Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 28th October, 1958.

CONTENTS.

	Page
WORKERS' COMPENSATION :	
Accuracy of figures, personal explanation	1796
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Collie coal, price to Government, etc.	1797
Taxation valuations, increases and decreases	1797
Water rates—	
Charges for excess throughout Western Australia	1797
Collection in outer metropolitan towns	1802
Railways Royal Commissioner, date of appointment and total cost of inquiries	1798
Child welfare, "closed institution" for boys at Guildford	1798
Tone River blocks, applications received and land available	1799
State Shipping Service, award conditions, crew employed, wages paid, etc.	1799
Specialist teachers, method of promotion	1799
Light Horse memorial, re-erection in Australia	1800
Serpentine dam, method of construction	1800
Collie water supplies, allowance for sewerage	1800
Agricultural Council meeting, resolution re wool	1800
Vehicular traffic bridges, responsibility for maintenance and replacements	1800
Rural and Industries Bank, new money, total advanced, and assistance to settlers	1801
True case, wording of original Rule 61 (b)	1801
Three Springs school, septic tank system	1801
Public Works Department, new office accommodation	1801
Leighton Surf Life Saving Club, uncertainty of future	1801
Geraldton High School, commencement of additions and alterations	1802
Wundowie charcoal iron industry, purchase of local and imported saws	1802
Warrants of execution, number issued, applications for relief, etc.	1802
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE :	
Close of session, target date and Bills to be introduced	1803
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, Melbourne paper's reference to defeat	1803
True case, tabling of papers, books, records, etc.	1803
Three Springs school, septic tank system	1803
Charcoal iron industry, investigation by Federal Treasury official	1804
Workers' compensation, figures quoted by the hon. member for Nedlands	1804
TRANSPORT BOARD :	
Issue of licences	1804

CONTENTS—*continued.*

	Page
ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1958-59, Com. of Supply, general debate :	
Speakers on financial policy—	
Mr. I. W. Manning	1817
Mr. Bovell	1819
Mr. Hall	1821
Mr. Ross Hutchinson	1824
Mr. Evans	1827
Mr. Owen	1829
BILLS :	
Long Service Leave, Council's amendments	1805
Licensing Act Amendment, 3r.	1805
Cancer Council of Western Australia, report	1805
Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment—	
2r.	1805
Com., report	1807
City of Perth Parking Facilities Act Amendment, 2r.	1807
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment,	
2r. 1807,	1831
Com.	1838
Wheat Industry Stabilisation—	
2r.	1815
Message	1817
Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment (Continuance)—	
2r.	1816
Message	1817

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

WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

Accuracy of Figures—Personal Explanation.

Mr. COURT: Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a personal explanation. On Thursday afternoon, when speaking to the second reading of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill, I quoted the figure of £2,000,000 as being the premiums paid for workers' compensation during the year ended the 30th June, 1958. That figure was seriously challenged by interjection. At the time I was only prepared to say that the figure of £2,000,000 was an approximate one, because that was the figure that my research indicated when I was preparing my notes for the second reading speech.

Over the week-end I had the opportunity to do further research, and to get the official figures; and, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to state that the official figure is £2,026,613, divided as follows:—

	£
All approved insurers for the year ended 30th June, 1958	1,913,169
Self insurers	113,444
Total	£2,026,613

Mr. Johnson: What is the source of that information?

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

COLLIE COAL.

Price to Government, etc.

1. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What is the lowest price at which Collie coal has been offered to the Government since the 1st January, 1953, regardless of quantity and source?

(2) When was this price offered and by which company?

(3) What would have been the annual saving to State instrumentalities had the offer been accepted?

Mr. MOIR replied:

(1) As far as our records show, 35s. per ton for open-cut coal.

(2) On the 23rd July, 1957, by the Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. This offer was not necessarily, however, for the full requirements of the Government instrumentalities.

(3) Assuming that the company had supplied full requirements, approximately £680,000. The purchase of all open-cut coal for Government requirements would have had ruinous effect upon the township and district of Collie, as it would have put many existing business firms out of operation because of the widespread unemployment which would have developed.

TAXATION VALUATIONS.

Increases and Decreases.

2. Mr. BOVELL asked the Treasurer:

(1) In what towns and districts have taxation valuations for land tax purposes been increased during the separate years ended the 30th June, 1957 and 1958?

(2) What is the percentage increase of such valuations in each town and district affected?

(3) Were there any decreases in valuations? If so, what are the details?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1), (2) and (3) Revaluation 1956 for the year ended the 30th June, 1957—

Country Town.		Percentage.
Amery—decrease	—	9
Barragup	+	335
Beverley	+	32
Boscabel		nil
Broome	+	99
Busselton (Sheets 1 and 4)	+	9
Carnarvon	+	73
Derby	+	432
Dowerin	+	188
Dunsborough	+	912
Ejanding	+	8
Geraldton	+	2
Jarrahdale	+	29
Katanning	+	167
Kellerberrin	+	261
Keysbrook	+	97
Kojonup	+	237
Mandurah	+	46
Manmanning	+	11
Minnivale	+	90
Mundijong	+	26
Muradup	+	58
Onslow	+	264
Port Hedland	+	1,129
Quindalup	+	1,992
Roebourne	+	793
Serpentine	+	31
Vasse	+	146
Wonnerup	+	1,124
Wyndham	+	1,173

Rural District.		Percentage.
Capel Road Board	+	398
Dandarragan Road Board	+	281
Mandurah Road Board	+	60
Murray Road Board	+	20
Mullewa Road Board	+	59
West Arthur Road Board	+	49

Revaluation 1957 for the year ended the 30th June, 1958—

Country Town.		Percentage.
Arrino	+	81½
Bindi Bindi	+	50
Bruce Rock	+	86½
Coomberdale	+	58
Esperance	+	1,500
Lake Grace	+	205
Merredin	+	124
Miling	+	234
Newdegate	+	91
Pingelly	+	12
Three Springs	+	176
Watheroo	+	40
West Murray	+	325

Rural District.		Percentage.
Albany Road Board	+	171
Augusta-Margaret River Road Board	+	12
Collie Road Board	+	80
Corrigin Road Board	+	139
Dalwallinu Road Board—decrease	—	5
Esperance Road Board	+	521
Gnowangerup Road Board	+	34
Irwin Road Board	+	3
Pingelly Road Board	+	2
Williams Road Board	+	155

WATER RATES.

Charges for Excess Throughout Western Australia.

3. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

What are the respective charges in each district throughout the State for excess water?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

Assuming the question refers to domestic supplies, the charges are as set out hereunder, subject to payment of accrued rates and other charges within the periods prescribed in the respective by-laws:

(a) Metropolitan area—1s. 9d. per thousand gallons if rates paid by the 30th November; otherwise 2s. per thousand gallons.

(b) Country districts:—

Serpentine, Roebourne—1s. 6d. per thousand gallons.

Collie—First 20,000 gallons @ 1s. 6d. Balance @ 1s. 3d. per thousand gallons.

Boyup Brook, Bridgetown, Pemberton, Brunswick Junction, Pinjarra, Waroona, Yarloop, Brookton, Wagin, Darlington, Glen Forrest, Mahogany Creek, Parkerville, Kalamunda, Mundaring, Stoneville, Mt. Helena, Sawyer's Valley, Chidlow, Wooroloo, Wundowie, Baker's Hill, Derby and Wittenoom—2s. per thousand gallons.

Margaret River, Katanning, Narrogin, Pingelly, Toodyay and York—2s. 6d. per thousand gallons.

Albany—First 5,000 gallons @ 2s. 6d. Balance @ 2s. per thousand gallons.

Northam—First 10,000 gallons @ 2s. 6d. Balance @ 2s. per thousand gallons.

Beverley—2s. 9d. per thousand gallons.

Grass Valley, Meckering, Cunderdin, Tammin, Kellerberrin, Baandee, Shackleton, Hines Hill, Doodlakine, Nangeenan, Merredin, Burracoppin, Carrabin, Walgoolan, Bodallin, Noongaar, Moorine Rock—First 10,000 gallons @ 2s. 9d. Balance @ 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons.

Cranbrook, Mt. Barker, Tambellup, Manjimup, Allanson, Carnamah, Cue-Day Dawn, Dalwallinu, Geraldton, Meekatharra, Mingenew, Moora, Morawa, Mt. Magnet, Three Springs, Wongan Hills, Dwellingup, Leonora, Norseman, Boddington, Dumbleyung, Gnowangerup, Kojonup, Kulin, Lake Grace, Quairading, Dangin, Williams, Lake Brown, Barbalin, Kununoppin, Trayning, Gabbin, Mandiga, Bencubbin, Welbungin, Mukinbudin, Belka, Goomalling, Kondinin, Narembeen, Bruce Rock, Nukarni, Nokaning, Nungarin, Carnarvon, Onslow and Pt. Hedland—3s. per thousand gallons.

Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Bullfinch, Coolgardie, Marvel Loch, Southern Cross and Westonia—First 5,000 gallons @ 3s. Balance @ 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons.

Mullewa and Pithara—4s. per thousand gallons.

(c) Property rated as country land—4s. per thousand gallons.

RAILWAYS ROYAL COMMISSIONER.

Date of Appointment and Total Cost of Inquiries.

4. Mr. BRAND asked the Premier:

(1) On what date was Mr. A. G. Smith, S.M., appointed a Royal Commissioner to inquire into the Railway Department?

(2) What has been the total cost to the State of the inquiries to date as to—

(a) Mr. Smith's salary;

(b) salary of staff assisting, both legal staff and otherwise;

(c) fares, travelling expenses, etc.;

(d) office accommodation;

(e) other?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) The 19th June, 1957.

(2) (a) £4,678.

(b) £4,676.

(c) £2,567.

(d) Nil.

(e) £20.

CHILD WELFARE.

"Closed Institution" for Boys at Guildford.

5. Mr. CROMMELIN asked the Minister for Child Welfare:

(1) When is it anticipated the new institution for boys will be completed at Guildford?

(2) What is the estimated cost?

(3) Will this building be what is known as a "closed institution"?

(4) Can it be assumed that escape from this building will be extremely difficult?

(5) What maximum number of boys will be able to be kept there?

(6) What staff will be required to maintain the institution in the manner required?

(7) What is the estimated annual cost of running the institution?

(8) Who will bear this annual cost and by what method will it be financed?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) Early in 1960.

(2) £130,000.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

(5) 33.

(6) 19.

(7) £40,000.

(8) Child Welfare Department, Consolidated Revenue.

TONE RIVER BLOCKS.

Applications Received and Land Available.

6. Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Referring to the blocks of land recently made available for selection at Tone River, can he say how many applications have been received from—

(a) local residents;

(b) applicants other than local residents living in Western Australia;

(c) Eastern States applicants?

(2) How much more land at Tone River is likely to become available in the near future?

Mr. HAWKE (for Mr. Kelly) replied:

(1) (a) 24.

(b) 3.

(c) 72.

(2) An area of 20,522 acres still remains unalienated in the Tone River subdivision. The Forests Department has arranged for four mills to operate over this area, and it is anticipated that cutting will proceed at a rate that will permit two blocks of approximately 1,600 acres each to be released per annum, subject to cutting and haulage conditions being satisfactory.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

Award Conditions, Crew Employed, Wages Paid, etc.

7. Mr. CROMMELIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Supply and Shipping:

(1) What are the award conditions under which officers and other members of the crew of State ships are employed?

(2) What were the average numbers of—

(a) officers;

(b) crew other than officers

employed on State ships for each of the years ended the 30th June, 1956, 1957, and 1958?

(3) Is overtime paid to officers and crew other than officers?

(4) What amount of wages excluding overtime was paid to officers of State ships and what amount of overtime was paid to them for each of the years ended the 30th June, 1956, 1957 and 1958?

(5) What amount of wages excluding overtime was paid to the crews other than officers of State ships, and what amount of overtime was paid to them for each of the years ended the 30th June, 1956, 1957 and 1958?

Mr. BRADY replied:

(1) The various maritime awards of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, viz.:

Merchant Service Seagoing Masters' Award of 1956.

Merchant Service (Seagoing) of 1952 (as amended).

Marine Engineers' Award of 1952 (as amended).

Marine Radio Officers' Award of 1950 (as amended).

Marine Stewards' Agreement of 1951 (as amended).

Marine Cooks' Award of 1950 (as amended).

The Seamen's Award of 1955 (as amended).

Shipwrights' (Seagoing) Award of 1950 (as amended).

As regards cattlemen, these crew members are covered by an industrial agreement registered in the State Arbitration Court.

(2) Masters and Officers (including chartered vessel)—

(a) 1955-56—80.
1956-57—96.
1957-58—96.

(b) Crews (including chartered vessel)—
1955-56—223.
1956-57—272.
1957-58—255.

(3) Yes.

(4) Masters and Officers (chartered vessel included)—

	Wages.	Overtime.
	£	£
1955-56	84,600	46,400
1956-57	108,750	59,350
1957-58	110,440	61,050

(Inclusive of all leave payments.)

(5) Crews (chartered vessel included)—

	Wages.	Overtime.*
	£	£
1955-56	163,700	121,500
1956-57	200,000	159,000
1957-58	183,500	133,100

(Inclusive of all leave payments.)

* Includes "overtime" payments to crew for stevedoring work North-West ports.

SPECIALIST TEACHERS.

Method of Promotion.

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

(1) Is it a fact that teacher specialists, in order to seek promotion, must forgo their specialist field to become headmasters?

(2) If so, does this not mean that certain specialists who, in the interests of sound staffing, should be retained in their fields, will be lost to the profession in their specialist capacity?

(3) In order that such teachers may be retained in their specialist fields, does he feel that consideration should be given to formulating a plan or a promotion scale which would serve this particular purpose?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) Only if they desire promotion to headmastership.

(2) It could.

(3) No.

LIGHT HORSE MEMORIAL.

Re-erection in Australia.

9. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Light Horse Memorial, erected in the Middle East, and pulled down by Egyptians during the recent disturbances, been located?

(2) If so, will he undertake to discuss ways and means with the R.S.L., the Federal Government and overseas shipping companies, of getting the memorial released and shipped back to Australia?

(3) Has the matter of re-erecting the memorial been agreed to by the R.S.L. of Australia?

(4) If so, is the site, as selected, known as Apex Drive, Albany?

(5) Bearing in mind the tourist potential to this State, will he endeavour to have the matter expedited?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) The latest information indicates that the damage to the memorial is not very extensive and that the memorial is safely stored in an Eygptian Government building.

(2) The league is hopeful that arrangements can be made by negotiation between the Commonwealth and Egyptian Governments for the memorial to be released and shipped to Western Australia.

(3) To the best of my knowledge, the national executive of the Returned Servicemen's League has agreed that the memorial should be re-erected at Albany, Western Australia. The New Zealand kindred association agrees to this proposal.

(4) The Apex Drive site has been suggested, but no firm decision has yet been arrived at.

(5) Every effort is being made by the league to expedite this matter.

SERPENTINE DAM.

Method of Construction.

10. Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is the construction of the Serpentine Dam or any associated work to be done by contract after the calling of tenders, or is it all to be done by the day-labour system?

(2) If it is to be done by day labour, will it be necessary for the Government to purchase any new large earth-moving machinery?

(3) If so, what items will have to be purchased and what is the estimated cost?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) By day labour.

(2) Yes.

(3) This has not yet been determined.

COLLIE WATER SUPPLIES.

Allowance for Sewerage.

11. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

What quantity of water is allowed for sewerage in Collie over and above the previous allowance for domestic purposes before the sewerage installation?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

A dwelling rated under the provisions of the Country Towns Sewerage Act is granted an allowance of 5,000 gallons of water per annum for flushing purposes in respect of each water closet on the premises.

AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING.

Resolution Re Wool.

12. Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is there a report in existence of the proceedings of the recent Agricultural Council meeting?

(2) If so, will he make it available to members of this House?

(3) If not, will he make an early statement setting out what happened at the council in connection with the resolution re wool, submitted by him as a result of a decision of this House?

Mr. HAWKE (for Mr. Kelly) replied:

(1) A draft printer's proof has been received.

(2) The minutes of meetings of the Agricultural Council are confidential.

(3) Yes.

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC BRIDGES.

Responsibility for Maintenance and Replacements.

13. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Treasurer:

What Government, or semi-Government department, is responsible for the maintenance and replacement of vehicular traffic bridges over this State's railway lines?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

Generally the Railway Department is responsible for the substructure up to, and including, the beams; and the local authority concerned is responsible for that portion above the beams.

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK.

New Money, Total Advanced, and Assistance to Settlers.

14. Mr. HEARMAN asked the Treasurer:

(1) How much new money has been made available to the agency section of the Rural and Industries Bank since his Government took office?

(2) What is the total amount of money advanced through the agency section?

(3) What assistance, if any, is available to new settlers who are not under the war service land settlement from Government sources for the purchase of stock, machinery, fertiliser, etc.?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) £2,924,560.

(2) £3,272,223.

(3) Fertiliser is available to settlers under the Esperance Plains Development Scheme.

TRUE CASE.

Wording of Original Rule 61 (b).

15. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Labour:

Will he read to the House the original Rule 61 (b) of the Collie Miners' Union, as published in 1955, or if it has been renumbered as the result of the deletion of Rule 61 (a) on the 18th June, 1957, will he read to the House Rule 61 (a) as it stands at present?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

As I am fearful of again being wrongly accused by the hon. member of malicious misrepresentation, and in view of his apparent comprehensive knowledge of the rules referred to, as well as for the purpose of greater accuracy, it is suggested that the hon. member read the rule himself.

THREE SPRINGS SCHOOL.

Septic Tank System.

16. Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What is the estimated cost of installing a septic tank system at Three Springs State school?

(2) Has the local parents and citizens' association made any offer to assist to install the system? If so, what is the extent of the offer?

(3) Has he accepted the offer? If not, why not?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) An estimate has not yet been prepared.

(2) Yes, to—

(a) dig the French drains and cart stone for same;

(b) fill in the drains with the stone and cover same;

(c) supply tank stand and a tank with a capacity of 1,000 gallons;

(d) supply any piping necessary and dig trenches for same;

(e) cart from the railway any materials, free of cost to the department.

(3) No. There are no funds available during the present financial year.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

New Office Accommodation.

17. Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is work proceeding at present on the provision of new office accommodation or the rearrangement of existing office accommodation at the head office of the Public Works Department?

(2) If so, what officers are to be accommodated in the section on which work is proceeding?

(3) What is the nature of the work?

(4) How much is it to cost?

(5) When did work commence and when will it be completed?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The Goldfields Water Supply Branch and some officers of the architectural, land resumption and administrative divisions of the Public Works Department.

(3) Alterations, renovations and minor extensions consequent upon the vacation of portion of the Barracks building by the Transport Board and reallocation and provision of improved office accommodation for the Public Works Department.

(4) £8,045.

(5) Commenced on the 15th September, 1958. Date for completion—the end of December, 1958.

LEIGHTON SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB.

Uncertainty of Future.

18. Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that the members of the Leighton Surf Life Saving Club are very incensed at not being told what is going to happen to them?

(2) Is he also aware that they have given 23 years of faithful public service to the bathing public of Western Australia?

(3) Is he further aware that the Port Beach cannot possibly ever rival Leighton Beach either in expanse of beach, or public transport, which is catered for by Perth-Fremantle railway, Perth-Fremantle Metropolitan Transport Trust services, plus

Fremantle-Leighton service which connects practically the entire public transport system of the metropolitan area?

