

and there is no reason why this proposed amendment should be abused, either. As members will appreciate, there are a great many principles involved in the Bill which are not related to one another so that I found it necessary to give some explanation of them, particularly those relating to alcohol tests. However, I now move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Hearman, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 1.2 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 20th November, 1957.

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QUESTIONS.

WANNEROO SCHOOL.

New Classrooms.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER, asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the building of new school classrooms at Wanneroo on the building list of the Public Works Department for this financial year?

(2) If not, does the Education Department intend to honour a promise made last year, that two new classrooms would be built on the new site during this financial year?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

ROADS.

Construction and Maintenance Work in Geraldton District.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Minister for Railways:

On the 4th September, 1957, I asked the Minister for Railways the following question:—

Has any consideration been given to widening the Fig Tree crossing bridge, and to widening and straightening the approaches to this bridge on the Geraldton-Yuna road?

To which the Minister replied—

No funds have been provided to widen the Fig Tree crossing bridge or improve the approaches.

In view of the fact that a fatal accident has occurred on this bridge since then, will the Government give further consideration to this matter?

The MINISTER replied:

As the hon member's question is based on false premises, the reply given on the 4th September is appropriate and is therefore reiterated.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. F. Griffith and Electoral Act Amendment Bill (No. 3).

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I wish to make a personal explanation. During the debate on the Electoral Act Amendment Bill last night, the words that I used by way of interjection to the Minister for Railways when he made a statement concerning people whom he said could not be enrolled in respect of Lawson Flats were "that is not true."

The Minister for Railways: You used the word "lie."

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister inferred that I was calling him a liar. That is far from the point, as there was no such

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

intention on my part to be so ungentlemanly and call the Minister by that name. It was purely that I was doubting the statement he was making.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Would you say the same if you knew it was untrue?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I want to make it clear in the minds of members that it was not my intention to offer any insult to the Minister, and I hope he will accept that explanation.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister asked you for a withdrawal and you withdrew.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In the course of this explanation, I want to point out that I queried the Minister's statement. If we refer to the metropolitan electoral roll—not giving many cases but just one or two—members will see that the remark I made had foundation. I quote from the West Perth province portion of the roll:—

S. G. Brearley,
72 Lawson Flats, Esplanade,
Broker, Ratepayer, 72 Lawson Flats.
Christine Janet Cowlshaw,
6 Esplanade, Perth, Investor.
E.L.A.L. Perth C.C. 6 Esplanade.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member has made his explanation and can raise the other matters during the Committee stage.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Very well; I have gone far enough.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member has explained his point and there is no need to go any further.

MOTION—RAILWAYS ROYAL COMMISSION.

Extension of Inquiry into Closure of Lines.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [4.43]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the scope of inquiry of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. A. G. Smith, should be widened to include in his inquiry the discontinuance of the 842 miles of railway, particularly as it relates to—

- (1) The accuracy or otherwise of statements and figures presented to the Government by the committee which recommended the discontinuance.
- (2) The accuracy or otherwise of the tonnage and revenue figures of each area concerned as presented by the Minister when moving the Motion for discontinuance.
- (3) The value of each section of line discontinued as it affects—
 - (a) the productivity of the area and its effect on the State as a whole and the railway system;

(b) the increased cost or otherwise to producers and all people living in the area affected by discontinuance;

(c) the capacity of the road system to handle the extra road haulage necessitated by such railway discontinuance.

This motion is the result of a question I asked the Minister for Railways in this House last week. Had the Minister given a definite reply to the question instead of what was, in my opinion, an indefinite one, this motion would not be before the House now.

To my mind, too much has been done and too much has been said which has never been corrected; and now, I believe, is the time to have these matters put before Royal Commissioner Smith while he is on the job of inquiring into railway matters. I should imagine that by now Mr. Smith has a pretty solid knowledge of railway working in this State; and he will be competent, in my opinion, to deal with all phases which I have mentioned in the motion.

I will now deal briefly with the first part of the motion, concerning the discontinuance of 842 miles of railway line. We were told, when the discontinuance motion was before the House, that two departmental committees had been set up to report to the Government on the desirability or otherwise of closing certain railway lines. I believe that some of the statements contained in these reports should be investigated. One which comes readily to my mind is the inaccuracy of statements made by the last committee regarding the cost of essential reconditioning of certain lines.

In answer to a question in another place, the Minister for Transport admitted that the cost of a new railway line—3 ft. 6 in. gauge—was somewhere in the vicinity of £15,000 per mile; yet we find in this report from the committee that the essential reconditioning of the Wokarina-Yuna section would cost £22,000 per mile. Surely, when we find the cost of a new railway line is £15,000 per mile—

The Minister for Railways: Who gave that figure?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Minister in another place.

The Minister for Railways: Which line?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: He said a new line would cost only £15,000 per mile to lay.

The Minister for Railways: That is incorrect.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is in black and white.

The Minister for Railways: I say it is incorrect.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This committee stated that it is going to cost £22,000 for essential reconditioning, and essential reconditioning had already taken place! I think it is time these figures were checked. I am definitely of that opinion because it is on these premises that the Government has acted in discontinuing these lines. In my opinion these figures are wrong. I want the Minister to prove them otherwise. I want him to prove whether I am correct or the committee is correct. That was not the only line; there are other lines on which the committee gave the costs of essential reconditioning, and I believe they were also incorrect. All these figures have been given as an appendage in this House.

The Minister for Railways: What makes you believe they are incorrect?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Because the figures of original cost under today's conditions, as compared with essential reconditioning, are lower. What is the estimate of the cost of a line today?

The Minister for Railways: The Kwinana line cost £22,500 per mile; work it out for yourself.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am using figures given by the Minister in another place. Why the discrepancy? Let us verify their accuracy or otherwise, and I will be satisfied.

The Minister for Railways: You would never be satisfied.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Another aspect about which I am not satisfied is the accuracy or otherwise of tonnage given for each particular line in what the Minister always refers to as the audit report. I am going to be quite frank. I accept the Minister's statement from the audit report, but it does not give a true picture from the local office itself. I think the Minister was given certain figures in Geraldton which disagreed with the audit report.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: They are incorrect then?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If they are incorrect the local officer was at fault—one or the other. I want the Royal Commissioner to tell us whether they are right or whether the Minister is right.

The Minister for Railways: Would you be satisfied then?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes, definitely satisfied. I believe Mr. Smith, with the knowledge he has gained of railway working since he has been on the commission, should be able to tell us exactly what the position is. As a matter of fact, that applies to the whole of the discontinuance. If, after Mr. Smith inquires into the ramifications of the discontinuance of 842 miles of line, he reports back to this House that

the discontinuance was a wise move, I will be satisfied; and I think most people in Western Australia will be too. Up to date they are not satisfied.

The Minister for Railways: Only you.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I will give information to the Minister directly to prove that I am not the only one. He keeps harping on the fact that there is no agitation for this. I do not know in what circles he moves.

The Minister for Railways: Not in your area.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is agitation from there. I will read a letter that I received this week.

The Minister for Railways: You wrote it yourself. A Dorothy Dixer.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Minister puts a lot on my shoulders that should not be there.

The Minister for Railways: I trust you as much as you trust everyone else. I reciprocate the trust, my boy.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Another phase which I believe should be dealt with concerns the productivity of the area and its effect on the State as a whole and on the railway system. At the deputation from the Country Party which waited on the Premier, the Premier promised that an officer of the Agricultural Department would make a report. I do not doubt that the officer made the report, but he made it while sitting in his office in Perth.

The Minister for Railways: He is wrong, too.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Of course.

Hon. L. C. Diver: At home.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: He might have done it at home, but he did not make an investigation. We would be failing in our duty if we were to take that sort of thing all the way through. The officer sits in his office or at home at night to make his report on a question that affects the position some 200 or 300 miles away. He sends the report to the Minister and we are expected to accept it. It is fantastic. I ask that this matter be given a little more thought.

Another question is that of the increased cost, or otherwise, to producers and all people living in the area affected by the discontinuance. This question arises because the increased cost to one must apply to the other. The Minister referred to my section and said that the cost of wheat transport would this year be cheaper by road than by rail. I do not doubt that for one period of 12 months this will be so. When I spoke on the discontinuance motion, I said that the road haulage of wheat might be cheaper in this

particular year, but the fellow who has the contract might go broke, and then the price will not be as reasonable as the Minister thinks. That will be the position unless the contractor is a wizard at getting out of trouble. The consensus of opinion of the transport operators in the area is that this fellow has no hope of transporting the wheat at the price.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The roads will not be in the same order at the end of the period.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I will deal with the question of the capacity of the road system to handle the extra traffic. It is strange that every time the capacity of the roads to handle the extra traffic was mentioned the reply was that the roads would be capable of standing up to it. But within three months of the closing of the Geraldton-Ajana section, an amount of £40,000 was authorised for straightening, levelling and resurfacing the road. Within three weeks of the Wokarina-Yuna section being closed, a gang was sent there. Yet we are told that the road is capable of taking all the traffic.

As the result of the closing of the Wokarina-Yuna line I asked a question relating to the Fig Tree crossing bridge. This bridge is a traffic hazard in its present state. It is a narrow bridge with two bad approaches to it. If extra transport is put on that road, the bridge will become a greater hazard. Because of a fatal accident on the bridge I asked whether the Government would give further consideration to it. The reply I received tonight was that I had based my question on false premises. When a man is killed on a bridge, is not that a fatal accident? What happened was that this chap's truck broke down and he was walking across the bridge when another truck came around the corner on to the bridge and the light arm or mirror arm hit him on the head. Is that a false premise?

The Chief Secretary: That would not be the fault of the bridge, though.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It was the fault of all of it. Had the person been able to see what was coming, he would not have gone on to the bridge.

The Chief Secretary: I saw a fellow knocked over in St. George's Terrace today, but I would not blame St. George's Terrace for that.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This fellow would not have gone on to the bridge had he been able to see what was coming.

The Chief Secretary: This fellow would not have gone on to the Terrace either, had he known what was coming.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Why say it is based on false premises?

The Chief Secretary: Your argument is.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Minister did not say anything about my argument, but the accident. These things need looking into. The Minister says I am the only one who is growling.

The Minister for Railways: That is right.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The following is a resolution passed at a meeting at Yuna one night last week; and I was not there. I was invited to go along, but I could not get there. This is the resolution—

We submit to the Government that: At this crucial moment on the eve of a harvest of several thousand tons of grain, and with an ever increasing number of livestock in transit, the producers in the Chapman Valley-Yuna area find themselves with neither rail service nor with a road capable of carrying heavy traffic. So much for the Government's assurance concerning alternative transport.

With the exception of a portion washed away during last winter—a circumstance which could arise at any time or on any railway—it is still maintained that the Yuna-Geraldton railway is better and more economically capable of handling heavy transport than the half completed road on to which all haulage has now been diverted.

The repeated public statement to this effect has gone unchallenged by the Government which also despite repeated questioning has consistently refused to reveal relevant figures.

In the area concerned the opinion has now become general that no "loss" other than that normally consistent with the operation of a public utility has, in fact, ever been incurred by the Yuna-Geraldton railway.

We ask the Government: Please accept the word of people qualified to judge concerning the condition and capability of the road concerned. Do not be misled by an ambiguous report by any one Government official.

In like manner, please assess fairly the condition and capacity of the railway concerned. In so doing, remember that heavy maintenance operations were carried out for some time on this section prior to and right up to the eve of closure.

Will the Government not take all facts into account concerning this line in particular and in considering re-opening; also take into account the aggravation of difficulties in the past caused by organised overtime, over-staffing, and insobriety of staff on duty.

In reciprocation, will the Government accept the assurance of farmers, as a body, of their pledged co-operation and support for the successful and economical operation of the reopened service.

Will the Government please be convinced that in the absence of proof to the contrary, the users of the Geraldton-Yuna rail service firmly and sincerely believe that no case for the suspension of their service has ever existed and that their rights within the constitution of democratic Government, and the best interests of the district, in terms of rural economy, can be justly served only by a full resumption of the service.

I did not write that letter. The motion was put to a meeting and carried unanimously. I had nothing to do with it except that I was invited to attend the meeting but could not go. In last week's "Farmers' Weekly" I read under the heading "Strong Stand Urged on Rail Closures"—

At the last meeting of the Farmers' Union, Barley and Oats Section Executive, Mr. C. C. Hill (Corrigin) moved that it be the policy of all members of the Farmers' Union to refuse to take delivery of superphosphate until all railways were reopened for normal traffic.

That is direct action.

The Chief Secretary: Do you support that?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No. I am trying to point out the attitude of those who are concerned. Finally that motion was watered down. Those who attended the meeting said that they did not want direct action.

The Minister for Railways: They meant they did not want their super on the railways.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Mr. Hill went on to say—

The upshot of the matter was that an amendment was carried that it be referred to General Executive and it was discussed at the last meeting of that body. Mr. Hill said this was rather a contentious subject in his zone. It was all very well for people who had not been affected by railway closures but in his zone there were 90 odd farmers on the Brookton-Corrigin line who were vitally interested in this matter.

The report went on—

They had certainly complained and held protest meetings but they had not got anywhere. The wording of the motion was not practical and it would probably be turned down on those grounds.

That was because it was direct action. It continued a little further on—

The union had "taken a hammering" in this matter and it would not be fair to the Corrigin people just to throw it out.

Dealing with the question of direct action, in reference to the closure of the debate the report states—

Closing the debate, Mr. Hill said he admitted this was not just what was wanted but they were having direct action used against them every day and had to do something. When they talked of direct action there was always someone who would say, "Some one would get hurt." Other organisations throughout the world went ahead when they wanted something and did not care whom they hurt. The Government subsidy decreased by equal amounts until it disappeared after seven years and farmers would then have to carry the whole burden and he doubted if they could do it. They should push for a full subsidy all the time.

I quoted that extract to prove that I am not the only one concerned about this matter. The Farmers' Union is very concerned about it, and not long ago that organisation wrote a letter to the Minister asking him to give consideration to using the lines for the transport of wheat and super only. If I remember correctly, that letter was received by the Minister on the 29th October; and on the 30th October the Farmers' Union received a reply saying, "Nothing doing."

The Minister for Railways: Don't forget that it was in the local Press on the 26th October.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It was the sort of letter and a proposition that, in my opinion, involved a fair amount of inquiry; but the union received a reply the next day. There was not much inquiry made into their request; that is obvious. It was a request which came from the whole of the Farmers' Union. They wanted the lines reopened. Does that look as though I am the only one who is growling?

The Minister for Railways: I think you are.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Does the Minister think I have been stirring up trouble? Of course I have not!

The Minister for Railways: You seem to be doing a lot of grizzling.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am entitled to do so. Someone has to grizzle on behalf of these people. An application was also made by the Northampton Road Board, and another one came from the Narngulu area asking for special stock trains. Those requests were turned down. The farmers in the Narngulu area were in such a state not long ago, because of no rail transport, that they had 300 sheep which they had to get to market; but they could not get them there because road transport could not handle them.

Also 200 other sheep were in such a filthy state—because the people operating the trucks did not have time to clean the

trucks down—that they lost a great deal of their value by the time they reached market. Many others arrived in a dirty condition. The congestion was so great that the truckers had to work from 5 o'clock in the morning until 9 at night and until midday the next day before the stock could be cleared. That is why the people ask for these conveniences to be returned to them. They are having a terrific amount of trouble. So from that, does it look as though I am the only one who is grizzling?

The Minister for Railways: Do you want the services reinstated?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If the Minister asks Mr. Smith to inquire into this question, and to see whether the lines should be reinstated, I will be quite happy, if Mr. Smith says that the services are not warranted, to accept his word for it. I think most of the people concerned, and about whom I am speaking, would also be satisfied.

The Minister for Railways: But do you want the services back?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The people want them back.

The Minister for Railways: But what is your opinion?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The people want them back.

The Chief Secretary: Can't you answer a direct question?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have answered it.

The Minister for Railways: I am asking you what is your opinion.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am giving an expression of the opinion of the people I represent.

The Chief Secretary: Now give us your own.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am concerned about those whom I represent; they ask for the services to be reinstated. I am not in a position, personally, to say whether or not the lines should be opened until I make a personal inquiry. If I did so now I would be like the Director of Agriculture sitting at his desk and writing out a report without investigating the matter. I do not want to be like the Minister who received a letter one day and replied to it the next day.

