

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 26th September, 1950.

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

QUESTIONS.

STATE HOUSING COMMISSION.

As to Tabling Annual Reports.

Hon. H. K. WATSON asked the Minister for Transport:

Regarding the annual reports which the State Housing Commission is by law required to submit to the Minister for presentation to Parliament, when may we expect to have tabled the annual reports for the years ended the 30th June, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949 and 1950?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied:

The outstanding reports, with the exception of that for the year ended the 30th June, 1950, will be tabled within a few days.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Disabilities and Development.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Transport:

As no indication was voiced in the Governor's Speech or in the speech of either Minister on the Address-in-reply, will the Minister urge the Premier to make a public statement on the Government's policy towards the disabilities and future development of the North and North-West?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied:

Yes.

[33]

BILL—BULK HANDLING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [4.36]: I have scrutinised the Bill and, as it deals only with tolls and arrears of tolls, I have no objection to the measure and support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—Central—in reply) [4.38]: I should like to supply a little information for which members asked, principally by way of interjection during my speech in moving the second reading. Mr. Fraser inquired why the stamp on the eggs did not include the date. This question was raised a long time ago by the Egg Board, and it was found that certain difficulties prevented its adoption. In the first place, the principal rubber stamp maker in Perth said it would be almost impossible to make a date stamp that would conform to requirements. It would have to be concave in shape to fit over the egg and would have to be very soft.

A stamp was submitted recently, but the construction of this type would prove very costly and would create some difficulty as the date would need to be changed every day by inserting the new figures by means of tweezers. As the board uses several hundred grading stamps, the cost would be out of proportion to the advantage to be gained. Hence the adoption of a colour scheme which enables the colour to be changed every three days so that the board is able to determine at what time the eggs were graded.

Hon. G. Fraser: Yes, but my complaint is that the consumers do not know.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the answer I have. Apparently that is all that can reasonably be done.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Very often we pay top prices for stale eggs.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The people would get to know.

Hon. H. Hearn: How?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They would soon find out, if they were sufficiently interested. No date stamp is put on eggs in any other State, so I suppose that the rest of the Commonwealth has experienced the same difficulties. I know it sounds reasonable that eggs should be stamped, but people cry out enough now about the expenses of the board, without making the position worse. If such a thing were reasonably possible it would have been done in some other State. That is the only answer I can give.

In his comments, Mr. Cunningham mentioned that last year Kalgoorlie was short of eggs and implied that the shortage might be attributed to the Egg Marketing Board. Kalgoorlie does not come within the jurisdiction of the board. The area that does come within the ambit of the board is proclaimed under the Act as, approximately, the South-West Land Division which can be shortly described as being that area to be found within a line from about Northampton running south, down the rabbit-proof fence, to the coast. The Egg Board, therefore, cannot be blamed for any shortage of eggs in Kalgoorlie.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Does that mean that growers on the Esperance line could supply Kalgoorlie without any control?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, provided they are not within the South-West Land Division. The same member raised another query about the shortage there. Normally Kalgoorlie and Norseman draw their supplies from storekeepers in the Great Southern who have permits to supply. Many people have permits to work outside the board. There have been occasions when eggs have been imported from South Australia. It is understood that before the war, eggs were almost entirely supplied from that State. I mentioned that the other day, and that the Kalgoorlie people did not support their own State. There may have been reasons for that: I am not blaming them. However, during the period from the 1st March to the 30th June this year, 40,600 dozen eggs were forwarded by the board to the Kalgoorlie market to supplement the shortage of supplies there, and this is the normal procedure every year. That plainly demonstrates that the board tries to look after Kalgoorlie, although it is not its province to do so. The board does that to help Kalgoorlie and to help itself to get rid of the surplus eggs.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The people at Kalgoorlie are getting their eggs from South Australia because they could not obtain them from Perth.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Probably there was some reason for it. If they want to get their meat from South Australia—and I hope they do—then let them do so.

Hon. H. Hearn: On the fields they get most of their commodities from South Australia.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I suppose there are reasons for that. I do not think the board can in any way be held responsible for the shortage of eggs in Kalgoorlie. Mr. Roche asked what marketing charges were levied by the board. In replying to the hon. member, I admit that I did make a slight error in what I told him were the total charges. I did that inadvertently. The normal charge is 3d. a dozen, and the various phases of the board's operations which absorb this charge have already been explained. They include handling, grading and everything else to do with the marketing of eggs. Apart from providing materials and the cost of handling, from the stage of receipt to disposal on the export or local market, this charge of 3d. per dozen provides a normal price stabilising medium.