(4) Will he find out and inform the Leighton Surf Life Saving Club what is going to happen to it?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) It is known that members of the Leighton Surf Life Saving Club are very concerned about the matter.

(2) Yes; they have rendered very valuable service, for which they are to be commended.

(3) The advantages of Leighton Beach are undoubted; but unfortunately progressive industrial development in the area now makes it necessary for the Railway Department to utilise its land for the provision of certain facilities; and, although every effort is being made to ensure that the land requirements are kept to a minimum so that as much as possible of the beach can be preserved, the necessary works cannot be carried out without affecting the use of the beach to some extent.

(4) The club will be informed of the degree of unavoidable encroachment as soon as the matter is finalised.

WATER RATES.

Collection in Outer Metropolitan Towns.

19. Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Would he give consideration to having water rates collected at outer metropolitan towns similar to the system operating for the collection of electric light accounts by the State Electricity Commission?

(2) If "yes" is the answer to No. (1) could any local authority be empowered to accept such payments?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) This aspect will be investigated.

No. 20. This question was withdrawn.

GERALDTON HIGH SCHOOL.

Commencement of Additions and Alterations.

21. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Will he advise when the proposed additions and alterations at the Geraldton High School will commence?

(2) What other improvements will be undertaken at the school this financial year?

Mr. W. HEGNEY replied:

(1) It is expected that tenders will be called in December for additions and alterations to include an extra classroom, home science centre, extensions to the manual training centre, conversion of blacksmithing room to a general science room, and additional toilet facilities.

(2) Bitumen sealing of the existing paved areas.

WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON INDUSTRY.

Purchase of Local and Imported Saws.

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

(1) How many saws have been purchased by the Wundowie charcoal iron project during the last 12 months and what was the total amount paid for such saws?

(2) How many of these saws were of local manufacture?

(3) In cases where imported saws were bought, what were the reasons which resulted in the purchase of the imported saws?

(4) What local saws are manufactured and in what particulars do they fail to conform to the Wundowie charcoal iron project requirements?

(5) Are the locally made saws found acceptable to other users in Western Australia or do they have to rely on a market outside of Western Australia?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) Twenty-eight; £5,186.

(2) Three.

(3) All power saws recently purchased by the charcoal iron industry are sold to firewood contractors, who nominate their own brand of saw.

(4) Dennis & Schulstad. The locally used 2-stroke engine requires a pint of oil with every gallon of petrol, whilst the imported motor uses no oil mix. Locally made saws are given preference for uses for which they are suitable, such as falling trees.

(5) No information is available on this point.

WARRANTS OF EXECUTION.

Number Issued, Applications for Relief, etc.

23. Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) How many warrants of execution have been issued in Western Australia during each of the two years ended the 30th June, 1957, and the 30th June, 1958?

(2) How many of these warrants have actually proceeded to the point of sale in each of the years mentioned?

(3) How many applications were made for relief for defendants in these years under Section 139 of the Local Courts Act, and with what results?

(4) What are the facilities for the examination of a debtor under a judgment summons in the country—

(a) in a town where there is a resident practising solicitor;

(b) where there is no resident practising solicitor?

(5) (a) How many judgment summonses were issued in Western Australia in each of the two years mentioned above?

(b) Are existing facilities adequate to handle these judgment summonses?

(c) What additional facilities would be needed if there was an increase in excess of 50 per cent. in the number of judgment summonses issued per annum?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

(1) and (2) To obtain this information it would be necessary to search the records of every local court throughout the State. I understand the hon. member does not wish this to be done. However, the following particulars, which have been furnished to me in respect to the Perth district for the year ended the 30th June, 1958, may be of interest:—

Warrants of execution	3,471
Occasions on which actual levy made by bailiff	508
Occasions on which bailiff advertised intention to sell	196
Actual sales taken place	119

(3) Information not readily available but the number of applications would be very few.

(4) (a) and (b) Normally by the visiting magistrate, but the magistrate may request two justices of the peace or the clerk of a local court to sit in his absence. It is neither necessary nor usual for either party to have counsel at the examination of a debtor under a judgment summons.

(5) (a) This information is not readily available, for the reasons stated in No. (1).

(b) Yes.

(c) It is difficult to say; but in many places an increase in the number of judgment summonses could be handled without any difficulty. In some of the more densely populated centres some additional facilities would probably be needed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

CLOSE OF SESSION.

Target Date and Bills to be Introduced.

1. Mr. BRAND asked the Premier:

(1) Has a target date been set for the closing of the session?

(2) What legislation has still to be introduced in the Assembly?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

(1) No target date has yet been decided upon. I should think that by Tuesday of next week I could advise the House of a target date for concluding the session.

(2) I would say there are some Bills yet to come forward and that notice of nearly all of them would be given before the end of this week.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Melbourne Paper's Reference to Defeat.

2. Mr. HEARMAN asked the Premier:

Referring to the article under the heading, "Political Fund Move Fails," in the issue of the "News-Weekly," Melbourne, of the 15th October, 1958, the last paragraph of which, in referring to the Bill introduced in this House by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Court) to provide that donations for political purposes could only be made by unions from a separate voluntary fund, reads, "The Bill was defeated on party lines by the Evatt Labour Party," will he state whether he has any objection to the party led by him in this Parliament henceforth being described as the "Evatt Labour Party"?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

I am responsible for a great many things, and for some people; but I am very thankful that I am not responsible for anything which appears in the publication referred to by the hon. member.

TRUE CASE.

Tabling of Papers, Books, Records, etc.

3. Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Justice:

Will he lay on the Table of the House all of the papers, books, records, documents, etc., which were tendered as exhibits during the hearing in the Supreme Court of the action True v. Collie Miners' Union?

Mr. NULSEN replied:

The Leader of the Opposition was good enough to give me notice of this question and the answer is as follows:—

No. The Hon. the Chief Justice is of the opinion that exhibits should not be made available for tabling as they are not records of the court but the property of the parties, or witnesses, and are only retained temporarily in case they are required on appeal and for convenience.

THREE SPRINGS SCHOOL.

Septic Tank System.

4. Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

In reply to question No. 16 on the notice paper, the Minister said that the parents and citizens' association at Three Springs was prepared to—

(a) Dig the French drains and cart stone for same;

(b) Fill in the drains with stone and cover same;

(c) supply tank stand and a tank with a capacity of 1,000 gallons;

(d) supply any piping necessary and dig trenches for same;

(e) cart from the railway any materials, free of cost to the department.

Mr. Hawke: Why import drains from France?

Mr. BRAND: Does the Minister not consider that that is a fair contribution towards getting septic tank facilities for the school; and will he give further consideration to finding the very small sum of money which would be necessary to enable these people to go on with the project?

Mr. TONKIN replied:

I do regard it as a very fair offer of assistance. Similar offers have been made by other people in other districts. However, the offer would still involve expenditure of some money on the part of the department, and funds are not available.

CHARCOAL IRON INDUSTRY.

Investigation by Federal Treasury Official.

5. Mr. HEAL asked the Premier:

Some weeks ago I asked the Premier a question regarding the latest developments in respect to the export of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore to Japan. His answer indicated that the Commonwealth Government intended to send a Treasury Department official to this State to investigate the position. Can the Premier advise whether that official has arrived in Western Australia, and what are the latest developments in regard to the State's request?

Mr. HAWKE replied:

The hon. member did not warn me about this question.

Mr. Brand: Ahem! Excuse me.

Mr. HAWKE: I replied to the Prime Minister's letter regarding his idea of sending a Commonwealth Treasury officer to Western Australia to investigate our proposals by pointing out that if such an investigation were pursued it could commit the Commonwealth Government to making a decision which would approve of the proposed new industry; or, alternatively disapprove of it. In either event, the Commonwealth Government would be taking on itself a rather peculiar responsibility.

At the same time I advised the Prime Minister that we would be pleased to welcome such an officer, and would make available to him all the facilities and information possible. No answer to that has been sent; and I think the Prime Minister has decided that it might not be a good idea to send such an officer to this State. The Prime Minister had asked that further detailed information be made available regarding a re-check of the proposed charcoal iron industry for the South-West, and I referred to this re-check in the letter I sent to him about his suggestion relating to this Commonwealth Treasury officer.

I received a letter this week from the Prime Minister, from which it is clear that the Commonwealth Government is going to stall this issue until after the Federal election is held. Should the present Federal Government be returned to office, I should say that it would not take long after that date to say "No".

WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

Figures Quoted by the Hon. Member for Nedlands.

6. Mr. JOHNSON asked the Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

In relation to the personal explanation made earlier by the hon. member for Nedlands, I would like to know the source of the figures which he claims he has checked, as they are not in accordance with those supplied by the Commonwealth Statistician.

Mr. COURT replied:

This information was obtained from a member of the board, who, in turn, obtained his figures from the department.

Mr. Johnson: Which board and which department?

Mr. COURT: The Workers' Compensation Board. I would respectfully point out to the hon. member that the figures in the year book are only up to 1956; the year quoted in the 1957 book is 1955-56.

Mr. Johnson: This is 1956-57—figures supplied by the Commonwealth Statistician.

Mr. COURT: I suggest that if the hon. member is not satisfied with the figures I have given, he should refer the matter to his Minister. I am sure that the figures supplied by the Minister will be exactly the same as I have produced to the House.

TRANSPORT BOARD.

Issue of Licences.

Mr. GRAHAM: I should like to make a short statement for the information of hon. members. Last Wednesday, when the Legislative Assembly was considering a Bill to amend the State Transport Co-ordination Act, the hon. member for Katanning, and several other hon. members representing country constituencies, asked whether a farmer who had property in two different places, and who required to move machinery and other such necessities without having to make a separate application for a licence on each occasion, could be covered for a longer period. I indicated, by way of interjection, that I thought some arrangements could be made.

I have had the matter checked, and I am pleased to be able to inform all those hon. members who are interested, that it will be possible, upon application being made, for a licence to be granted for any period up to 12 months; and the licence, of course, would be in respect to machinery or the particular items desired to be transported from one property to another, both of the properties, of course, being in the name of the same person.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

Council's Amendments.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

CANCER COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA BILL.

Report.

Report of Committee adopted.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

MR. WILD (Dale) [5.2]: This is not a very large amending Bill, as it virtually only envisages the setting up of an inspector under the Act who will be fully conversant with the operation of lifts. This job will not in future be done, as it has been done since the installation of lifts, by the normal inspector of machinery who, under the Act, is a man who has served an engineering apprenticeship for at least five years, during which time he has been engaged in the actual manufacture and repair of engines, boilers and machinery, and has had engineering experience of a satisfactory character subsequent to his apprenticeship.

One can quite readily appreciate that this is completely different. When as a layman one steps into some of the more modern lifts, one realises that it is not necessarily a man with qualifications such as those I have mentioned who would inspect the many hundreds of lifts now in operation in the metropolitan area. Whenever I step into a modern lift the number of buttons it contains puts me in mind of a typewriter. The lifts of 20 years ago were rather old-fashioned structures and they would not require considerable knowledge to know whether they were in a workable condition or not. But in these days, with the number of high buildings being erected in the metropolitan area, together with the innumerable high-speed lifts being installed, the time has undoubtedly come when we must have somebody with the necessary qualifications to carry out these inspections.

There is one feature I cannot understand about the amending Bill. Hitherto we have laid down in the Act definite qualifications as being necessary. As I have said, a man must have served an engineering apprenticeship for five years, and have been engaged in the actual manufacture and repair of engines, and so on; but under the amendment contained in the Bill it is only necessary for the man to have certain broad qualifications. It is not requisite for him to have qualifications attendant upon an apprenticeship or a diploma. The Bill states that he must have had practical and definite training in electrical, constructional, and mechanical engineering, and subsequent practical experience of a satisfactory character in the erection and maintenance of lifts, and be capable of making technical calculations and drawings and comprehensive technical reports on lift practices.

That qualification seems to me to be all-embracing. When introducing the Bill last week on behalf of the Minister for Mines—who, I understand, was away—the Premier did make mention of the fact that there need not be any fear that, on some occasion or other in the future, an inspector of machinery who has been entered to the service for special duties connected with inspection of lifts only, may be inadvertently instructed to carry out inspections of boilers or other types of pressure vessels, though he would not have been experienced or qualified for such work. Avoidance of such action would be safeguarded by virtue of the lists of duties submitted to the Public Service Commissioner.

I know that the Minister for Mines is one who is deeply steeped in the principle that before a man tackles anything concerned with machinery he should possess certain qualifications. The parent Act itself says that a man must serve a five-years' apprenticeship; yet we are going to permit him to be appointed even though he does not have specific qualifications. The Minister is nodding his head, and I am sure he can see my point. A man might appear to be suitable in the all-embracing way contained in the Bill, but he would not be qualified by examination or by possessing five years' experience. That is something we will have to watch.

Mention was also made of the fact that the other inspectors would not be able to transgress and carry on with the inspection of lifts, as they are doing now. I

would draw the attention of the Minister to Subsection (5) of Section 6 of the Act where it says—

> Any duly appointed inspector of machinery may exercise any or all the powers of an inspector of mines under the Mines Regulation Act of 1906.

So, although it has been said that the man will not transgress, once he is appointed an inspector under this Act there is nothing to say he shall not. Virtually therefore, we would get back to the same position in which we find ourselves today, where the normal inspectors are able to do this job, due to men being on leave and so on. I am not cavilling at that; but I would like to point out to the Minister that it has been said there will be two compartments as it were. There will be one man who will be capable of inspecting these lifts, and whose work it will be to do so, to the exclusion of all else. But there is nothing to prevent the department doing what it is now doing—namely, giving one of the normal inspectors the job of inspecting these lifts. However, the Minister may be able to advise the House of his views when he replies.

Apart from this, I can see nothing wrong with the measure. There are 463 lifts in the metropolitan area, and I understand 19 more are to be installed in the next few months. These lifts must be inspected twice a year, and this means that a man must inspect four a day. It will be necessary for him to synchronise his work and move along the terrace inspecting four lifts a day.

The Premier said that no extra inspectors would be involved, and this would suggest to me that the inspectors already engaged in this work are not doing a full-time job. If one man is going to retire, and another is to take his place and be appointed for lifts only; and if he can inspect four a day, it seems to me that the present inspectors are not doing a full-time job. With all these additional lifts being installed, it might be necessary to have an additional inspector.

It appears that the duties can now be performed by the men of the department without the appointment of additional inspectors when people retire. If this assistance is not necessary then the present inspectors must be very under-worked. I submit those matters to the Minister for consideration. I hope that, in his reply, he will deal with the two points I have raised. I support the second reading.

THE HON. A. M. MOIR (Minister for Mines—Boulder—in reply) [5.10]: I shall deal briefly with the few points raised by the hon. member for Dale. Many of the inspections of lifts do not take up very much time. I understand that in the case of the modern lifts the inspector only imposes certain tests during the course of inspections, and these do not involve a great deal of time. However, it is necessary for some qualified person to make these inspections regularly, and the time has now been reached when a full-time officer can be employed on these duties.

With regard to inspectors appointed under the parent Act, in most cases one officer was delegated to perfom the duties of lift inspector. For that reason the other qualifications held by him were wasted completely; because, although he was qualified to inspect other types of machinery, he was not called upon to exercise those qualifications while he was inspecting lifts.

In answer to another point raised by the hon. member for Dale, if he were to examine Clause 2 of the Bill he would see that it states—

> or that he has had practical and technical training in electrical, structural and mechanical engineering and subsequent practical experience of a satisfactory character in the erection and maintenance of lifts and is capable of making technical calculations and drawings and comprehensive technical reports on lift practices.

I am not aware that any standard or examination is set under which a person can qualify, to meet the requirements of the Bill. I am inclined to believe there is no avenue by which a person can obtain a certificate, as there is in the case of certificates for boilers, engines and similar types of machinery.

It can be assumed that if any appointment is made under this Bill, the person best qualified will be chosen. I would remind the hon. member for Dale that any such appointment must go before the Minister, and invariably he keeps his eyes open as regards the qualifications of appointees. The Minister will not agree to the appointment of any person who does not possess the requisite expert knowledge of lifts.

Reference was made by the hon. member for Dale, to Section 6 (5) of the Act which states—

> Any duly appointed inspector of machinery may exercise any or all of the powers of an inspector of mines under the Mines Regulation Act of 1906, or any amendments thereof, subject to such conditions or restrictions as the Governor may think fit to impose.

I do not think it was ever envisaged that a person solely qualified to inspect lifts would be authorised to exercise the powers under the mines regulations. If there is any possibility of that being done, the Minister can, through the Governor, impose conditions or restrictions on the duties of that officer.

In the case of inspectors of machinery, it is very necessary for them to have the powers mentioned in the provision I have just read, although they do not exercise

all the powers referred to because they have not the requisite knowledge. They exercise only such powers as are related to their job when they carry out their duties in mines. They would deal with machinery being used on the mines. They would not exercise powers in regard to safety regulations, such as those relating to the firing of explosives.

I am informed there is no necessity to appoint an extra inspector if this Bill is passed. I have for guidance the statement of the Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery, who told me that when one inspector retires shortly, no replacement will be made to fill the position of inspector of lifts. There will be no need to appoint another inspector. That is the position as I understand it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

CITY OF PERTH PARKING FACILITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. H. E. GRAHAM (Minister for Transport—East Perth) [5.20] in moving the second reading: This is a very small Bill and, I trust, entirely non-controversial. It is a pity that so shortly after a measure has become law it is necessary to effect an amendment. The Bill deals with one principle only. It has been discovered that there was an omission in the drafting of the original measure. Parking facilities as defined in the Act relate to many things, but included amongst them is no provision for signs; and so we have the position where the Perth City Council, in providing parking facilities within the parking facilities region, has no legal authority to erect signs for the information of the public. Accordingly, by inserting the words "signs and notices" in the definition of "parking facilities," the position will be met. The second amendment, which relates to the same matter, affects the power to make regulations.

Therefore, whilst this is a very simple Bill, as indicated earlier, nevertheless its failure to become law could have serious consequences; inasmuch as, on the one hand, the Perth City Council could not give the desired information to the public; or, on the other hand, the signs having been erected without authority, should anybody have an untoward and unfortunate accident in connection with them, there would be no coverage so far as the Perth City Council is concerned, to meet the position. Without the Bill, it would be necessary for another authority—namely the Commissioner of Police—to erect these signs. I think the Bill speaks for itself and accordingly I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Hearman, debate adjourned.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison) [5.23]: I rise to support this Bill and am very pleased it has been introduced for the benefit of the workers of this State. From time to time there is an increase in the cost of living and by an approach to the Arbitration Court justice is received, but the same rights do not apply so far as the Workers' Compensation Act is concerned.

Mr. Court: But there is an automatic basic wage adjustment under the Act.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I consider that if an employee is hurt he should be entitled to just treatment—that is, fair monetary gain for the injuries he receives. Should he be unfortunate enough to lose his life, then his dependants should be entitled to receive some fair compensation. I am very pleased that the Minister has introduced this Bill and am also pleased to see Clause 28, which provides for something the Labour Party—the party behind which I stand and which I support whole-heartedly—has been trying to achieve for a number of years; and that is, a reasonable increase in compensation for these unfortunate people. I sincerely trust that the amount asked for will not be rejected on this occasion.