The Minister for Railways: I read it in the Press weeks before that.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: But you did not receive the request until later.

The Minister for Railways: There was plenty of time to answer their letters.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Why did not the Minister have a look at the matter before answering their questions?

The Chief Secretary: You are growling because the Minister answered the letter promptly.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No. I think a suggestion like that deserves more consideration.

The Minister for Railways: I will read the letter and the reply to you tomorrow; it will not be bits and pieces like the Farmers' Union picked out of it.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is one other matter which should be investigated by Commissioner Smith. Not long ago in this House, the Minister for Railways said that there were something like 600 less employees in the railways than there were last December.

The Minister for Railways: I said 800, and it was last November.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There were 800 less than there were last November?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Minister talks of there being 800 less, but the commissioner, when giving evidence before the Grants Commission recently, said that because of the discontinuance of lines the railways had retrenched 260 men. So just whom are we to believe? He said the department had retrenched 260 men and had saved £260,000.

The Minister for Railways: Analyse the two questions.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: What are we going to analyse?

The Minister for Railways: Put up something fair.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am trying to be fair and I want an answer.

The Minister for Railways: I will give it to you. You are unfair.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am not. I read in the Press the evidence that Mr. Hall had given to the Grants Commission. He said that the department would be saving £260,000, and that there were 260 men less.

The Minister for Railways: Because of the closures?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes. The Minister said that because of the closures there were 800 less men.

The Minister for Railways: I did not say anything of the kind. I said that there were 800 less men in the railways now than there were last November.

The Chief Secretary: Two entirely different statements.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If only 260 men have been retrenched because of rail closures, it shows that the figures do not agree. In the first place I was told that 382 men would be retrenched. In addition, the commissioner said that the amount of money saved by rail closures would not be nearly as much as was first thought by others. So I believe that all these matters should be checked; and all I am asking the Minister to do is to say

that Mr. Smith will investigate these further matters when he has completed his present inquiry.

The Minister for Railways: You want him to drop everything and get straight on with your queries.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I did not say that; I said that I would like him to investigate these other matters when he has finished his present inquiry. But the discontinuance question cannot be delayed much longer because of things such as are happening in Northampton in regard to the stock trains. In reply to a question I asked concerning the matter the Minister said that as there has been no maintenance on the line it would not be feasible to run trains; despite the fact that in the first place we were told that if it was found that a mistake had been made the Government would re-institute the service. How can the service be reinstituted unless the line is kept in repair? In my opinion the Government has no intention of reinstating the service, because it has allowed the line to fall into disrepair.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is supposition.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: There is no supposition about that, because the maintenance staff have been removed. All I want the Minister to do is allow Mr. Smith to inquire into these matters; and I would be perfectly happy to accept his report. That is all I am asking the House to do.

The Chief Secretary: We appointed Mr. Smith to do a job and you want to interfere with him.

On motion by Hon. A. R. Jones, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had disagreed to the amendments made by the Council.

BILL—ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS).

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILL—MIDLAND JUNCTION- WELSHPOOL RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [5.12] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is introduced as a result of the Stephenson plan for the metropolitan region. It could be termed the key movement in the overall metropolitan transport plan for the railways, and also for some roadways. Professor Stephenson, and his associate, the Town Planner, Mr. Hepburn, recommended that the goods marshalling yards

at West Perth be transferred to a site in the Welshpool area—the object being, of course, to clear the congestion which exists at present in the central Perth area. As we all know, the railways are causing a terrific amount of congestion, and are an obstruction to traffic in the city generally.

It is most desirable that the marshalling yards be moved out of the city area so that the metropolitan area can ultimately be straightened out, and the land now occupied by the present railway marshalling yards can be put to better use. So this Bill has resulted from an endorsement of that portion of the Stephenson plan—that the marshalling yards be transferred from the central city area to a site near Welshpool.

In order to locate the marshalling yards on the new site, it is also necessary to link them up with the Great Eastern railway, in the vicinity of Midland Junction, and also with the South-West railway, both at Welshpool and Cannington. This Bill proposes to do just that—to authorise the construction of 15 miles 10 chains of railway.

The portion from Midland Junction to the east end of the Welshpool marshalling yards covers a distance of 7 miles 25 chains; the section from Cannington to the east end of the marshalling yards covers 3 miles 40 chains; the section from Welshpool to the west end of the marshalling yards covers 1 mile 55 chains; and the length of through-line in the marshalling yards will be 2 miles 50 chains. Of course there will be many more miles of railway line inside the two-mile length of yard.

So overall the through-line—that is, the three connecting lines with the Welshpool marshalling yards—totals 15 miles 10 chains, less 2 miles 50 chains, the length of the marshalling yards. It is estimated that the cost will be as follows:—The connecting lines £800,000—which works out much more per mile than the £15,000 per mile mentioned earlier this evening, and the £22,500 per mile which, from memory, was the cost of constructing the line from Coogee to the B.H.P. works at Kwinana.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Will this line be constructed of heavy or light rails?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It will be constructed with 80lb. rails. The problems associated with the construction of the line from West Midland to the Welshpool marshalling yards are more numerous than the problems encountered in the construction of the line from Coogee to Kwinana, for the reason that the latter line was practically a straight run over level ground. It had only one road to cross, and a simple crossing at that. In the proposed route from the east end of the Welshpool marshalling yards to West Midland, several main roads will have to be crossed in addition to a big river span.

This line will involve the construction of some bridges over roads, and in other cases of roads over the line. It is not intended that in the construction of this busy line, ordinary level crossings will be provided in every instance. Where a level crossing is constructed it is intended to install the flashlights at the same time as the line is built. Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of road users because the section between Welshpool and Midland Junction will certainly be very busy, as will be the section between Welshpool and Cannington, and the section between the marshalling yards and Welshpool station itself.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: When will the project start?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I cannot anticipate when the project will start, but if Parliament authorises the construction of that line an attempt will be made on a start in the next financial year. A submission will be made to the Treasury for the allocation of a specific amount of loan funds each year so that the programme can be carried on over a definite period.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: When will the Government resume the land?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The land will not be resumed until such time as authority has been given to the Government to resume the land. The land cannot be resumed until this Bill is passed.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Will this Bill give the Government the authority?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Once this Bill is passed and once it has received the Royal assent, the Government will be authorised legally to negotiate for the purchase or for the resumption of the land. It is not anticipated there will be any difficulty. The hon. member knows that in one or two instances where hardship is caused to the owners of land, negotiations have already been going on with them to their satisfaction.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am interested in the phase of the owners getting payment for their land.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think very many owners are really worried about what is going to happen to their land. They know they will be treated very fairly and in accordance with the law.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister is not very well informed.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not represent the district, but I do receive a lot of representations when people are dissatisfied. In this instance I have not received any. To put it in Australian slang, when people are dissatisfied I sometimes "cop the lot." We can only judge each case on the facts and the evidence placed before us. I have not noticed

any excitement or pressure from that district since it has been known that it was the Government's intention to seek authority to construct a railway line and the marshalling yards.

The marshalling yards are estimated to cost £2,050,000. There will be a need for the building of a locomotive depot and that will run into £800,000. The goods terminal is estimated to cost £650,000. The cost of resumption—which can only be estimated—for the marshalling yards and the railway line is somewhere in the vicinity of £400,000 to £500,000. I am saying that is the estimate because the value of any property which is resumed or purchased will be assessed at the current market value at the take-over. My information from the officials is that the cost can be estimated at between £400,000 and £500,000.

To give an overall cost under the several headings, the connecting lines will cost £800,000; the marshalling yards, locomotive depot and goods terminal £3,500,000; resumption costs £400,000; or a total approximate cost of £4,700,000. The cost of the project will not end there. Other works which will involve further expenditure will be required. There is bound to be some additional cost for work in the vicinity of West Midland Junction, and only a rough estimate has been made. Although it will not be much, the cost will run into some thousands of pounds.

As I said before, ultimately this project will be the key to a very big movement which must necessarily take place over a long period of years. Further costs will be involved as a result of that movement. There will be the need for a duplication of the railway line between Welshpool and East Perth. A single line over the Bunbury railway bridge will no longer be able to handle the traffic sufficiently when the scheme is finalised.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Is it not the idea to cut down traffic on that line?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The idea is to build up traffic wherever it is possible.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Even traffic coming into Perth?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This scheme will bring more traffic. Goods coming from North Fremantle, for instance, will not be taken to West Midland and then to Welshpool; the goods will be conveyed over the Bunbury railway bridge to the Welshpool marshalling yards along the South-West line. There will be a big increase in traffic and there will of necessity be a big increase in passenger traffic. The construction of the marshalling yards, the goods terminal and a locomotive depot at Welshpool will bring more settlement in that district. Many more houses will be required. The population will increase very greatly and there will

necessarily be a big movement of population into this district as a result of this project. Apart from goods traffic, the other types of traffic must consequently increase. Ultimately another bridge will have to be built in place of the existing Bunbury railway bridge because the latter cannot carry two lines.

Thus it will be seen that much more expenditure will be involved, following on with the additional works that are required over the years to finalise the movement of the railway marshalling yards to Welshpool in conformity with the Stephenson plan. It is anticipated to continue the work of removal of the goods yards from West Perth. Involved in that is the lowering of the railway line between West Perth and East Perth, or perhaps as far as West Leederville. The Stephenson plan contemplates the lowering of the railway line to obviate the building of overhead bridges of any height. The crossings between the north and south side of the city will be facilitated and not interfered with as at present. These are long-range plans which can only be carried out as the finance becomes available.

The first move is to establish a goods terminal and marshalling yards in the Welshpool area, and connect them up with the Eastern Goldfields railway line and with the South-West railway line. That is the purport of this Bill. It is anticipated that there will be no great disturbance in the area. Overall the number of improved properties involved in the 600 acres where the marshalling yards are to be located will amount to 40. From memory the connecting lines may interfere with perhaps 100 houses. I will not say those figures are accurate; they are approximately correct.

When it is considered that almost 16 miles of railway are to be constructed, and that an area of 600 acres is to be resumed for marshalling yards, the overall disturbance is seen to be remarkably small. The fact that within six or seven miles of the heart of the city of Perth we can build a railway and marshalling yards covering so much land, and yet disturb so few people is something for which the Government and the Western Australian taxpayers—and the taxpayers of Australia generally, because they all contribute—must be thankful. If the estimated cost of £500,000 for the resumptions is the limit, we must be thankful that there has been so little development in that area that we have been able to repurchase the land so cheaply.

A plan of the marshalling yards has been laid on the table, and I have here a plan which outlines the route that the connecting railway will follow. I will also table that. Under the Transport Co-ordination Act, it is necessary to have the approval of the Transport Board before any new railway can be constructed. I

have here a report signed by members of the board and endorsed by the chairman approving of the construction of this railway and marshalling yards and I propose to table that also. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith, debate adjourned to the 26th November.

BILL—EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [5.35] in moving the second reading said: I hope that members will not growl about Bills being delayed and then adjourn debates for nearly a week.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You have a lot of work to do between now and the 26th.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; and members will not help by adjourning debates for almost a week. This Bill is to amend the Education Act. The most important of the several amendments deals with the age until which it is compulsory that children shall remain at school.

It is almost unnecessary to mention that the age is at present 14 years, and it will be remembered that in 1943 Parliament agreed to the extension of the age to 15 years. This extension, however, was not to take place until a date to be proclaimed. Members will appreciate the problems and difficulties that have faced successive Governments in regard to implementing this proposal and it is hardly necessary to dilate on these factors.

In view of these difficulties, the Government considers that it would be a definite and considerable advantage if the Government of the day had the power to extend the school-leaving age by whatever lesser period than one year was considered advisable at the time. The Bill, therefore, seeks to empower the Minister to recommend to the Governor that the leaving age be increased by a period which would not exceed the age of 15.

The Government has in mind the possibility of increasing the present age by two periods of six months each, when the times are opportune for the alterations. The position is being kept very carefully under surveillance by the Government and the Education Department.

The other amendments are of a minor nature and have been asked for by the Department. The first is the alteration of the title of "compulsory officer" to "welfare officer." Members will realise that the proposed title more befits the responsibilities of the work than does the present one.

Section 14 of the Act provides that, if a child cannot attend school because of sickness, a medical certificate may be requested

by the Minister. This requirement is amplified by specifying that the certificate may be requested by a person authorised by the Minister. The reason for this is obvious.

In Section 15 the principal Act authorises officers to accost and take the names and addresses of children who it would appear should be at school. This power is a very dubious one, as it would be only too easy for children to give false names and addresses. To overcome this, the Bill seeks to give departmental officers the authority to escort any such child to its parents. I would remind members that the term "parent" includes a guardian or any person who is liable to maintain or has custody of a child.

At present the Act provides that a parent found guilty by a court of having wilfully failed to send a child to school shall be fined from £1 to £5. The Bill proposes to modify this penalty by giving the court the discretion to refrain from imposing a conviction if the parent enters into a security that the child will attend school regularly in future. It is possible that in some cases there may be mitigating circumstances that would merit leniency of the court.

Another amendment proposed by the welfare officers of the Education Department deals with the employment of children of school age. The parent Act makes it an offence for any person to take into employment or cause to be employed any child of school age. This provision is not far-reaching enough, as while a parent may not cause a child to be employed, he could allow the child to work. The Bill therefore makes it an offence for any person to suffer or allow such a child to be employed. I understand the Education Department has encountered a number of such cases. The fine for a person permitting a school child to work is increased from a maximum of £5 to a maximum of £20. No minimum fine is involved in this case.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Does that apply to newsboys?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They would come under the Child Welfare Act. Whether this measure would override that Act, I am not in a position to say; but I would not think so.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The last Act on the statute is the prevailing one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think the position of newsboys would be safeguarded. The present maximum has been in existence since 1928 and therefore bears little resemblance to present money values.

Under Section 18 of the Act, if a child is constantly and habitually absent from school, the parents may be summoned before a children's court to show why the child should not be sent to an institution. This provision, however, does not refer to a child who commits truancy frequently,

yet not constantly or habitually. The Bill seeks to empower the department to charge the child in a children's court with truancy. If the charge is proved the Bill proposes that the court, in its discretion, may record a conviction and release the child on probation under the supervision of the Child Welfare Department.

The period of probation may be for any term up to the date the child attains the school-leaving age. If the court thinks fit it may refrain from imposing a conviction and release the child in the parent's care, provided the parent enters into a security that the child will attend school regularly.

The Bill seeks to delete the provision that the parents of a habitual truant committed to an institution shall, if their circumstances warrant, pay a sum of not more than 12s. a week for the child's maintenance and training. There is provision for such payment in the Child Welfare Act, and it is now assessed at £2 10s. per week. The amount of 12s. is very much out of date.

A similar provision exists in Section 20 of the Act which refers to children who are blind, deaf mute, cerebrally palsied or mentally defective. A parent who is not able to give such a child the proper care and education it requires must report this fact to the Minister, and send the child to whatever institution the Minister directs. If no agreement is entered into by the parent for the maintenance of the child, a court order for maintenance of not more than 12s. a week shall be issued, if the court is satisfied the parent is in a position to pay. The Bill seeks to increase this maximum to £2 10s. to bring the parent Act into conformity with the Child Welfare Act.

Where a parent fails to properly care for and train a handicapped child or does not send it to an institution when required by the Minister, a court may order the child to be sent to an institution. If the parent fails to obey the order the parent Act provides for fines not exceeding 5s. for the first offence and not exceeding £2 for any subsequent offence. The Bill seeks to amend these two penalties to £1 and £5 respectively, thus making the penalty uniform with that for failing to send a child to school. This proposal is more in keeping with present money values.

The Bill also proposes that where a handicapped child is committed to an institution by a court, the Minister or the Director of Education may authorise the conditional release of the child after it has been two months in the institution. The person in whose care the child is released is responsible for the child regularly attending the institution or whatever school is specified in the release certificate. If the conditions of release are not obeyed, the release may be cancelled and the child

returned to the institution. I think members will agree that in the main these amendments are designed to bring fines up to present-day money values and to bring the Act up to date with present conditions. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, debate adjourned.