However, during the export season—June to November inclusive—when all surplus production is exported to the United Kingdom—in the heavier grades—nine out of every 12 dozen eggs are surplus to local requirements and, therefore, must be exported in some form or other. The net price which the board receives from the export market is approximately 2s. 3½d. per dozen, and consequently its ability to pay a higher price to producers is extremely limited. With the object of increasing the return to producers over this export period only, the board introduced the price stabilisation scheme under which the wholesale price fixed by the board is higher than the net export price. From the wholesale price is deducted an additional amount of 1d. to 4d. per dozen. That is where I made a mistake.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Does that mean that some pay 7d?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but only on a portion. The funds obtained from such a charge are returned to the producers progressively with each fortnightly payment, and when spread over all grades received, increase the producer's return by 1½d. per dozen. I told Mr. Roche at the time that that was the return to the producer, but where we were at variance was in regard to the total amount taken from the producer on a certain number of eggs. Obviously if the scheme were not in existence, the price which could be paid to producers would not exceed export parity, namely, 2s. 3½d. per dozen.

I want to say something about the stabilisation scheme introduced here. It has an advantage over that adopted by the boards in the Eastern States in that the producers here receive the benefit of the increased prices progressively, whereas the boards in the East retain the money in a fund and some considerable time later pay

the producers in one amount. In other words, the Western Australian scheme allows the producer to obtain the maximum benefits at a time when he needs the money most—that is, during the flush season when the price is low. I think I have answered all the queries put by members. Whether or not they care to accept the explanations I have made, I do not know, but in my opinion they are reasonable.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Citation of principal Act as amended by this Act:

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not entirely satisfied with the answers given by the Honorary Minister. In fact, I think that in connection with a couple of my complaints they are rather weak. The excuse put up regarding the date stamp is that it would have to be very soft, but a stamp is already put on the eggs. Those concerned would know what type of material could be used. I admit that the size might cause some difficulty. The other point is that the Honorary Minister, by his replies, shows just what little chance the public have of knowing whether they are getting fresh or stale eggs. I said that the colour of the stamp was changed every week or so, but the Minister said it was changed every three days. I will guarantee that quite a lot of people handling eggs every day of the week could not say what colour the stamp should be for a particular day.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Are they not supplied only once a week to the shops?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know, but if the colour is changed every three days, members can imagine how difficult it would be for anyone to know the significance of the colours.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The board is trying to get over it by having a dozen eggs in a carton.

Hon. G. FRASER: That will help a little but it will not solve the difficulty of the person who wants to get rid of stale eggs. The public should be given more enlightenment on the subject. The colouring of eggs does not mean a thing unless each person has a chart showing what the different colours signify. It is useless, and the only significance is that it shows the eggs have been through the hands of the Egg Board.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I will take it up with the Egg Board to see if something else can be done. However, I think it would have been done in some other State if a more reasonable system was possible.

Hon. G. FRASER: There are difficulties but the experts should be able to solve them. The colour system does not mean a thing, even to the persons handling eggs, unless they have the chart in front of them.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I have been buying eggs at the same shop for the last six months and I have never had a bad one yet.

Hon. H. Hearn: The people might know you.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Often one gets two bad eggs out of a dozen.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope some effort will be made by the board so that the public can satisfy themselves that they are buying fresh and not stale eggs. No coloured charts are published in the Press or anywhere else, and therefore the system is useless.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member will find some difficulty in linking up the citation of the principal Act with the date or colouring of eggs.

Hon. G. FRASER: There are only three clauses in the Bill. One is the short title; one has reference to the principal Act and the other has relation to the date. I certainly would not be in order if I left this discussion to Clause 3. Therefore, the only other clause is Clause 2. That is the only point I desire to stress and I hope some effort will be made by the board to see that the public has an easier method of knowing whether they are buying fresh or stale eggs.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I will ask the Egg Board to make further inquiries as to the possibility of putting a date stamp on each and every egg.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Section 40 amended:

Hon. W. J. MANN: I was not present when the second reading took place and I wish to take this opportunity to make some remarks on the subject. Last week we had a Malayan lady in our home and she has been a housewife in Malaya for the last four years. The question of Australian eggs, as well as that of other Australian products, was discussed on several occasions. This lady informed me that Australian eggs have a bad name in Singapore.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They are not Western Australian eggs.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am pleased to hear the Honorary Minister assure me on that point. There is a general impression in that part of the world that Australian products are being pushed from the markets because of the lack of interest taken in their marketing. Only two or three nights ago I was told of an occasion where a lady purchased two dozen eggs and only two of them were usable; the rest had to

