is. One of the greatest curses in Australia today is the city complex that exists, and I repeat that those who live in the metropolitan area have no idea at all of the state of affairs that exists in the outback. No one, with my point of view, could possibly support this measure because he would realise that its only effect would be to give these unfortunate people the right to drink.

That is their failing. It may be a failing of white men also, but in these primitive people it is far worse. Again I ask the Government to take a realistic view of this question and accept the point of view of those with a lifetime of experience in rural areas. Again I say to the Government that if it wants to destroy these people it need only give them liquor. The member for Stirling truly remarked that the Bill is before its time. Members may think that it is nonsense as we have waited so long for it, but I say that raising the status of our native people must of necessity be a slow process and that as a first step they should be given housing and taught hygiene. Then, if their children are sent to school, there may be some hope for them but without housing those children simply return from the school to live in squalor among hovels.

Mr. Brady: What about the thousands that have been educated in the missions? Are they properly housed?

Mr. MANN: The missions are doing a wonderful job. I was at Wandering recently, and saw what was happening there. The belief of the missions is right in this regard and they are training the boys and girls in the proper way. I feel that when they reach manhood and womanhood they could be the beginning of a new race.

It has been suggested that we should take the children from their mothers, but, as long as I am a member of this House, I will oppose any move in that direction. The coloured mother has as much, if not more, love for her children as has the average white woman. I repeat that the coloured woman has a tremendous amount of love for her children. It is no use denying that this is a party Bill, as not one member of the Government side of the House has spoken against it, but I would like the Minister to withdraw it and try, before the House meets next year, to arrange for members of this Chamber to get together and frame a Bill that would be of some help to these unfortunate people and give them a real chance of living a decent life.

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison) [10.25]: I have listened attentively to the various speakers who have voiced vastly different opinions. I support the Bill because I feel deeply sympathetic towards the aborigines and realise the problems with which they are faced. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I have had a lifetime of practical experience of these people. To begin with, I played with them in my childhood and I do not suppose I have ever been so happy since as I was in the days when I was playing with the little black boys.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I think these are your happiest days.

Mr. O'BRIEN: The Leader of the Opposition may have played with a little black boy, too.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I have.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Later, when we reached the age of going to school, I met the black children there and sat and played with them, just like the other boys. Throughout my life I have mixed with them from time to time, meeting them in practically all avenues of employment. I have met some of those men in the wool industry, employed as station hands, shearers and overseers. I could take members of this Chamber to a place known as Coodingnow Station which is controlled by near-whites, half-castes, who conduct it as a pastoral property and do their own shearing and everything.

I went there to class wool about ten years ago and found they had progressed favourably. Unfortunately, the land left to them by their father is not sufficient to support them all, and some of them have been obliged to go to Mt. Magnet, to the mining industry, the railways and various other occupations. Those boys have always pulled their weight a hundred per cent. and have been equal to white men. Some of them have citizenship rights, and of those some go to the hotel and others do not. When they do go there, they behave themselves, and furthermore they all have respectable homes with gardens and own utility trucks or cars.

There has been a lot of talk about the aborigines and their welfare, and members opposite have said what the natives did in their day, but we must have faith in the Government, and especially in the Minister, and then we will have faith in ourselves as representatives of these unfortunate people.

Mr. Oldfield: You have not faith in this Government, have you?

Mr. O'BRIEN: If I have not, who has?

Mr. Oldfield: We have none.

The Premier: You must have sense to have faith.

Mr. O'BRIEN: When the previous Government was in office, I have no doubt it did what it thought best to help the aborigines. But their best is not good enough; we can improve upon it if we agree to this amending Bill. It is a large measure and covers a lot of ground. To a certain extent I agree with a number of points that the Leader of the Opposition put forward. The hon. member mentioned the brawls in native camps; but that happened about 40 years ago before the natives were educated. They have become educated since then and today we are in a position where we must go further ahead. This is a big problem and liquor is one of the major factors to be considered.