BILL—METROPOLITAN (PERTH) PASSENGER TRANSPORT TRUST.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS
(Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [5.43] in moving the second reading said: One of the greatest problems that have arisen in recent years through the tremendous growth and development of the greater metropolitan area has been that of passenger transport. This problem is one that demands urgent attention—hence the present bill.

At the outset I feel that I must express the wish, as did the Minister for Transport, in introducing the Bill in another place, that it will not be a controversial one, so far as its main principles are concerned and that there will be no indulging in political catcheries.

The very framing of the Bill has made this unnecessary; and a very careful examination will show that if the proposed trust comes into operation it will be given a charter by this Parliament, and nowhere will it be found that it is subject to the Minister. Any situations that may develop will be judged and adjudicated by Parliament; and, in fact, the only controls exercised will be on the part of the Treasury and this will be by way of making funds available to the trust from time to time.

The Bill is not the product of a "snap decision" but is something that has been given very lengthy and detailed thought. Today 12 operators are conducting the regular passenger services of the metropolitan area. A very few—and I mean a very few—are doing well. Some are getting by moderately well; others are battling; while a percentage are in extreme financial straits, despite the assistance of Government subsidy.

Although the metropolitan population increased by over 50,000 people between the year 1951-52 and the end of June, 1956, the combined passenger services in the metropolitan area carried over 10,000,000 people less in the year 1956-57 than in 1951-52. Of course the answer to that lies in the fact that during the same period the number of motorcars registered in the metropolitan area rose from 37,000 to 67,000.

Over recent years, efforts have been made to rationalise the public transport system. The metropolitan area has been divided into seven zones. It was hoped that this would enable adjustments and modifications between operators so that each would have a satisfactory sphere in which to operate, and that in new districts extended in the locality the services would be so extended to cater for the need, that there would not be any need for new operators to come into the field and cut across the working of others.

There have been attempts at amalgamations; but I regret that no improvement has been evidenced, although I want to make it plain I am not blaming any person or organisation. I feel that I would be more truthful if I stated that the position has got worse.

It must be pointed out that the present Bill is not a measure to enable the Government to "grab" the businesses of private operators against their will. On the contrary, the operators have been consulted continually and have co-operated splendidly, clearly showing that legislation should be introduced to acquire and operate all services as one unit.

It even goes further than this, as the Bill has been the subject of a select committee of both Houses.

Having heard 21 witnesses the committee of eight with one exception found:

- (a) it is desirable and necessary that one statutory authority should be constituted to take over and operate all passenger transport facilities by vehicles over streets in the metropolitan area of Perth;
- (b) there is no practical alteration more desirable than this course; and before stating their third recommendation, I should point out that they were unanimous on this point:
- (c) the Bill at present before Parliament satisfactorily achieves the purpose for which it is designed subject to amendments which are recommended—

I do not propose to detail these recommendations as they have since all been agreed to in another place and are now contained in the Bill before this House. In explaining the Bill it is my intention to touch only on the main points.

Part II seeks to set up a body corporate known as the Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust, consisting of a chairman and two members, the chairman of the trust to be appointed for seven years, one member for six years and the other member for five years for the initial appointments, but subsequently for five year terms in each case.

Part III, Division 1 gives general power to provide and operate street passenger services and if necessary ferry services routes.

Division 2 provides power to hold and deal with property, borrow money by issue of stock or debentures, engage staff, enter into contracts and, with the Governor's approval, to acquire the whole or part of any existing passenger transport undertaking by agreement with the operator or, if the whole of the undertaking is involved, compulsorily. In this respect it is not considered fair that the trust should be empowered to acquire only part of the undertaking compulsorily, leaving the operator with something for which there is no other sale.

The position could be envisaged where the trust might decide that it would not take over an individual service, which would not only defeat the chief object of the Bill—creation of a single operating authority—but would also place the particular operator in the position of being "crowded-out" instead of being taken over on a proper business basis. Therefore, Clause 25 also provides that where a service is in existence when the trust is appointed, the operator may require the trust to acquire his business within three years after its appointment.

A provision has been inserted to provide that where notice is served on the trust by the proprietor of any undertaking, being a limited liability company, requiring the trust to acquire the whole of the undertaking, such proprietor having the consent of the holders of not less than four-fifths of the value of its issued stock and/or shares, such stock and/or shares shall be acquired by the trust, but if any question arises relating to such acquisition, including what constitutes the property acquired, the consideration payable, or otherwise, the question shall be settled by arbitration.

Division 3 provides machinery for compulsory acquisition, notice of intention to be gazetted and a copy served on the person affected, provision for claims for compensation and settlement of disputes by reference to arbitration. Compensation may be paid either in cash, inscribed stock or debentures, or partly in each. This will render it unnecessary for the Treasurer to be called upon to provide large sums of capital at the outset.

The Bill provides that inscribed stock and debentures may be issued with the Governor's approval, with a tenure not exceeding 21 years and at interest one per cent. higher than the ruling interest rate for Commonwealth loans. A similar rate of interest is provided where payment for acquired assets is in suspension pending settlement of claims.

Division 4 provides for assessment of compensation. Clause 33 provides that, in compulsory acquisition, compensation shall

be paid at the market value of the property concerned, but without regard to any fictitious values of property or stocks and shares which might be created by the acquisition.

Division 5 deals with compensation, where property is acquired by agreement. Clause 34 provides for payment under acquisition by agreement to be made wholly or partly in cash, stock or debentures of up to 21 years' tenure and with interest at one per cent. greater than the ruling Commonwealth loan rate. This is similar to the provision made in connection with compulsory acquisition.

Division 6 provides for payment of mortgages, plus six months' interest. Alternatively the mortgagee may claim compensation.

Division 7 is a formal provision regarding leases and bailments. It provides for apportionment of rent in connection with acquired property and preserves the rights of lessees and bailees. Division 8 contains formal provisions under which the trust may secure physical possession of acquired property. Division 9 deals with staff arrangements and provides that where an existing transport undertaking, or part of same, is acquired, preference of employment shall be given to the existing staff on similar duties.

The trust is also empowered to arrange for staff superannuation, pensions, family benefits or long-service leave or other similar benefits. Where an existing undertaking is taken over, it protects the rights of employees as regards accumulation of long-service leave, annual leave and sick leave.

Part IV provides for the keeping of accounts by the trust, and the payment to the trust's general account of all revenue from operations, appropriations by Parliament and moneys borrowed by the trust. Authority is given for payment from the fund of operating and administration costs, including wages and salaries and superannuation payments, and capital payments for acquired property.

Contributions from the public account are provided for in the event of the fund being insufficient to meet commitments. The borrowing of money is authorised by the sale of debentures or the issue of inscribed stock having a tenure of not more than 21 years, the terms of issue to be subject to approval by the Governor.

Audit of the accounts of the trust is to be carried out by the Auditor General and a report and audited accounts are to be submitted annually to the Minister for submission to Parliament. Any profits made by the trust, after making full allowance for the items specified in clause 55 of the Bill, to be paid to the credit of an appropriate account of the trust and which may be used by the trust for any

of its purposes subject to such payment first of all being used towards extinguishing the accrued losses, if any, which might be owing to the Treasury.

Part V, Division 1 concerns legal proceedings by and against the trust and relates to the service of notices and other legal processes, and the submission of evidence. Division 2 authorises the trust and its officers to enter upon property and to carry out inspections pursuant to the Act. Division 3 provides a general penalty of £50 for offences against the Act.

An important clause in Division 4 provides that the State Transport Co-ordination Act, 1933, does not apply to the trust or any of its functions. This is the general authority for regulations necessary to carry out the functions of the trust, including the regulation of routes, fares and timetables and the use of facilities provided by the trust. Regulations may provide for penalties of £50, or £5 per day for a continuing offence.

The Schedule makes formal provisions relating to the issue of debentures and inscribed stock by the trust and is modelled on similar provisions in the State Electricity Commission Act. The trust may purchase any of the debentures or inscribed stock. It stipulates that stock or debentures may be issued for a tenure of not more than 21 years, at the discretion of the Governor, and shall bear interest at one per cent. above the ruling rate for Commonwealth loans.

This Bill is being brought down to provide the necessary machinery for the trust to operate. If it is agreed to, the trust will then take over the task. It will have a tremendous job ahead of it, and it will not be able to accomplish this in a matter of weeks. But if given the opportunity, I feel that it will operate in a manner highly satisfactory to the people. I believe the proposed trust has every chance and prospect of solving the transport disabilities which surround both operators and the Government services in the metropolitan area today. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [5.57]: I think it can be said that a small Bill, comprising not many words, has sometimes a greater sting in its tail than a larger measure containing much verbiage. The Bill before us is another of the Government's taxing measures and I am sure

that members of this House sometimes stop to reflect and ask themselves just what will be the ultimate situation in this State in regard to taxation and expenditure. I do not think we are the only people in Western Australia who ask themselves that question and it occurs to me that the present process is like a dog chasing its tail.

As each year passes and the financial situation of the State becomes less secure, the element of taxation on the shoulders of the people is obviously made greater, in order to try to meet the demands of the Government; and I wonder where the process will end. It is interesting, at this stage, to examine the 1957-58 financial statement, in order to see what has taken place in this State over the last five or six years.

From the period 1950-51, when the State's deficit was some £591,000, the deficiency, almost without exception, has increased substantially each year until we reached the stage where, in 1955-56, we had a deficit of £1,830,831. In 1956-57 the State had a deficit of £1,912,368 and the deficit for the present year is estimated to be in the vicinity of £2,000,000. It is logical to ask: How much longer are the people of the State to be expected to bear this additional burden? Are we in this Chamber to pass every taxing measures that is brought forward when we know that such measures mean a greater impost on the people we represent?

However, to refer more particularly to the present Bill, for many years prior to the last amending legislation, the scheme of land tax was this: Under the existing taxing Act there was levied a land tax of 2½d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land. Section 9 (2) of the Land Tax Assessment Act defined improved land as land which had been improved to the value of £1 per acre in the case of farm land or, in the case of other land, having improvements to the value of one-third of the unimproved value of the land. Section 9 (1) of the Act provided that the tax on improved land should be only one-half of the rates set forth in the taxing Act and the principle of taxing improved land was that the rate should be only half that paid on unimproved land. That surely was a sound provision. It awarded the industrious owner and acted as an incentive to him—especially the owner of farm land—to develop his property.

I was absent from the State when the amending legislation went through this House last year; and in order to bring myself up to date with what occurred during the debate on that legislation, I have made a close study of the speeches. As a result I have noticed that there were some remarkable occurrences during the passage of the Bill last year. Last year's measure repealed Subsection (1) of Section 9 of

the Land Tax Assessment Act and thereby repealed the preferential treatment which had been enjoyed since 1907. I then observed that for good measure by the amending Bill of last year the rate was increased by as much as 7d. in the £ with an extra 1d. in the £ charged on unimproved land.

I would like to summarise the position briefly in regard to farm land. From 1907 onwards, farm lands were, of course, taxable in the same way as any other land, but members know that due to the great distress that occurred with the depression of the 1930's, farm lands were exempted from land tax in 1932 or thereabouts. However, the legislation of last year waived that exemption or, to be more precise, suspended the exemption for two years. Coincidental with the reimposition of land tax on farm lands, the vermin rate was suspended. Last year's legislation increased the annual revenue obtained from land tax from £629,000 in 1955-56 to £1,108,000 in 1956-57, and to an estimate of £1,430,000 in 1957-58, which is the first year for the full operation of the new land tax.

When the Chief Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill on this occasion he said that of the total increased revenue obtained from last year's legislation, about one-half comes from the tax on farm land and the other half from the increase in rates on other land. The Chief Secretary mentioned a total increase in revenue of £500,000. I think it will be seen, however, from the figures I have collated from the Treasurer's financial statement, that this increase is more like £800,000. For instance, there is an increase from £629,000 in 1955-56 to £1,108,000 in 1956-57 and to an estimated amount of £1,430,000 in 1957-58. In my opinion the amending Bill of last year should never have been passed.

The Chief Secretary: You must not reflect on this House.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nevertheless, it was agreed to; and now all we can do is to reflect and wonder—I think in amazement—how legislation such as that ever found its way on to the statute book. Also, the second reading of the Land Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill was carried, and farmers were thus made liable for the payment of land tax by the passing of that legislation.

Farmers—and everyone else—were deprived of the 50 per cent. rebate of tax on improved land by the repeal of Sub-section (1) of Section 9 of the Land Tax Assessment Act. It was surprising to see that all these decisions in this House were resolved by a majority of one. I notice from page 3513 of the 1956 Parliamentary Debates that Mr. Watson moved an amendment to have the taxing Act reviewed every year by making it an annual Act as it was for so many years prior to the introduction of the legislation introduced last year. However, that motion

was defeated by 16 votes to 8, the only members who desired to see the taxing Act remaining on the statute book for only one year being Hon. N. E. Baxter, Hon. J. G. Hislop, Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, Hon. R. C. Mattiske, Hon. C. H. Simpson, Hon. H. K. Watson, Hon. F. D. Willmott, and Hon. J. Murray.

The Chief Secretary: What is this? A post-mortem on the Council's action of last year?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is merely a second reading speech in which I think I am entitled to refer to the parliamentary debates of last year and to inform the Chief Secretary and you, Mr. President, without reflecting in any shape or form, the results of a division on a motion.

The Chief Secretary: You are discussing last year's Bill, not this year's Bill.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary is behind the times. I am discussing this year's Bill. However, I will place myself in your hands, Mr. President. I will leave it to you to tell me if I am infringing Standing Orders; but I would like to point out that I have no intention of so doing. I wish to tell the Chief Secretary that if the Government desires this Bill to be placed on the statute book, it should at least give some consideration to two suggestions I am about to make.

The first is that every taxpayer, farmer, businessman, the man residing in the suburbs, and the country dweller, should all have restored to them the right to a rebate of land tax of at least one-quarter of their tax if their land is improved by a sum equal to the value of the unimproved land. The second suggestion is that any amount spent on painting and repairs to property should be considered to be a deduction from the payment of land tax by a rebate of one-quarter or 25 per cent.

The Chief Secretary: Are you up for election next year?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is a rather deplorable state of affairs—

The Chief Secretary: It is—to hear statements such as these.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —when the Chief Secretary makes remarks of that nature. I would point out that for many years, in regard to the imposition of land tax, a rebate of up to 50 per cent. was granted; and yet now, because I suggest that there should be a 25 per cent. rebate of tax, the Chief Secretary makes an accusation such as that. It is not unreasonable to suggest that a man should receive a 25 per cent. rebate of tax for any money that he spends on painting or repairs to his house or property. Members know that if a man owns a house which is tenanted he is obliged to maintain it in a reasonable state of repair; and if such an owner is to be encouraged to keep his house

well painted and in a good state of repair, he should be granted a rebate of tax along the lines I have suggested. In my opinion it would be a well-merited deduction.

Hon. G. E. Jeffery: I hope the Commonwealth Treasurer will agree with that contention.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In regard to the first suggestion I have put forward, I have made some calculations, as a result of which it appears that the amount of tax is not nearly as great as would be involved if the Bill were lost. If, out of a total amount of £1,430,000 received in tax, we estimate that £300,000 is attributable to unimproved land, that will leave £1,130,000 as being attributable to improved land.

The other day I asked some questions in order to get nearer to this calculation. The questions I asked were—

- (1) Of the gross land tax collections of £1,108,173 in 1956-57, how much—or approximately how much—was received in respect of improved rural land?
- (2) Of the estimated gross land tax collections of £1,430,000 for 1957-58, how much—or approximately how much—is in respect of:—
 - (a) improved rural land;
 - (b) all other improved land;
 - (c) all unimproved land in the State?