be thrown away. We have been informed that certain fruits and other Australian products are gradually being pushed off that market. Some drastic action should be taken to see that decent Australian products are put on the market and that the favourable name our products had is maintained.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I want to assure the hon. member that his reference does not apply to eggs exported from Western Australia. The secretary of our Egg Board was sent to Singapore to look into the question of egg marketing and he found that these poor quality eggs were not Western Australian eggs, but came from other countries. However, he has tightened up both on the marketing and the quality of the product.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL — SUPERANNUATION, SICK, DEATH, INSURANCE, GUARANTEE, AND ENDOWMENT (LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES' EMPLOYEES) FUNDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [5.0]: I propose to support the Bill, but there are one or two phases that I do not quite understand, and I take it that at the Committee stage the Minister will make some explanation. I think the Minister said, when introducing the Bill, that one of the reasons for the amendment was to permit other bodies that were controlled by boards or owned by local authorities to be provided for. The King's Park Board was one instance which the Minister gave. I believe that in 1947 an amendment to the Parks and Reserves Act provided authority for the King's Park Board to be brought under this scheme. I am not au fait with the significance of that portion of the Bill which states—

The Governor, by proclamation, may declare any persons to be corporations for the purposes of the provisions of this Act.

I should like to know what is meant by that, because at the moment it would appear that it might bring in anybody at all. I have no objection to the provisions of the Act being extended to other bodies, but I do feel we should have some clarification the nature of those bodies.

With the inclusion of certain other bodies to which this Bill refers, is it meant that superannuation premiums will be made a monopoly of the A.M.P. Society, as at present? When the Act first came into existence, it gave local authorities an opportunity of establishing these funds, and the Fremantle City Council was one of the first local authorities to inaugurate one, which it did with another insurance company after securing the best terms it could. For some reason or another that was altered, and the local authority was compelled to make the necessary arrangements through the A.M.P. Society. What I would like to know is whether the provisions of the Bill will create a monopoly for this particular company, and whether other boards will be asked to take out their policies through the A.M.P. Society. I do not know whether these provisions will affect any future body brought under the provisions of the Act. At present, it is necessary for the Fremantle City Council to make two separate deductions from their pay sheets, one for the other insurance company and one for the A.M.P. Society. With certain reservations, I support the Bill but would like the Minister to give me some further information when we deal with it in Committee.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—Central—in reply) [5.4]: The provision in the Bill permitting other bodies to participate in the scheme is to prevent legislation like this having to be brought down every year or so. An amendment was passed in 1947, which was followed by another in 1949, and now again we have a further amendment. The King's Park Road Board came in, and there are other bodies which may wish to do the same.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Will the Government make any contributions to this?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: None whatever. I am sorry Sir Charles was absent at the time, but I made it very clear that the Government makes no contributions at all. The provisions of this Bill do not set up a monopoly for the A.M.P. Society, which merely acts on behalf of six other companies for the purpose of issuing life endowment policies to provide benefits. This procedure, I think, simplifies the matter for those other six companies. I hope this explanation will satisfy Mr. Davies.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

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

BILL—RAILWAYS CLASSIFICATION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [5.8]: I secured the adjournment of the debate in order to consult the Railway Officers' Association. As the Minister has said, that association supports the Bill. It is a matter of safeguarding the status of an officer who, when a position is reclassified, finds that some other officer has secured it. For example, if a railway officer is classified Class 4 and the position is reclassified as Class 3, another officer may be appointed in his stead by the Commissioner or by the Board. The officer concerned would be assured of continuity of service under this amendment under his Class 4 classification. Clause 5 clearly sets out that the continuity of service of the occupant of an office is safeguarded. That is the main provision in the Bill. It is a little difficult to work it out, but I see that the Bill does provide for retrospective action to February, 1948. Evidently a number of positions have been reclassified, which will work back to 1948. I support the Bill.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.10]: The only point I wish to emphasise is in regard to Clause 5. This really sets right anything that has been done in the last two years and it shows how careful we have to be in matters of appeal and so forth. I would like the Minister to indicate whether my interpretation is correct, namely, that action in respect of appeals and so on has taken place since 1948, though there has been little indication of this happening. If that is the case, then it is a serious matter, because it would appear to have been done illegally.

On motion by the Honorary Minister for Agriculture, debate adjourned.

MOTION—ADVERTISING COSTS.

As to Action to Restrain.

Debate resumed from the 21st September on the following motion by Hon. G. Fraser:—

That the Legislative Council views with alarm the very high aggregate value of costs, including prizes, in "Quiz" and similar contests given by manufacturers, and requests the Government to confer with other States and the Commonwealth Government in an endeavour to exercise some restraining influence over these high advertising costs.