This measure will enable a large number of people in my electorate to become citizens and those people will be given an opportunity of coming in to the towns. As a result we will need more police in Laverton, Wiluna and Yalgoo. We will not need these extra men because the natives are likely to cut up rough; far from it. There will be an occasional native, like the occasional white man, who will become a victim of liquor. It is unfortunate but it happens in all walks of life and with all nationalities. There are a number of new Australians in my electorate and, at times, some of them cut up rough. At present two policemen are stationed at Big Bell to handle them. I briefly want to refer to the Mt. Margaret Mission which is under the control of a man named Schenck who lives there with his family.

Hon. D. Brand: He has retired now.

Mr. O'BRIEN: That man and his family have faith in the natives and faith in their ability to do a job. As a result they have imbued the natives with a faith in themselves.

Mr. Manning: What will this Bill do for them?

Mr. O'BRIEN: This measure will be helpful to all natives. It is a pity some members in this Chamber did not have faith in themselves and in their electors. If they had they would endeavour to do something about this problem. I do not mean that they are not trying to do something, but they are going about it the

wrong way. By educating the children of these natives and sending them to the missions, we will make reliable citizens of them. At the mission stations they will meet their partners in life and that will have a considerable effect upon them.

We can train the half-castes and it is only a matter of facing up to the problem; the Mt. Margaret Mission is an example of what can be done. If we snatch babies away from their mothers' breasts and put them into homes, as one member of the Opposition suggested, we will not be overcoming the problem.

Mr. Manning: Who said that?

Mr. O'BRIEN: What happiness would there be in the lives of either the children or the mothers if that were done? Surely these people are entitled to a better share of the good things in life! As I said the liquor problem must be overcome. But surely we have faith in our Minister to control it. He has already told us that that aspect has not been overlooked. Therefore it rests with the Government and its Minister to see that that particular provision is enforced. For every social wrong there is a remedy; true liberty means equal liberty and these people are justly entitled to that.

I could quote a number of instances where I have met half-caste people throughout my electorate and I have found them to be good citizens. Many of them are married; their children attend the State or convent schools and are a credit to them. There was an article in the "Daily News" a few nights ago and it dealt with aborigines on the Murchison. It said that the natives in that area lived largely on biscuits, chocolates and huge quantities of soft drinks. That is so. These people work on the stations and when they come to town they, like other people, want to buy sweets. One often sees people buying chocolates or milk shakes when one walks down the street.

The Premier: The Leader of the Country Party, for instance.

Mr. O'BRIEN: It is also true that on some stations the food is not the best. Therefore I do not blame the natives, when they come into Meekatharra or any of the towns on the Murchison, for buying a food such as chocolate. It is good for them. The late Kingsford Smith claimed that it is good for a person to eat, so it must be. The thing that impresses me about the native is his loyalty. My brother and I went for a 130 mile trip in the back country of the Murchison and we had one native with us.

Had it not been for that native we would have perished because of the lack of water. That is only one instance but I could quote a number of them to show the loyalty that these natives have. If one treats a native well, he does not forget it. So why should we hesitate to give these people the right that is justly theirs? If we have

done nothing to wrong natives, why should we worry about them having a drink or two? I have seen natives with citizenship rights having a few drinks and they have cut up rough with some people; but I have never seen them do it with a man who has treated them justly.

Only last November I visited Mt. Magnet and as I stopped the car in front of the hotel a big upstanding native met me. He opened the door and said, "Are you Mr. O'Brien?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Are you the endorsed Labour candidate?" I said, "As a matter of fact, I am." He said, "My name is O'Brien, too." He told me that he had citizenship rights and we had a drink together. He did not cut up rough; he is a loyal type.

Mr. Lawrence: Was he on the roll?

Mr. O'BRIEN: He was on the roll and I think he voted for the Liberal candidate.

Mr. Lawrence: Then he is not worthy of the name of O'Brien.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Natives go to the pictures and why should they not? They pay their taxes; they pay full admission charges to pictures and they carry on just the same as any ordinary citizen. Surely they are entitled to what this Bill seeks to give them! We have listened to various speakers on this debate. The member for Moore made some remarks which were uncalled for; the member for Cottesloe spoke about babies and the Leader of the Country Party wanted to hold up progress for another 15 years or so; the member for Guildford-Midland faces facts and faces them correctly; the member for Roe is prepared to pull his weight, but in the wrong direction; and the member for South Perth made an excellent speech and I congratulate him.