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park) [5.25]: The Minister, in his opening remarks on this Bill, made the statement that certain amendments had passed this House on a number of occasions—I think he said as many as eight or nine times—and had been defeated in the Legislative Council. I do not know whether we will be more successful on this occasion, but it does not seem that the real Government of Western Australia is elected democratically. The amendments to this particular Bill are very important and I intend to deal with several of them.

The hon. member for Nedlands made the statement that the Act should be revised. I find myself somewhat in agreement with him in that regard, but for very different reasons from those which the hon. member for Nedlands advanced. Under the

Workers' Compensation Act, if a person is injured, he has certain recourse to the Workers' Compensation Board if an agreement is not reached; but the amount which he can receive is limited by the Act. It does seem strange to me that people who are injured in civilian life get ever so much more compensation through an action in common law than do people under the Workers' Compensation Act, for a comparable injury.

Mr. Court: The same rights are available to a worker.

Mr. May: If he lives long enough to appear before the court.

Mr. ANDREW: The position is this: If a worker goes to the Compensation Board, the most he can recover for an injury is £2,617. That is with the basic wage adjustments. In the civil court, we find people getting as much as £34,000—as occurred in the Eastern States recently. We also find that £16,000 or £17,000 is quite a common amount for a person to receive. I am, of course, referring to a totally incapacitated person, or to a wife who is suing because of the loss of her husband in an accident. But we had a case here on the 16th October in which a coal-miner was hurt and was awarded £5,085, which is several times as much as would have been received under the Workers' Compensation Act by a worker who received similar injuries.

Mr. Court: They have exactly the same common law rights.

Mr. ANDREW: It is all very well for the hon. member to say they could use common law rights; but I know of a case where at the moment a person has £3 in the bank. He was injured and has been paid a weekly compensation for some considerable time. I took this man to various people, in an endeavour to obtain satisfaction for him; but although he has a 40 to 50 per cent. disability, under the First Schedule he has now been offered £1,046. The advice I got for him was that the only redress he now has is at common law; because, as this offer has been made to him, his weekly payments will be brought down to 40 per cent. of what he should get, which means that he will receive about £5 8s. a week—proportionate to his disability. The remarkable part of it is that those payments will come out of the lump sum; and if he received £5 8s. for 12 months, the total of those payments would be deducted from the £1,046.

I asked the person who was advising us this question: If this man went to a lawyer and was able to win the £13 odd which he previously received per week, for how long would it continue? The reply was that it would continue only until the £2,600 odd was cut out—provided the man was not capable of returning to work. The injured worker told me, in the end, that he was considering accepting the £1,046.

What a position for a worker to be placed in, when he has what the doctors say is a permanent injury! He can take the £1,046 for it, but he cannot then draw the weekly benefits under the Commonwealth unemployment scheme, because the £1046 would be paid in lieu of wages, and until that was cut out he could not draw the Commonwealth benefits. There is no doubt that a good case could be made out for greatly increasing compensation payments in order to bring them more into conformity with present-day actualities and in keeping with what is fair and just to the injured worker.

The amendment which seeks to lift the ceiling for medical benefits and hospitalisation is extremely necessary, and the present figures of £100 and £150 are absolutely inadequate. I recently read a letter from a doctor to a person associated with compensation matters in one of the unions; and in it the doctor stated that he and quite a number of other medical men are dissatisfied with the amount allowed for medical expenses. He said that on numerous occasions he had charged injured workers £100—the limit allowed—although actually his charge should have been much higher, and he could not continue to do it.

I wish now to refer to the case of a young fellow who damaged his foot and received 50 per cent. of the sum allowed for a foot injury—£375—and whose medical expenses amounted to over £700. The result was that the sum he was allowed for medical expenses, plus what he received as compensation, did not equal the total cost of his hospitalisation and medical treatment, so that he had to pay the balance out of his own pocket.

There are many cases where persons are injured at work and their injuries necessitate long periods of hospitalisation and medical attention; and in some instances the medical expenses reach a figure greater than the £700 which I have just quoted. A man in Victoria Park received an injury to his leg and it was treated for a considerable time; but eventually the leg had to be amputated and, owing to further complications, the treatment for the injury extended over four years. In the final analysis he was not paid a penny for the loss of the leg. The hon. member for Nedlands said that the inclusion in the Act of the to and from work provision would raise the premiums by 50 per cent—

Mr. Court: I said it would raise the premiums by 6 per cent.

Mr. Brand: Now you are confused.

Mr. ANDREW: I do not think it would raise the premiums by anything like 6 per cent.

Mr. Court: It represents over 26 per cent. of the claims in Victoria.

Mr. ANDREW: I have not any figures for the "to and from" clause—

Mr. Brand: Why not argue it on the basis of 50 per cent. and then come back to 6 per cent.?

Mr. ANDREW: I will argue it on the basis of 6 per cent. I will quote figures in regard to workers' compensation; and I believe they are reasonably reliable, although it is impossible to get exact figures in these matters as the information has to be gathered from a number of sources. I will quote, in regard to Western Australia, the premiums actually paid by employers to insurers, and will include the estimated premiums which would be payable by self-insurers had they been insured with a company. The figures are taken from the "Monthly Review of Business Statistics" and include wages paid to Commonwealth employees—who are under the Commonwealth Employees Compensation Act as the figures for those cannot be separated from the others. The wages for 1957 which I will mention are estimated on the September and December quarters of 1957, being the latest figures available; and I think they are the same as the hon. member for Nedlands quoted in his speech, as regards the last item.

In 1955-56, the premiums paid to insurers for workers' compensation in Western Australia amounted to £1,752,000, and the wages paid were £150,644,000. In 1956-57, the premiums paid were £1,796,152; and the wages, £154,908,000. In 1957-58. the premiums reached £2,026,613; and the wages, £163,202,000. The percentage of premiums to wages was 1.163 for 1955-56; 1.60 for 1956-57; and 1.242 for 1957-58. I cannot give the figure regarding the to and from work provision, or the amount paid in compensation in this State, which I would need to show what was the percentage paid out in compensation; but I have the figures for New South Wales, and they are interesting.

For the year 1955, premiums paid to insurers amounted to £13,213,742, on wages amounting to £800,755,327, and the compensation paid was £6,232,031; while the compensation paid under the "to and from" clause was £489,226. For 1956, the premiums amounted to £14,283,640 on wages which reached £880,166,829, and the compensation paid was £6,949,396, the compensation paid under the "to and from" clause being £520,534. That shows that in New South Wales, where the "to and from" clause operates, the gross profit for 1955-56—the latest figures available—was £6,981,711; and in 1956-57, it was £7,334,244. The total compensation paid, as a percentage of the premiums, was 47.16 in 1955-56; and in 1956-57, it was 48.65 per cent.

Mr. Court: Are you quoting the claims paid or the total cost of compensation?

Mr. ANDREW: I am quoting the percentage, as between premiums paid to insurers and the amount paid out as compensation.

Mr. Court: Are you sure you have the full amount there, or is it just the claims as distinct from medical and hospital payments?

Mr. ANDREW: These figures were obtained from New South Wales. I have not checked them personally, as I could not do so; but I am putting them forward because they include compensation payments under the "to and from" clause.

Mr. Brand: What is the source of your information?

Mr. ANDREW: Compensation paid under the to and from provision, as a percentage of the total compensation paid, was 7.85 in 1955, and 7.49 in 1956—

Mr. Court: That lends credence to my figure.

Mr. ANDREW: I got these figures from a reliable source, but cannot give the source of my information.

Mr. Court: Have you the Victorian figures?

Mr. Brand: Do you think the source of your information might be suspect?

Mr. ANDREW: One of my figures is the same as that given by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

Mr. Brand: That is something.

Mr. Evans: That does make it suspect.

Mr. ANDREW: I believe the people who supplied the figures would make an effort to provide the facts, and I do not think they can be questioned. On the figures I have quoted, which show that less than 50 per cent. of the premiums collected are paid out in compensation—and that includes compensation paid under the "to and from" clause—I would suggest that the position in Western Australia would differ very slightly.

Apparently the private companies make a similar profit to the huge profits that are made by the private insurance companies in New South Wales, so I cannot see why the premium should be raised if the "to and from" clause is inserted in our legislation.

Mr. Court: All the premium rates in this State are fixed by a statutory board; and as all the private companies have to adhere to them, that almost eliminates the element of profit.

Mr. ANDREW: They pay, in compensation, 48 per cent., which means they have a 52 per cent. profit to cover expenses. I can assure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that in regard to the type of insurance which carries the highest expenses of all—namely, industrial insurance—the expenses represent only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the total premiums that are collected by the private companies which deal in this type of insurance. Therefore, the insurance companies that handle all classes of insurance business must have a

large profit to play with, and the small amount that they would have to spend to cover the "to and from" clause would not be anywhere near 6 per cent. as suggested by the hon. member for Nedlands.

Mr. Potter: Anyway, it is a very fair clause.

Mr. ANDREW: I support the second reading of the Bill, but I have indicated that it could go considerably further in some directions to grant compensation to workers which would at least approximate what they would receive if they were awarded damages in a civil action.

MR. HALL (Albany) [5.47]: I support the Bill, but I will not endeavour to engage in a battle of figures with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, because he is out of my class in that regard.

Mr. Brand: You mean that you are out of his class.

Mr. HALL: There are many features concerning this legislation of which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would not be aware, one of which is tracing the cause of the industrial disease or injury to which a worker has been subjected. For example, in 1939, when an endeavour was made to trace the cause of dermatitis, it was considered by the managers of large industrial establishments—particularly in the textile trade—in America, England and Australia, that if a worker contracted dermatitis it was not the responsibility of the management. I would point out that that policy was adhered to from many angles.

After the war had ended, dermatitis was eventually recognised as an industrial disease, but during hostilities there was a great deal of controversy over this complaint. It was referred to by many terms, one of which was "khaki rash." This brings my mind back to the type of oils that are used for lubricating machinery. In one instance, a girl working in a factory brushed her leg against the side of a machine and the oil which remained on her skin caused an irritation which resulted in her having time off from work beyond her sick-pay periods, for which she received no compensation.

Following a great deal of research by the oil companies, it was discovered that there was some substance in the oil which did constitute an irritant to the skin; and they took corrective measures which, although not 100 per cent. effective, have achieved, in the main, the purpose they were seeking.

Mr. O'Brien: That applies to workers in the mining industry, too, who have contracted dermatitis.

Mr. HALL: The corrective measure that was taken was to apply a thin film of ointment over the legs of the workers which protected the skin should it come in contact with any oil off the machines. However, whenever the skin on the leg of a worker was irritated, no compensation was paid. But today, dermatitis is recognised as an industrial disease.

In all types of industry, those in charge of industrial establishments have recognised that safety precautions must be taken to protect the eyes of a worker. Hon. members of this House will recall that when inspecting the factory of General Motors-Holden, each one of them was provided with a pair of glasses to protect his eyes. If it is so important that the eyes of any visitor to a factory such as that must be protected with glasses, hon. members will realise that it is all the more important that the eyes of a worker should be fully protected whilst he is working in such an establishment.

In some sections of industry workers are never compensated for any injury to their eyes. After several years they have developed eyestrain due to the fine work that they have performed in an industrial establishment; and, as a result, they have to meet recurring expenditure for the provision of spectacles. This has been brought about by the fact that they have had to change, three or four times, the spectacles prescribed for them. Some of them have even had to leave their places of employment because of eyestrain which had been caused by repairing the weft and warp of the fabric in the textile factory. However, today, after much representation, glasses are being supplied to workers in some factories.

I believe the Deputy Leader of the Opposition queried the provision requiring a medical practitioner to be in attendance in large industrial establishments, because he said that it would increase the cost. I fail to see that. If expert medical attention were provided immediately a worker received an injury in an industrial establishment, many minor injuries could be treated at a minimum cost to the management; and as such attention would probably prevent an injury from becoming serious, it would prove to be of great advantage not only to the employees but also to the employers. Further, by having their ailments and injuries treated immediately, the health and efficiency of the workers would be improved, which would bring about not only an increase in production, but also a lowering of the cost of production.

It has always been recognised that protective measures are far better than corrective measures. In the larger factories, the managements ensure that the starting action of their machines is almost foolproof. Therefore, if employers would ensure that the health and efficiency of their workers were maintained to the highest peak, they would find that their premium rate for workers' compensation would be reduced considerably. Also, in referring to safety measures, employers

should make sure that safety guards are fitted to all machines and are made foolproof by constant checking.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [5.53]: I support this Bill which I trust will, in its entirety, together with the principal Act, become the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-1958. The main aims of this measure are, firstly, to increase the retrospectivity of the legislation and to extend it to include not only weekly payments made under the schedule of the Act, but also lump sums; and, secondly, to effect a change in the principle of the term "accident" and to substitute the term "injury."

As I understand it, the term "accident" in the past has been the subject of close scrutiny in the field of litigation. As a result, many workers have suffered on account of the interpretation of the definition of this word. I understand that the term "accident" could include the word "injury" and any sickness arising from following an occupation. This provision has been included in the legislation of at least one other State; namely, Victoria.

I will cite an example for the information of hon. members. A worker could have his heart or any other organ weakened or badly strained by his working conditions. During his lunch hour he could, say, stoop to pick up the lunch wrapping that he had dropped, and this could bring about his collapse and death. Under the term "accident" as defined in the Act at present, it is doubtful whether that worker would be eligible for compensation; because although his heart injury could have been brought about by the conditions of his work, it was not an "accident" in the true sense of the word.

Mr. Court: If it could be traced to his work, obviously the injury would be as a result of his working conditions.

Mr. EVANS: Yes; but sometimes such cases involve litigation. The third feature of this measure is the extension of the term "work" which is in accordance with the Labour Party's policy. Our policy, as a progressive party, is to emancipate the people whose lot in life is to work. I am sure that the hon. members of the Country Party will see no harm in this provision, because many of them regard themselves as workers.

The Bill, therefore, proposes to include taxi-drivers as being eligible for workers' compensation. Many taxi-drivers today are earning no more than ordinary wages, whether they be working for a company and using its taxis, or using their own. Although they may be driving their own cabs they are working extremely long hours; and if they are associated with a company, they are required to pay to that company not only an amount for the use of its name, but also for space on the rank and the radio telecommunication services provided by the company. Those taxi-drivers definitely come within the term "worker", because they are receiving no greater remuneration than any other worker. It is our policy, therefore, that those taxi-drivers should be covered by workers' compensation.

The fourth feature of the Bill is the introduction of unlimited liability when making weekly compensation payments for medical and hospital expenses. The fifth feature of the Bill that I have enumerated is the journey clause, and the seventh provision is one which seeks to amend the section relating to partial incapacity. With respect to the clause seeking an increase in the total payments, I trust that hon. members, not only of this House but also of another place, will, in this instance, adopt a more generous and humane outlook.

Mr. O'Brien: Hear, hear!

Mr. EVANS: The ninth feature of this Bill which I have enumerated is the clause which seeks to remove all time limits during which claims can be made by those persons who have worked in the mining industry but who, on leaving it, have discovered that the silicosis which they contracted as mine workers has been greatly aggravated. I consider that this provision is the most important of all. The last feature of the Bill is that which seeks to recognise an ex-nuptial child on the death of a worker when the payment of compensation is under consideration.

Before I deal with one or two of those features in the Bill more particularly, I wish to make a few comments on the remarks that were expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition last Thursday afternoon. He said that there were three important factors to be taken into consideration with regard to workers' compensation. These were: (1), a true concept of workers' compensation; (2), the relation of workers' compensation to common law; and (3), the development in Australia of a system of social services.

Along those lines we do not differ; but when we examine, particularly, the first—that is, the true concept of workers' compensation, I am sure that we will differ. I believe that the true concept of workers' compensation is one in which an industry must accept full responsibility for injuries or any sickness incurred by a worker as a result of his employment in that particular industry. To put it briefly, I believe it is just a contention for an industrialist to accept the responsibility for injuries caused to persons working in the interests of his industry.

Mr. May: Hear, hear!

Mr. EVANS: The relation of workers' compensation law to common law is a matter which I fear is difficult to define; and I am sure that, on that point, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would agree.

However, in regard to the true concept of workers' compensation we have a clear concept that all workers' compensation law should cover a clear dividing line between that and common law.

Mr. Court: It is not difficult at all.

Mr. EVANS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition's advocacy of the development in Australia of a system of social services is one which I believe should be examined very carefully. We should be very careful that we do not try to shoulder workers' compensation on to social services, and directly on to the shoulders of the taxpayer, because it is the responsibility of industry.

Mr. May: And rightly so, too.

Mr. EVANS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition went on to say that the situation under this Bill, if it were passed in its present form, would be that Western Australian industrialists would not only be called on to pay taxes to cover social services of Australia—or their portion of them—but they would also be called on to contribute more through increased workers' compensation premiums in order to meet workers' compensation claims, which very properly belong to the field of social services. That was why I mentioned that we must be careful that we do not shift the responsibility of industry on to the shoulders of the taxpayers.

I am afraid I must point the finger of guilt at the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because that must be his intention. He made the clear and deliberate statement that he would like to load some of the responsibility of workers' compensation law on to the shoulders of the taxpayers.

Mr. Brand: I suggest you talk to Dr. Evatt. If he gets in there will be nothing left for social services.

Mr. Court: I think you have misunderstood the true concept of workers' compensation in relation to common law, or you would not speak like that.

Mr. EVANS: I would like to deal briefly with some of the main points which I enumerated earlier. Firstly, let me take the journey clause. I am led to believe that this provision applies in workers' compensation law in both New South Wales and Queensland. Knowing this Bill was coming forward I have been able to make some inquiries in Queensland as to the operation of this particular clause. In some States it is called the "journey" clause; and I believe that here, in the past, it was often referred to as the "to and from" clause. In regard to this, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that if the employer had to pay the premium, surely he should have some opportunity of regulating the conduct of his employee during that period.

With that contention, I disagree. However, under the provisions of the Bill the actual journey of a person to his work or from his work will be clear-cut and defined. He will not be able, for example, to call into the local hostelry and refresh himself after a long day's work—no matter how entitled he may be to such refreshment—without breaking the provisions of the clause. Under these provisions the employer has some control over the regulation of that employee's time during his journeying period.

Mr. Court: You haven't read some of the cases decided in the Eastern States!

Mr. EVANS: I will refer to some in Queensland in a few minutes. I would like to mention this aspect of this clause: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition would like to shoulder some of the responsibility of industry for injury caused to a worker on to social services; but during the time a man is working he is covered by workers' compensation. A worker may have to leave home at 7 a.m. and not arrive at work until 8 a.m. on account of traffic. Is it not a wrong or unjust contention to hold that when he left his home at 7 a.m. he was still indulging in his period of leisure? He was about to go and carry out an obligation for his employer. The time after he left home was not his own time. He had a certain bus to catch and he might have had to change buses in order to reach a certain destination; and when he arrived at work he might have a clothes-changing period. I believe that these duties are part and parcel of the employee's obligations to his employer; and the same applies at the conclusion of an afternoon's work.

An employee would knock off work at 4.30 p.m.; and even on a defined and unbroken journey, he might not reach home to commence his leisure period until an hour after such work had concluded. Therefore, I do not believe it is an unjust claim that a worker should be covered for workers' compensation on his journeying periods to and from work.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave us some very interesting figures, for which I am very grateful. He mentioned that the figures were obtained from certain insurance firms. I would like to ask him if he could answer at this stage, by way of interjection, whether those firms are operating in Western Australia? Are they firms operating in St. George's Terrace?