The reply that I received was that statistics have not been kept in order that those figures could be given with a precise determination of the amounts requested. I asked: "Approximately how much?" It is rather distressing to learn that the Taxation Department is unable to ascertain for the Government figures which are more accurate, and I should only hope that the Government would not be treated in the same manner as a private person would be who attempted to evade the Land Tax Act and who asked for his taxation records for the previous 10 years.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Before tea, I was endeavouring to give some explanation of the basis upon which I have calculated the possible rebate that can be offered to the taxpayers under this legislation. I was pointing out that I had had some difficulty in calculating this amount in view of the inadequate information supplied in answer to the question I asked in this regard on the 12th November. I stated that one of the questions I asked was: Of the estimated gross Land Tax collections of £1,430,000 for 1957-58 how much approximately was with respect to improved rural land, all other improved land, and all unimproved land in the State. The reply I was given was that the statistics had not been kept which would enable a precise determination

of the amounts requested, but that the following estimates were based on available information:—

	£
Tax collections for rural land, 1956-57	330,000
Land tax collections for rural improved land, 1957-58	400,000
Land tax collections for other land 1957-58	1,030,000

If out of the total tax of £1,430,000 we estimate £300,000 as being attributable to unimproved land, that would leave £1,130,000 as attributable to improved land, and a rebate of one-quarter of £1,130,000 amounts to £282,000, as against £400,000 if this Bill were lost.

The amount of the rebate would be less than £282,000 because not all the improved land within the meaning of the Act would qualify within the condition I have nominated. The immediate restoration of some relief to every owner of improved land—and I refer to the farmer, to the businessman, to the suburban and country dwellers—is in my opinion a most pressing claim, and a question of paramount importance. I refuse to believe that the farmer or any other self-respecting citizen would say, "I do not care when you tax or how harshly you tax so long as you give me complete exemption." I do not think that would be the attitude of any citizen, particularly of any farmer, in this community.

Under my proposal the farmer, along with the country and city owners of improved land, would get an equal rebate which would reduce by one quarter the land tax they are now paying. If I had my way there would be no tax whatever on improved land; I would limit it to unimproved land.

In conclusion I would like to say once more that I do not know where the end will come so far as the finances of this State are concerned. Our people are finding it increasingly difficult as each year goes by to meet the impositions that are being placed upon them. The ordinary man in the street who has the good fortune, by dint of his own hard work, to own his home is pressed heavily by the rates he is obliged to pay. He is required to pay road board rates, water rates, health rates, and expensive electricity and gas rates—these are becoming more expensive as time goes on—and now he is faced with this imposition of having to meet exorbitant land tax.

Surely the least that we can do is to offer him a rebate of tax; and I repeat that a 50 per cent. tax rebate was the order of the day in this State for many years. Surely it is not too much to suggest that a 25 per cent. rebate of tax would not be too great for the considerations I have mentioned; namely, the improvement of his property. Surely 25 per cent. rebate

should be given to the man who spends money repairing or painting his property. That would not be asking too much.

I will terminate my remarks now and will observe the reaction of the Government in respect to the proposition I have submitted. At the appropriate time I will hand to the clerks the necessary amendments, which can be put on the notice paper to give effect to the rebates I have spoken of during my speech on this Bill.

On motion by Hon. L. C. Diver, debate adjourned.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [7.40]: This is a Bill to amend the Stamp Act and thereby to increase duty on cheques from 2d. per cheque to 3d. per cheque, and to extract another £80,000 from the long-suffering public of Western Australia. I think it is well to remember that stamp duties were imposed long before the turn of the century. They were imposed for the reason that in those days virtually the whole of the revenue of the State was derived from stamp duty. There was no income tax, and no land tax; and someone devised the bright idea of taxing receipts, cheques and other documents.

I would submit that whatever merit such a class of taxation may have had before 1900, there is really not much merit in persisting with it today. Virtually every item that is taxed under the Stamp Act should have been relieved from stamp duty many years ago, because today the State finances on its income tax; and its grants from the Commonwealth and its income tax finance are its principal source of revenue. These irritating taxes are matters that should come up for review with a view to their abolition. That procedure has been followed in quite a few countries. For example, in New Zealand there is no tax on receipts.

The Chief Secretary: There is no Upper House there either. Would you follow them in that?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: New Zealand did have a stamp duty on receipts, but found it irksome, and also found the cost of collecting it was almost as much as the revenue derived from it, with the result that it was abolished. I would submit that Parliament should give serious consideration to abolishing 90 per cent. of the items that are liable to stamp duty; because when we look at the matter can we think of anything more illogical than the case of a man who receives his wages at the end of the week having to pay a penny stamp for his receipt because of that simple transaction?

The same is the case if he draws a cheque, which is an ordinary everyday commercial transaction. Why should that cheque he draws have a 2d. stamp duty imposed on it? We might as well say that everyone who makes a withdrawal from the savings bank should pay stamp duty.

The Chief Secretary: That is a good idea.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am not here to offer ideas for raising revenue but for reducing it.

The Minister for Railways: The Commonwealth will be on to that one.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: In the case of receipts, for example, in many of the other States a stamp duty of 2d. is paid regardless whether the receipt is for £2 or £2,000. In Western Australia, however, if a receipt is given it is an ad valorem receipt of 2d. per £100.

I do not view this Bill with any enthusiasm. So far as the city man is concerned—the city businessman—it is a further pinprick. So far as the country businessman is concerned, it simply means that every account he has to pay is going to cost him 7d.—3d. for the cheque and 4d. for postage, plus exchange. If one looks at transactions like this, it does not sound very much for one, but when they run to the tune of hundreds or thousands, it is quite an amount to pay over the year; and the fact that it may be called painless extraction does not alter the fact that it is extraction.

Therefore, I do not view this Bill with any enthusiasm at all, and I intend to reserve my vote on the second reading until I see what happens to the legislation just adjourned.

On motion by Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, debate adjourned.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North [7.46] in moving the second reading said: This Bill contains four amendments to the principal Act. The first proposal is to ratify what is actually occurring at present and to make the Commissioner of Main Roads the authority for fixing omnibus stands in the metropolitan traffic area. This power is vested by the principal Act in the local authority of the district concerned, and so far as traffic matters are concerned the Commissioner of Police is the local authority for the metropolitan traffic area. The Commissioner of Police agrees that the Main Roads Department is the proper organisation to deal with this matter.

A second proposal is to increase the penalty imposed on the driver and owner of any vehicle which is operating without

the licence required under the principal Act. The Bill seeks also to make the penalty applicable where a vehicle is carrying goods for which no authority is contained in the licence. The penalties at present are, for a first offence a maximum fine of £20; for a second offence, a maximum of £50; and a maximum of £100 for any subsequent offence. The proposals in the Bill are to increase the present maxima to £40 for a first offence, £100 for a second, and £200 for any subsequent offence. This would result in the doubling of the present maxima. These increases are designed to dissuade those offenders who have been prepared to continually flout the law, without worrying about the penalties received by them.

The third amendment is to authorise the Transport Board to finance out of the Transport Co-ordination Fund the erection of bus shelters or other amenities on or adjacent to any bus route. This is a desirable move, and shelters would not be erected without the entire agreement and concurrence of the local authority of the district concerned.

The last amendment is in connection with the formula used to ascertain the power-load-weight of commercial goods vehicles, apart from trailers and semi-trailers. At present the parent Act provides for the use of what is termed the Dendy Marshall formula. The Bill seeks to replace this with the R.A.C. formula. This will bring the Act into uniformity with the Traffic Act and with the position in other States of Australia.

The proposed new schedule change from the Dendy Marshall formula to the R.A.C. horse-power calculations would, in some cases, increase the fees by certain amounts. For instance, for a Holden utility with a variation in fee at 10d. per power-load-weight the increase would be 6s. 10d. per annum. Under the R.A.C. formula fee at 1s. 6d. power-load-weight the increase would amount to 10s. 6d. per annum. With a Chevrolet utility rated at 30.4 horse-power, under the R.A.C. formula the increase would be 4s. 2d. per annum at 10d. power-load-weight and 7s. 6d. per annum at 1s. 6d. per power-load-weight. A Vanguard rated at 17.92 horse-power R.A.C. would be 3s. 4d. per annum at 10d. power-load-weight and 6s. per annum at 1s. 6d. per power-load-weight.

The highest increase is for a Ford truck rated at 42 horse-power. Under R.A.C. rating the increase is 10s. per annum at 10d. per power-load-weight and 18s. per annum at 1s. 6d. per power-load-weight. As we get higher weighted vehicles the fees reduce, until we find with a Leyland Comet, 9 ton, rated at 37.64 horse-power under the R.A.C. rating—it was 37.25 horse-power under the Dendy Marshall formula—there will be no variation. The fee will be the same.

These are licences under the Transport Co-ordination Act, and they are not traffic licence fees. They are licences to be registered with the Transport Board for the carrying of goods. A Leyland Beaver, 20 ton, rated at 71.9 horse-power under the Dendy Marshall formula is reduced to 60 horse-power and under the R.A.C. formula the variation would be a saving of 6s. 8d. per annum under the 10d. power-load-weight, and 12s. under the 1s. 6d. power-load-weight.

Therefore, it can be seen that there is not much variation in respect of those licences but there certainly is quite a difference, of course, in the traffic licence fees. They were increased previously, and I think were explained to the House last year. They were increased to bring them somewhere within uniformity with the average traffic fees for the same vehicles in the other States. This State is still below the average of those States. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

BILL—NORTHERN DEVELOPMENTS PTY. LIMITED AGREEMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [7.58]: This small Bill—a private member's Bill—introduced into this Chamber by Mr. Jeffery is, in a way, similar in character in some respects to the Bill which was introduced last night to amend the Electoral Act. In fact, I think some of the members who contributed to the debate last night were under the impression they were discussing the Constitution Bill, rather than a Bill to amend the Electoral Act. In any case, that Bill was debated at length and at least some of the remarks which applied to that measure can be said to apply to the one now under consideration.

This Bill touches on various matters. Clause 2 refers to the qualifications of a member and Section 7 of the principal Act is repealed and re-enacted in practically the same terms and language. However, the vital difference is that it seeks to make the qualifying age of a member to sit in this Chamber 21 years instead of the present age of 30 years. The hon. member when introducing the Bill admitted he did not think that, in actual practice, it had mattered very much; and I quite agree. For that reason I can see no purpose in amending it.

It has worked very well; and it has, as I remarked last night in the debate on the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, something which, on balance, coupled with the other qualifications that apply to electors, rather than members, created a reaction from older people. I think the same applies to the members who sit in this House as compared with the members who sit in another place.

Clause 3 of the Bill amends Section 15 of the principal Act. This deals with the question of residential qualification of a member seeking election to the Assembly as a member of that body. This portion of the Bill reads—

Section fifteen of the principal Act is amended by—

(b) adding immediately after paragraph (4) the following paragraph:—

(4a) has resided at his present place of residence for not less than five years, and for the whole of that time has been, and still is, enrolled as at that address as an elector for the Legislative Assembly;

Section 15 of the Act refers to members' qualifications for the Legislative Council. Therefore, if that amendment were made to the principal Act, it would mean that the member seeking election as a member would apparently not need to possess any other qualifications than to have resided at that residence for that time and to have been and still be enrolled at that address as a member for the Legislative Assembly. I just pose a question at this point. Supposing he has been enrolled as an elector for five years and does not happen to reside at that address. Apparently that would disqualify him on the score that he has not actually resided at that address.

The next amendment is a new section proposed to be inserted, which would give a returned serviceman the right to vote. This question has been debated in this House many times. I do not think any member objects to a returned serviceman becoming either a member of this Chamber or qualified to vote for a member of the Legislative Council; but we say that the existing qualifications in respect of having a property interest are so easy to acquire—particularly in the case of an ex-serviceman—that it would be far better to afford him the means of becoming qualified in the ordinary way than to break a principle, so far as we are concerned, and make an exemption for any one class of person.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What if they are boarding somewhere? They would not have a vote.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I served overseas as a soldier, the same as anybody else, and I was over the age of 21. The last thing I ever considered when I volunteered for service and actually served as a soldier was the question as to whether I was entitled to vote or not. I was probably relieved that I was not vested with the responsibility of having to go to the poll or be fined £2.

I think that feeling is almost universal with the young folk who are actually called up for service. They think of many things and when they return, their interests are safeguarded and through their various organisations they learn to appreciate the provisions which the Government makes for them. But I do not think any of them worries in the slightest about voting. They take it as a matter of course. The vast majority of them, I think, are quite prepared to conform to the laws of the country and to qualify for entitlement the same as any other citizen.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: The State executive of the R.S.L. carried a motion at congress a few years ago.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I think I was present at that meeting; and if I remember rightly, the hon. member's partner was the sponsor of the motion. I have a sneaking suspicion that the inspiration may have come from his partner. But that is by the way.

The Minister for Railways: Did you oppose it?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: At a big conference like that, frequently a snap vote is taken. I have seen many motions passed after a brief debate. By all means assist the soldier to attain those qualifications which would permit him to be either a member or an elector, but do not make an exception to the principle we have laid down that everyone must be qualified along certain lines in order to attain that privilege.

Hon. R. F. Hutchinson: They have that in other States.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: The last amendment deals with an Assembly qualification. The Bill has to pass both Houses, but this is a matter that we are not immediately concerned with. According to the Bill, Section 20 of the Act is to be repealed. This section deals with the qualifications of members of the Assembly, and again I can see very little difference between the proposed new section and the one it displaces. What is suggested in the Bill is as follows:—

(a) is a natural born subject of Her Majesty the Queen, or if not such a natural born subject, has been naturalised for not less than five years; and

- (b) has resided in Western Australia for not less than two years during the period of five years immediately prior to such election; and
- (c) is a resident of Western Australia at the time of such election, and has been such a resident for a continuous period of not less than six months immediately prior to such election.

The present qualification provides for a term of residence of two years. This does not concern us much; but having regard for the fact that it makes very little difference whether the Bill is passed or not, but that it can, by one of the clauses automatically qualify an aspirant for membership of the Council because of five years' residence only and not because of the recognised qualifications, I intend to oppose it.

HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (Suburban) [8.4]: I support the Bill because it is an attempt to widen the franchise for this Chamber. I have let everyone know how I object to the restricted franchise. Mr. Simpson mentioned the clause dealing with the returned soldier. It is strange to hear the excuses that are brought forward when it is proposed to widen the franchise and do justice to these people. It is also strange to hear a man, who says he is a returned soldier, tell us that a returned soldier would be quite prepared to enrol in the ordinary way. What about a man who has four sons living with him on a property? He has a vote, as the owner; but although his four sons are returned soldiers who were ready to give their lives during the war, to protect such institutions as we have—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was not the important thing, but our freedom.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: —not one of them is entitled to vote for the Upper House. The opinions of those people cannot be given on the legislation which is passed by members here. That is pretty terrible. This legislation pertaining to returned soldiers is in force in other States, namely—Victoria, Tasmania and, I think, New South Wales, but not here.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: It will be after this Bill is dealt with.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I hope it will. I hope I do not have to stand on a platform and bring this forward, as I surely will, and to say that the members of this House—

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Now we have it.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I do not mind. I am speaking as I think and of the position as I know it. Mr. Simpson referred to these men being prepared to agree to the ordinary qualification. How does the hon. member know that every returned man is

satisfied with the position? He does not know any such thing. He cannot speak for the rank and file of the returned soldiers who have not a vote. I have heard from adult men and women many objections because, being neither the householder nor the owner of the property in which they live, they are not entitled to vote for the Legislative Council, but on the other hand are forced to vote for the Legislative Assembly under pain of a fine of £2.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Whom do you blame for that?

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The hon. member does not blame us for it?

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The Labour Party; that is its policy.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I get more and more amazed as time goes on at the order of thinking here. To blame people for giving the public a democratic right is surely strange in a House of this sort. Mr. Simpson also said that the qualifying age of 30, instead of 21, had worked well. How does he make that out? I do not think it has worked well. It is a disastrous state of affairs. A person can be a member of the Legislative Assembly at 21 years of age, but he has to be 30 years of age before he can qualify to be a member of this House. Do members call that democracy or justice? I think it is an absolute negation of everything that is right and just. This might be poor hearing to members opposite, and it is pretty poor hearing to the public in general, but I do not think it will be so for much longer.