On the Murchison there are 687 full-bloods and 1,162 other bloods, making a total of 1,849. I am not frightened to face up to the provisions of this Bill if it is passed because I know these people. I have summed up the position and, like the Leader of the Opposition, I have had a lifetime of practical experience in dealing with the natives. I know that the Leader of the Opposition has had the experience; I can tell that from the way he speaks. But we must have faith in our Government, in our Minister and, above all, in ourselves as members of Parliament.

Mr. Manning: Put your faith in the missions.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Yes, if we have faith in the missions and faith in ourselves, the native problem will be solved and we will cop the lot.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [10.45]: A Bill of this nature purporting to deal with human rights must of necessity command the attention of all the members of this

House. I think it is for that reason that members have deliberated at length on the measure. In introducing the Bill the Minister made a speech that had as its theme the uplift of the native community in Western Australia. The Minister and I are in complete accord in those sentiments.

The Bill, with its two principles—one to give half-bloods and those of lesser blood the right to consume alcoholic liquor and the right to vote at parliamentary elections—is not, I think, the way to begin to uplift the native community in Western Australia. Whenever Europeans have migrated to countries where coloured people are the normal inhabitants, difficulties have arisen with regard to assimilation.

At the time when the white people were colonising Africa, Rudyard Kipling wrote very considerably concerning the difficulties of the native races. I think one of his masterpieces was a poem called "The White Man's Burden." I do not believe that the last line aptly describes the coloured people. He wrote as follows:—

Take up the white man's burden—  
Send forth the best ye breed;  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives need;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild;  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
Half devil and half child.

The simile in his last line may not apply to our way of thinking and to our civilisation. Our natives have not been bred and born in an environment of civilisation which the European had enjoyed, and I believe it was for that purpose that Rudyard Kipling used the words he did in the last line of the first verse of his poem. I believe the churches and their various missions have played the greatest part in educating our native people to a standard by which they may accept the responsibilities of our civilisation. I believe, too, that to give those native people all at once the two things which this Bill provides and which I have mentioned, without education in the way to use them, would be a very inadvisable step.

Like the Leader of the Country Party, I believe that the only way we will successfully deal with this problem is over a period of years. During its six years of office, the previous Government contributed in no small measure towards this end. The establishment of Alvan House for girls and McDonald House for boys was an excellent move. We have in our community some very highly respected citizens of native blood. I was born and bred in the Vasse district. During most of my life I have lived in the country districts of the State and accordingly have had some experience with the aborigines of Western Australia.



A lot has been said about the crimes that have been committed, on the one hand by the native population and on the other by the white population. Those people of our own blood have been trained in the correct way of accepting the responsibility which they have to shoulder under our existing system. On the other hand, most of the natives have not had this experience and training, and it is only by this training, in my opinion, that they will be fitted to do so. I would like to repeat here that a number of them have fitted themselves to accept this responsibility, and have accepted it with very great credit to themselves and to people of their own blood.

But to give them an open go—to use that for want of a better term—when they have not been trained, is, I feel, similar to an adult placing a loaded rifle in the hands of a child; the child would know nothing of the danger attached to it and therefore the consequences would be very serious indeed. I believe too that the Government could achieve its end by administration and not legislation; by closer co-operation through the Education Department and the churches, who, I repeat, through their missions have done and are still doing a wonderful job of work in uplifting the standard of our aborigines.

The Minister for Labour: They have been doing that for years.

Mr. BOVELL: I am not denying that fact. The training is very necessary from early childhood. The reason I have spoken is that I do not wish to cast a silent vote on this measure. In view of the circumstances and the grave risk which, in my opinion, will be taken by the passing of this legislation, I—together with the member for Avon Valley and others—would implore the Minister to give some consideration to the matter during the recess and see if a more satisfactory measure cannot be evolved which would prove a greater uplift to the native race of this State. I will oppose the second reading of the Bill. The two main clauses in it dealing with the provision of alcoholic liquor and the provision for the right to vote at parliamentary elections are too dangerous to be given to the uninitiated and uneducated in those matters.