Mr. Court: Do you want to know the cover they are prepared to give to workers?

Mr. EVANS: Do they cover a worker 24 hours a day, seven days per week?

Mr. Court: The firms are all operating in Western Australia. You ask the unions about them, as they have had correspondence from them.

Mr. EVANS: These are the figures I have been given: Certain insurance firms are willing to cover workers on a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week basis at a premium rate of 2s. per week per registered working member, or £5 per year per working registered member, subject to 55 per cent. or more of the total registered working members of a union being insured. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned that the benefits were considerable and at a very nominal cost. I have not taken a list of the benefits set out in his speech, but I would agree with him that the benefits, as given to us by him, do appear to be very beneficial and at a very nominal cost to the employer.

However, I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition this: If the benefits are so great, and if the premium is so small—2s. per member or £5 per year provided 55 per cent. or more of the registered working members of the union are insured—why is there such a great objection to industry covering the workers? Because, if this particular provision of the Bill became law, we would find that not 55 per cent. of the workers would be covered, but 100 per cent. Therefore, we would expect the premium rate to be lower than 2s. For that reason, I cannot understand the objection of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and those people he represents when he states, "I think I am right in this figure; this particular provision would result in an increase of at least 5 per cent. of premiums paid."

Mr. Court: I told you the reasons for that. The policy was a very good one and put up for a special purpose, to make some gesture to help those who want this cover.

Mr. EVANS: If the premiums are so nominal, why do not industrialists accept them and cover the workers? It could be much lower on the Deputy Leader's own statement.

Mr. Court: If you follow it through, you will find it would be run at a loss.

Mr. EVANS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants to see workers' compensation law related to common law, so that a worker has resort to that law, in respect of accidents during "to and from" periods. Strictly speaking such is the case, but we know that the law, with all due respect to the Minister for Justice, is often an ass.

Mr. Brand: Not only the law, either!

Mr. EVANS: Litigation is too slow and costly for the working man to take the risk of pursuing it, and he swallows hard and suffers injury. Therefore, I believe that common law is too difficult to be availed of.

I would like now to turn to the provision dealing with unlimited hospital and medical expenses. The figures in Western Australia are £109 and £163 respectively. I believe they are unlimited in some States. By inquiry I have not been able to find in Queensland—their hospitalisation scheme is financed from a lottery known as the Golden Casket—that there has been any abuse whatsoever, as a result of unlimited extension of hospital and medical expenses in regard to an injury caused to a worker by the conditions of his employment.

Mr. Court: Who told you that?

Mr. EVANS: I wrote to the Clerk of the Industrial Court of Arbitration, Brisbane.

Mr. Court: You go to Brisbane and make some inquiries and you will get a different story altogether.

Mr. EVANS: I am told there is no grave concern at all.

Mr. Court: From the previous Labour Government, too—not the present Government.

Mr. EVANS: I am told there is no grave concern at all.

Mr. Brand: Read his letter then!

Mr. EVANS: We find that the figures of £109 and £163 for hospital and medical expenses in Western Australia are insufficient because of the great costs of hospitalisation and medical attention. Is it any wonder that these small amounts are soon consumed by hospital and doctors' fees? This Bill seeks to give an unlimited extension of these particular requirements provided the injury was bona fide and checked and guaranteed by medical opinion. Is that an unjust claim?

If we hold ourselves in agreement with the principle of workers' compensation—and I believe in that principle—I cannot see how we can deny adequate hospital and medical expenses to persons to meet the requirements or the conditions of an injury received whilst working within an industry covered by workers' compensation.

Mr. O'Brien: The maximum is little enough.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. EVANS: I would like now to dwell upon the one provision in the Bill about which I am most concerned. I do not mean that I have little care or respect for the other provisions, because I think they are all important. This one, however, is most important. I refer to the provision whereby a person who has worked in the mining industry and has left it finds that, due to silicosis, his condition has deteriorated, but who is unable to lodge a claim—such a claim would have to be verified by medical opinion—stating that his condition was due to silicosis incurred during his time in the mining industry.

Under the Act at present, any person who finds that his condition deteriorates, must lodge a claim within three years. I submit that the statutory period is unconscionable, harsh, and strictly unjust. I say that because silicosis is a progressive disease and never improves. I think all

authorities, and even hon. members on the other side of the House, will agree with that.

Once a man contracts the disease—and if he works amongst silica he must be contaminated by it—it progressively kills portion after portion of his lungs. Yet we have medical opinion—in several instances this opinion has been expressed—that the three-year period is not sufficient for a person really to know that his condition has deteriorated to a dangerous extent; and it does not provide sufficient time for him to lodge a claim for workers' compensation.

Under the Act at present certain provisions in Section 8(13) and Section 11 are matters of grave concern. However, these provisions are to be remedied by the Bill. Leading on from what I had to say at page 93 of Hansard for 1956, I would like to quote from a report by Dr. Alan King—this is his report as Commissioner of Public Health for 1954—who stated, when dealing with tuberculosis on the Eastern Goldfields—

> It is obvious that the existing measures to date have not lowered the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis in goldminers to that normal in the community.
>
> A further attempt will have to be made to discover each and every infectious case of pulmonary tuberculosis in the goldfields.
>
> There is no doubt that goldminers, by reason of their occupation, and exposure to silica dust, are more susceptible to infection with pulmonary tuberculosis.
>
> It is seriously suggested that, in spite of a possible detrimental effect to the labour force in the goldmining industry, workers contracting silicosis in the early stage be excluded from the industry and receive some compensation for this exclusion.

Many workers, fearing that they will be contaminated with tuberculosis or silicosis, or perhaps both, do leave the industry. They find employment elsewhere; and I am sure that hon. members, including those from areas other than the Goldfields, have been approached by ex-Goldfields workers in regard to their mining history and silicosis. These men often leave the industry early, and three years may not be sufficient time—it is not—for them to be warned of the impending dangerous condition of their health.

Therefore I strongly urge that every consideration be given by hon. members to this provision so that justice can be done to these men who work in abnormal conditions and who are subject to abnormal diseases. We find that as these people grow older, their condition deteriorates, and they receive the invalid pension and are, I might say, thrown on to the scrapheap of humanity. No-one wants that. Therefore, I once more urge that this provision in the Bill be given every consideration, and I trust it will receive an early and safe passage through both Houses of Parliament.

Finally I notice that the Bill seeks to repeal Section 8 (13) and also Section 11. I wish briefly to quote these two provisions and explain why it is wise that they should be repealed. Section 8 (13) states—

> Subject to the provisions of this section, if a worker, disabled by disease from earning full wages at the work at which he was employed, is found to be suffering from a disease to which this section does not apply—

It could be dermatitis, thrombosis, or any other disease not included in the schedule—

> —and also from silicosis, pneumoconiosis, or miner's phthisis, and his disability is partially caused by such industrial disease due to the nature of his employment, the worker shall be entitled to a proportionate part of the compensation payable under this section apportioned to the degree to which such disability is caused by silicosis, pneumoconiosis, or miner's phthisis, as the case may be.

Section 11 provides—

> When permanent partial incapacity of a worker results from personal injury by accident within the meaning of section seven of this Act, the liability of the employer to pay compensation in accordance with the First Schedule, pursuant to section seven or pursuant to section eight of this Act, as the case may be, shall be proportionate to the degree of that incapacity, the ratio of that liability to liability for permanent total incapacity being the same as the ratio of that permanent partial incapacity to the permanent total incapacity.

There are other sections, but I do not need to weary the House by reading them. I wish now to refer to the speech I made on the 8th August, 1956. At page 93 of Hansard for that year, when referring to Section 8 (13) and Section 11, I said—

> If a man at work strains a part already enfeebled by industrial disease such as lead poisoning, and is thereby permanently incapacitated for work in that industry he receives full compensation.

That is quite just. If a person contracts a disease such as dermatitis, or lead poisoning, and is classed as permanently incapacitated within an industry, he receives full compensation as set down in the schedule for that industry. With that we all agree. I continued—

> The same applies if he contracts an industrial disease such as lead poisoning or dermatitis.

The Act, however, provides that where a man who is already suffering from a heart, kidney, liver or any other disease is also incapacitated by silicosis he is paid, not the percentage he would receive for dermatitis, liver or heart trouble but only the percentage which a laboratory doctor estimates is due to silicosis. The Act requires that the degree of incapacity due to silicosis should be compared to the incapacity arising from a non-industrial disease, and the unfortunate miner then receives only a percentage of the compensation that I say is due to him.

I believe that these are unjust provisions within the Workers' Compensation Act. Therefore I am pleased to see that an attempt is being made to repeal these sections, and I hope it will succeed. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by the Hon. A. M. Moir (Minister for Mines) debate adjourned to a later stage of the sitting.

(Continued on page 1831)

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILISATION BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. L. F. KELLY (Minister for Agriculture—Merredin-Yilgarn) [7.45] in moving the second reading said: This Bill provides the legislation for the continuance of a wheat stabilisation scheme for a further period of five years. The legislation proposed in this Bill is essentially in line with existing legislation. On this occasion, however, there has been no poll of wheatgrowers as in 1954 when the current plan was put before growers and approved by them. The measure is particularly urgent as the Commonwealth Government has passed its Act and this Bill is complementary to such legislation.

The decline in the price of wool and the large harvest anticipated in Western Australia this season makes it essential that some stabilisation scheme be evolved to ensure to wheatgrowers in general a guaranteed minimum price for the next five years. The wheat harvest in Western Australia this season is now estimated to be in the vicinity of 58,000,000 bushels. In addition, an estimated 22,000,000 bushels of oats and 6,000,000 bushels of barley will be harvested. It is reasonable to assume that for next season there will be a considerable increase in the acreage sown.

Mr. Bovell: Is there any reason why a poll of growers was not taken?

Mr. KELLY: There are several reasons, the main one being that the growers' federal organisation agreed that it was not necessary to have a poll. Recent figures disclose that the number of holdings in the State growing wheat for grain is somewhat in excess of 8,000. The acreage increase over the last two years is over 1,250,000 acres, making a total of over 22,000,000 acres under crop. The current system of wheat buying by overseas interests, although handled by individual companies there, is controlled by the Governments of those countries. It follows then that our own Governments in Australia must have legislation on their statute books, and that there be in existence a wheat pool. It is essential that there be unanimity between States on prices effectively to administer interstate trade in wheat, and orderly marketing is necessary for the Commonwealth and State Governments to have assurance that agreements can be ratified internationally.

The following points illustrate the main issues of the plan:—

1. Period of Plan.

   Five years to apply to crops of 1958-59 to 1962-63, both inclusive.

2. Australian Wheat Board.

   To be sole constituted authority for the marketing of wheat within Australia and for the marketing of wheat and flour for export from Australia for the period of the plan.

3. Commonwealth Guarantee.

   The Commonwealth Government to guarantee a return to growers of the ascertained cost of production in respect of up to 100,000,000 bushels of wheat exported from Australia from each of the five wheat crops covered by the plan.

4. Stabilisation Fund.

   To be collected by means of an export tax equal to the excess of export returns over cost of production with a maximum tax of 1s. 6d. per bushel.

5. Size of Fund.

   Ceiling of £20,000,000; any excess beyond this figure to be returned to growers on basis of "first-in-first-out".

6. Balance in Present Wheat Stabilisation Fund.

   To be carried forward in a new plan as a nucleus for a new stabilisation fund.

7. Use of Stabilisation Fund.

   When average export realisations fall below costs of production, export returns to be raised to the costs of production level, first by drawing upon the stabilisation fund, in respect of up to 100,000,000 bushels of wheat from each crop. When that fund is exhausted, the

Commonwealth Treasury to meet the obligations of the Commonwealth guarantee.

8. Premium on Western Australian Wheat.

   A premium from export realisations to be paid on wheat grown in Western Australia and exported from that State, in recognition of the natural freight advantage applying to Western Australia owing to the proximity of that State to the principal overseas markets for wheat. The premium will be 3d. per bushel.

9. Freight on Wheat to Tasmania.

   Provision to be made for loading on all wheat sold for consumpion in Australia to the extent necessary to cover the cost of transporting wheat from the mainland to Tasmania in each season of the plan. This will not affect the pool returns to growers in any way.

10. Cost of Production.

    Cost of production to be determined after new survey by Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

I might add that that survey will take place at the end of the first 12 months of operation of this plan. The Bill is substantially the same as the Act under which the wheat stabilisation plan has operated over the past two terms of five years. It is necessary that this measure be passed by this and the other Chamber as expeditiously as possibly, because all States must pass the legislation before the plan can come into operation. This Bill, of course, is complementary to the Act which has already been passed by the Federal Parliament. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Perkins, debate adjourned.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE) BILL.

Second Reading.

THE HON. L. F. KELLY (Minister for Agriculture—Merredin-Yilgarn) [7.53] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has been prepared for the purpose of extending the life of the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board for a further period of 10 years. The present Act was proclaimed to come into operation for 15 years after the date of its proclamation; namely, the 23rd March, 1946. This Bill therefore will extend the life of the measure from 15 to 25 years. This is the only amendment to the Act contained in the Bill before the House.

The Egg Marketing Board has for some years been endeavouring to establish its own receiving, handling, and processing buildings, together with cold storage of egg pulp and eggs for both local consumption and export. The Metropolitan Market Trust is at present engaged on a comprehensive building programme within its area, and has intimated to the Egg Board that it will be only a matter of time before the building housing several departments of the Egg Board will have to be demolished to provide space for new structures and for the smooth flow of traffic.

Apart from renting space from the Market Trust, the board is also receiving facilities for cold storage from the W.A. Meat Works at Robb's Jetty. The meatworks provides facilities for the processing of pulp, including shock freezing. This service could be further improved by having a cold store for loading directly from store to ship.

The board has gone into the savings which can be expected under various projects, and considers that the capital cost of the floors and cold storage at either Fremantle or Welshpool could be paid for in 12 years. It will be realised that, apart from the savings which could be expected, properly designed facilities can bring about a stimulation of consumption, particularly local consumption, by the marketing of a very much improved product. The industry moreover contends that more economical handling could result in the supply of a cheaper egg to the consuming public.

If we are to follow the successful practice employed in countries where climatic conditions are similar to those in Western Australia, it is almost certain that the time is not far distant when it will be necessary for eggs to be held under refrigerated conditions at the source of supply, through the processing stages, and finally at the retail supply stores. Obviously this will be impossible if the Egg Board's facilities are inadequate. The estimated cost of the required buildings is £200,000, and the Commonwealth Bank is prepared to advance a sum of £210,000, subject to the loan being guaranteed by the Western Australian Government.

From a survey of the Egg Board's assets, it would appear from the figures submitted that the guarantee of the loan could be safely given. The board already has substantial country assets, and 12 years is not a long period over which to finance the capital installation required. The main feature to be observed, however, is that the tenure of the board is a limited one under the Marketing of Eggs Act; and to safeguard the Government, it would be

necessary to amend the Act so as to extend the life of the board for a sufficient period, which would not be less than 10 years. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Wild, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—MESSAGES.

Messages from the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the following Bills:—

1, Wheat Industry Stabilisation.

2, Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment (Continuance).

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1958-59.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 21st October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. Sewell in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £9,675:

MR. I. W. MANNING (Harvey) [8.0]: I desire to take this opportunity to discuss one or two items with a view to bringing them before the notice of the Government. I shall be dealing mainly with the subject of irrigation. Firstly, I wish to draw the attention of the Minister to what appears to be a rather anomalous position in the rating of the Waroona irrigation district, where we have the situation of two farmers paying for the same water.

This is brought about by the big farmer with the water rate on a large area paying the full irrigation rate of 28s. 9d. per acre; and his neighbour using the water, and also paying the full price for that same water. I do not think this situation should be allowed to continue. It is not permitted in the Harvey irrigation district.

It appears that when a district is surveyed and the water right is allotted to the various farmers on a one-acre-in-three basis; and a farmer has an area on a greater water right than he needs, and his neighbour on the small property—also on the one-acre-in-three basis—has not sufficient irrigation to meet his need, he is permitted to use the water the big farmer does not require. That is all in order so far as I am concerned. But it does not seem right that we should have two farmers paying the same water rate on the same water.

Accordingly I would like the Minister to have a look at that position at an early date, because it should not be allowed to continue, particularly when the irrigation rate today is on a basis of 28s. 9d. per acre. In this case, of course, the farmer using the water would be permitted two free waterings for his rates, and from then on pay 7s. 6d. per acre for subsequent watering. In the case of the farmer using that water he buys it at accommodation rates of 14s. 6d. per acre per watering for the first two waterings, with an additional charge of 7s. 6d. per acre for subsequent waterings. So I would like the Minister in charge of this department to look closely at that situation at an early date, to see if the water cannot be transferred to the other farmer at accommodation water rates. When the big farmer does not require the water and does not desire to use it, he should not be charged the full irrigation rates.

Another matter I wish to bring to the notice of the Government is the need for additional water storage for the Harvey irrigation district. During the last summer at Harvey, many of the irrigation farmers were in difficulties because of the shortage of irrigation water. There was not sufficient water to meet the needs of that particular irrigation district, and many people were faced with rather serious difficulties. In these irrigation districts we have people buying accommodation water. This water is other than that on which irrigation rates are paid and is, in this case, additional to the rated areas.

The people who will use accommodation water are those who would pump from the weir or Harvey River, and by means of a sprinkler system irrigate their crops, such as potatoes, and other vegetable and fodder crops. The sale of accommodation water is a big item in those districts. Accommodation water is also used for the starting of early clover—the flooding of dry land to get an early start on the new season's feed.

This accommodation water is used very extensively for the purpose I have outlined, and it is a purpose for which provision has not been made. It is in addition to that which applies on the surveyed irrigation district. But it is a means of selling water which is very extensive, and constitutes a big item to the irrigation farmer—and a very valuable one, also—because if early feed can be started by means of irrigation, it can be very worth while to a farmer's feed supply. It is a particularly big item in the dairying districts. Sprinkler irrigation is also being extensively used at the present time. It is a most economic method of irrigation, because there is no run off and no waste whatever. But with the restriction placed on the use of sprinkler irrigation last summer, the farmers were not permitted to pump from the source of supply.

Mr. Hearman: It also saves a lot of current.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: That is so. In many cases, however, the treatment seemed very harsh, particularly in the case of potato growers who had their crops ready. They found things most difficult when they were told that they would not be able to get water to irrigate the crops, which, in one or

two instances, were lost. In other cases the area of land was all set up and ready for planting, and the farmers were told they could not have the water, even though the quantity they would use by the sprinkler irrigation method would constitute only a minute amount, when compared with that used by a farmer flooding a similar area of land.

It is recognised within the department that there is a very definite need today for the additional storage of water for this district. I have outlined the situation that existed last summer. We were denied accommodation for out-of-zone waterings, and also the pumping of accommodation water. In the case of out-of-zone water the irrigation district operates on a zone period. The irrigation is used once every 21 days.

If the period of 21 days is too long between waterings, then the farmer buys water at a greater price, and pays what is termed an out-of-zone charge. He buys additional water between the usual waterings. This indicates that the watering periods of 21 days are too long a gap, and the farmer needs the water more frequently. If he is not able to obtain it his pasture dries between waterings. Last summer, of course, this water was denied to the farmer and in many cases the pastures suffered severely from lack of it.