I support the Bill because it seeks to widen the qualifications for this House, and I will always be a champion of anything to do just that. The time is not far distant when members will have to agree that this is a much-needed reform. It will be paid for by the sweat and the tramping of the people of the Labour Party and it will be no credit to the Opposition parties in this House. I support the Bill.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [8.10]: I have been giving just a little bit of thought to the Parliamentary set-up in the State of Western Australia. We have been told that the Legislative Council is not a democratically-elected House but that—

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Is it?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —one-third of the people vote for one-third of the members. I find that in the province I represent, by the activities of the electoral office, my roll is now so fat that there are some 36,000 to 37,000 people on it. We have been told that the franchise for the Council is limited, but some 12,000 or 14,000 people have gone on to the roll in my province. This leads me to believe that the

franchise is not nearly so undemocratic or limited as some people would have us believe.

It would be as well, too, if we were to have a look at the franchise for the Legislative Assembly and examine the representation there so far as the electors of the State are concerned. There are, representing the mining areas in the Legislative Assembly, some four or five members.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: There are three.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right; there are three members representing huge expanses of country, but elected by a mere handful of people. I agree that the country, no matter how far out back it is, must have representation, but let us apply the principle to simple facts and see what is fair and reasonable. These members are elected, I repeat, by a mere handful of people.

The Minister for Railways: Very important people, though.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I grant the Minister that, but no more and no less important than any other people in the State.

The Minister for Railways: The backbone of the country.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No more important than the farmer or city dweller, because we are all part and parcel of a community and it takes all of us to make up that community. It takes the farmer to produce the goods of the country to feed the people, and it takes the people to consume the goods in order that the farmer can prosper.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And the miner has to find the gold to help them.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thank the hon. member for assisting me. I can remember when I served a period in the Legislative Assembly; and speaking of majorities, the Government had no majority. There was an even number of members of Government and Opposition parties on the floor of the House. The Government of the country took place with the support of two independent members.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What has that to do with the franchise for this House?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Quack, quack, quack!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The duck is a respectable citizen. I think it has a lot to do with the subject matter under discussion—as to whether this franchise, or the application of it, is any different—

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is not democratic.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought the hon. member was going to be kinder in her approach this evening; she started off so well but she is not finishing so well.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Not on this subject.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not because of necessity that there is this narrow representation of the people for some of the areas represented in the Legislative Assembly; but, I repeat, it is necessary to have the far outback portions of the State represented. Where the majority is fine in any Parliament, whether it be in Western Australia or in any other part of Australia, if one works it out on the actual number of votes cast one will see that the difference between the parties is very slight.

I can remember Dr. Evatt, during the recent elections, going to no end of trouble trying to convince the people of Australia that the present Federal Government was not democratically elected because more people had voted for the Labour Party than had voted for the other parties. What sort of argument is that? The fact remains that those people were elected and because of the system that we have in this country, they comprise the Government at the present time. All this business about the Legislative Council, and what a bad lot of people we are, is overdone. I repeat what I said last night, when speaking to a Bill similar to this one: We members who perhaps sit on the opposite of politics to the Labour Party have just as much regard for the citizens of this community, and we represent them in a way which we think is best.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But you have a lot to learn.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We are liberal in thought.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But not in franchise.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member, too, has a lot to learn. To have a little tolerance when someone else is speaking is something she has to learn.

The Chief Secretary: I think someone else could learn about that, too.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have learned to respect other people's views. The hon. member who has so much to say on this matter prides herself on being a socialist. That is all right; it is her political view. She would abolish this House if she could.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is also a view which she has but to which I do not subscribe. Nevertheless, this is a free country, and whether the thoughts of others are right or wrong it is not for us to question, but it is for us to allow, in a tolerant way, those people to have their thoughts and be able to express them.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: With a brutal majority all the time.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I hope the day will long reign in Western Australia when people will be able to think in a free

manner; that they will be able to get up in this House, and in the Legislative Assembly, and pour forth any ideas that they have, in the interests of the people they represent. With all due respect to the hon. member who introduced this Bill, I do not think it is any better than any other Bills we have had and which have attempted to widen the franchise for this Chamber.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What is wrong with that?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think that those who have a stake in this country—the landowners—and the people who half-an-hour ago this Government was trying to tax into the ground—

The Minister for Railways: Rubbish!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not rubbish.

The Minister for Railways: It is political twaddle.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But the taxes are still very heavy.

The Minister for Railways: Not as heavy as those imposed by Bob Menzies.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He has to tax the people to give your Government the money to carry on with.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The taxing powers of the State and the Commonwealth are two completely different matters, and the Minister knows that. Nevertheless I do not think that the franchise for the Legislative Council is a difficult one to qualify for; and surely we have an ample example of that in the huge increases which have been made to Legislative Council rolls in recent months.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But it is not fully democratic.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I could not calculate the cost, but a lot of taxpayers' money has been paid into the post office for the postage of thousands upon thousands of circulars. They have been sent out, suggesting that people should enrol for the Legislative Council.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What is wrong with that?

The Minister for Railways: You found a cheaper method than that.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It would be difficult to say how much of the taxpayers' money has been spent in that way. Let us compare that expenditure with the money spent on schools, roads and other essential services which the State so badly needs. That money would have been much better spent on providing those things. We all know that prior to the last Legislative Council elections the Government despatched Electoral Department officers into State Housing Commission areas, at night-time, and at overtime rates, and paid expenses for their motorcars,

to canvass the districts and to put people on the rolls for the Legislative Council. That fact is undeniable.

The Minister for Railways: They did a good job, too.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: They did!

The Minister for Railways: They are doing a better one this year, so you had better look out.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We know that the basis for enrolment for the Legislative Council is voluntary, and the basis of voting for the Legislative Council is also voluntary. Whilst it remains on a voluntary basis the Government should be satisfied to allow the legislation to remain as it is, and not try to induce the people to vote, but allow them of their own free will to get on the roll.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: We don't believe in that.

Hon. A. R. Jones: But it is democratic.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If that is done, it is the thinking people who vote. In England there is no compulsory voting. The people there vote voluntarily; they vote if they want to vote. And to my mind the voluntary method of voting is far more satisfactory than the compulsory method.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But that is not to say it is right. That is only your view.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is my view on the subject, and while I am tolerant of the ideas of the hon. member—

The Chief Secretary: She is making a speech for you.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is one thing that would make the hon. member much more approachable—tolerance of other people's ideas.

Hon. L. C. Diver: You should submit to her brains trust.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: He would lose.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have reason to believe that the staff of the Electoral Department has also been canvassing in Wandana flats in Subiaco. Correct me if I am wrong.

The Chief Secretary: I could not say. I would not know where they were.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I said that I have reason to believe that they have been canvassing that area.

The Chief Secretary: I would not know whether that was right or wrong. I do not worry about it.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not worrying about it either; but I believe the electoral staff have been trying to get those people on the roll.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is a good idea.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The basis of enrolment for Legislative Council elections is a voluntary one, and people should be left to get on the roll themselves, if they so desire.

The Chief Secretary: They still have to sign the cards.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. The Chief Secretary, being the father of this House, would know that in 1933 the method of voting for the Legislative Assembly in Western Australia was altered from a voluntary one to a compulsory one. Is that right?

The Chief Secretary: I forget. That is too far back.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it is right. I am not going to be truculent about it, but I am of the opinion that the person who votes at a voluntary election exercises a thinking vote, a better vote and a more intelligent vote than the person who says, "This is a compulsory election and I will have to vote otherwise I will be fined £2."

The Chief Secretary: Did you ever put anybody on the roll or take anybody to the poll?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course. The Chief Secretary, with all his experience, knows, as well as I do, that the answer is "yes."

The Chief Secretary: Why complain about others doing it?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not complaining.

The Chief Secretary: I misunderstood you.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: You often do. I am not complaining; I am simply pointing out what the electoral staff in this State are doing; and whilst I have no method of calculating it, I would hazard a guess that many thousands of pounds have gone down the drain in posting letters to people asking them to place their names on the roll. Indeed, on many occasions that first letter has been followed up with a second one.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There is nothing wrong with that.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But at the same time I know people who live in the districts I represent, who are living in difficult conditions, and whose children are working in overcrowded classrooms; and these conditions cannot be improved because of lack of funds—because of the niggardly way that the Federal Government treats the State! It would be far better to build more classrooms, and to spend money in that way than in trying to induce people to place their names on the Legislative Council roll. That is my opinion and I let my case rest on that point.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [8.27]: I think members should have a look at the Bill in order to see what it is all about; because, with the greatest respect to Mr. Griffith, I think he spoke on a number of diverse matters entirely dissociated with this measure now before us. First of all he dealt with the franchise, and the composition of the Legislative Assembly. For the life of me I cannot see where he can tie that argument up with the Bill which is now before us. Whether the Constitution of the Legislative Assembly is good, bad or indifferent; whether its electorates are democratic or otherwise, surely has no application to the measure before us!

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I was only making a comparison.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If the Electoral Department staff is canvassing for the people at Wandana flats to get on the roll, or if they are spending money, as they must do in postage—because it is expensive, and a lot of people change their addresses and do not know their rights or their obligations—surely it is the function of the Electoral Department to write to them and remind them that one of their responsibilities is to get on the roll.

I see nothing wrong in such a practice. If the electoral department in this State does not do all in its power to bring about the enrolment of the occupants of Wandana flats and the other flats in this city, and to point out their obligations of citizenship, it will be failing in its duty fundamentally as a department in charge of electoral matters. However, Mr. Griffith suggested there was something subversive in that course of action. He thinks that the Electoral Department's action in bringing about the enrolment of the occupants of Wandana flats is wrong. He even suggests it is subversive.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not suggest it was subversive at all.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That was the conclusion I drew. The hon. member mentioned that fact as a criticism of the department.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I said that enrolment in respect of the Legislative Council was voluntary and people should not be canvassed.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I hope the hon. member will remember that remark during his forthcoming election—that is, that it is entirely voluntary, and he should not remind any prospective elector of his right to vote or to canvass any elector to get him on the roll. He has put up a foolish argument; and I do not think that any of the matters mentioned by him have much bearing on the Bill that is before us.

The first proposition is to alter the Constitution Act by providing that persons can be elected as members of this House after they have reached 21 years of age, instead of the existing provision of 30 years

of age. I can understand opposition to such a proposition for political reasons, but I cannot understand opposition to it on logical grounds. No mention was made by Mr. Griffith of this proposition in the Bill, yet it is one of the fundamental provisions. If we examine it, and if we apply arguments during this debate to it, we will get somewhere. I would point out that the Commonwealth Electoral Act sets out that all persons not under 21 years of age, whether male or female, should be entitled to be enrolled. Another Act provides that they can be elected as members of the Federal Parliament at that age.

Hon. G. Bennetts: For both the Senate and the House of Representatives?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That is so. In our own State the law provides that any person over 21 years of age can be elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly; yet there is a remarkable situation applying to the Legislative Council which is in contradistinction to the Commonwealth Parliament—a body charged with much greater authority than this House—and in contradistinction to the Legislative Assembly which has equal responsibility with this House. There is a diversity in the age as a qualification for being elected. No logical argument can be used to sustain that proposition any longer. I am surprised that a person belonging to any political party should argue or vote against a measure which contains an amendment to enable persons of 21 to be elected as members. I cannot see any political party gaining an advantage, or suffering a disadvantage.

What will occur if the Bill is passed is that one of our democratic institutions—namely, this House—will be greatly improved. As I have often pointed out when speaking on Bills of this character, unless we make some effort to keep up with the rest of the world during these changing times, by improving the instruments and institutions of democracy, we will lag behind the field. In so doing we will suffer reverses. Unreasonable age restriction tends to engender prejudice against this House and the parliamentary system in general, because no argument can be found in favour of that restriction; yet year after year when a Bill of this nature has been introduced to alter the system it has been thrown out.

I would point out that only the other day we passed a Bill to enable persons of 21 years of age to serve on juries. People can be elected as members of the Federal Parliament when they are 21 years of age; they can enter the professions at that age, as is evidenced in the Acts controlling medical practitioners, legal practitioners and engineers. There is no restriction that the practitioners must be 30 years of age before they are permitted to practise. Yet in this House we find a situation which is almost ludicrous. When a Bill like the

one before us has been submitted it has been cavalierly treated and thrown out time and again.

The Bill contains other important provisions, one being the extension of the franchise to returned soldiers. As Mr. Simpson pointed out, there are various qualifications with which the returned serviceman should comply. In my view adult franchise should be adopted, or at least the franchise should be extended to every man and wife who occupy a house. The returned soldier is certainly a worthy citizen; and despite what Mr. Simpson has said about their being uninterested, it was only a few years ago that the State Congress of the R.S.L. carried a motion asking for this very same provision.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You might have been behind the move. It was your partner who sponsored it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I cannot help it if the person with whom I was connected in business in Kalgoorlie at the time happened to take an interest in the affairs of the returned soldiers, or that the Kalgoorlie sub-branch sponsored that resolution which the State Congress carried. Do not discount that proposal simply because the person working in favour of it happened to be a partner of mine in business. That was one of the most worthy things he carried out. I do not regard that provision as being radically important, and if any fundamental reasons can be advanced against it I shall not break my heart over the result.

There are other worth-while provisions in the Bill, in particular the one to which I have devoted my main remarks. In conclusion, I plead with members to give this measure some consideration. Year after year measures of a similar nature have been introduced, and they have been treated with derision. They have been dubbed as hardy annuals. When the vote was taken they were thrown out. The years are passing, and as I have often contended, we should not keep the franchise for this House on the present basis for ever. If this House is to survive, we have to make it a real instrument of democracy by permitting the members to be elected democratically, and by permitting all the people in this State to cast a vote. If that is done a lot of the prejudice held against this House will disappear.

No political party will gain any advantage with the passage of this Bill. On the other hand, its passage will prove to be of great advantage to the State, and in my opinion it will bring about a great measure of justice. I support the Bill and hope that its main provisions will receive serious consideration.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [8.41]: I also support the Bill, for this reason. We are now living in an atomic

age and the world is advancing very rapidly in science. It was mentioned in the Federal Parliament only recently that steps will be taken to speed up the education of the youth of this country with a view to producing a greater number of scientists. This Bill will be a step in the right direction, in that it will foster the education of the young people of this State by allowing them to become members of this House at 21 years of age and so take their place in the government of the State.

The Government is taking steps to foster the youth movement and to back them up to the hilt; yet we are saying that persons under 30 years of age are not fit and proper to become members of this House. With the improved education given at the universities, the youths of this country are well qualified to become members. I would point out there are one or two members of another place who are well under 30 years of age. Should they be defeated at the next elections, they would be debarred from standing as members in this House. The knowledge and the experience which they have gained in another place fully qualify them to a seat in this House.

It was mentioned by Mr. Griffith that the Commonwealth Government has wasted a lot of money on postage of enrolment cards, etc. If we broadened the franchise of this House and brought about compulsory enrolment there would not be that waste of money, because every person over 21 would have to be on the roll. There would not be the need to send out enrolment cards and the like. Furthermore, members of this House would not have to use up their shoe leather during election time by going around to ensure that electors who were eligible were enrolled. If there was compulsory enrolment every one over 21 would be entitled to a vote and we would get better results.

As far as returned soldiers are concerned there has never been a better move on their behalf than the move to enable them to be enrolled for this House. If a war occurred tomorrow, who would be the people who would fight for us? It would be the 21-year-olds. It is they who have to go to war and help keep the country free. Yet they are not allowed to vote for this House! I hope all members will support the measure.

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

BILL—BUNBURY HARBOUR BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [8.46] in moving the second reading said: This Bill contains a very simple amendment to provide for increased fees to be paid to members of the Bunbury Harbour Board. Under the Act there is a limitation of £100 per

annum for the chairman and £50 for members. With the increased value of money, it has become necessary—

Hon. A. R. Jones: Did you say the increased value of money?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The decreased value of money, but the increased nominal value. It has become necessary, in order to bring the fees to present-day values, to alter the Act and remove the limitations. The Bill proposes to delete Section 12 which contains those limitations and to provide for Section 61 to permit of fees being prescribed by regulation.

At the moment the fees being paid are £3 3s. per meeting to the chairman and £2 2s. to each member. At the request of the board it is proposed to increase those fees to £4 4s. and £3 3s. respectively. The board consists of a chairman and four members.