I do not want to indulge in unnecessary repetition, but I repeat that there are those of coloured blood in our community who have obtained citizenship by a process which may be considered slow and inadequate, but they are discharging those rights to their credit. I believe that this measure is too dangerous. It is like giving a child a loaded gun about which he knows nothing. I will vote against the second reading if the Minister cannot be persuaded to withdraw the Bill which action would, I think, be in the very best interests of the native people of the State.

HON A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [10.55]: I do not want to cast a silent vote on this Bill and I propose to support it. I think quite a lot of good can be done by bringing a very old Act up to date as it relates to natives. Undoubtedly our native population presents the State with a very serious problem. I think it is mainly an economic problem and there is no doubt that given equal opportunity a portion of the natives would probably be able to take similar positions in the community as do our own people from the homeland or those from the European countries. But until they have been given those opportunities, of course, they are not able to take advantage of them.

Having that in view, when I was a member of a previous Government I was always pleased when the Government started off on what I considered was the right step to bring a better way of life to the native population. I think the previous Government can take some credit for having selected probably one of the most outstanding men for the job in Mr. Middleton. He has certainly shown keenness in his work and his sympathy with all those with whom he has had to deal. I think we can also claim some credit for Sir Ross McDonald having laid down a new policy, which was virtually a welfare policy, to assist these natives.

The previous Government provided more money for this purpose than has ever been made available before. I am a little disappointed that the present Government has not gone further than it has. Out of an increased revenue expenditure of £4,500,000 it can only find a miserable £40,000 for native welfare. I do not think the Government is doing as much as it might for the natives. After all, what chance have the natives of enjoying citizenship rights if they are not given the opportunity in life to habilitate themselves?

It is well known that after the war when a number of youngsters were taken away from a routine way of life an immense Commonwealth scheme had to be put into force to rehabilitate these men who had to abandon their careers and give up their youthful lives to matters of war. That scheme was very successful. It was necessary to train them according to their inclinations and the ability they showed. Some entered trades; and others, professions. Some went in for arts; and others took up nursing, and a hundred and one other vocations. Some such scheme as that will have to be brought into being before our native people can hope to enjoy a fair share of the wealth of this State.

There are many Acts in which there is discrimination against natives, and which ought to be repealed, or dealt with in some way. There is the Workers' Compensation Act, for instance. I see no reason why a native should be distinguished under that. The Licensing Act could be brought up to

date, and there are other measures to which consideration should be given. The Electoral Act is one of them. I am not competent to say what standard of education any citizen should attain before being entitled to vote; but there ought to be no discrimination on account of colour. There are many white people who are probably not sufficiently capable of exercising proper judgment, and the same would apply to the native race.

I agree with the Minister that this Bill is a step forward. I do not like some of its provisions, but I favour others. They can all be dealt with more aptly in Committee. I would sooner have seen a new Act than this attempt to amend a very old piece of legislation and bring that Act up to date in a way that is not altogether satisfactory.

The Minister for Native Affairs: I will explain the reason later.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister may have a reason. Again I would like to point out that it is extremely difficult for us who have no intimate knowledge of our native people to know what is the best way to go about this matter. We all have our own ideas. There have been a number of Royal Commissions, and I have read the reports furnished by Mr. Moseley, Mr. Bateman, and others. But they dealt with specific problems. It would probably have been wise for the Government to institute an inquiry, the results of which could have been submitted to the House. The report would have been very informative to a man like myself who, unlike the Leader of the Opposition or the member for Kimberley, has no intimate knowledge of these natives.

Various opinions have been expressed, and I cannot exercise proper judgment on what has been said in this House, because I have had no personal experience. I do not know what would be the result of natives being given the right to obtain alcohol. I would not be competent to judge. We do know that the systems of white races and of other races are susceptible to certain drugs. For instance, the white man is peculiarly subject to the effects of opium. We know that the Chinese have taken opium for hundreds of years. The majority of Chinese can use it all their lives without becoming depraved; but we know that to the white man opium is absolutely deadly, and he becomes an addict almost immediately and a complete wreck within a very short time. I use that just as an example.