HON. J. M. THOMSON (South) [5.11]: Because I believe the principle involved in this motion is a good one, I propose to support it. When speaking to the Ad-

dress-in-reply, I advocated the appointment of a Royal Commission to go into ways and means of endeavouring to bring about a reduction in the cost of living. That commission would be free from political bias and party politics, and the subject-matter of this motion could well be inquired into by such a body. It would be far more beneficial if the business houses distributed their profits by way of reducing the prices of their articles rather than continue in their present manner. By reducing profits they would be extending to the public as a whole the benefit of the cheaper articles. I feel that this motion is a step in the right direction and I believe the motive prompting it is a genuine one. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [5.13]: I agree with the view that we should do all we can at the present time to reduce the very high expenditure incurred in advertising of this nature. If something is not done to check this trend, it will be an encouragement to other manufacturing concerns to adopt the methods used by the soap people. I do not know how it can be controlled, as this money is spent in the Eastern States and the broadcasts originate there.

Other than by expressing our opinion here, I do not know what action can be taken. We tried to deal with this problem in a minor way when we prevented people from making available gifts in order to encourage consumers to buy things they did not want and to pay for something they thought they were getting for nothing. But the figures have grown alarmingly so far as broadcasting is concerned and particularly as regards the terrific amount paid to the promoters of quiz competitions. A pious resolution carried by this Chamber may or may not have some effect. Personally, I think it will have none whatever.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: At the same time, it may give the public an opportunity to express their views. I object to manufacturers paying these huge sums in advertising and then going to the Prices Commissioner and saying, "Look at our costs," and receiving permission to increase prices. I was told the other day that the cost of this advertising amounted to only one farthing a cake of ordinary washing soap.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The manufacturers must be making big profits.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: How do they make them? Simply by increasing the price of their goods. The hon. member wants to show that people are paying big prices. People do not use more soap simply because they listen to these competitions. They pay an additional amount for the soap they buy but do not use a

great deal more just because they delight in listening to some stupid story over the air.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: But they use a different brand.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The brands are all the same. It is difficult to determine which is which. I listened one night to a show advertising Lux toilet soap—

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: But you said they were stupid stories!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am forced to listen to them because the young people are so wrapped up in these stupid things.

Hon. L. Craig: Not only the young people either!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not turn on the wireless to hear such things. I listen to the news and to any speech that I consider is worth hearing, but this sort of trash does not appeal to me at my age. I do not say that it does not appeal to the young people, and I do not condemn them for that. I do not mind their enjoying that sort of thing, but I object to paying for it and I object to other people being asked to pay for it; but that is what is happening. I shall certainly give whatever support I can to Mr. Fraser in this matter. It is very seldom that he and I agree, but on this occasion we do. Wherever I see the public being exploited I will be behind the hon. member in an endeavour to put a stop to it, particularly today when we hear so much about spiralling costs.

I would like to instil into the minds of these firms that a certain public decency is required and that they should restrict the prices of their goods to the lowest possible point which will give them a reasonable return on their investments, but nothing further. To exploit people in this way is wrong. I was amazed that the House adopted the attitude it did a little while ago in refusing to allow presents to be given away by firms for advertising purposes. In this instance the public gets nothing but a story that tickles their ears. In the former instance they did get something of value, though it was not worth very much.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You condone this sort of practice by listening to the programmes.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not!

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You said you did.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I just told the House that I never turn on the wireless to listen to such things.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You seem to know a lot about it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I usually go to bed when this sort of session comes on the air.

Hon. L. Craig: You rush to it!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No. Nevertheless, although I do not like this sort of programme, I have to pay for it. I object to that, and I object to anyone else having to pay. I am sure that this advertising must cost at least a halfpenny on every ordinary fivepenny cake of soap.

Hon. H. K. Watson: On what do you base your estimate?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Our farmers have not made much more out of the fallow they supply to these people for the manufacture of the soap. The increase allowed to them has been very slight. There is a sense of public decency demanded of these people, namely, that they keep their costs as low as possible. I daresay that Mr. Watson, who has big interests, will find something good in this sort of thing, but I do not. I support the motion.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [5.20]: I am not one who would support anything likely to increase the cost of goods. But we have to remember that advertising has been undertaken by all business concerns for as long as we can remember. Many people would never have succeeded in business if they had not adopted that policy. Today there is an outcry because a considerable amount of money is spent on broadcasting. But who is going to draw the line? Who is going to say how much shall be spent? I know a number of small concerns in this State spend a lot of money on advertising without going on the air at all.

Some of our smallest storekeepers have full-page advertisements in "The West Australian" not once a month but frequently. That must cost a considerable amount of money, but nothing is said about it. I suppose that, comparatively speaking, the cost would be somewhere on a par with that undertaken by larger firms that make use of the wireless. I think that is a fair business proposition and I cannot see that this House will get anywhere by trying to interfere with the rights of the people in this connection. Advertising has been the means of firms securing business and competing with others. The only solution is for the Prices Commissioner to say, "You will be allowed so much percentage of your profits for advertising."