At this stage I would like to say that I believe that in other areas in the district this zone period of 21 days is far too long. In the Benger area of the Harvey irrigation district the zone period is 15 days, and there is quite a noticeable difference in the quality of pasture watered in the 15-day zone to that in the 21-day zone. This indicates that a more frequent watering would be a tremendous advantage on those properties.

This, of course, might call for a greater need for water, although the experience in the Benger district is that no greater quantity of water over the irrigation season is used by watering in the 15-day zone period. The total supply of irrigation water to the Harvey irrigation district is 51,000 acre ft. The area of land watered last irrigation season was 13,003 acres. A survey has revealed that an additional 3,650 acres of irrigable land is available, making a potential of 16,650 acres of irrigable land in this district.

That is apart from what I have indicated earlier—namely, the use of accommodation water, and out-of-zone waterings. We believe that the additional area would need another 15,600 acre ft. of water to satisfactorily cater for the total available land. This 15,600 acre ft. of additional water would require a new weir. The Stirling Dam, which is the main supply for the district has, I think, some 42,000 acre ft. The Harvey weir would have about 12,000 acre ft. So, to meet the requirements of the Harvey irrigation district, we would need a weir larger than the existing Harvey weir.

I understand the department has been making surveys of the streams which would serve the Harvey irrigation district—namely, Logue Brook in the Yarloop area, and also upstream from the existing Harvey weir. I understand the department has given consideration to three propositions, the first of which is to raise the wall of the existing Harvey weir; the second, to build the additional weir half way between the Harvey weir and the Stirling Dam on the Harvey River; and the third, to build a new weir at Logue Brook in the Yarloop area.

To a layman the building of a new weir at Logue Brook would seem the best proposition, because the existing stream could be served as the main supply channel of the district, and the water could be taken from Logue Brook and turned into the existing irrigation channels. To my mind that looks a very good proposition. Because of the urgency and great need, I sought by way of a question to learn from the Minister what progress is being made. I wanted to know whether the site had been selected for the additional storage. The Minister said, "No." He could not indicate where the new site would be. He said that investigations into the possibility of further establishment of water storage in the Harvey area are in a preliminary stage, and it is not possible for him to say when a decision will be made.

My reason for raising this matter tonight is to point out to the Government that additional water storage is becoming an urgent need. Last summer the two irrigation committees concerned with the Harvey irrigation district—the Harvey Irrigation Committee and the Cookernup Irrigation Committee—met and discussed this subject. Their members expressed concern about the existing situation, and the urgency for additional water supplies.

I sought to arrange a deputation of the farmers concerned to the Minister, but he replied that he was well aware of the need for additional storage, and that he was sufficiently interested to have surveys carried out. He said he would make a decision on where additional water storage would be established. He said he was keen to improve the situation, and that investigations were proceeding for possible dam sites.

My concern is that if we experience a really dry summer, the irrigation position will become very serious indeed. We should take immediate steps to see that such a position does not arise. It became very evident last summer that the water restrictions imposed great difficulties on the farmers in that district; in a really dry summer, and with greater restrictions, the position could become very serious.

I would ask the Government at this stage to push ahead with surveys. I cannot understand why the department has not been able to make a decision and select a site as yet. If there is a hold-up, the Minister should reconsider the position, especially in view of the letter he wrote saying that he was interested; that he recognised the need; and that he would do something about the matter.

Mr. Brand: Is there any intention on the part of the Government to extend the irrigation at Harvey?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: There is no proposal to extend this particular irrigation district. When the Stirling Dam was built, it was designed to cater for an area of some 14,000 acres. I repeat that the department believes there is an additional 3,650 acres of irrigation land available in this district which can be watered. There are many other ways to assist the farmers in this respect. For instance, the water right is based on one in three acres. The farmer is not permitted to water more than one-third of his farm. Irrigation has very considerably stepped up production from the land in these districts, and if additional water is available the water right of farmers can be based on one in two acres. On many properties such an increase would make a tremendous difference to the production.

We must bear in mind that in the building of weirs; in supplying irrigation water; and in the maintenance that goes with it, a tremendous amount of employment is created for a large number of workers. From that point of view the Government should be interested in my proposal. If implemented, it would provide a wonderful source of employment.

I want to impress upon the Government that there is an urgent need for additional water storage and for the setting aside of money each year so that the work can be undertaken as soon as sufficient finance is available. If this type of work is put off because finance is not available, then the improvements which I have outlined will never be carried out, and the existing difficulties of the farmers will continue and will grow bigger as time passes. If the Government will agree to the setting aside of money for this purpose, the sooner the work is commenced the sooner will the effect be felt. The benefits from the establishment of additional water storage would be very far-reaching indeed.

Those are the points I wish to bring to the notice of the Minister. They are, firstly, rating in the Waroona irrigation district where farmers pay twice for the one lot of water used; and secondly, the urgent need for additional storage to be established at Harvey. I hope he will be able to make an early decision as to where a new weir will be established.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [8.21]: The Estimates introduced by the Treasurer offer an opportunity to hon. members to discuss the problems and requirements of their districts. The Treasurer has budgeted for an amount of £61,766,331 expenditure for this financial year. I hope that the amount allocated to country and rural districts will be spent to the best advantage.

An unsavoury system is arising in Western Australia where over 58 per cent. of the population reside within a radius of 30 miles of the G.P.O., Perth. In the remainder of the State, which covers almost 1,000,000 square miles, only 42 per cent. of the population reside.

Figures of past expenditure are not encouraging to rural dwellers. The Leader of the Country Party mentioned last week that out of the total expenditure on public buildings and utilities in this State, the proportion spent in the metropolitan area was 81 per cent.; and in the country districts, 19 per cent. That is a most unhealthy state of affairs, and the Government should give serious consideration to providing more funds for the establishment of services and amenities in country districts.

If this State is to progress we must adhere to a policy of decentralisation. It is only by providing more amenities and services in rural and country districts that people will be encouraged to go out, develop the land, and produce the real wealth for the State. I recognise that the primary need of the community is good health; and in this respect facilities in country areas should be built up to the same standard as those found in the metropolitan area. For some considerable time I have tried to persuade the Minister for Health to commence urgently-needed additions at Busselton hospital.

Mr. Nulsen: You have been fairly successful.

Mr. BOVELL: The Minister has been encouraging; but there has been no activity so far. During the last session of Parliament, on the 10th September, 1957, I asked the Minister whether he would give details of the proposed additions to the Busselton hospital. He said that the proposed additions included a new laundry; additions to the kitchen; children's bathroom; food preparation room; additional male lavatories; new sterilising room to operating theatre; combined single room and iron-lung room; new boiler house; and improvements to casualty treatment room. He went on to say that it was hoped to start these improvements during that financial year, which ended on the 30th June, 1958. The estimate of the Minister was not realised; and on the first sitting day of this session of Parliament, I raised the question again.

I asked the Minister for Health what was the position regarding the urgently-needed additions to Busselton hospital. He replied that tenders would be called within two or three months. That period of time is now running out. I urge the Minister to expedite the commencement of these greatly needed additions. If country people know that they can obtain medical attention and suitable hospitalisation they will be encouraged to remain in the country. Other people will also be encouraged to go out into the country, to engage in rural production, and thus contribute to a stable economy.

The second essential of country districts is education. It is the desire of country parents to see their children being given perhaps a greater opportunity than they themselves enjoyed in the past. I know that the policy over the post-war years has been to construct and operate secondary schools. That is most encouraging. The secondary education system in country districts has certainly improved greatly compared to what it was some years ago; but many needs remain to be met.

In regard to primary education, I would point out that the school at Cowaramup needs consolidation. For a number of years the sections of that school have been separated by a distance of some 1½ miles. Such a state of affairs is unfair to the headmaster, to the teaching assistants, and to the children. The reason for dividing the school some years ago arose from the desire of the Government of the day to establish a site for a new school at Cowaramup. In fact two classrooms were built there, but the old school was retained.

The excuse given from time to time when I have made representations is that the funds do not permit of the consolidation of the Cowaramup school. I would like the Minister to give earnest and serious consideration to the problem that is confronting the teachers and children in the Cowaramup district. It is a large school with over 100 children attending it. It is not fair that the school should be divided by a distance of approximately 1½ miles. The old buildings are in a dilapidated condition and the conveniences are totally inadequate. I do impress on the Minister the need to take some action forthwith with a view to consolidating this school.

Mr. W. Hegney: Incidentally, we will be extending the high school at Busselton.

Mr. BOVELL: I am very pleased to hear that; because, as I have said, secondary education is vital and the policy of Governments during post-war years has been to extend secondary education in country districts; and this is, of course, very commendable. But there are still the primary education needs which must not be overlooked.

Mr. W. Hegney: But you would not suggest that we should consolidate the Cowaramup school in preference to building a high school?

Mr. BOVELL: No; I did not say that. I am suggesting that attention must be given to the needs of primary education, and I am pointing out to the Minister some of the needs of the district I represent.

Mr. Hawke: That is why the hon. member voted to deprive the Government of £200,000 revenue?

Mr. BOVELL: The matter of that £200,000 would not come into this aspect, because that is revenue; and the consolidation of the Cowaramup school would come from loan funds.

Mr. Hawke: Where is the extra £200,000 to come from?

Mr. BOVELL: I think the Treasurer might curtail expenditure in some other way; but not penalise the country districts.

Mr. Hawke: You tell us which other way.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We will do that next year.

Mr. BOVELL: The school at Yallingup is totally inadequate for the number of children attending it, and I did hope that some additions could be made during this financial year. The official and departmental communications have so far not been encouraging, but I do impress on the Government the need for additions to the Yallingup school and also to the school at Vasse.

I have spoken at length on the need for attention to the hygiene in small country schools in regard to the installation of septic systems where water supplies are available. In the district I represent, the schools that need the installation of septic systems have water supplies; and it has been recognised by the department that they should be attended to when funds permit. However, these needs are vital—especially the septic tank systems—in relation to the health of the children.

Mr. W. Hegney: Wouldn't you say classrooms should come first?

Mr. BOVELL: I would say that the health of the community is the first need; and in regard to Forest Grove school—a matter which I raised in the House only recently—the district medical officer reported very unfavourably on the sanitary conditions and services there.

Mr. Wild: The Government has put in very desirable amenities on native reserves in the way of septic tank systems.

Mr. W. Hegney: It is about time something was done for the natives.

Mr. Wild: I did not say it was not; I am just making that suggestion, because you are talking about schools coming before septic tank systems.

Mr. BOVELL: The matter of water supplies in rural districts is, of course, one of very great importance. Earlier this year I introduced a deputation, comprising the chairman and some members of the Augusta-Margaret River Road Board, to the Deputy Premier regarding the proposals to establish a water supply at Augusta-Flinders Bay. This district is growing rapidly and there are a number of new dwellings being erected at Augusta this year. People at Flinders Bay have now been granted—after a number of years—the freehold titles of land they occupy. They take a pride in their homes, and a water scheme is vital to the needs of that community.

The overall expenditure would not be excessive. The proposals have been submitted to the department and the Minister in charge is au fait with the conditions, but he has not so far given any encouragement that this matter will be attended to in the very near future. I do urge that where water is available and ratepayers are prepared to subscribe for a water scheme which will enable them to use it, for the advantage of themselves and the district, urgent attention should be given to the installation of such a water scheme.

Dunsbrough is another centre vitally in need of a water supply, and proposals have been submitted by the Busselton Road Board. Like Augusta-Flinders Bay, it is the centre of great tourist attraction. From December to April the population increases three-fold or four-fold; and I believe that if we are to encourage tourists where nature provides the attraction, the least that the Government could do is to establish the ordinary needs of a community of which I would say water is of primary importance.

Mr. W. Hegney: That is socialistic, you know.

Mr. BOVELL: Electricity is another necessary amenity. Members of the State Electricity Commission have recently paid a visit to Busselton, and discussions ensued with the local authority in relation to the extension of the electricity supplies to the Dunsbrough-Yallingup area. There would be approximately 200 subscribers if power was made available, and the number of subscribers would rapidly increase as time went by. I do hope that there will be an extension of the electricity supply to this area, and I give my whole-hearted support to the Busselton Road Board in its plea for extensions to these very extensive and rapidly-growing areas.

I was recently approached by Mrs Billinghurst, a storekeeper at Carbunup Bridge with a view to having State Electricity Commission supplies made available to Carbunup which is the centre of that particular district. There is admittedly only the local hall, post office and store, but I do think that as the mains pass by, a transformer could be installed; or, in view of this being a district centre, a transformer some distance away could be used. The commission has stated that the existing transformer is further than the acknowledged two bays away from the centre and it is not the policy of the commission to extend services of a transformer for a distance of more than two bays. But in special circumstances such as these, I think the Minister might approve of further extensions if a new transformer is excessive in cost.

We know the State Electricity Commission is a Government instrumentality which is endeavouring to pay its way, but the services to the people must be recognised, and I do hope it will be possible—in view of the fact that this is a community centre with a store, post office and hall—to make an exception to the rule and extend the supplies further than the usual two bays.

I am informed that the people concerned will willingly pay for some of the poles and installation, and the additional cost of bringing this current from the existing transformer, and I ask the Minister's co-operation in this regard.

Another extension which I consider is very urgent in regard to electricity supplies is to the primary producers themselves. So far the main work and endeavour of the State Electricity Commission in the South-West, under the South-West power scheme, has been to take over the existing supplies such as Busselton, Margaret River, and so on, and the towns are the only ones—to any extent, anyway—that have the benefit. A further extension is needed from Margaret River to Augusta-Flinders Bay. I feel that a survey in this area would show it would be profitable to continue the extensions to Augusta-Flinders Bay and I do ask the Minister to give earnest consideration to the proposals which I have outlined.

I can only conclude by repeating that every endeavour must be made by the Government to provide amenities in rural areas so that the population will not continue to migrate to the metropolitan area. People should be encouraged to go out into the country areas to develop our almost 1,000,000 square miles of territory and thus contribute to the sound economy of the State of Western Australia.

MR. HALL (Albany) [8.44]: The three points I would like to make are mainly addressed to the Minister for Works. The No. 1 item is Albany harbour and its further development; the second item is the dredging of the Albany harbour to further the cleaning up of the harbour adjacent to No. 2 wharf; and the third item is the erection of the second transit shed. The Tydeman report of 1948 foreshadowed that by 1950 there would be 150,000 tons of cargo to be handled which would require two berths. It was said that by 1960 the cargo tonnage would be 225,000 tons; which would require a further berth; in 1950, 150,000 would be required; and in 1955-56,

the tonnage was 196,000; in 1956-57, it was 258,000; and in 1957-58, it was 282,000. It was proposed that the planning of the extra berth should commence in 1956; but it is now 1958, and the actual construction of the third berth, we were told, would begin in 1958 and the work would be completed in 1960—

Mr. Brand: The Minister for Works took the dredge away and never finished the work on the bottom of the harbour.

Mr. HALL: The Tydeman report proposed that in 1950 the tonnage handled at Albany would be 150,000, and the two berths would be required. We have already superseded that, in 1958, and it is evident that we have to have expansion with a third berth going east to meet the development of the hinterland of Albany. That development will be even greater in the future—

Mr. Brand: Did that dredge ever come back to Albany?

Mr. HALL: It is on the Estimates for this year, to come back to Albany and commence work again, but the dredging adjacent to the harbour will not meet the requirements of harbour development. The sum on the Estimates this year will not be sufficient, because the south-west corner of the harbour will, I hope, be reclaimed for industrial sites adjacent to the wool shed. There would be no cheaper land than that and I hope the Minister will view that matter in its proper perspective.

In 1955-56 the number of vessels entering the port was 66, with a gross tonnage of 457,082. The inward tonnage for the year was 82,257 and the outward was 114,291 tons. Oil bunkers amounted to 8,670 tons, giving a total tonnage in 1955-56 of 205,218 tons. In 1957-58 there were 124 vessels that entered the harbour, as against 87 in 1956, with a gross tonnage of 838,030—

Mr. Roberts: But gross tonnage does not mean anything.

Mr. HALL: Perhaps. The inward cargoes amounted to 144,806 tons and outward cargoes 136,900 tons, oil bunkers being 17,328, or a total trade tonnage of 299,034.

Mr. Brand: Who do you think made that possible?

Mr. HALL: I am not prepared to say who made it possible; but over a long period many people have contributed to it. It has resulted mainly from the development of the hinterland, and I think all governments have had something to do with that. I will not take any of the due praise from the previous government, or from the present one.

As regards imports, we find, to begin with, 62,185 tons of rock phosphates—a commodity used for the manufacture of the super which is essential to the development of the district. The next is crude sulphur, 21,365 tons, followed by jute goods 480 tons, petroleum products 54,187 tons and general cargo 6,589 tons—a figure which should improve greatly as the population of Albany and its agricultural zone increases. The exports were wheat, 117,768 tons, barley, 3,693 tons, and apples 111,994 cases. Wool, greasy, for the last season was 23,486 bales. We did not have a scouring works in operation and over 7,000 bales of wool was transported to the metropolitan area for treatment.

I hope the Government will use its persuasive powers to have a scouring works installed at Albany. As the wool sheds progress there will be a greater demand for the blended scouring necessary for overseas customers. That wool is now coming to the metropolitan area, but in the interests of the woolgrowers and of the district I believe a wool-scouring works should be established at Albany. I think the Leader of the Country Party might support me in that. We might be able to get them interested in a co-operative move in order to make something of that nature possible.

For frozen meat the tonnage was 1,215 tons, and I think that will be superseded. Whale oil amounted to 1,908 tons and with the sperm whaling today taking precedence over the humpbacks they are taking about six at a catch at present. They have found another shelf further afield, which they say is more lucrative, but they have not at present either the time or the finance to develop it. We find that Albany is progressing, but harbour development is not keeping pace with the progress. The first essential is the transit shed to reduce the handling charges on cargo and it should be adjacent to No. 2 berth. That would do away with the double handling, which I believe costs about 6s. 3d. per ton.

I asked some questions recently about the shipment of oats through Bunbury and I found that considerable tonnages have been taken away from the Albany agricultural area; and that, in a sense, has boosted Bunbury's tonnage. I do not want to take from Bunbury anything rightly belonging to it, but these tonnages rightly belong to the Albany agricultural zone. For years the workers of Bunbury have been enjoying the privilege of an A-class port registration, which our workers did not have. We did not have even the tonnage for a B-class registration until recently. The hon. member for Bunbury smiles; but he has been pinching out of our back yard to build up his tonnages, and his workers have been getting 24s. per day appearance money, while mine have had to sit in Stirling Terrace.

I appeal to the Minister for Agriculture to contact the bulk-handling people in order that they might examine the picture again. I do not think there is a true picture put forward at present; and in the interests of equity to the Albany agricultural zone, I think the oats should be shipped through that port.

Mr. Bovell: Is Albany still a B-class port?

Mr. HALL: Yes, it has a B-class registration, but we hope to change that by means of these tonnages. The hon. member for Bunbury asked some questions recently in regard to this subject. He asked—

> What was—
>
> (a) the total tons of cargo exported;
>
> (b) the total tons of cargo imported;
>
> through the port of Bunbury and the port of Albany for each of the years ended the 30th June, 1957 and the 30th June, 1958?