Members will recall that last year a similar amendment was made to the Albany Harbour Board Act at the request of members of the board. That was done late in the session, and some members queried why the Bunbury Harbour Board was not also being brought into line, because the Acts are identical. I promised to introduce legislation this year, and have done so through this Bill, to which there should be no objection. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. G. C. MacKINNON (South-West) [8.50]: I trust that members will support the measure.

Members: The shortest speech on record!

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—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [8.52]: This is a somewhat similar Bill to one with which we dealt earlier. It represents one of the attempts we have made down the years to bring about a more democratic franchise for the election of members to this Chamber. I think it was Mr. Griffith who, last night, when dealing with this matter, made it appear that it is only in recent years that we have made an attempt to improve the franchise. May I tell him that ever since I have been here we have introduced

Bills of all descriptions with the one objective of improving the franchise of this House; and we have never yet succeeded in any shape or form, irrespective of what numbers we might have had in the House.

We have tried to introduce adult franchise; we have tried to give the spouse of an elector a vote. When opposing these Bills, members have said they could not support them; but that if so and so had been done they would have supported them. So we took the cue and introduced Bills along those lines. But the same members found other excuses to defeat such measures.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Why "excuses"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They have definitely been excuses. There has been no logic behind the attitude in any shape or form.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Do you really want this Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are some questions one treats with contempt. Questions like that contain about as much meaning as does the opposition we find to this Bill. I heard one member, in speaking on another matter, refer to New Zealand. If New Zealand is such a good place, that member should be prepared to follow its example, because it has gone so far as to abolish the Upper House altogether. While I was over there only this year, I made it my business to wait on some of the Ministers. They are not Ministers of my own political kidney. I happened to be there also in 1950, not long after the Upper House was abolished, and at a time when there had not been sufficient experience to enable them to give a sound judgment on the effects. But this year—seven years later—I assumed that they were in a position to pass sound judgment. So I put it to those Ministers—who, I repeat, are not of my political kidney—whether, if they had a chance, they would reinstitute the Upper House. They said, "Not on your life!"

Hon. H. K. Watson: Dictatorship grows, you know.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am pointing out how much out of step members of the Opposition in this Chamber are with people of their own political kidney in other parts of the world.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You only asked one man.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I asked several Ministers, and I got the same answer from the lot. The Opposition members in this State merely trim their sails to suit the occasion on which they are speaking. That is entirely different from our attitude, which is the long-sighted objective of the abolition of this Chamber.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Does this Bill provide for that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. I said it was the long-sighted objective. We do not want to create a revolution. We are not revolutionaries but evolutionaries. We are working up to that stage by improving the franchise of the people.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: "Altering" it would be the better word.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member can use what word he likes, and I will use the word I like; and I prefer the word "improving." Some members have complained that this is an annual affair. I make very few promises indeed; but there is one I will make and keep. So long as we are the Government in this State—

Hon. H. L. Roche: That will be only one more session!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member is a poor judge of anything at any time. I make this promise: that every year there will be a Bill similar to this one brought before this Chamber, until we achieve some success.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Hear, hear!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members opposite have used all sorts of methods in opposing such Bills. I have heard them protesting how democratic this House was.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Till you came here.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. As a matter of fact, it was looked upon as being a House of review till we came here. But since we came here, there has been no more outstanding party House in Australia than this one.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Whom do you mean by "we?"

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Labourites. When I came I only made the number six; and six in a House of 30 did not mean a thing. So members could "review" without any worries. But there is no review today. The Opposition in this Chamber has reached such a pass as we witnessed last night. I do not have to put up one finger without members protesting that there should be two fingers. Members wanted to—

The PRESIDENT: The Minister must deal with the Bill and not with something that happened last night.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I raised an objection this afternoon to someone dealing with something that happened last year; but he was allowed to do it.

The PRESIDENT: I have called the Minister's attention on this occasion to the Bill before the House.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Thanks! I was going to link up my remarks.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member will.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That was only incidental.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What is in the Bill before the House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would not attempt to explain to the hon. member, except to say in general terms that it is to improve the franchise for this Chamber. This year, next year, and every year Bills of this description will be introduced until some success is achieved. I was saying when I was interrupted—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I meant by Mr. Watson.

The PRESIDENT: I will interrupt the Minister when I think he is not keeping to the subject matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I was not referring to you.

The PRESIDENT: All right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I was going to say that in debates on this question I have found the atmosphere in recent years entirely different from that in the past. At that time one man who opposed a similar measure said to me, "This franchise is well loaded our way and we are sitting pretty. What fools we would be to give way." That was the most truthful statement that I have heard put forward in this Chamber and I respect that man because of the truth and honesty of the statement he made of the reasons why he opposed legislation such as this.

Mr. Griffith and Mr. Logan both put forward certain figures, but I do not know why they went to all that trouble, because all that detail as to the number of divisions that had taken place, the number of mixed divisions, or anything else of that nature, proves nothing—

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not give information such as that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: At all events, it was given in the course of the debate. One member quoted the number of divisions that had occurred in a certain period and told us how many times the Country Party vote was split, and so on. I believe Mr. Griffith gave the number of Bills that had been introduced and told us how many had been passed—

Hon. H. K. Watson: What is in this Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am replying to the debate. Last night Mr. Griffith spoke to this Bill and mentioned something about 29 or 39 Bills that were not passed. They must have been the important measures dealing with industrial improvements, and so on. That is when we find how undemocratic and party-ridden this House is—when measures of that nature are being dealt with. Some members make an outcry because the session is nearing its end and there is still much

business to be done, yet they continue unnecessarily to secure the adjournment of the debate on various measures.

I repeat that this question will remain evergreen until we obtain the improvements in the franchise of this House that we think will give justice to the people of Western Australia. How anyone could define the present franchise of this House as just is beyond me. If one is a shrewdly and gets on a ratepayers' roll, as was quoted, it is possible for one to vote. I cannot understand why members support the present franchise; but I hope the day will not be far distant when we will be sitting as pretty as members opposite are now and then we will secure the necessary alternation to the franchise of this Chamber.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: In order that the question may be carried, it is necessary that there shall be an absolute majority of members present and voting in favour of it. I shall divide the House.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	.....	11
Noes	.....	14

Majority against 3

Ayes.	
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)
Noes.	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray
	(Teller.)

Pairs.	
Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. W. F. Willesee	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. J. Cunningham

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILL—LONG SERVICE LEAVE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [9.9]: This is an interesting measure which exemplifies the general tendency that exists today to achieve efficiency in industry and to give what is regarded as a just measure of leave to employees in industry. We have heard a lot from time to time, when measures such as this have been brought before the House, of how the existing state of affairs is such a great improvement over the terrible times that existed in the past, and the fact that in the past times were terrible has always been laid at the door of the employer.

Apparently there has been no attempt to examine the situation from the point of view of the whole national outlook. In those days the whole of the nation was cruel. People had been inured to cruelty and the idea in everyone's mind was that life was something that had to be survived and that the reward could not come in this world, but in the next. The result was that life itself became very cheap and no matter whether it was the worker, the criminal or the lord endeavouring to usurp the powers of someone higher up, death was the penalty in almost all cases. At that time there was very little industry and man's method of survival was to struggle against the laws of nature; and he realised that in living at all he was winning a battle against those laws. While working, there was experienced the satisfaction of having gained in the struggle; so even at that time there was some reward for labour, even though it might be gained through long, hard hours of toil.

There was, even in those crude days, a feeling of satisfaction. Certain changes have occurred since then which have completely altered the whole outlook, yet industry appears still to be organised on some of its early lines. The long hours of the farmer have given way to better conditions; but he still has a certain degree of satisfaction in struggling for a living, although the struggle has largely been replaced by the new conditions that have become part of our sphere of living. As industry progressed there came about shorter working hours and a shorter cycle of operations, while mechanisation took over the long hours of exhaustion, yet all this somehow destroyed the sense of satisfaction that then obtained, because there is no longer any question of tilling the soil and growing something in order to eat and thereby live, or in having beaten the forces of nature, as man's tasks are now more varied and of a more complex character.

Man now does a certain amount of toil in a limited field, in order to provide something for someone else, who in turn provides him with the money with which to purchase his essential requirements. In this way a number of individuals become associated with the living of the individual. No longer is the individual responsible for his own existence. With this has come about a curious state of affairs probably not known before in history, and still not known to many other races, where man has now begun to look upon here as the possible avenue of his reward rather than the hereafter.

Whereas a man previously felt that after death would come his reward, there has come a doubt in man's mind as to whether the reward will be then or whether it should be now.

The Minister for Railways: You'll have pie in the sky when you die, by and by!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The result is that the material outlook has taken the place of the spiritual to a large extent. In the

old days we used to believe the craftsmen existed in very large numbers, but the interesting psychological approach to the changes that have been brought about is summed up very appropriately, I think, by the words of Nigel Balchin, who makes it quite clear that the number of craftsmen that we had in the old days were still only a small percentage of mankind.

Today we have craftsmen who are doing work in a much more limited field. This has brought about a tremendous change in our living compared with that of the worker in the old days who had a deep religious faith and who had to struggle for existence. Today, there is no longer such a struggle on the part of the worker for existence, but there is a struggle for other things. As Balchin has said, it is not a question now of "Work or starve." Today it is a question of working for a new piece of material, whether it be a radio, a car, or something else. With our social insurance and all the various other factors that have come into being, there has sprung up an altered outlook among mankind, and so now a man can look for something in addition to just pure survival as a result of his labour.

It is no longer applicable to say, "He who does not work shall not eat." We have travelled a long way to the stage where it can now be said that a man who does not work shall not have a new piece of material. What is going to make a man work? I think all those who have studied the psychological aspect of work in the last few years have an instance of how extraordinary it is that at a time when England should be looking in a greater sense for national survival, the amount of work per man or per organisation is possibly not what is merited if she is to become the great nation she was in the past.

What, therefore, is the incentive that is to be held out to an individual to produce that effort? It appears that we have not yet reached the stage whereby we can ask a group of people to work purely for the benefit of the social group in which they live. Russia has attempted to do that by the introduction of collective work, and so on, but no statement or authority that has come out of Russia has given evidence of the success of that system introduced by totalitarian governments to make an individual work purely for the social group. In fact, according to a recent statement made by Krushchev there is a considerable tightening in the amount of effort that is to be expected from the people of that race who still till the soil.

Yet it is an extraordinary factor that if one asks an individual to do nothing he will consider that as one of the greatest trials that he has to undergo. A man without work is a pitiful sight. No man wants to do nothing. Then what is the incentive to work? It is interesting to note

that the psychological approach to it—which has been made so very carefully in the recent past—is that there shall be an attempt to bring work and leisure or work and living more closely together than they have ever been before. Despite that, every step we take in legislation is an attempt to isolate work, as a unit factor, in the process of living.

Man still spends the best part of his life at work. He possibly works for 45 years on an average; and despite the fact that he works only 40 hours a week, he probably spends the best part of his life at his place of employment. The question which I think faces management in the future is whether work and leisure can be approximated more together. That is a task which will call for tremendous effort on the part of those in authority and also from the worker and his leaders. Yet one feels that there will always be those fortunate individuals who, like myself, and others in this House, have a task in this life that gives every sensation of pleasure, and, therefore, the question of hours of work does not enter the picture at all.

Then, as Aldous Huxley has said, there will always be the alpha, beta, gamma and delta; and perhaps one will often ask: What satisfaction can a man get by emptying my dustbin every Monday morning? Yet that is an essential part of living and of society. Therefore, the question of making work come more into our pattern of life is one which, in the future, is going to exercise the minds of many, and it will probably be a long period of time before any step towards reaching that desirable state is made.

That brings me now very closely to this legislation when I say this: Whilst this is a great challenge to every one of us—particularly to those in industry—it is a challenge that seems to arise from the fact that whilst we still go along in the same old way divorcing work from living to trying to get shorter hours of work and longer periods of leave, we have never yet attempted as a people, to organise our society for the use of leisure. I say that very advisedly because in my position as a physician I see men reaching the stage where they are due for long-service leave, and very few of them have a hobby which they can follow during that leave.

Those who said last night that a man can be very lonely and very desperate if he is compelled to spend three months' leave without doing anything are quite correct. It is probably not realised by members of this House that it is a very fortunate circumstance for some workers and for some executives in the State Public Service that the Government has never been able to force them to take out their long-service leave the moment it has accrued. The reason for that is that there are many individuals nearing the end of their service who have had an illness and

have taken that long-service leave as portion of the time they have spent in convalescence.

The Minister for Railways: That is a good argument for long-service leave.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am not arguing against long-service leave. What I am doing is arguing against the rigidity in the laws we introduce and appealing for greater elasticity instead. We say that a man should take his leave within a very short period of time after it becomes due. After all is said and done, this leave belongs to the man himself. I believe that so long as there are clauses or rules protecting a man's leave, he ought to be able to take it when he so desires, in accordance with the arrangements made with his employers.

At the particular time when his long-service leave falls due, it may not be a suitable time for the worker to take that leave. It may be found that within two or three years afterwards, when his family has grown up, he and his wife could spend three months' long-service leave with much greater benefit to themselves than if the worker had taken such leave when it fell due. The fact remains that very few of us know how to enjoy leisure. I feel that the real enjoyment of leisure today requires extra cash during the period of long-service leave.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Send them to Esperance with a fishing line! They'll be right!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That is one way to spend one's long-service leave; but I can assure the hon. member it would soon send some people madder than most of us. Therefore we must realise that the individual himself is the one who must, through a process of education, learn how to make the best use of his leisure.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Fishing can be pretty expensive, too.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The second feature I dislike in this Bill is that we dictate to the man that he must be idle during the period when his long-service leave is taken. That is a very wicked feature to introduce into any piece of legislation.

The Minister for Railways: Not wicked.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is wicked!

The Minister for Railways: Why?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is wicked; and the Minister should not interrupt. I repeat that this is a wicked piece of legislation. We are seeking to introduce legislation which will make a man take a period of enforced idleness at a time when idleness is not wise for such a man. One of the greatest difficulties we have found with an injured worker beyond middle age is that if he is so incapacitated as to be prevented from following his usual occupation for any length of time, he can

deteriorate very rapidly and become a "B"-class worker instead of being an "A"-class worker. On the other hand, if he continues with his usual work and remains in circulation, he can remain an "A"-class worker. Yet, with this legislation, we are going to insist that he remain idle for three months. That is wicked. A man who is forced to sit down and do nothing for three months may not have the wherewithal to enjoy this leisure. Therefore, I maintain that it is only right that this man should be permitted to do what he likes with his three months' leave.

The Minister for Railways: So do we.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: But the Minister has not said so in the Bill.

The Minister for Railways: Oh yes!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is very difficult to answer interjections that are merely mutters. If a member makes an interjection it should be such that it will appear in Hansard.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: They do.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I maintain that this sort of legislation which would take away from a man his right to spend his long-service leave as he desires, is quite wrong. Many men would be much better as a result of a change in occupation during that period. I feel that this piece of legislation tends to make this portion of the Bill something of which I cannot approve. I do approve of long-service leave. In fact, I doubt whether our organisation is on a right basis.

I doubt very much, in connection with our modern trend of work, whether in some particular organisations a fortnight's annual leave is sufficient. I think that in some occupations which entail considerable mental strain apart from physical strain, a longer period of rest is essential. I refer particularly to such occupations of which I have heard a good deal in the recent past. One of those occupations is that of perhaps sitting at a trunk line switchboard, which I consider is a very trying occupation, because it may mean that an individual has to sit for long periods completely inactive and yet unable to take his or her concentration off the job because of a call that might come through. In occupations such as that 14 days' leave is insufficient.

We should not look at the question from the angle as to whether we are going to increase that fortnight so much, but as to whether the time the individual now spends away from his work is not badly organised. I wonder how many of these Monday holidays and so on are of real value when compared with three weeks' holiday instead of a fortnight? The Monday holidays that we now have only disrupt the worker and the business establishment. It would be better for the individual to have an extra seven days' leave in lieu of these Monday holidays.

I approve of long-service leave, but I think there is tremendous scope for research as to whether we are acting in the interests of the individual worker. If we pass this Bill, it will create many difficulties in organisations which already have such leave established. Some of the firms in this State have a system of long-service leave on a 20-year basis; and, in addition, they give their employees considerable amenities. For instance, one firm gives a three-month period of leave after 20 years' service, and the first month's pay is doubled, so that the individual has enough extra cash to spend while on long-service leave.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: That is doing the right thing.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is a big establishment functioning in this State and all over Australia which does that; it has established it as a principle.