Hon. L. Craig: That is what is done now.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: Then what more do we want? We are more or less wasting our time, though I agree with Sir Charles Latham that if anything can be done to keep down costs, it is our duty to assist in that direction. But we are seeking to interfere with what appears to be recognised business procedure, and I do not think we will get anywhere by trying to alter the present policy.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.23]: I propose to vote for the motion, although I am afraid I am not very enthusiastic about it. I want to say something in fairness to one firm that operates in Western Australia. I refer to the Relax company which, I understand, is sponsored by local people. That concern indulges in a form of advertising which it has apparently found successful. Last week-end it staged a show on the Goldfields. I mention this to point out, in all fairness, that this is not a matter of one-way traffic by any means. The company visited the Goldfields and put on an excellent show in the Boulder Town Hall on Saturday night. The whole of the proceeds from that entertainment were donated to the Fresh Air League, a splendid charitable organisation, which by this means received a gift of £105. On the following night the company put on a show in Kalgoorlie. These performances were broadcast, people all over the Goldfields were able to enjoy the programme, and the proceeds were given to the St. John Ambulance brigade.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: They have been doing this sort of thing in the suburbs for some time.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: They gave a performance on the Saturday afternoon at Coolgardie and the proceeds were donated to the Coolgardie branch of the Fresh Air League. That, in my opinion, is a very good effort; and, if a company wishes to spend its money advertising in that way and at the same time to do good, as this company did last week-end, I would not be one to interfere. I understand similar concerts are given at Fremantle and a lot of money is thereby raised for the Fremantle hospital.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: They do it all over the metropolitan area.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I cannot see anything terribly wrong with that. The company is probably doing more good in that way than many others that spend money on extravagant placards, such as are to be seen on the Causeway, and on advertisements in newspapers. However, I understand that Mr. Fraser is in view the splendid motive of voicing an opinion that may ultimately contribute something towards reducing the cost of living.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Another control!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I support him in that principle, because the cost of living in this country today is alarming. That is not an extravagant word to use. If all advertising of products could be abolished, and in that way some worth-while contribution could be made towards reducing the prices of products, we might get somewhere. I am afraid that this motion will not achieve much, but I support the principle and the motive that Mr. Fraser had in mind in introducing it. At the

same time I want to give credit where it is due, and for that reason I mentioned the particular case which came under my notice only last week-end.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [5.28]: The House would be foolish to carry this motion, though I am not opposed to the principle behind it, which is all right. But does everybody here really view with alarm the cost of advertising soap? I do not. Do we view with alarm the slow turnaround of ships at Fremantle?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Yes; Here is one that does.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Why not add that to the motion?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Let us start with one subject.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Do we not view with alarm the high cost of building and of materials? Do we not view with alarm many things that are taking place today? I think that this motion is rather an indictment of the Prices Commissioner.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: So do I.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The cost of advertising is controlled by the Commissioner. In fixing the price of goods, he takes into account the cost of advertising. There is one point in favour of the motion that has not been mentioned. It is rather significant that this very high advertising cost is undertaken by soap manufacturers who receive their tallow at a specially low price. The Australian price of tallow is something like £34 per ton and the overseas price is £134 per ton. So in order to keep down the price of soap in Australia, butchers and farmers, and other people who produce tallow, have to accept a low price—less than one-third of the overseas price.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: And the soap manufacturers get the value of the export price of soap.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not know about that; but they are subsidised. They do receive tallow at a very low price in order that the home price for soap may be kept down.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They are subsidised by the cattle producers and not by the people generally.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is so; and it would appear that the low price of tallow is helping the soap manufacturers to spend large sums in advertising. But again, that is all subject to the Prices Commissioner, who has always determined the percentage that may be allowed for advertising. Who are we to say whether advertising costs are excessive? From the manufacturer's point of view this form of advertising may be a cheaper medium than the Press. I think an advertiser would have a greater audience over the air than if he used the newspapers to advertise his goods, and it might work out much cheaper. I do not

think we should agree to a motion of this kind, which does not include so many other aspects that we view with equal alarm.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Are you not prepared to make a start somewhere?

Hon. L. CRAIG: But why pick on advertising?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is a start, at all events.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Why not pick on shipping, or the price of gold? I do not think we should support the motion, though I appreciate the principles which actuated the mover of it.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.32]: Because I cannot view with alarm the high aggregate cost of advertising, as mentioned by Mr. Fraser, I am unable to support the motion. The practice of advertising is worldwide, but I do not think the general public realise what a large part it plays in our daily lives. During the debate it was suggested that we might do away with advertising.

Hon. E. M. Davies: We would get more news if that were done.