The reply was—

		Tons
(a)	Bunbury—	
	1957	243,858
	1958	282,605
	Albany—	
	1957	141,407
	1958	136,900
(b)	Bunbury—	
	1957	55,257
	1958	72,776
	Albany—	
	1957	116,302
	1958	144,806

That shows that we are bringing more stuff in to foster the development of our hinterland. I hope the hon. member for Bunbury does not think I am taking too much from him, but we must insist on our rights—

Mr. Nalder: Bunbury must be buying more local goods than you are.

Mr. Roberts: What was the total tonnage of bulk oil?

Mr. HALL: The petroleum products imported totalled 54,187 tons. I did not include that in the overall tonnage. With the probable shifting of a timber mill and its activities further south, as the Government planned at one stage—the idea may be shelved for the moment as the demand for timber may not be so great as it was—there will be a further increase in our progress.

I am hoping that that mill will be started again between Nornalup and Northcliffe, and the Minister for Works has assured me that the roads will be linked up and a considerable amount spent on them. I believe that, owing to the marriage rate, by 1960 there will be a great demand for timber for housing our younger people, so I do not think the Government need have any fears about starting that mill. It would be a great acquisition to the State and to Albany.

Now I wish to refer to the fishing industry. Some time ago the whaling station at Babbage Island was sold, and in this regard I will quote from the "Fisheries Journal" of May, 1956. Under the heading "Big Fund to Develop Fisheries from Sale of A.W.C. to Nor'-West Whaling" we read—

> The Commonwealth Government is selling the Australian Whaling Commission enterprise at Carnarvon, W.A., to Nor'-West Whaling Co., which operates the Point Cloates station, for £880,000.

In selling that station they gave them financial assets to foster the fishing industry in this State; but, like the boy that fell out of the boat, I believe we are not in it, although they are investigating trawling in the Bight and are buying a modern trawler.

In June, 1957, it was announced that the Federal Government had decided to purchase from the United Kingdom a modern trawler of not less than 160 feet, to be diesel-operated and equipped with cold storage facilities, for the purpose of investigating the possibilities of establishing a commercial fishery in the Great Australian Bight. Earlier attempts to establish trawling there showed that the quantities of fish that can be caught compare favourably with other fishing grounds in other parts of the world; and in recent years the catches of fresh fish in Australia have declined, while imports have steadily increased, indicating clearly that the market here would have no difficulty in absorbing additional supplies.

That has been evident recently, as we have seen from the hullabaloo that has been raised about imported packaged fish. We have been shutting down an industry and importing the product from overseas. The research that the Commonwealth Government is going to undertake in its own interests—it will not be giving us back any of the assets to which we are entitled from the sale of the Babbage Island whaling station—and the knowledge which it is going to use will be gathered from an article that I will now read. The following are some notes on the history of Anglo-Australian Fisheries:—

> Fishing operations commenced on the 27th September, 1949,—

that is quite some years ago. Continuing—

> —when the "Ben Dearg" sailed from Albany.
>
> Two trawlers, the "Commiles" and the "Ben Dearg" carried out 60 trips in all, and fished the area bounded by latitudes 33 degrees and 52 minutes south and 32 degrees 49 minutes south, and longitudes 125 degrees 18 minutes east and 128 degrees 29 minutes east, but the main concentration of fishing was carried out no further east than 127 degrees 10 minutes east.

That is, from Albany. Continuing—

> Not taking into account trips for refits and experimental work, the average catch per trip of the "Ben Dearg"

was 44,305 lb., the average catch per day's absence was 3,222 lb. and the average catch per hour's fishing was 345 lb. The total catch from the general fishing area during the 30 months' operation was 1,240,567 lb.

The equivalent figures for the "Commiles" was 33,255 lb., 2,594 lb., 289 lb. and 731,620 lb.

The Commonwealth's decision to carry out further trawling operations apparently stems from the results of these activities, and it is most probable that the same grounds will be fished.

These grounds are closer to Albany than to Port Adelaide.

The main reason for the failure of this venture was that the vessels were old and were not the proper type, being coal burning and without refrigeration.

From the History of Trawl Fishing Research in that portion of the Bight, it is expected the new trawler will operate, which shows that the Western Australian Government was very active.

In 1904, the "Rip" operated by the W.A. Government carried out trawling operations.

In 1920, the W.A. Government steamship "Penguin" made two trawling cruises in an area east of Albany.

In 1929-30, the West Australian Trawling Coy. with S.T. "Bon Thorpe", undertook seven cruises chiefly in the Great Australian Bight.

In 1948, the Government persuaded the 75 ton trawler "Trusan" to fish in the Bight.

In 1949, the Anglo-Australian Fisheries, backed by the Government, operated.

The cost of this last episode cost the Government well over £100,000.

The harbour facilities of Albany have been improved since trawling operations ceased, the Seafoods' factory is working processing other types of fish, mainly salmon.

That factory's operations are being further extended by the canning of herring in the large oval tins at the expense of £75,000 to Mr. Hunt. He is assisting to maintain Australia's—particularly Western Australia's—dollar strength in overseas markets.

It is obvious from that research and also from the sale of the Babbage Island Whaling Station that the Commonwealth has not only depreciated Western Australia's fishing assets, but also its financial assets.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [9.5]: Recently my attention was drawn more closely to the crayfishing industry of Western Australia by some fishermen in my electorate making certain representations to me. I developed further interest after reading a newspaper article which appeared in "The West Australian" dated Thursday, the 18th September, 1958. This article was as follows:—

> Fremantle Man Wants Cray Waters Closed.
>
> A Fremantle fisherman yesterday suggested that all crayfishing waters within three miles of the coast beyond Fremantle and Port Gregory be closed for a two-year trial period.
>
> Salvatore Miragliotta made the suggestion at the Fisherman's Advisory Committee's annual meeting at Fremantle.
>
> The committee, chaired by Superintendent of Fisheries, A. J. Fraser, will report to Fisheries Minister Lionel Kelly.
>
> After the meeting Miragliotta said that other crayfishermen also wanted the waters closed for two years. He said they were crayfish breeding grounds and far too many crays were being taken from them. Large numbers of under-sized crays were being destroyed or used for bait and if present conditions continued Western Australia's dollar-earning cray industry could disappear.

Mr. Brand: It is a very important industry.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: This suggestion, made by Mr. Miragliotta, is rather revolutionary, but does indicate to all concerned how important this subject is in the minds of fishermen. Obviously there is a fear that the industry may not be successfully continued in the future. My main reason for rising to my feet this evening is to request the Minister for Fisheries, when he introduces his estimates, to make a full statement on the future of the crayfishing industry.

Most people are aware, in one way or another, of the importance of this industry. It should be appreciated that it is a dollar-earner for Australia; that it is an important source of food supply; and that it offers a secure means of livelihood for many people.

Mr. Lawrence: What value in dollars do you think the export of crayfish represents per annum?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I am afraid I could not tell the hon. member at this stage.

Mr. Lawrence: Would you like me to tell you?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes, if the hon. member has the information.

Mr. Lawrence: About half a million dollars.

Mr. Brand: What authority have you for quoting that figure?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I hope the hon. member for South Fremantle will pursue this question in a further debate. As I was saying the third point emphasises the importance of this industry in that it provides employment for a large number of people. Because of these three important factors, every endeavour should be made to ensure the successful continuation of the industry, and that it remains on a sound footing. There are indications, however, that the industry is not on a firm foundation.

Mr. Kelly: That has been said for 10 years now.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Exactly; and that is why I suggested that the Minister could perhaps make a full statement on the problems of this industry when he introduces his estimates. It is obvious to many people that the crayfishing industry has grown tremendously in recent years. I cannot say for certain, but probably it has reached its peak; and if this peak of production is to be maintained, certain measures will doubtless have to be taken.

Mr. Kelly: Do you know that the industry is 20 times greater than it was 10 years ago?

Mr. Roberts: It still has tremendous potential.

Mr. Kelly: Not down Bunbury way.

Mr. Roberts: I don't know so much about that.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Minister has given us an indication of the industry's tremendous growth. The important point in what I have just said is that I consider the peak of production has just about been reached; and in order to maintain it, certain steps should be taken.

Mr. Kelly: New grounds are coming in every year.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Just as farmers and pastoralists in the agricultural and pastoral industries are taking steps to ensure that their industries continue on a successful basis in the future, so should fishermen do the same for this industry. If possible they should work in close conjunction with the Fisheries Department to take the greatest care to ensure that there is not a severe depletion of the crayfish population in future by over-fishing. In the past, crayfish were caught in comparatively few spots along our coastline. Some choice fishing grounds were known to certain crayfishermen, and a real harvest was taken from them.

Mr. Kelly: Of course, great improvement has been made in the design of fishing craft, which enables fishermen to move further afield.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The growth that has taken place in the industry since the time when comparatively few crayfishing grounds were being fished makes a fascinating story. I have been able to establish that those grounds now extend from Cape Naturaliste in the south to the North-West Cape in the North. Over recent years the crayfishermen have been extending their operations further and further afield. These areas are now being fished very extensively, and the crayfishermen are taking rather dangerous risks in fishing along portions of our coast which in the past they have neglected because they would have exposed their fishing craft to great danger.

All in all, as a result of the rapid growth of the crayfishing industry, many interesting incidents have occurred and many stories have been told concerning the activities of those who man the crayfishing vessels. I have even been told that there is great material in this industry for a best-selling novel, and no doubt someone will attempt that task in the near future.

Mr. Kelly: That is a bit fishy, I think.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I think I pointed out earlier that unless certain measures are taken, the crayfish population could be very seriously reduced; so much so that the industry could be deleteriously affected, employment prejudiced, and dollar exports considerably lowered. Perhaps the Minister, in making a statement on this industry, will be prepared to give some thought or some comment in regard to the three or four proposals, ideas or thought that I will express at this stage.

Firstly, will he give consideration, or does he think consideration should be given to restricting the number of boats that are engaged in the industry? In his speech the hon. member for Albany, who has just resumed his seat, made mention of the whaling industry.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you think we should have a fish board?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: No.

Mr. Lawrence: I always thought you believed in private enterprise.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Just as in the whaling industry, there is a commission which restricts both ships and the captures taken—

Mr. Kelly: It only restricts the catch which is on a quota basis. They can use 40 ships if they want to.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I shall be more specific and say, "restrict the catch to be taken"; and a quota is given. That in itself has the tendency of restricting the number of boats engaged, because it is quite obvious to the Minister that it would be uneconomic to use more boats than necessary to obtain the quota.

Mr. Kelly: It is an international matter, not Australian.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I am only using it as a basis of comparison and trying to point out that in another industry a commission sees fit to restrict the catch on a quota basis, as the Minister pointed out. I am now suggesting that the Minister give consideration to the question of restricting the number of boats engaged in the trade, not because I want to restrict the number of boats, but because I desire consideration to be given to protecting the industry. As the Minister probably understands, I have not risen to my feet in any critical vein whatsoever, and I would like him to make a full statement when he introduces his estimates.

Mr. Kelly: I will.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: That is the first point I desire to make, and the first proposal I would like the Minister to comment upon. I now suggest to him that some action should be taken to tighten or strengthen the existing regulations regarding the plucking of female crays in berry, and also the taking of under-sized crays.

Unfortunately, the plucking of female crays is all too common; and this in itself can only result, if carried on, in a severe lessening of the crayfish population. Sometimes I am led to believe these female crays are stripped or plucked of their eggs and then replaced in the pots in order that the wounds may heal; and at a later stage they are taken up and marketed.

I think that each and every one of us will realise the foolishness of this action if indulged in to any great extent. When one considers that a female cray produces approximately half a million eggs, one realises the effect the plucking of female crays could have on the crayfish population. Say that there is ordinarily a mortality rate with regard to the reproduction figures of this half a million eggs of 90 per cent.: it means that although 450,000 eggs do not reach maturity 50,000 crays might still come into being and reach marketable size. Therefore, I suggest that the regulations regarding this matter could be severely tightened up.

Unfortunately, the taking of under-sized crays is all too common. During the season, hundreds and hundreds of boxes of under-sized crays are landed at various points along our coastline, despite the strenuous efforts of the departmental officers to prevent the practice; and this stripping of the female crays is a practice which can only lead to a severe diminution of the number of crays along the coast. Perhaps the Minister would be kind enough to comment upon what he feels might be the necessity, or not, of tightening up the existing regulations in regard to these two matters.

I have here the Act; so let us have a look at it and see what it says in regard to the penalties for the taking of under-sized fish. Section 24 of the Fisheries Act reads as follows:—

> If any person shall, without lawful authority, have in his possession, or on his premises, or in any boat, or shall sell or consign for sale any fish of any of the species mentioned in the Second Schedule, of a less length than that set opposite to the name of such fish in such Schedule, he shall be liable to a penalty not less than two pounds and not exceeding five pounds for a first offence and not less than five pounds and not exceeding twenty pounds for a second or subsequent offence . . .

Mr. Kelly: Would you be prepared to support me if I made these penalties very much higher?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I think something like that should be done, and that is what I am coming to. Section 24 goes on to deal with, in certain circumstances, the number of under-sized fish in a boat; and the catch may be confiscated. I submit that these penalties need reconsideration, although I am doubtful whether penalties that are purely financial will completely fit the bill.

Mr. Kelly: They won't.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Therefore, the Minister may be able to give us some information as to whether or not he would include somewhere in this Act a provision for a boat licence to be suspended for a period.

Mr. Lawrence: If you read that section of the Act, you will see it does not refer to wet fish.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHISON: It refers to the taking of under-sized fish, which includes crayfish.

Mr. Lawrence: You had better have another look at the Act.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Perhaps the hon. member could correct me at a later stage if I am wrong. With regard to the catching of female crays in berry, would the Minister comment on a proposition to ban the taking of all female crays for an additional period beyond the 15th October? That is a proposition which may not go down particularly well with some fishermen; but I would appreciate it if the Minister would have the point of view examined, because of the practice of which I have spoken. Possibly it might be in the interests of the industry to ban the taking of female crays after the season begins for a further time in their spawning period.

If action were taken along the lines I have suggested, there would, in all probability, be little or no need to close all crayfishing waters within three miles of

the coast, as was suggested at the annual meeting of the Fishermen's Advisory Committee.

Mr. Kelly: They have already dealt with most of the points you have enumerated. Their advice has not been on the lines you suggest, although I have had meetings with my officers in regard to some of those same points.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Perhaps the Minister would enlarge on the matter at a later stage.

Mr. Kelly: Yes; I will.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: There is another matter of which the Minister probably has a full knowledge, but concerning which the public is still in the dark; and it has to do with what steps, if any, have been taken by the State to extend its jurisdiction over waters outside the three-mile limit, or to obtain Commonwealth agreement on some co-ordinated measures. If some official statement has been published, I am afraid I have not seen it; and the Minister might be prepared to enlarge on that point also.

Mr. Kelly: Have you followed the case in Iceland?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I trust it never reaches such a stage as it has in Iceland.

Mr. Kelly: It is an international matter as regards the delineation of the three-mile limit.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I hope it never will as we are a Commonwealth. Would the Minister comment on the quality of the two patrol boats in use by the Fisheries Department? I have been told—although it may be a little extravagant—that the slowest vessel in the fishing fleet could show a clean pair of heels to the department's two control boats.

Mr. Kelly: I think that would be right.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Minister says that it is probably right.

Mr. Kelly: Yes. It is a matter I have been trying to alter.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I think that all of us would agree that if the department is going to be efficiently served in regard to its patrol boats; and if there is any necessity for boats to patrol the waters of our coastline, it is rather ludicrous that the Fisheries Department's vessels are too outmoded and too slow to be able, if they desire, to apprehend any vessel on the high seas.

That is practically the sum total of what I have to say. To a certain extent I have been groping for information. I—and I think the public too—would be glad if the Minister would make a full statement regarding the various problems appertaining to the industry. I trust that when he introduces his Estimates, he will not only make this full statement, but will, in his kindness, make comment on the few suggestions or proposals I have outlined.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [9.31]: We have just heard some views on an important dollar-earning industry, and I would like to speak briefly on another—the goldmining industry. I was interested to read in "The West Australian" this morning, in the "Business Review" section, this heading: "Hopes For A Rise in Dollar Gold Price Dashed." I believe the report in the newspaper would be of interest to hon. members. It states—

> The biggest setback to the goldmining industry in the past year was the failure of the International Monetary Fund conference at New Delhi to increase the price of gold.
>
> The decision was all the more disappointing as there had been repeated assertions from many quarters, including some prominent economists, earlier in the year that the time was now ripe for an increase. Once again the industry must look to continued assistance from the Commonwealth Government.
>
> At the last annual meeting of the W.A. Chamber of Mines it was said that the chamber was seeking adjustments to the Australian subsidy. In the 1957 budget, the gold subsidy was raised 15s. an ounce. At the same time the maximum amount allowed to be charged against development in assessing costs per ounce was raised from £3 10s. to £5 5s.

The amount of increase per fine ounce—namely, 15s.—as provided for in the 1957 Federal Budget, is, as I said at the time, like a teaspoonful of water poured into an empty dish. It is a help, but the help is not sufficiently appreciable to be noticed or beneficial.

To justify my speaking on the goldmining industry on these Estimates, I intend to advocate that a goldmining industry aid mission, sponsored by the Mines Department and led by an official of that department, should be established. I would have no hesitation, if I were allowed to select the leader of the mission, in nominating our Under Secretary for Mines, as I regard him as one of the best men in the State in this field.

I would like to see a goldmining industry aid mission formed of interested persons who have a thorough knowledge of the industry and its economics. The lead in this matter should be given by the State Government, and the Chamber of Mines should be invited to join the mission, which should be equipped with the necessary economic knowledge together with details of the latest findings in connection with production methods. The mission should be sent to Canberra after the next Federal election, and make its presence

felt there in an effort to convince the Federal Government—irrespective of its political colour after the 22nd November next—that a new, realistic and enlightened outlook must be adopted towards the goldmining industry. In 1957, the present Commonwealth Government did recognise that there was a definite need for some aid for the industry, but I claim that the 15s. increase in the subsidy was almost negligible from the point of view of benefit.

I wish to leave the goldmining industry now—not because I have exhausted the subject, but because I feel brevity is the soul of wit; and because others who are more capable than I in connection with the industry and are more cognisant of its problems can take up this case; and I hope some good will result. What I do hope for is an increased subsidy to be paid to both the large and small producers. At present, the small producers are receiving the subsidy—which I think is inadequate—but I would like to see the big producers receive something, too. Because of the conditions attaching to the subsidy, some of them at present are receiving nothing.

I shall now address a few remarks to the Minister for Industrial Development. In 1953 an inter-departmental committee was formed to report upon the utilisation of the sulphur content of Kalgoorlie gold ore. This session, I asked for the file to be laid on the Table of the House. I have examined it thoroughly and have made quite a few inquiries into this question. I would like to speak on some of my findings. I believe that, in 1952, this committee left no stone unturned in its field of inquiry. Its report was most meticulous and contained a list of recommendations. I shall briefly mention some of these recommendations and then go back to 1952 to see just how they were carried out.

The committee recommended several alternatives, as far as Kalgoorlie gold ores were concerned. These alternatives were to be attempted in a certain order. The last of them, if the others were found to be impracticable, was the encouragement of the Chamber of Mines, Kalgoorlie—or failing the interest of the chamber, the encouragement of individual mines to send gold ores by rail from Kalgoorlie to the metropolitan area, for treatment not only for the gold content but for the sulphur content, which would become a product of the sulphuric acid industry and ultimately be utilised in the manufacture of superphosphate.