The Minister for Railways: Can you name it?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not know that I am at liberty to do so, but I will tell the Minister privately.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The unfair trading people will get on to that.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Swear him to secrecy.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: In addition, this firm has a superannuation fund which starts two years after the individual joins the firm; but it is operative from the time that he joins the firm. The two years are by way of a probationary period, and at the end of that time the firm pays superannuation. No matter how high the employees go in the firm, the amount they pay towards superannuation is £1 a week. If this Bill were passed it would not be possible for that firm to continue this practice.

It might be possible to introduce long-service leave on the 20-year plan and reduce it by one year annually, because while the organisation of our industry continues at the rate it does, and when science is either too fast for the human being, or outstrips itself more quickly than it should in relation to the human effort, the effect upon the human being would be that the individual would require three months' leave in 10 years. But that comes at a period of some 15 years before the 10-year plan is adopted and it spreads the cost in this State over a long period which the State can afford to carry.

That is another point that might be worth considering instead of bulldozing our way into long-service leave without doing some research into it, and providing for the individual on the basis I have suggested. I believe that the doubling of the first month's salary is the answer to lots of problems that arise in regard to lack of funds to enable the individual to enjoy his leave. Another factor at which we

must look is whether we should have the word "long" in this Bill; whether it is not a service leave Bill rather than a long-service leave Bill.

Do we believe that long-service leave is meant to be a reward for long and continuous service, or do we believe that the individual who goes from one occupation to another shall have service leave after a certain time? We should have some definition of that. Under this Bill, after three years an individual is entitled to one-fortieth of his year's salary and so it goes on after a period of a further seven years. I cannot imagine that that is regarded as long service.

Long-service leave is a reward by the community for service given over a period of years, because one must remember that the community and the worker himself is going to pay for it. No organisation can afford to carry this impost; it must be spread in the costs and there must be rising prices. My definition of long-service leave is that an individual is rewarded for long service; and I believe he should be rewarded. In the Public Service it is quite different, because in those cases the individual is given leave after a period of long service. It is not as though his various short periods of service are added up which allow him to qualify for this privilege.

If we are to have long-service leave then it should be on a basis that the State can afford, and it should be introduced in a progressive measure which would meet the advancing needs of modern industry, because then it will be of benefit to the worker. If we then realise we have only taken the first step and enter this field of research and follow up the idea of estimating what the human being requires by way of leisure, we will do something very real for the workers of our State.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [9.40]: Dr. Hislop has given us quite an impressive dissertation from the physician's angle; and although he says he believes in long-service leave he does not say how long the service should be before the individual can be entitled to that leave. He suggested 20 years, reducible each year by one year. In 15 years' time a man would be on a 10-year basis.

From the general trend of the debate and from the speeches made by members in opposition, it would appear they have been hard-pushed to find logical reasons to oppose this proposition. We have heard Mr. Cunningham say that we must protect the worker from himself. He based his observations on knowledge of a particular case on the goldfields. He said that the leave must do the worker good. Mr. Logan thought that long-service leave might not be so good for the workers; and, of course, Dr. Hislop has told us that they would not

know what to do with their leisure, and that it would be wicked for an injured man to be forced to take three months' long-service leave.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Have you got all the answers?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am summing up what was said by various members; and if the hon. member will have a look at his speech, he will see that I am correct in what I say about his reference to the man walking the streets in Kalgoorlie and not wanting his long-service leave.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: He is doing more than that. It is one instance I mentioned.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Mattiske said that the principle of retrospectivity in the Bill was a bad one. He would, however, support all the amendments on the notice paper; and retrospectivity in his opinion should go back 20 years. Yet he considers the principle that we put forward a bad one because it goes back only seven years. I cannot reconcile his views. He thought it was quite unfair and that it would benefit only a few. He told us the same old story that industry could not stand it, and that it would be the ruination of the country, and might even engender a depression.

We were reminded of the days when the workers walked around with nothing in their pockets, while the storekeepers had all the goods in their shops. Every storekeeper will admit that it is better for workers to have money in their pockets than for him to have goods in his window. The storekeepers about whom we have heard so much were the hardest hit, and they would be prosperous if their back debts were paid by those who themselves have since become prosperous.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Has anyone denied that?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No, but we have had this depression bogie thrown around. The hon. member knows that the community would not stand another depression. Even those members who oppose the Bill support the principle of long-service leave. But when? And to whom? We cannot get a definite and firm suggestion in regard to this matter. Mr. Logan suggested that he believed in long-service leave being granted on a 20-year, 15-year and 10-year basis.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Why not make it five years?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No reason has been given.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I gave a reason.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Dr. Hislop suggests it will commence after three years' service. It will commence after seven years' retrospectivity; that is,

after 10 years' service, when the Government proposes that the worker should be entitled to 13 weeks' leave. The argument put up that the worker would not know what to do with his leave is ridiculous. Goodness gracious me! There are many workers who know what to do with their leave.

It has been suggested that long-service leave might be given when a worker is too young. It could not come at a better time than when a man is in his 20's, because he could then do some study and take advantage of the leave. He could study in regard to his particular job, instead of wasting his time around the town.

Mr. Watson suggested—going to the extreme and using an awful word; but it is his opinion of the poor type of worker or poor unfortunate worker that has to work on the farm—that a farmer could expect to find men loafing for three months on the farm. I think one is scraping in the barrel when one has to come out with that one. Anybody living in the bush and getting three months' leave on full pay from a farmer or a pastoralist is not going to sit down on that property for three months. That is certain.

I do not think this legislation would affect many in the farming industry or the pastoral industry. Very few people would be affected—very few indeed. They do not remain 10 years on the one property. I do not say there will not be some—there are—but it would not affect many. The same would apply to the building industry. I know some pastoralists who treat their men very well and give three months' long-service leave every year. They send them into town for three months of the year.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That is in the North-West.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If the pastoralists have a good man, as a rule they treat him very well and look after him. It must be remembered that the type of worker who will benefit from long-service leave is the genuine worker. He is the worker who works for private industry.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Aren't they all genuine?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: These workers will have to satisfy private industry for 10 years; and private industry does not carry any duds. That is a well-known fact. Private industry will not carry any duds. I know the hon. member is going to say it does, but he has already given us his opinion on that. It is a fact that private industry does not carry the dolts and the duds. It turns them over. Private industry selects the best of the work force; and if a man stays in the one job for 10 years he must be satisfied. But he has also to satisfy his employer. Therefore, surely to goodness

only those who have earned or who are entitled to it would be the recipients of long-service leave!

It has been said that industry could not stand it. That is a general conception of those who oppose the Bill. However, if we read the daily news we will find that industry has never been better off.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Never been more heavily taxed.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is right, and I will tell him more about it in a minute.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Not too much.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Members say that industry cannot afford it. But heavens above! It is well known that industry has never been so prosperous. I read Wesfarmers circular yesterday, which stated that last year was the second best year in the history of the firm; second only to the boom wool year of 1950-51. In yesterday's issue of "The West Australian" we were able to read an analysis of the accounts of companies in a special industrial edition.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Of the railways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The accounts of these firms have certainly not been better. This Bill deals with employees in private industry. According to the supplement in "The West Australian", the profits shown on the balance sheets of some companies are down; but, generally speaking, they were never better.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Were the railway accounts in it too?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They are better than when the hon. member was running them. During that time they got into a mess; and I will read the history when dealing with the railway Bill, and tell the hon. member how he got them into this tangle. These accounts have never been better, when we look at the dividends they paid as compared with the year before. They are all up and buoyant, and reserves are most healthy.

Hon. A. R. Jones: They want to be, too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They are very healthy indeed. When we look at industrial finance and motor transport—

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is the position of transport companies?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They are all very healthy indeed. I can pick out some selected companies where the dividends have been 100 per cent. Sydney Atkinson made a 100 per cent. dividend on a paid up capital of £42,990. Reserves were £624,000. There is nothing wrong with that. The community, which buys motorcars, must be in a healthy condition, to be able to make Sydney Atkinson's accounts like that.

I think the argument that industry cannot stand it is just another one of those bogies. The facts are that conditions are not as bad as that. Sir Charles Latham mentioned taxation. He said these firms are doing well, but they are heavily taxed. That is quite so. But whose fault is that?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The Government's fault. Bad management.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is the fault of the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You have been there for five years.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A little while ago we heard complaints about State taxation. If members read yesterday's issue of "The West Australian" they will see a statement made by the Prime Minister, when addressing the Australian Council of Local Government Associations. He told them they would have to raise all their taxes, as would State Governments, because the Federal Government was not going to be Father Christmas forever, or words to that effect. I will read the article from "The West Australian" dated the 19th November, 1957. It is as follows:—

State and Local Governments should examine their own resources before calling on the Commonwealth for financial assistance, Prime Minister Menzies said today.

Opening the conference of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations, Menzies said that the Federal system would not last if State and Local Governments regarded the Federal Government as their one source of financial assistance.

In other words, tax your own people; tax them more. That is what the Prime Minister said to the States. The article continues—

It was natural that State Local Government and voluntary organisations should seek all the money they needed from the Commonwealth under the present form of uniform taxation, he said.

But if this continued, the Australian people could stop talking about a Federal system of Government, because a Commonwealth Government might some day refuse to discharge financial responsibilities unless it had the power as well.

Therefore, in other words, the Prime Minister says we must tax the people more.

Hon. A. R. Jones: How can you get any more?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is what the Prime Minister said.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You have not left much to be taxed.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Returning to the question as to whether industry can afford to pay, I would point

out that the Commonwealth taxes industry and the Federal Treasurer, the Commonwealth Government and those who support it consider that industry can afford to pay. Therefore, that Government takes the lion's share. In the financial review which I referred to earlier we have the Swan Brewery making a direct taxation provision of £327,000—almost equal to the net profit.

Hon. J. Murray: What has that to do with this Bill?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It has a lot to do with it. I am talking about the cost of long-service leave to industry, and whether industry can afford to pay.

Hon. J. Murray: Look at the State Trading Concerns which have long-service leave and see whether they can pay for it.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Brisbane and Wunderlich will provide £75,000 for tax, as compared to a net profit of £100,000. Bunnings will provide £94,000 for taxation, leaving a net profit of £117,000. From these figures members can see the big slice which is being taken out of industry—a tremendous slice. Apart from this they have to meet payroll tax and sales tax.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And you are going to increase it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member should tell them in Canberra to decrease taxation.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Tell them to decrease taxation on industry and the workers may be able to get some more of the things to which they are entitled.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Like the entertainment tax.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We have heard of the terrific impost of granting long-service leave to perhaps 70,000 or 80,000 employees in Western Australia. It has been said that this impost would ruin the country and cause an industrial depression, as suggested by Mr. Mattiske. It is all so much tommy rot. In the eyes of the Federal Government industry can stand plenty; and it is taking plenty from industry. I think that side of the question could be well and truly ignored, and that industry is well-equipped and well able to meet any impost that this Bill might thrust upon it.

It has been said here and in another place—I would say by the official Opposition—that the cost would be between £15,000,000 and £17,000,000. When asked where that figure came from, no one could say. The figure was quoted and left for somebody to disprove.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: That is what you did with this £10,000,000 estimate.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is out of touch. The Government has not given an estimate of what it might cost.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Give us one.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The only way to give an estimate would be, as Mr. Logan said, for every employer in the State to be examined in order to ascertain the age of all employees, length of employment, and so on.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Any good firm could give an analysis for you.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We say that the figure would be between £4,000,000 or £5,000,000.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Is that an analysis or a wild guess?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Nobody could give an accurate figure. I defy the hon. member to return here with one within a year.

Hon. L. C. Diver: You ought to know as Minister for Railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member credits me with much that I do not profess to be able to give information on.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What is the cost to the railways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is in the vicinity of £100,000 per annum for 12,000 employees.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is on 10 years?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is hard to assess. With 50,000 workers in the State, who now receive long-service leave benefits on a 10-year basis, it is amazing but true, nevertheless, to say that less than 30 per cent. of them stay in a job long enough to take it. That is the assessment we can give on Government figures. But in private enterprise there is a greater turnover of labour.

We heard some talk about the little shop at the corner, and the candlestick maker as Mr. MacKinnon said. Generally these shops have one or two juniors who work for a few years. I threw my memory back, as best I could, to recall the position at West Perth. I have been there since 1947 and I would say that the staff in the small shops has turned over two or three times in that period. Very few of them would be affected. These employers have juniors. They cannot afford to pay senior wages, anyway.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They cannot afford it. I am glad to hear you say that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They will never be involved in long-service leave.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What about the tradesmen—plumbers?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They are not in small shops. The impact of long-service leave would be small. Quite a lot of importance has been placed upon the so-called code which appears to be a refuge for those who say they support long-service leave but are opposed to the Government's proposition. They would, however, support something which is bad.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Something which is more reasonable.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I will tell the hon. member how reasonable it is. There is no doubt that the recognised Opposition in another place, and here—

Hon. A. R. Jones: There is no opposition at all.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; we have a Leader of the Opposition here. There is no doubt that they are in line with the general trend of employers throughout Australia. They submit the case of the employer and present that case as against the one presented by the Government for the worker. It is not strange to me to find that as soon as the Bill has been introduced into the Parliament in Western Australia, the trend in the Eastern States has become the fashion here.

The history of this so-called code should be known by everyone, and I hope the Press will publicise it so that the workers and the employers, who are affected by this legislation, whether it provides for 10 years or 20 years, will be acquainted with the actual facts and not the catch-cries of the supposed agreement or code.

This code was born as a last ditch stand by employers throughout Australia in opposing long-service leave entitlements for the worker. I will tell members how it came about. In 1953 the Victorian Parliament, under the Cain Ministry, passed an Act to give long-service leave benefits to workers in that State. The employers were hostile and fought the provisions of the State award so far as workers who came under Federal awards were concerned. They refused to pay it.

In February, 1955, they applied to the Victorian Industrial Court for a decision in regard to payment for long-service leave to workers working under Federal awards. The magistrate found in favour of the workers, with costs against the employers. Not satisfied with the decision the employers—the people who now say that they are in favour of long-service leave—appealed to the High Court which delivered its judgment on the 11th August, 1955, and again the judgment was in favour of the workers and costs were

awarded against the employers. The employers were fighting long-service leave being granted on the basis of 20 years; three months after 20 years. They appealed to the Privy Council. They took two years to have their case heard, despite promptings from the A.C.T.U. to get on with the case. They lodged notification of the appeal and then sat back in the breeching. The appeal was heard by the Privy Council in January 1957—this year—and the judgment was delivered on the 20th March. The judgment again was in favour of the workers.

One would think that the employers, after testing the question on three occasions would have been satisfied to accept the findings of law. But not they. There was no other appeal court to which they could go so they launched a log of claims against 20-odd unions registered in the Federal court. This was a log of claims in connection with long-service leave provisions.

The court ruled that there was no dispute and ordered the parties into conference, and that is the conference which met in July of this year and at which this supposed code came into existence. The employers fought long-service leave from 1953, and it is still being fought in this Parliament. The question was tried in every court, including the supreme court of the British Commonwealth, but they would not accept the decision.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Who has fought long-service leave in this Chamber?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I will explain to the hon. member how he is keeping in line with the history of long-service leave as I have just explained it. The employers have professed their belief in long-service leave, but the events which I have described took place. Now, when ordered into conference by the Arbitration Court, after discussions with representatives of the A.C.T.U.—and incidentally no representative from Western Australia attended that conference—

Hon. H. K. Watson: Mr. Pereira did not attend the conference?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No Western Australian attended the conference on the long-service leave discussions. As a last ditch stand we have this code drawn up, and it has been put to us. Here is an agreement on a code. There is no agreement, as I have interjected and protested during the course of the debate.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Where do my proposals differ from those of Mr. Cain?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I will tell the hon. member in a minute. Firstly, I point out that the employers who fought long-service leave in Victoria in 1953, are still fighting it. The legislative entitlement in Victoria is 13 weeks after 20 years' service, etc. The employers' claim was eight weeks after 25 years' service and

no additional leave for further service. That was their application to the Federal Arbitration Court in May of this year.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What member of this Chamber has suggested that?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The service was to be retrospective from 1947, and no pro rata leave was to be granted. That is the type of generosity that the employers of Australia hand out to the workers. Mr. Watson has asked me to explain the difference between Mr. Cain's proposition and his. There is a big difference between them. There is an important section in the code that refers to exemptions. The code, if ever it was agreed to, would contain a provision that the trade unions would agree to, but there are several others that they would never agree to. This is No. 5 of the exemptions—

It is agreed in principle that provision is to be made in the code to enable an exemption to be granted to an employer in respect of any existing or prospective long-service leave scheme which, viewed as a whole, is regarded as being more favourable than this code for the whole of the employees.