Hon. W. J. MANN: If the Press did not accept advertisements there would be no newspapers, unless at a price that would cause an outcry by Mr. Fraser and those associated with him. Over the years advertising has proved its value again and again and, although Mr. Fraser does not seem to think so, it has been proved that advertising tends to reduce the cost of goods. That claim has been substantiated on numerous occasions. I do not think members should support the motion simply because Mr. Fraser alleges that the salaries paid to certain persons are excessive in view of the services they render. Advertising reduces the cost of goods. Mr. Fraser said, in effect, that advertising costs should be reduced in order that greater amenities might be provided for the workers, but I am afraid that is beside the question as the curtailment of advertising would not achieve that result. I cannot support the motion.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [5.35]: While giving Mr. Fraser full credit for the motives that actuated him in moving this motion, I cannot support it. If every manufacturer were able to avail himself of such advertising of his wares as the soap people have had in this House in the last fortnight, I do not think he would have to spend money on quiz shows or anything else.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We might be able to encourage them in that way.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I suggest that if we supported this motion we would not be gaining anything for the public but would rather be taking something away from them. These audience-

participation shows have grown in popularity with the general public, beyond the dreams of those who originated them. The cost may seem terrific—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Just as in the case of the crossword puzzles that were so popular a few years ago.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Does the hon. member think they did as much good as the quiz shows are doing today?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: For the promoters, yes, with entries at 6d. a time.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: At the time when the crossword puzzles were so popular as a form of advertising, there was a good deal of questioning of the honesty of those behind them; but there is no doubt that where the audience is given opportunity of participating in the show, they derive good from it: They are given an opportunity of getting back some of the enormous profits about which we have heard so much.

I do not think any member can indicate where, since the inauguration of these quiz shows as an advertising medium, the result has been an increase to the public in the cost of the article advertised. When several of the well-known soap powders first came on the market they were so harsh as to injure the skin on the hands of the housewives who used them, but, because the marketing of those products has been reasonably profitable, they have been improved until now they are 100 per cent. superior as compared with their original form.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And the price has risen from 6d. to 11d. per packet.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Not for entirely the same article. The soap powder is better and the packet has nearly doubled in size.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: But not in weight!

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am not trying to give a free advertisement to the soap manufacturers. I oppose the motion because I would like to hear more quiz shows of the type we have heard in the last two or three years rather than revert to that type of radio advertising in which, after every reasonably good musical item, one heard the announcer say, "This programme comes to you by courtesy of the H.U.M.B.U.G. Company," or something of that sort. We were compelled for years to listen to that kind of thing, but now, instead, we can listen in to these quiz shows.

When one realises the number of people who, at their own expense, telephone the stations or call personally at the studios to register their votes for individual artists, one gets an indication of the interest taken by the public in good quiz shows. I believe this modern form of advertising over the air is far superior to the older type of advertising which cluttered up the

countryside with huge hoardings showing ghastly grinning creatures advertising Pep-sodent tooth powder or asking one to vote for some aspiring political candidate. I do not think any good can be derived from the motion, and therefore I cannot support it.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.40]: No member has yet given an instance of an increase in the price of soap or soap powder being due to the cost of advertising. What about the enormous cost of advertising wool, which is borne by the farmers of the State? Has any member mentioned what it costs the farmers? Members may have seen the semi-trailer called "Wool on Wheels," which will be on view at the Royal Show next week. That vehicle cost thousands of pounds, to say nothing of the cost of running it and of the wages involved, and yet that is only one of the mediums for advertising wool. We might just as well say that the cost of advertising wool is too large, if we are going to criticise the cost of advertising soaps. For these reasons I cannot support the motion.

HON. G. FRASER (West-in reply) [5.41]: I have been surprised at the approach of some members to this motion. They have said they were afraid they would have to vote against it. The only reason why they could be afraid is because their consciences are pricking them and they know they should support the proposition. However, they are afraid, and are going to vote against it. The motion, if agreed to, would not prevent advertising in any shape or form, and was not intended to do so, being directed against extravagant advertising, only.

Hon. H. Hearn: And what is the definition of that?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member has a dictionary, just as I have. He is in business and knows what is extravagant and what is not.

Hon. L. Craig: Your language may be extravagant.

Hon. G. FRASER: Most members occasionally see American publications and know the extent of advertising in that country. It is only in the last couple of years that advertising on that scale has appeared in Australia.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: That is an indication of its popularity.

Hon. G. FRASER: All the motion asks is that the Government should consider this question. Has any member objection to the Government considering the question of excessive advertising costs?

Hon. W. J. Mann: If it had nothing better to do, that might be all right.