Mr. Sleeman: I wish you would keep it at Kalgoorlie and treat it there.

Mr. EVANS: Give me a hand, and I will try to get it back.

Mr. Sleeman: I have done my best.

Mr. EVANS: That was the last alternative suggested by the committee. Before dealing with the others I shall briefly mention that the gas emanating from the mines at Kalgoorlie—sulphur dioxide gas—is known to have what is called a gas tenor, or percentage of sulphur dioxide to a certain volume of gas, 2.5 per cent., which is regarded as too low for use in either a chamber or a contact sulphuric acid plant.

However, the committee recommended that a certain type of roaster could be used for experimental purposes and it would—so the committee claimed as a result of experiments elsewhere in the world—not only retain the present gold recovery, but would most likely improve the gold recovery; and at the same time, possibly increase the gas tenor up to 5 per cent. which is quite sufficient for use in the manufacture of sulphuric acid under the chamber method. The type of reactor or roaster suggested is called a fluo-solids type, the capital cost of which, I believe, is no more than that of the Edward roasters in use in the mines at Kalgoorlie at the present time.

Another suggestion was that with this roaster, no difficulty would be experienced in obtaining pure elemental sulphur from the sulphur dioxide. The pure elemental sulphur could then be treated on the Goldfields, thus providing more employment on the fields; or it could be transferred to the existing sulphuric acid section of the superphosphate works.

However, not one of these suggestions was carried out. I do not even know whether they were tried, but I fail to see how they were. I recently asked an interesting question of the Minister for Mines as follows:—

> What type of roasters or reactors are used by the North Fremantle Superphosphate Co. in its recovery of gold by treatment of Kalgoorlie gold ores?

I was given this reply—

> The roasters used for the roasting of Kalgoorlie concentrates at North Fremantle are of the fluid bed type.

I am led to believe that this is the same type of roaster as was advocated by the committee in 1952 for use in Kalgoorlie. Therefore, I am trying to bring the problem to light by asking whether it is too late—I see no reason why it should be—for an experiment to be carried out by the Department of Industrial Development in conjunction with the Mines Department and in co-operation with the Chamber of Mines or individual mines, at the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie. The mines could supply the gold ores, and the pyrites could be obtained from them by means of a fluo-solids type roaster to see whether the gas tenor could be raised to 5 per cent., and the gas then converted to sulphuric acid.

The experimental stages of the conveyance of the acid could then be carried out. We could also see whether it was practicable and economical to manufacture or

obtain pure elemental sulphur from the gas, and either convey the sulphur to the existing superphosphate works, or treat it on the Goldfields for the ultimate manufacture of the acid, and then convey the acid to the superphosphate works.

In 1952, the committee mentioned—I have to tax my memory at this stage—that the freight on a ton of sulphuric acid from Kalgoorlie to the metropolitan area was something like £6 per ton; and the cost of sulphuric acid in the metropolitan area was about £10 a ton, which left a margin of only £4; and the committee thought that would be uneconomic.

However, I am now informed that the price of acid—100 per cent. sulphuric acid: the contact acid—in the metropolitan area today is £21 per ton. At the same time freight rates have not risen accordingly; and therefore it would seem to me that there is a possibility that the manufacture of acid on the Goldfields, and the conveyance of same to the existing superphosphate works either in the outports or the metropolitan area, could be an economical proposition.

I place those remarks on record in the hope that cognisance will be taken of them by the appropriate departments, because the time is ripe now, and has been in the past, for decentralisation to be given a practical move. I claim that the Goldfields is one area that should be given consideration, and decentralisation should be made the platform of those responsible for looking after this grand State of ours.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [9.45]: I wish to address a few remarks to the debate on the Estimates. When introducing the Estimates, the Treasurer remarked on the seasonal conditions; and, since that time, the prospects have improved somewhat. With the late rains, it appears that the wheat harvest is assured, and there seems to be a big reserve of fodder for sheep and cattle. Although wool prices have been down to a fairly low level there has been a little upward movement in the recent sales.

But I am somewhat more concerned with the prospects of the fruitgrowers; and, in this regard, it is still rather early to say just what the coming crop will be like. However, indications are that it will be a heavy one, and the necessity to export more than the usual amount of fruit may occasion some concern. The position may be particularly difficult with apples, in view of the experience of exporters last year. On that occasion the market fell away badly, and exporters lost considerable sums of money on their deals.

With regard to stone fruit, at a recent meeting of the stone fruit committee of the Western Australian Fruitgrowers' Association, there was an indication that plum crops would perhaps be a little below normal, but that the peach crops would be very heavy, and it would be necesary for growers to pay particular attention to the thinning out of their crops so that there would not be a surplus of small and inferior fruit. It is to be hoped that the growers concerned will give every attention to thinning within the next few weeks.

Last Saturday the Eastern Hills Agricultural Society held its annual show, and I was particularly pleased to see, among the stock exhibits, a new class to that district—I refer to the number of beef cattle being exhibited. I think this indicates a new trend in agricultural pursuits in the Eastern Hills Districts. As most hon. members would know, that area has in the past been considered mainly as a fruitgrowing area; but, of late, settlers have turned their attention more to grazing. Although their holdings are small, as agricultural holdings go, there has been a considerable advance in the growing of pastures in that district. The few beef cattle exhibited at that show indicated what can be expected from this area in future years.

In the Gidgiegannup area, which is just off the Toodyay road, a little above Red Hill, and the Mt. Helena, Chidlows and Wooroloo districts, there has been a big advance in pasture development in postwar years. It is very pleasing to note that that area is being developed; because, over the last 50 years, little has been done except in regard to other types of production, such as the felling and milling of timber. I would like to impress upon the Government, and particularly the Minister for Lands, the need to hasten with the throwing open for settlement of bigger areas of the Berry Brow estate, which the Government bought some years ago and some small areas of which have been made available. In my view, considerably more parts of that estate should be made available to applicants.

I should also like to stress the need for the charcoal iron works at Wundowie to get rid of the timber on that area so that settlement can proceed there. I understand that some settlers have already taken up land in the district but have been held up because the works have not yet taken all the timber that they require; thus it is impossible for the settlers to go ahead and develop and clear their land. I would like the Government to pay particular attention to that matter, because I know that the land, when developed, has a big potential in pasture growth and could support quite a few families in the production of beef and fat lambs.

I should now like to discuss the tourist industry in this State. Some emphasis has been placed on the need to develop our tourist industry, because this State has a big potential in that regard. People from overseas countries have shown interest in Western Australia and its tourist attractions. But before we can hope to make great progress in this field, we must develop our tourist facilities and to make

that possible we must provide more modern hotels. We should also make sure that the hotels which we now have are brought up to date so that better accommodation can be supplied for our overseas and Eastern States' visitors.

Many of the people who come to this State as visitors would be prepared to spend large sums of money here, and we should take advantage of the opportunity offered by providing the necessary tourist facilities. If more money could be spent in this State by tourists it would play a great part in furthering development of the State. However, until we can attract people with plenty of money, particularly those from England, Europe, and America, we are only playing about with this subject.

In regard to tourist attractions in close proximity to the metropolitan area, I think the Darling Range has much to offer; and, over the years, many thousands of tourists have visited the area; I refer particularly to the Mundaring, Kalamunda, Roleystone, and Armadale districts. I consider that there are many beauty spots around Mundaring and Mundaring Weir to attract tourists.

I am extremely pleased to see the Forests Department developing its pine plantations and honouring its obligation to improve and beautify that land which was formerly owned by the late Fred Jacoby. This area, which is to be made into a tourist attraction, is to be known as the Fred Jacoby Park. I believe the department intends to convert part of it into a nine-hole golf course which, with the pine trees planted around its perimeter, will prove to be a great attraction not only to tourists, but also to local residents.

In the last 12 months the Forests Department has also developed many areas along the Kalamunda-Mundaring Weir road and have given them very appropriate names. If one can call them such, the name plates are huge jarrah beams which have been hewn out of jarrah logs and the names have beeen carved into them and painted to make them stand out. These name plates have proved to be a great attraction to those motorists who drive along the Mundaring Weir-Kalamunda road. There is no doubt that these name plates are a great innovation, and it is a feature that should be encouraged.

In one plantation, known as Gungin Gully, there is a small dam which at present is full of water; and it makes quite an attractive spot. On many occasions I have seen motorists pulling up at this point to boil their billies, and no doubt they take the opportunity of exploring the bush in that locality whilst they are there. Nevertheless, I think the Forests Department could go a good deal further, without committing itself to any greater expenditure, to add to the tourist attractions of that district.

For example, if the department opened up some of its forest roads—which, incidentally, are in good condition—for the use of tourists during the late autumn and spring months, it would be possible for them to visit such places as Mt. Dale, Mt. Gungin, and also the pine forests which are in the Mundaring Weir region. Incidentally, I would point out that these roads serve a useful purpose as fire breaks, and also enable fire-fighting vehicles to travel through the plantations should a fire break out. If these roads were thrown open to tourists, it would encourage many people to visit that area and this would prove to be a great advertisement to the department not only in establishing its pine plantation but also by illustrating what it has done and is doing to regenerate the jarrah and other native timber growth in that area. I make the suggestion, therefore, that the Forests Department should take some cognisance of my remarks and so promote the beauty spots as a tourist attraction in the Mundaring-Kalamunda district.

Whilst on the question of tourist attractions, I would point out that the Water Supply Department, which is in control of the Mundaring Weir, has performed an excellent job in improving the local scenery by planting flower gardens in the area. Perhaps the department could go a little further by making a tourist attraction of the No. 1 Pumping Station, or part of the No. 2 Pumping Station which houses the old steam pumps. For 50 years or more those pumps gave excellent service by pumping the water from Mundaring Weir to the Goldfields. In the early part of the century the Goldfields water scheme was considered to be one of the engineering wonders of the world and visitors to this State from overseas showed great interest in Mundaring Weir and the Goldfields pipeline.

Since the electric pumps have been installed, these steam pumps have been lying idle; and possibly, in years to come, they will be broken up and sold for scrap. I suggest, therefore, that one of the pumping stations—preferably No. 1—could be turned into a museum wherein the steam pumps and boilers could be retained to make the pumping station a tourist attraction. If that suggestion were put into practice, I suggest that many thousands of tourists would willingly pay a fee to inspect those old pumps.

I now wish to speak on inventions and the use of many farming gadgets. Over the years, the Department of Agriculture has organised field days which are conducted at research stations and on private farms throughout the State. These field days have proved to be most educational to farmers, many of whom travel hundreds of miles to attend. In conjunction with such field days the department could organise small or separate field days for the exhibition of and

discussion on farming machinery gadgets, many of which are unique in their own way and which, although they have been invented or modified by local farmers are not put into widespread use because the manufacturers of farming machinery and other farmers throughout the State have never heard of them.

Farmers who have the bent and the natural ability to modify certain farming machinery or to invent gadgets to attach to them so that they will give better performance on the farm could, if they were given a chance to exploit their ingenuity, do a great deal to improve the machinery on agricultural holdings held by those farmers in other districts. I have read that in America, and even in South Africa —one of the youngest farming countries in the world—many of these gadgets have proved to be of great value.

For example, Professor Harold Olmo, a Fulbright Scholar from California, gave a talk to vignerons in this State. To assist him in his lecture he showed lantern slides illustrating many of these gadgets which had proved to be so useful to vignerons in the United States of America.

He said that many of the present machinery units which play such a big part in mechanisation of orchards and farms in America had their origin on the farm, where some farmer with a mechanical turn of mind has invented them, patented them, and sold the patent rights to a manufacturer. He pointed out that much of the farm machinery had been introduced and brought to notice in that way. I feel that much of our farm machinery could be similarly produced and modified to suit our conditions. I suggest to the Minister for Agriculture that his department could do much to encourage the advertising and manufacture of those farm gadgets which one often sees in operation on our farms.

There are several other matters on which I would like to speak, but I think they can be better referred to when we are discussing the departmental Estimates in particular. Accordingly I will leave any further discussion until that time.

Progress reported.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

THE HON. A. M. MOIR (Minister for Mines—Boulder) [10.9]: I would like to say a few words on this measure. I am firmly of the opinion that it fills a long-felt want in the Workers' Compensation Act, bringing forward, as it does, some very necessary amendments. It is only by the workings of an Act that we obtain a full realisation of its benefits and shortcomings. Over a period of years it has become apparent that there are certain shortcomings in our Workers' Compensation Act; and this Bill, if passed, would in large measure rectify some of those shortcomings.

I do not propose to deal with all the provisions in the amending Bill, as there have been other speakers who have very ably put forward the necessity for them. But there is one aspect with which I would like to deal, and that is the question of the removal of the limit of time in which a worker suffering from industrial disease—in this case silicosis—can claim under the Act. At present the time limit is three years. If a man goes longer than that time after having left the mining industry he is not able to claim for the injury he suffered.

It must be remembered that this is a disease of slow progress at times; and it is quite possible—and it has been proved in quite a number of cases—that a man would leave the industry after working there for some years and show no sign of handicap or disability from the disease of silicosis; but after some years he might show considerable disability from that disease. It has become apparent to the layman, as well as to medical men, that the three-year limitation imposes a very severe hardship on this type of worker, who is unfortunate enough to be placed in the circumstance where he has gone outside the three-year time limit, and is therefore unable to claim worker's compensation for the disability he suffers.

I notice the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in his quite lengthy speech on this Bill, took the view that a number of difficulties could arise. No doubt there are circumstances, and there are times, when we might envisage difficulties arising that could appear very real to us. But if we allow time to go on, we find that quite a number of these supposed difficulties never eventuate.

It must be remembered that every man entering the mining industry has to undergo very severe medical and x-ray examination to prove his fitness. Not only must he be free from any lung weaknesses; but, in the words of the Act, he must in all other respects be physically fit. That covers a wide range; and we can take it, therefore, that when a man is accepted in the industry, with a certificate from the laboratory that enables him to obtain employment—if he can find an employer willing to employ him—he is physically fit, and as far as his lungs, in particular, are concerned there is no blemish of any kind; and that any disability he might suffer through the onset of silicosis is due to the nature of the work in that industry.

So we have the complete picture of a worker who has left that industry for some years, and who has engaged in other occupations in the meantime, developing silicosis. The disease can develop five or 10

years after a worker has left the industry, and can become a serious disability. It has been agreed by many persons who are not prejudiced in this matter that a person such as the one I have mentioned is just as entitled to compensation as the worker who developed a distinct sign of disability within three years of leaving the industry.

I am not saying that because it happens to be my opinion; in making that statement I am backed up by medical evidence. I am also supported by no less an authority than Dr. Hislop, an hon. member of the Legislative Council. Early this year he sent a worker suffering from silicosis to see me. This man had been out of the industry for quite a number of years, but his health deteriorated and he went to see Dr. Hislop for an examination. Dr. Hislop sent him to me with the following letter dated the 31st January, 1958, addressed to the Minister for Mines:—

> I am sending the bearer to you in confirmation of what I have been saying for years concerning silicosis as a progressive disease.

He mentioned the name of the person and then went on—

> He left the mining area 16 years ago and has worked on tobacco and vegetable growing since. Now he has extensive silicosis and is unfit for work, with no claim to compensation as his sputum is negative to tubercular bacilli. He has no claim in that direction. Is it possible to assist in any way, as he is unfit for work?

When questioned, this person told me that when he left the industry he had no signs of tuberculosis at all and was quite fit; but after an absence of 16 years from the industry he reached the condition when he became unfit for work as a result of silicosis. Many other doctors agree that such a situation could arise.

I thought it worth while to read that letter to show that a doctor, who is a member of another place and who has had quite a lot of experience in regard to workers' compensation, is concerned about a worker who has contracted silicosis 16 years after leaving the industry. The doctor in question has made many speeches dealing with this matter when speaking on workers' compensation measures. He has, in another place, given the opinion which he indicated in the letter.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has given a reason why the amendments in the Bill are being opposed. He said there would be a considerable increase in costs to industry, and he quoted certain figures without giving the source. I must confess that I was sceptical when he quoted those figures without giving the source. I say that because the hon. member seems to pluck things from the air, and express them authoritatively in the hope that we will believe them.

Mr. Court: Have I ever misled you on a single statement in this House?

Mr. MOIR: In answer to that interjection, one reason why I do doubt the hon. member's words at times is that he was guilty of misleading this House in 1956.

Mr. Court: In respect of what matter?

Mr. MOIR: In a particular regard.

Mr. Court: Tell us what it was. It is a very unfair statement to make. I am always careful about getting my facts lined up before I speak in this House.

Mr. MOIR: The occasion was the time I was speaking on the workers' compensation measure. I made some reference to the interest which I expected the hon. member to have in the Sons of Gwalia mine. He assured me he had no interest in that company.

Mr. Court: I did not say anything of that sort. If I did it was a complete misunderstanding of your question.

Mr. MOIR: I happen to have the Hansard in which those statements are recorded. They are on page 2184 of the 1956 Hansard, Volume 2. I was dealing with the ability of the goldmining companies to pay premiums. Among other things I said that they were making greater profits than ever before. This is what follows in Hansard—

> Mr. Court: Only in some cases.
>
> Mr. MOIR: Yes. I know the hon. member wishes the Sons of Gwalia was.
>
> Mr. Court: I do not, but the Government does.
>
> Mr. MOIR: I thought the member for Nedlands would be interested in that, too.
>
> Mr. Court: Not personally.

I inferred from that, as any other hon. member would infer, that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had no interest in the Sons of Gwalia mine.

Mr. Court: You are misreading that completely.

Mr. MOIR: For some considerable time before and afterwards he was a director of that company.

Mr. Court: You know I was in that position in an honorary capacity, doing it as a public service.

Mr. MOIR: It does not matter in what capacity the hon. member was acting. I say that no director of a company can be said to have no interest in it.

Mr. Court: You are distorting the whole facts of the case.

Mr. MOIR: When I learned of the true position, I was concerned to this extent: that a director of a company employing a large number of men would use his position in this House to speak against extra impositions being placed on that company. I do not know what is the legal position, but I think the ethical position is involved in that instance.

Mr. Court: You are stretching a mighty long bow. I am sure your Premier would not agree with you.

Mr. MOIR: I am not stretching the long bow when I say it is misleading for the hon. member to state he was not interested in a company when all the time he was a director of that company.

It has been said that these proposed amendments are going to impose quite a heavy impost on industry. The industry with which I am most concerned, as a member of Parliament and as a Minister, is the mining industry. I would be very loth to inflict a burden or be a party to imposing a burden on that industry which it could not shoulder; but I have every confidence that so far as it is concerned, it would bear the additional payments that would be involved in removing the time limit from the disease of silicosis.

I am not guessing when I say that. I base that opinion on the position we have in regard to State Government Insurance Office funds which are held to pay compensation in this regard. We find that over the years the burden has been successively lightened on the mining companies in regard to premium rates which were, in 1953, 80s. per cent., but which have been reduced at the present time to 20s. per cent. That is a considerable reduction on the premium rates that are charged in respect of this particular risk.

We find that over that period the fund held at the State Government Insurance Office to meet commitments in respect of this particular liability has increased to a very considerable amount, despite the reduction from 80s. per cent. to 20s. per cent.; and in the matter of a few years since 1953. We will take a look at the position in 1954. That fund—called the Potential Risk, Miner's Phthisis—had an amount of £1,483,552. In June, 1955, the fund stood at £1,493,602, a gain of £10,050.