We know that the Chinese have a great resistance to typhoid and certain other diseases that the white races have not. Again, many native races who have not been subject to illnesses such as measles are very much affected by those diseases. The white race has been closely associated with alcohol for hundreds of thousands of years, and there is not the slightest doubt that to some extent the

white man's system has become accustomed to its use, and it does not have the same effect on him as it might have on members of a race not accustomed to it. There again, that is a matter of study for those who have the opportunity of investigating such aspects. I am not capable of expressing an opinion on the effect of alcohol on our native race, and I would like to have had a more expert opinion before coming to a decision on the matter. However, it is not available.

I discussed this problem with Mrs. Gordon Walker when she was here. At that time, her husband was a Minister of the British Government. She was born and brought up in the West Indies, where there are a great many people of the African race. They have largely overcome the difficulties with which we are faced, and she told me that the only problem confronting the people there was not the difference in race but an economic one. She said the difference between the various people was purely economic. I suggest that is the position here. If people had equal advantages, I do not think there would be any distinction; but while there is a big economic difference in the conditions of the natives and ourselves, it is difficult for people of both races to associate and for the natives to become assimilated. I propose to support the second reading, and will discuss the various clauses in Committee.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [11.8]: I think all members are in agreement with the purpose of the Bill, although the Opposition prefers to see improvements made more slowly. The member for Vasse quoted Kipling. I think I could aptly quote Robbie Burns's phrase, "Man's inhumanity to man." I feel that some members of the Opposition are a little inclined that way.

We have heard something about the names these coloured people are called. I do not think of them as natives or aborigines. I think of them as being the original people of this country. What right have we to say what they should be called?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They could call themselves what they like.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I am referring to comments concerning what they should be called. Questions have been asked as to why this should be termed an aborigines welfare Bill, and why we should use the term "aborigines" instead of "natives." I say they are the original people of this country upon whom the white people have imposed and whom they have degraded. The sooner we move away from that situation, the better.

I am pleased to see that about 33 sections of the old Act are to be repealed, that is some advancement. I have mixed quite a lot with natives, not only here but

in other countries; but this is the only place in which I have seen them in such a position as that in which they exist in Western Australia. The member for Narrogin would know that natives in Africa work alongside white men and drink with them if they want to. They have their own vote alongside the white men. There are no restrictions on them. Why should there be restrictions here? The original Australians are just as much entitled to be treated in the same way as are the original inhabitants of Africa and other countries.

The member for Mt. Lawley said there were some countries where the natives were not allowed to indulge in alcohol, but I have yet to know of those countries. I have always found the menfolk of the Australian aborigines to be good workers and mates. I have found them to be better mates, in times of danger, than some white men. We saw recently in the paper that an individual, because his colour was not the same as ours, was refused admittance to a hotel.

These men have gone and fought for us. They have offered to lay down their lives and be used for cannon fodder, so we should not restrict their activities in other ways. With regard to their working capabilities, well, we get drones in every hive. We find them amongst the Australians, Britishers and others, and we will find them among the original Australians.

The percentage of drones amongst the aborigines will not be greater than that amongst other races. I have seen these fellows working on gold mines at Mt. Margaret, and they did a good job. They can work the battery and treat the gold just as well as it is done on the Golden Mile. The work at Mt. Margaret is all done by native labour. It has been said that we are jumping too far ahead with this legislation, but I think the time is due for its introduction.

The Government is doing what it thinks is right, and probably the Opposition, if it had remained on this side of the House, would have done more for the natives during this session. The member for Vasse said he will oppose the second reading. This means that he does not want to see any advancements made in this matter, but wants it to remain static. We have heard a lot of talk as to how these people will conduct themselves if they are allowed to have liquor.