Hon. G. FRASER: This sort of thing is going on every day of the week.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you view it with alarm?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. The growth of this form of advertising in the last couple of years indicates how it will extend in the future unless some curb is placed on it. I am surprised at the attitude of Mr. Watson on this matter. He is so steeped in party politics that he tried to make it a party question, although it was nothing of the sort. It is purely a matter of whether members agree that advertising in this form has gone too far.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Perhaps it is a question involving Section 92 of the Constitution.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member, in the course of his speech, put up a hypothetical case and suggested that he might do a job for £300 and out of that pay £299 to his staff. I think the remainder of his argument against the motion was just as sound as that. In actual fact there has been no genuine opposition to the motion. Mr. Craig said he admitted the principle behind it but could not vote for it, because other items were not included. Members should decide their attitude towards the motion on whether it is right in principle.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There are a few niggers about.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am concerned with this aspect. If the hon. member thinks other matters should be referred to, he should move accordingly. Because this motion has not covered everything is no reason why it should be defeated. I repeat that there is nothing in the motion that will prevent genuine advertising; it is to prevent only excessive advertising.

Hon. L. Craig: You have said nothing about excessive advertising in the motion.

Hon. G. FRASER: Well, extravagant advertising.

Hon. L. Craig: You used the words, "high advertising costs."

Hon. H. Hearn: It is a question of ratio.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so, but has the hon. member considered the action of giving away motorcars and refrigerators in one night and prizes amounting up to £1,000, without even taking into consideration the salary of the person conducting the radio programme?

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The motorcar is not given away until possibly a month after the quiz contest.

Hon. G. FRASER: In the one show which I mentioned it is possible for half a dozen people to win prizes amounting to £1,000 in one night.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The amount is not £1,000 in one night; some of it is carried over until the next night of the "quiz" contest.

Hon. G. FRASER: No, £1,000 in prizes can be given away on every night the contest is held.

Hon. L. Craig: That only amounts to the cost of a full-page advertisement in a newspaper.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It all depends on what a full-page constitutes.

Hon. G. FRASER: The amount of the prize money reverts back to £100.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Yes, that is right, but the amount that is carried forward refers to the smaller sum.

Hon. G. FRASER: I said that the amount reaches £1,000 in one night. Six people each get £32 as a minimum.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I said on each night.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is what I said—each night.

Hon. H. Hearn: It is merely an expense ratio to turn-over.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member will proceed with his speech.

Hon. G. FRASER: I merely mentioned that in that particular show alone, £1,000 can be given away in one night.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Would you not like to win it?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would not mind. That is £1,000 in prizes given away in one night and I repeat again that in addition to the prize money there is also the salary of the compere and the cost of the time on the air which, I suppose, would involve the greatest expense. We all have some idea of what those costs are. The main objective I had in view—and it is on that score I claim some support—is that it is only two years ago since this Chamber set out to protect local industries against this type of advertising. When we come to compare what we stopped then—the giving away of glass bowls—because it would injure the industries in this State, with the object behind this motion, it does not make sense. Although some members objected to that Bill when it was before the House, they are now quite agreeable to £1,000 in prizes being given away by these firms.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: That was not the same thing.

Hon. G. FRASER: It was exactly the same thing and was considered by both Houses of Parliament in this State.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Your colleagues spent 40 days and 40 nights debating it.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not care what they did. I am responsible only for my actions. I supported the Bill and would support a similar Bill again because I consider it is impossible for industries in this State to grow if we allow unfair competition, by high advertising costs, to override them. I am surprised at the attitude of Mr. Hearn regarding that point. He and

other members have said that high advertising costs will increase the volume of business and will result in reduced costs. Mr. Baxter said that there would be no increase in costs. I now tell those members that there has been an increase in costs, not a decrease.

Hon. L. Craig: And in the cost of houses.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have asked the hon. member to produce one article which, as the result of high advertising costs, has been reduced in price, but he cannot do it.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The size of the article has been increased.

Hon. G. FRASER: It has nothing to do with the size at all. In fact, if the hon. member wants to know, the size has been reduced.

Hon. W. J. Mann: In any case, what has size to do with the question?

Hon. G. FRASER: If Mr. Cunningham cares to check up with his storekeeper or his wife he will find that the opposite is the case. There has been definitely no reduction in price or any increase in size of the packet. Speaking again on behalf of the industries in this State, I point out that this procedure may refer to soaps today, but we do not know what it will refer to tomorrow, and it is of no use waiting until after the horse has bolted before we shut the stable door. This practice has raised its ugly head and it is now up to us to do something to stop it. It is impossible for any industry to establish itself against unfair competition, due to these high advertising costs. Should this motion be taken to a division, I appeal to those who wish to assist Western Australian industries to vote with me and those who want to foster Eastern States' industries can vote against us.

Point of Order.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I object to that remark, Mr. President. That is not the question before the House and I feel the motion should be put without that addendum.

The President: Does the hon. member object to the words by Mr. Fraser?

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: The words used by the hon. member were to the effect that those who were in support of Western Australian industries should pass to the right of the Chair and those who supported Eastern States' industries should pass to the left of the Chair, and I object to that addendum to his motion.

Hon. G. Fraser: I am not putting any addendum to the motion, Mr. President.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I object to the hon. member's comments and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Hon. G. Fraser: If the hon. member objects, I withdraw my remarks.