It must be remembered that claims were being met and being paid out of that fund during that time. Then we come to June, 1956, and find that the fund had grown to £1,509,127, an increase of £15,525 for the year, despite the fact that in the interim increases had taken place in the commitment under the Workers' Compensation Act and higher amounts were being paid out. I might say that these statements are taken from the report of the State Government Insurance Office which is laid on the Table of this House.

On the 30th June, 1957, the fund had had a considerable increase from the year before. It grew to £1,545,627, an increase of £36,500 for the year; again, when heavy payments had been made from the fund due to the increases that had taken place over the years from £1,750 prior to the coming into operation of the amended Act in 1953; to £2,100 prior to the coming into operation of the amended Act in 1954; to £2,400 prior to the coming into operation of the amended Act in 1956 and the increases that have taken place since that time.

It all goes to show that these provisions could quite safely be put into operation and give a measure of justice to these unfortunate workers without imposing any strain at all on the mining companies. There is quite a large sum of money available, as can be seen; and although the 20s. per cent. does not cover the accruing liability each year, the interest from that fund—which everyone realises must be very considerable—together with the premium payments, are more than sufficient to pay the existing liability and to accrue a considerable amount of money—as pointed out, £36,500 in one year.

I have not seen the figures for this year as they have not been tabled yet, but I have no doubt that the story continues in them. Therefore, it can be seen quite readily that that fund can easily bear the additional impost without costing the industry one penny piece. We did not hear any outcry from the industry when the premium rates were 80s. per cent.; it was quite resigned to paying them. I do not suppose anybody pays happily, but evidently the industry was quite resigned to doing so. However, instead of compensation increases to the worker, we have seen premium rates drop over the years until they have reached the stage at which they are today. As I stated before, they are now 20s. per cent.

For the record, I would like to point out that on the 1st January, 1953, the premium per cent. for mining industry diseases was set at 80s. per cent.; on the 1st January, 1954, it became 30s. per cent.; and on the 1st January, 1955, 20s. per cent., at which figure it has been allowed to remain. If anyone attempted to argue that that fund would soon be reduced and demolished unless the premium rates were increased, there is a very simple solution. Instead of relieving mining companies—relieving the employers—of their just liability by reducing the premium rates to 25 per cent. of what they were previously, the premium rates could be increased without any undue hardship being placed upon mining companies.

I know the feeling and opinion abroad is that mining companies are in desperate straits, but I say that that is not the position. There are some mining companies, of course, which are in a bad way. Some

have just had to have considerable Government assistance—notably the Sons of Gwalia mine. I would hate to think that that mine took a downward turn when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition became a director.

Mr. Court: You know that is not so.

Mr. MOIR: It is in a rather unfortunate position, brought about largely by the circumstance that any mine, no matter how right or how well managed it is, must inevitably have lower ore reserves and probably a falling-off in grade; and that, of course, brings the trouble. On the other hand, we have most of the other goldmines which are the employers of labour. I mention the goldmines which are employers of labour as distinct from the small shows, which are largely worked by syndicates or owners themselves. They are not in a happy position at all; but in the main, as they are not employers of labour, their position has not to be considered in relation to this Bill. We find that other goldmines are doing very well indeed. I have a few figures here in relation to some of them.

The figures for last year for the Lake View and Star mine show a profit of £419,000. That is, of course, after adequate money was set aside for reserves and that sort of thing. It was £25,000 lower than that of the previous year. The paid-up capital was £560,000. It must be remembered there was a profit of £419,000 and the assets were £1,543,679.

The paid-up capital of the Central Norseman mine is £650,000 and the general reserve is £1,800,000. The assets are £2,797,393, and the net profit for the year was £664,177.

Last year the Hill 50 mine had a net profit of £922,544; the balance carried forward was £553,367. It has paid dividends and bonuses of £1,125,000, all on a paid-up capital of £450,000.

The Great Western mine at Bullfinch, which can be regarded as one of the poor relations in the mining industry, had a net profit of £51,850. Its paid-up capital is larger that that of any of the other mines and is £1,798,000. That profit can be regarded as a very significant one on such a large amount of capital. However, although the net profit was only £51,850, it was able to make a reduction in a loan account of £50,000. It is to be seen that while not in a position to pay handsome dividends, this mine is in the position of making profits, and it is regarded as having a bit of a struggle at the present time.

All in all, I think that, taking a long view of this Bill, it could be considered a very worthy one. I noticed that when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was speaking, he did not like the provision for higher amounts to be allowed for the payment of hospital and medical fees for injured workers, and seemed to throw some doubt on the honesty of the medical profession, inasmuch as it could be inferred from his remarks that the gate would be thrown wide open and that the medical profession would exploit the injured worker so far as fees were concerned.

The Workers' Compensation Act provides machinery under which those cases could be dealt with. The board could set up a register of doctors who would have considerable powers to impose fines on any offending doctor. Page 60 of the Act reads—

> Of its own motion, or upon a complaint in writing made within 12 months after the occurrence, giving rise to such complaint, by—
>
> (I) the worker; or
>
> (II) the employer; or
>
> (III) a near relative of the worker, when for any reason deemed sufficient by the board the worker is unable to make the complaint himself;
>
> (IV) any other person authorised in that behalf by the board,
>
> the Board may hold an inquiry into the conduct of any registered medical practitioner with respect to the treatment of or attendance on the worker, or to the expenses or fees charged for such treatment or attendance by the medical practitioner.

So I say the machinery is available to deal with the odd person who may be tempted to charge more than what would be considered reasonable in the circumstances. Therefore I do not think that the submission by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition really holds water.

Mr. Court: Do you think that Western Australian industry should bear the full impact of this when under the system proposed in this Bill a very considerable relief would be granted to social services; that is, to Commonwealth social services?

Mr. MOIR: The hon. member, in my opinion, is social-service happy.

Mr. Court: No he isn't!

Mr. MOIR: He is absolutely social-service happy. He thinks that it would be a wonderful thing if all liability could be removed, under the Workers' Compensation Act, from the shoulders of the employer and shifted to the shoulders of the taxpayers of Australia.

Mr. Court: We have never said anything of the sort.

Mr. MOIR: It was implied.

Mr. Court: It was not. We have complained about the failure of the Government to demonstrate where one impinges on the other.

Mr. MOIR: I will grant that I may have been exaggerating when I said the whole of the liability because this is what the Leader of the Opposition said—

> I am not attempting to pass the whole of the liability for workers' compensation over to social services. It will be a long time before that happens in Australia.

The implication is there. The hon. member thought a lot of the liability should be handed over; and if one takes notice of the concluding few words by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition when he said, "It will be a long time before that happens in Australia," it will be seen that he believes it will ultimately eventuate.

Mr. Court: Is it not the long-term policy of the Labour Party to have a system of social services which will render workers' compensation unnecessary?

Mr. MOIR: Is that so? The Deputy Leader of the Opposition seems to know more about Labour Party policy than I do. I must get together with him some time and he can give me a bit of instruction. I thought I was fairly conversant with the aims and objects of the Labour Party but I must be missing out. The Minister will probably be pleased to learn something in that regard, too. In quite a few instances the hon. member dwelt on this social services aspect.

On another occasion he and I bandied words across the Chamber, during his speech, and I said, "In other words, you are putting the responsibility of the employer on the taxpayer;" and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition replied, "Who pays the taxes? Who pays the premiums?" I pointed out that the employer did not pay the lot.

Mr. Court: He pays his fair share.

Mr. MOIR: The hon. member said he could not follow my argument; but there is no doubt in my mind—I do not think there is any doubt in the minds of most hon. members on this side of the House—after hearing the Deputy Leader of the Opposition speak on workers' compensation not only on this occasion, but also on every occasion since he has been in Parliament when he has spoken on this subject, that he has always tried to tie workers' compensation up with social services.

Mr. Court: Are you happy that Western Australian industry, struggling to compete, should be burdened with amounts which are there for the asking from the social services structure? You do not seem to think there is any consideration there at all.

Mr. MOIR: I do not agree that industry in Western Australia, in the main, is struggling to exist.

Mr. Court: I said it is struggling to compete.

Mr. MOIR: Or struggling to compete; it might be, in some instances, but in my opinion that does not relieve it of the responsibility of meeting its obligations as far as injuries to workers are concerned, when such injuries are met with in the employer's industry.

Mr. Court: You want to remove the limits from workers' compensation.

Mr. MOIR: Not at all; and it must be remembered that in other States quite a lot of the limits have been lifted from workers' compensation. We know that for many years in New South Wales, for certain types of injury or disability, weekly payments continue without limit. That has been so for many years. The social services payments are miserable amounts, and no one would seriously suggest that they were adequate to keep body and soul together, and particularly in the case of adults who have children to maintain.

When a worker is injured he is probably in greater need of financial resources, in order to assist him recover his health and return to work, than at any other time. I can assure hon. members that the majority of workers have no desire to be on compensation—especially in the industry from which I come. There it is looked upon as a calamity of the first magnitude when a worker is unfortunate enough to be deprived of his livelihood and has to go on workers' compensation. It is avoided as much as possible; but unfortunately that is an industry in which a lot of accidents occur and many people have to go on compensation. I hope and trust that the provisions of this Bill will receive favourable consideration by both this Chamber and another place, and that the measure will shortly take its place on the statute book.

THE HON. W. HEGNEY (Minister for Labour—in reply) [10.49]: I wish first to express appreciation to hon. members on this side of the House, for their enthusiastic support of the proposals contained in the Bill. I am sorry that I was not able to be present when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition took part in the debate; but I have taken the opportunity closely to study his speech, and I will give him credit for having indulged in quite an amount of research and for concentrating on his subject.

What I am about to say will not be said in any critical manner; but I have checked up and I find that the pattern of his speech closely follows that of similar speeches made previously on this important legislation. I have no quarrel with that, as I know that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party, and I am not surprised at the attitude—strictly negative as it was—that he adopted in regard to this measure.

Mr. Court: It was not a negative attitude. We asked you to do something positive, but for some reason or other you will not do it.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am expressing my opinion. Let us examine for a moment the question of whether the approach of the Liberal Opposition was negative or otherwise. The Bill consists of 24 pages and contains 29 clauses and—I am open to correction—in the one hour and 33 minutes that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition devoted to his speech on the measure, he did not have one word to say in favour of any clause. Is that not a negative attitude? It could not be said to be a positive attitude.

Mr. Court: We put forward a positive proposition.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I say that the attitude of the Liberal Opposition was negative in character and the Opposition did not indicate support for any single item in the measure. That has been done on a previous occasion, and I have no doubt it will be done again in the future, and it is nothing to laugh at.

Mr. Crommelin: I think it is.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: On a number of occasions since the present Government took office, the attitude of hon. members opposite has been not only negative but also, in some cases, hostile to the proposals of the Government—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I should hope so.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: It has been suggested that we could estimate what increased costs the implementation of these provisions would entail. My attitude—I make no apology for it—is that we must have regard, in the first place, to what is fair, right and just in the interests of the workers in industry and those who fall by the wayside as the result of injuries incurred or disabilities resulting from gradual onset. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that the premiums would be increased by 6 per cent. and the hon. member for Victoria Park agreed with him. I say that in these days it is necessary, right and fair that workers who suffer accidents going to or from work should be entitled to be covered by insurance; and, if it costs an extra 1 per cent. or 2 per cent. in premiums, that is no valid argument against such a provision going on the statute book.

We propose to lift the ceiling from medical and hospital expenses. Why? Because it has been found that in many instances workers injured in the course of their employment have incurred hospital and medical expenses far in excess of what is provided for under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act; and although in many cases the amounts involved are paid to the medical profession, physiotherapists and so on, on a pro rata basis, the worker is legally responsible to pay to the medical fraternity and others who render professional services the balance of their accounts. I say unreservedly that a worker who is injured in the course of his employment should not be placed in such a position. Industry should stand this cost, and he should be entitled to receive reasonable medical and hospital expenses.

The Minister for Mines mentioned that a provision already exists in regard to the Workers' Compensation Board. We have placed in the Bill another safeguarding clause which provides that where there are any disagreements between a worker and an employer, the Workers' Compensation Board shall determine what are reasonable expenses in any particular case. There is nothing extravagant in regard to the provision for the amount of compensation.

As I asked when introducing the Bill: What does £3,200 mean? It represents only 4½ or 5 years at the basic wage. It is possible to get a case—and not an extreme case either—where a man of 30 years of age, with a family of two, three or four children, and with a number of commitments, is stricken down in industry, and permanently and totally incapacitated. What does he get? Only 4½ years at the basic wage! That is certainly not too much.

I am not going to delay the House much longer. However, before I conclude, I should like to say that I have been handed a note which indicates that I must have misunderstood the hon. member for Victoria Park, because he did not agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that premiums would be increased by 6 per cent. if the "to and from" clause were implemented. I should also like to mention that there are cases where a doctor certifies that a worker, who is usually engaged on work of a laborious character, is fit for light work only. In such cases the worker, because of his incapacity, is not able to resume his normal occupation and he is certified as fit for light work. But there have been instances where a man has been refused further compensation.

If a man is placed in such a position, and his employer is not able to find work for him, or the worker is not able to obtain work, why should he be penalised by having to go on to social service benefits if his disability has been incurred in industry? These are matters which I submit for the consideration of hon. members of the Opposition; and I hope that the Bill will receive the consideration it deserves not only here but also in another place.

Mr. Court: Don't you think that all these problems to which you have referred would be better presented to Parliament if such an inquiry as we requested were set up?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am extremely glad that the hon. member made that interjection.

Mr. Court: I was only trying to be helpful.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I know, and the hon. member has been helpful on this occasion. I have a quotation here.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What poem is this from?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Although I am versatile, this is not a quotation from a poem. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said—

> Parliament is not the body which can objectively and dispassionately consider such a controversial and difficult subject.

Mr. Court: That was not a bad statement of mine.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: It is not a bad one, but in my opinion it is not correct.

Mr. Potter: It does not mean much.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: For at least 46 years a measure of this nature has been determined by Parliament. The Industrial Arbitration Act, the Inspection of Machinery Act, the Factories and Shops Act, and 101 different Acts of a contentious character, and all vital to industry, are determined, as they should be, by the representatives of the people.

Mr. Brand: The Leader of the Country Party instituted a Royal Commission on workers' compensation in 1947 or 1948.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: And in the Bill which resulted from the findings of that Royal Commission there was a provision granting the State Insurance Office a monopoly over certain aspects of workers' compensation.

Mr. Brand: But even so, we took that much interest in workers' compensation that we brought it up to date. We did something which had not been done by previous Labour Governments.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: If the Leader of the Opposition cares to look through Hansard he will see that at one stage the maximum amount of compensation was 50 per cent. of the worker's average weekly earnings, with no allowance for dependants; and where an injury lasted for less than a fortnight a worker received no compensation for the first three days; and at that time the maximum medical expenses were the magnificent sum of £1. The Labour Government of 1924 increased the figure to £100, and at that time the then Opposition opposed the provision.

Mr. Court: I think you will agree that the most spectacular reform in workers' compensation in this State was made by the McLarty-Watts Government.

Mr. Brand: That is quite true.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: That is not so.

Mr. Brand: The workers' compensation situation had been sadly neglected by your Labour predecessors.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: In conclusion, I should like to say that I have only one amendment to submit when the House resolves itself into a Committee. I am sorry I have not been able to place this amendment on the notice paper, but I have 20 copies of it and I shall distribute them among members so that they will know the meaning of the amendment.

Question put and a division called for.

Bells rung.

Remarks during Division.

Mr. BRAND: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, as there was only one voice in favour of the Bill, were you in order in having a division taken when it was called for?

The SPEAKER: For the information of the Leader of the Opposition, I heard more than one voice from the other side. On the volume of voices I gave the decision to the Opposition.

Mr. BRAND: I am sure that my colleagues on this side of the House will agree with me when I say that even allowing for the fact that the hon. member for Murchison was present, only one voice was heard, and that was the voice of the Minister.

Mr. Nulsen: I called out myself, Mr. Speaker, apart from the Minister, so that made two voices that should have been heard.

The SPEAKER: I am certain there were three voices, but they were very weak. But from the Opposition side the volume of the call was strong. I am the adjudicator in this Assembly; and if hon. members are not in their places to express their votes for or against, that is their responsibility. In this instance I gave the decision to the Opposition.

Result of Division.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes—26	
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Moir
Mr. Brady	Mr. Norton
Mr. Evans	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hall	Mr. Potter
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Toms
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. May
	(Teller.)

Noes—15	
Mr. Bovell	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Owen
Mr. Court	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. I. Manning
Mr. Lewis	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Graham	Mr. W. Manning
Mr. Tonkin	Mr. Mann
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Wild
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Thorn

Majority for—11.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—Short title and citation:

Mr. COURT: As indicated during the second reading, it is not the desire of the Opposition to debate each and every one of the clauses. Our attitude has already been made clear. That was one of the reasons why I spoke at considerable length during the second reading. At this stage I want to endeavour to facilitate the proceedings by stating that although we are not opposing or dividing on each of the clauses it is hoped that this will not be interpreted as being a change in our attitude.

Mr. May: In other words, you are relying on another place.

Mr. COURT: If the hon. member wants us to debate each clause we are quite willing to do so. I merely want to make it abundantly clear that although we are anxious to facilitate the Committee stages of the Bill, that does not mean we have changed our view and attitude as shown during the second reading debate.

Mr. BOVELL: I do not want to delay the passage of the Bill, but I was impressed with the proposal expressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, namely, that this type of legislation should be dealt with outside Parliament. It should be emphasised that party political issues can cloud the outlook on such an important matter and therefore an outside tribunal should be appointed to investigate this question and then Parliament could consider the matter.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 4—put and passed.

Clause 5—Section 7 amended:

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I move an amendment—

> Page 10, line 4—Delete the words, "judgment is obtained" and substitute in lieu thereof the words, "a person obtains judgment."

The hon. member for Stirling would undoubtedly know of the Lord Campbell Act, and it is proposed that this amendment will have the same effect in those cases where negligence has been shown on the part of an employer. Where the death of a worker has resulted from an injury and his widow and one of his children sue for damages in the Supreme Court and obtain judgment, it has been suggested that no other dependant is entitled to receive compensation under the workers' compensation law. However, in a case such as that which I have cited, if another dependant child of the deceased worker sues for compensation, such child shall be entitled to receive it. As it stands now, the clause is restrictive. Therefore, this amendment, in conjunction with the amendments I have to follow, will clarify the position.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by Mr. W. Hegney, the following amendments were put and passed:—

> Page 10, line 6—Delete the word "the" and substitute in lieu thereof the word "an."
>
> Page 10, line 7—Add after the word "compensation" the words, "to or on behalf of that person."

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 29, Title—put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 11.20 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 29th October, 1958.

CONTENTS.

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Licensed golf and bowling clubs, eligibility for membership	1839
Bus services, reduction in suburbs served by railways	1839
High school hostels, purchase of suitable place at Geraldton	1839
BILLS :	
Constitution Acts Amendment (No. 3), 2r.	1839
Traffic Act Amendment, recom.	1840
Electoral Act Amendment (No. 4), report	1840
Totalisator Duty Act Amendment, Com.	1840
Cancer Council of Western Australia, 1r.	1841
Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment, 1r.	1841
Licensing Act Amendment, 2r.	1841
Bank Holidays Act Amendment, 2r.	1845
ADJOURNMENT, SPECIAL	1851

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