I am not a drunkard, but I have had a drink alongside these fellows in hotels in Africa, and I have not seen any obstreperous natives putting on a desperate show. I have, however, seen white men act in this way on many occasions. If the aborigines do not want liquor, they will not have it, and no one will force another person, whether he is black, brown or brindle, to go into a public house if he does not want a drink. When we en-

deavour to prevent an individual from getting something he always tries to get that very thing. If the Bill is passed, instead of the natives drinking this poison-wine, which we hear so much about—and white men are prosecuted for supplying it—they might have a glass of beer which possibly would be better for them.

I was much surprised on many occasions to find these original Australians going through the garbage tins in the back lanes of Kalgoorlie. If the police saw them they would chase them out into the bush. How would we like to live in a country which was wholly populated and governed by black people, and in which we had to look in garbage tins for food? We should not treat any human being in that way, and these people are just as human as we are.

Incidentally, I have always found them to be good individuals, not only to work with, but to fight with, and I am sure many members of the Opposition will agree with me when I say that. They have seen the native regiments of other countries go into action, and they know they have done as good a job as ours. We know of some places where the mothers refuse to let their children attend the school if the black children, or children of a colour other than their own, go there. What sort of an outlook is that?

We are all born with the same type of brain. The native brain can be cultivated just as ours can. I consider it is most unfair to adopt that attitude. In Africa the black fellow is permitted to travel on the same train as the white man. He has no restriction on him. I do not know whether there is a restriction on him with regard to voting. I do not agree with such a restriction because I think they are entitled to all the amenities and privileges that I enjoy.

Because I was not born in Australia members need not think I believe they are entitled to more privileges than I am, or an original Australian is. I do not know of any country in the world where the natives are kept as far back as they are in Australia. We cannot say they are not clever, because one of the greatest artists in the world is a native. Some of the great pugilists have been natives and a girl from the South-West of this State is at present being taught to become a great vocalist. In addition, natives take part in other sporting activities. If the opportunity is given to them they will probably step ahead of the white man. May be that is the fear.

Perhaps we fear that if we educate the black man or the asiatic he will eventually rule the world and swamp out the white races. I do not believe in that as I think everyone should have equal opportunity in this country. Not long ago there came to me a native with whom I worked in the camel paddock 25 years ago and

who missed a patch of gold which has recently been discovered. He told me he could not get a home in Maylands and pitched his camp on a block of ground about 60 yards away from a house but the people there had him removed from the land although he had a wife and six children.

Mr. Oldfield: That is not right. He was not removed from the land.

Mr. McCULLOCH: He was. The people concerned said his sanitary convenience was not in order and applied to the Health Department and he was removed from the block.

Mr. Oldfield: He was not removed until such time as the Housing Commission supplied him with a house.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Had they been able to do so they would have put him off the block before he obtained a house. He could not get a home—

Mr. Oldfield: Nor could a lot of white people.

Mr. McCULLOCH: He was evicted from his home in East Perth and had to go somewhere to build a cubby for himself, his wife and family, but when they had been settled there for a week or two the white people nearby wanted him removed from the block. He told me they made application to the Health Department and the Perth Road Board to have him removed and he was eventually moved from the block although he is working alongside white men in this country today.

Mr. Oldfield: He was not removed until he was given a home.

Mr. McCULLOCH: These people should have as much right to obtain homes from the State Housing Commission as the white man has. They are civilised individuals working and earning their wages alongside white men. They should have the right to a home just the same as any other individual. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

On motion by Mr. Nalder, debate adjourned.

#### **BILLS (6)—RETURNED.**

- 1, Electricity Act Amendment.  
With amendments.
- 2, Royal Visit, 1954, Special Holiday.
- 3, Diseased Coconut.
- 4, Closer Settlement Act Amendment.
- 5, Hairdressers Registration Act Amendment.
- 6, Kwinana Road District.  
Without amendment.

#### **BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

Received from the Council and, on motion by Mr. McCulloch, read a first time.

*House adjourned at 11.27 p.m.*

## **Legislative Council**

Friday, 4th December, 1953.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### **QUESTIONS.**

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT.**

*As to Assistance to Physically Handicapped Adults.*

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Chief Secretary:

Will he inform the House the number of physically handicapped adults now receiving unemployment assistance?