Debate Resumed.

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

Ayes	10
Noes	13
Majority against	3

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. R. J. Boylen

*(Teller.)**Noes.*

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. H. Hearn	

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the motion defeated.

BILL—PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 21st September of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 37:

Hon. G. FRASER: I would like the Honorary Minister to give us a little more detail as to this particular clause.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The details of this Bill were fully explained by the Minister for Transport. The parent Act provided that all moneys granted as the result of an order by a magistrate should be invested in accordance with the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act and paid to the Public Trustee. In 1948, when we passed an amending Bill to the Workers' Compensation Act the jurisdiction over such moneys was passed from the magistrate of a local court to the newly constituted Workers' Compensation Board. This Bill, therefore, is to amend the Public Trustee Act in order to remove all reference to magistrates of local courts by substituting the Workers' Compensation Board or any court, tribunal or person delegated by the board. It also provides for the substitution of the year "1949" for "1939." Opportunity is also taken to adjust the numbers of several subsections.

Hon. G. FRASER: Would I be right in assuming that the principal idea of this clause is for the board to handle all the workers' compensation moneys which were previously handled by a magistrate of a local court?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the idea.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [6.0]: I support the second reading of the Bill because it is a measure which attempts to bring the Act up to date in the light of modern mining methods. It is generally acknowledged that every mining field in the world has its own peculiar formations. The mining fields of Western Australia are no exception, and it has now become fairly well established that the lines of lode, almost entirely and definitely on the Eastern Goldfields, follow a specific channel. In the past mining companies were formed on the outcrop and other indications, buildings and plants were installed and the companies continued for a few years and then died out.

This actually occurred in Kalgoorlie. There one may still go along the line of the so-called Golden Mile and see the remains of mines of bygone days with their poppet heads and plants still intact. In almost every instance of this sort, three, four, five and sometimes six of the old mines have been incorporated in one company. The object of the Bill is to make the adoption of a similar course possible in newer mining areas. When a company is formed with the purpose of exploring a specific area, it undertakes expensive diamond drilling and exploration, and geologists are able to tell almost exactly what to expect along the line of lode and at depth.

Recently a mining company was formed and took over the leases of several former companies. Expensive diamond drilling and exploration were undertaken, as a result of which it has been possible to determine where the lode or reef is likely to outcrop again further on. Another company, however, becoming aware of these activities, might peg out the lease ahead. I am not here to say whether that is good business, but it has been done quite recently. My belief is that, if a company expends a good deal of money to prove a lode or reef, it is entitled to some protection. This Bill is intended to afford that protection.

Under the proposals contained in the measure, it will not be incumbent upon companies to maintain expensive gangs to man leases far distant from the plant. All that will be necessary will be to maintain the requisite number of men on the central lease and hold the remaining leases until such time as it is possible to go ahead with the work. At Norseman the power house and plant are located on the old lease and there are roads extending for many miles into the bush, and along the roads will be found three, four or five new mines equipped with huge steel poppet head structures, compressors and change-rooms complete and undergoing development.

In former days that same line of country had a small township and supported several thousand people. Today hardly a vestige of the township remains. Activities have been carried on past the old town-site and the miners, instead of living out there, have their homes in Norseman. The company has been able to lay claim to those leases in the light of its activities nearer the town, and we feel that it is entitled to the protection proposed in the Bill in maintaining those leases and going further afield should it so wish.

It may be objected that, if companies are permitted to hold huge tracts of land, smaller men will be prevented from prospecting there. In the past there has been nothing to prevent the smaller men from prospecting on this site. They have not done so, and the reason is that the type of mining needed on such leases is far beyond the means of smaller men. They are propositions that can be worked only by companies with considerable capital.

I omitted to give the explanation in my opening remarks of the formation of the lodes in this State. In the early days, with the knowledge then available, it was thought that the various outcroppings were actually separate individual lodes. Modern geology has proved that the long lines of apparently independent outcroppings really constitute the same channel of ore or the same reef coming to the surface with considerable breaks between. Of course, experience has shown that there may also be a break in the values contained in the ore. Companies have followed these reefs through utterly barren quartz and have had to cease operations and drop out of existence. Now, however, we hope that a company will be able to install one plant where the indications show values and then from a subsidiary concern or company work in the district and, by means of mechanical traction—bitumen roads have been constructed out of Norseman—do the necessary hauling from the main site to the extended leases.

The Bill represents a step in the right direction. It will give large companies an opportunity to continue their exploration and extend and open up new and old gold-fields. But for the activities of such companies, towns that today are beginning to

assume large proportions would not have come into existence. I consider that the measure will be helpful to the mining industry in that it shows an advancement in the ideas for mining some of these leases.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 26th September, 1950.

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