The Opposition's proposition in regard to that is that they should lose all or any of the benefits, that they may be having now, and which are outside the code. The proposition of the Opposition, by its amendments on the notice paper, is that 50,000 workers in this State, who are already receiving long-service leave benefits, can, on the application of some interested party, lose the lot and be drawn into the national code which stipulates 20 years' service.

We hear members telling us that all these questions should be left to the court. Mr. Watson objects to the Secretary for Labour being the administrator to deal with any of these questions. He believes that everything should be left to the court. Yet, by his amendments on the notice paper, it will mean that if any interested person approaches the court, the court shall—it does not say may—cancel any agreements now in force. Dr. Hislop told us about one of these companies. He was telling us how good it is to its employees. But somebody could approach the court, and the court would have no option but to cancel any agreement that was in force.

If these amendments are agreed to all the wages workers in Western Australia who are now receiving the benefits of long-service leave every 10 years can be brought within the scope of the 20-year period. The workers at Yampi, whom Opposition members say deserve everything they get, could, on the application of some interested individual—and an interested individual would no doubt be the Employers' Federation, the secretary, the president or somebody else—lose their long-service leave every 10 years and have to wait 20

years for it. That is the difference between the hon. member's proposition and Mr. Cain's proposition; and our proposition and the code. There are no improvements in the hon. member's proposition; it would take away from 50,000 workers in this State the long-service leave benefits they now enjoy. I tell members quite frankly that this Government will not stand by and see those benefits taken away; we will not accept that sort of thing.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Why not leave everything to the Arbitration Court?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is prepared to leave only some things to the Arbitration Court.

Hon. H. K. Watson: No, I say all or nothing in either place.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is simply camouflage.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It describes the mind of the Employers' Federations throughout Australia; as a body it is opposed to long-service leave for any workers. It is all very well for us to have learned gentlemen here talking about psychology, and telling us we are nutty. There are times when psychologists need psychologists to study them. We have to look at realism and facts. We have to look at the position as it is, and judge it on its merits. I have shown that industry can stand this plan.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Did you get Chamberlain's figures for me?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No, I was not able to get them ready in time. It is a big job and it is not possible to get things like that worked out overnight. Let us say that the cost to Chamberlain's in 1961 is £10,000 or £15,000.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is nothing to what they have lost already!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If we wait for 20 years the cost will be just twice as much.

Hon. H. K. Watson: No.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Does the hon. member think that wages paid under an award will remain dormant over the next 10 or 20 years? Of course not! Nobody would expect them to remain dormant; they must advance. It will either be galloping inflation as a result of the Federal Government's taxation, or creeping inflation. No matter how we look at it, industry can stand and carry this scheme. At present one-third of the workers in Western Australia are entitled to long-service leave every 10 years. If the amendments on the notice paper are carried—and I understand the Opposition all support them—

Hon. L. A. Logan: Who said they did?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They were introduced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place, and they were not accepted there. Mr. Logan gave us the figures of the national federal employers' association, or whatever association it is. He would not be quoting their figures unless he agreed with the amendments. I say that industry can stand this plan. The State has never been more prosperous than it is today. Already one-third of the workers in industry are receiving long-service leave.

Hon. A. R. Jones: The taxpayers are paying for it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The State has never been more prosperous. That is a fact. "The West Australian" stated it.

Hon. G. E. Jeffery: That is the businessman's bible.

Hon. R. C. Mattiske: Is there any unemployment today?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: "The West Australian" quotes profits of 100 per cent., 60 per cent. and 50 per cent.

Hon. R. C. Mattiske: What about the private bus operators?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is obvious that industry can stand it. Of the other two-thirds who do not now enjoy long-service leave, it is doubtful if more than 30 per cent. would ever qualify, judging on those working in Government employment. They are facts which can be checked. This proposition was not born overnight, or since the code was mentioned in July of this year. The Government has spent a darned lot of time investigating this matter since it gave an election promise that it would introduce a Bill to give the best long-service leave conditions possible and practicable.

It spent 12 months examining the possibility of extending long-service leave benefits to every worker in the community. We had in mind a 20-year period for every worker in the community. That is the scheme with which Mr. Cunningham got tangled up when he mentioned the £10,000,000. Mr. Gawler, the actuary, was asked to look into the practicability of this scheme.

Hon. H. K. Watson: On a 10-year or 20-year basis?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: On a 20-year basis. After examining it his figures showed quite clearly that industry could not stand it. That was a scheme to cover every worker. It was to cover a man who worked on a farm for a month or two and then went on. The idea was to have a pool and contributions would be made to the pool. After the matter was examined the Government found that it could not keep to its election promise and extend long-service leave

to everybody. It made a further investigation and we know that the State and industry can stand the plan outlined in the Bill before us—13 weeks on a 10-yearly basis. We have introduced a Bill with seven years' retrospectivity and a three years' maturation period.

Hon. A. R. Jones: It is pretty tough.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We know that if the Bill is accepted, as it stands, there will be no hardship to anybody; we know that industry can stand it. No solid argument has been put forward against this measure, and I want to make it quite clear that the Government considers this a practicable proposition and it intends to stand behind it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Section 90 repealed and re-enacted with amendments:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (a) in lines 8 to 13, page 2, be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—

(a) who, being enrolled for a District, has reason to believe that he will, on polling day, be more than seven miles from any polling place; or,

The present provision in the Bill will remove one that has been in the Act for some years relating to a person who is enrolled for a district and who has reason to believe that he will be more than seven miles from any polling place on polling day being entitled to a postal vote. My amendment will have the effect of restoring that provision.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I ask the Committee to oppose the amendment. The effect of the amendment is to give to the elector of the Legislative Council a right not enjoyed by the elector of the Legislative Assembly. If it is agreed to an elector need only be seven miles from a polling booth to be permitted to cast a postal vote. We should ensure that the same procedure is followed in regard to both Houses. If a person is beyond seven miles of a polling booth he should record an absentee vote.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I would refer the Chief Secretary to Section 90 of the Act which contains a provision similar to the one outlined in the amendment before us. That provision has been in

existence for a considerable time, and I cannot therefore understand the opposition of the Chief Secretary.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	15

Majority against	6
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Ayes.

Hon. J. G. Hialop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. J. Murray	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.

Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Williesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That after the word "or" in line 13, page 2, the following be inserted to stand as paragraph (b):—

(b) who, being enrolled for a Province has reason to believe that he will, on polling day, be more than seven miles from any polling place in that Province.

I would point out to the members who opposed the previous amendment that if they oppose this amendment people living in the country would be confronted with a great deal of difficulty in recording their votes. People living beyond seven miles of a polling booth within the province in which they own property will find themselves at a distinct disadvantage.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would ask the Committee to oppose the amendment. If an elector is in a position to cast a vote he should not be permitted to register a postal vote.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: An examination should be made of the present position. I am not sure of the exact distances, but if a Fremantle resident owns property in Kenwick, which is within the Central Province, and there was no contest in the area between those two localities, there would be no polling booth unless one was opened specifically in the area where there was no opposition.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They always put up a polling booth.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It appears that the hon. member's knowledge of this matter is extremely poor. The Electoral Office does not always put up a polling booth in the circumstances that I refer to. In some cases where there is no contest, there is

no polling booth at all. In that event a person who is qualified to vote would have to travel from his place of residence to a polling booth, unless he is beyond seven miles from it. Let us apply that proposition to country electors and to the province represented by Mr. Bennetts. In that case difficulty could be experienced.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: By Mr. Bennetts's opponent.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not a question of whether the situation I envisage would suit Mr. Bennetts's opponent or not. It is a matter of altering the existing conditions, to make it much more difficult for the people living in the country.

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

Ayes	10
Noes	14

Majority against 4

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. E. M. Davies

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negated.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That the words "throughout the hours of polling" in lines 14 and 15, page 2, be struck out.

I ask members to have consideration for the man who might not necessarily be travelling throughout the 12 hours of polling from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., but might be travelling on polling day in such circumstances that he would be so involved that the application of the words "from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m." would not apply. That is the basis of the Act as it stands. I do not know whether some members realise what they are doing to this Act by cutting out the provisions already there. What will happen is that we will have a new system of postal voting which will not be able to operate very satisfactorily for those who live in the country.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I ask the Committee not to agree to the amendment. I do not see why any special privilege should be given to a person because he happens to be travelling. He might be going only five miles, and could easily record a vote in his own electorate or as

an absentee voter. But it is proposed to allow him to vote by post. There is no sense in the amendment.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I cannot comprehend. These things are in the Act at the moment and have applied for years. We have had Bills in this Chamber—one was defeated at the second reading the other day—which sought to do the very thing this Committee is now providing for in the Electoral Act. I fail to understand why members of the Country Party are prepared to leave their electors in this situation.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: When I spoke on the second reading I made my position quite clear. I do not desire the Bill or the amendments thereto. What I desire is to retain the Act in its present form; and any actions I take in the Committee stage are in that direction.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I propose to persist with my amendments, which are not being considered of their merits but on the prejudices of the hon. member.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	15

Majority against 6

Ayes.

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. E. M. Davies
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negated.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will battle on regardless. I move an amendment—

That the word "will" in line 16, page 2, be struck out and the word "may" inserted in lieu.

Surely "may" is better than "will"! It is very arbitrary to say that a certain set of travelling conditions will preclude certain things. Who knows? Who is even the Chief Secretary to look into the future?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As members know, I always like to be definite, and I much prefer the word "will" to the word "may." So I suggest the Committee does not agree to the amendment. Postal voting is a privilege, yet it is proposed to allow a person to decide whether he will vote by post, as an absentee voter, or in the ordinary way. He is to be given an option.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nothing of the kind.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If we insert the word "will" he must be under a certain heading in order to obtain a postal vote.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He might be in the position of having a puncture.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: He would be precluded, and I think we should be definite.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: A person might be precluded from exercising his vote owing to a train running late or something of that nature.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	11
Noes	....	....	....	13

Majority against 2

Ayes.

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. N. E. Baxter
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That all words from and including the word "or" in line 1 down to and including the word "Act" in line 4, page 3, be struck out.

I think the North Province is obviously a remote area—

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: No more than parts of the Murchison.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think the North Province should be the only remote area—

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That would do a great wrong to some of the people on the Murchison.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Act has operated in this State for a long time and any disability would have affected areas represented by supporters of the Government. I think it wrong in principle for the Minister to have power to declare remote areas as he thinks fit.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. There could be remote areas apart from the North-West. The Murchison has

been mentioned and there are other areas, such as Eucla, for instance, which should not be denied the privilege.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then why not be positive, as the Chief Secretary advocates, and write them into the Bill? We know which are the remote areas of the State and it is not likely that their remoteness will become greater as time passes.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	9
Noes	....	....	....	15

Majority against 6

Ayes.

Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. J. Murray	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. E. M. Davies
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That the words "and is within Australia" in lines 15 and 16, page 3, be struck out.

I am bound to take a trick sooner or later with these amendments. This one is definitely an improvement on the Bill because it will provide for people who are outside the Commonwealth to have a postal vote. When introducing this Bill the Chief Secretary said that he desired us to bring the State Electoral Act more into line with the Commonwealth legislation and this amendment will do that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We consider that the provision in the Bill is sufficient extension of postal voting for the time being. We cannot provide for a worldwide coverage yet. I think it is a little ridiculous to consider granting that concession at the moment.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Coming from the Chief Secretary, that comment is not in accordance with fact and his reply is extremely frivolous. The amendment does not seek to give a postal vote to a person anywhere in the world but merely to one who is in another dominion.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Who is an authorised witness?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: For anybody who is overseas?

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Yes, the one we are dealing with now.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Any person who is on the roll for a province or a district. That is provided in Section 94 of the Act. This amendment is not ridiculous because in the Commonwealth legislation there is provision for a man to vote if he is sick and is over five miles from the nearest polling booth. Also, he can vote by post if he is in another State or in another dominion.

Hon. H. K. Watson: And the Chief Secretary calls that ridiculous.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, and he desires to try to convince us that he is anxious to bring our legislation into line with the Commonwealth Act. The Chief Secretary will defeat his own Bill if he employs these tactics. Surely some commonsense will be shown in regard to consideration of this amendment.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The provision in the Bill is reasonable in all the circumstances. As the Chief Secretary has said, we have not given facilities for postal voting to anyone outside the State. In this amendment we would be taking a big step in extending the legislation to cover anyone who is outside the State or outside Australia. I think that is what the Chief Secretary meant when he said it was ridiculous to consider giving people in England a postal vote. The votes of the people who lodge a postal vote whilst outside the State will have to be returned within a reasonable time. One can imagine the complications that would follow if such a privilege were granted to people who were in America or England.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: The amendment does not provide for a vote to be given to people in America. It applies only to those who are in other dominions.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I cannot see any objection to people who are in America having a postal vote.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: You are the only one suggesting that.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If the amendment is agreed to the clause will read, "Temporarily absent from the State." If a person was in America and a witness for the vote could be obtained that person could lodge a vote if the amendment were agreed to. The majority of people outside the State at the time of an election will be provided for, but we are looking too far ahead when we seek to include those who are in England or America.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: When the Chief Secretary introduced the Bill he said, "We want everyone to be on the same footing." If a man travels to the Northern Territory or to any other part of Australia he can vote by post. Therefore, why should not a man who travels to England have the same right to exercise his vote by post?

Why does the Chief Secretary go out of his way to try to disfranchise that man and deliberately prevent him from voting? Mr. Heenan should not draw the long bow about a man who is in America. It would not be possible for a person in America to vote unless he had some preconceived knowledge of the election.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: America is not much further away than England.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He might be in the middle of the Nevada desert or anywhere. If a man is in England, however, he could quite easily keep in touch with Western Australia.

The Chief Secretary: Could he?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course he could! If the Chief Secretary went to England he would be surprised to know that the Agent General's office is like a home from home for many Western Australians who are travelling abroad. A man in England should have the right to vote in the same way as a man who is in, say, Sydney.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What about the servicemen in Malaya? With your amendment they would be able to lodge a postal vote.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: But they are not on the roll.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sure that Mr. Heenan is not serious when he says that, because he must know there are many servicemen who are on the roll irrespective of where their domicile may be in the execution of their duty.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We are dealing not only with Legislative Council elections.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I realise that. We are dealing with all elections and an elector who does not vote will be liable to a penalty of £2.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	9
Noes	....	....	....	15
Majority against				6

Ayes.	
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	(Teller.)
Noes.	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	(Teller.)
Pairs	
Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That all words after the word "shall" in line 1, down to and including the word "issue" in line 3, page 4, be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—

if the application is made before the close of nominations post to the elector immediately after such closure, and if made after such closure, either hand to the elector personally at the time of the making of the application (if the application is made by the elector in person) and in any other case immediately post to the elector at the address shown on the application.

I would refer members to paragraph (c) from which it will be seen that this is a departure from the Commonwealth Electoral Act. I revert to the argument that the Government used—namely, that it was proposed to bring this into conformity with the Federal Act. That Act does not contain provisions similar to this. Under that Act the elector makes application for a ballot paper which is posted to him by the Chief Electoral Officer. The person concerned exercises his vote and gets it back to the right quarter either by post or by handing it in. The process envisaged in the Bill of delivering it to him is one which would not meet with the approval of any of us, because it would mean that the staff of the electoral office would be delivering postal votes to people and that would not be the intention.

My amendment means that in return for an application a ballot paper will be posted to the elector unless he makes application to the appropriate officer personally for the ballot paper. He can exercise his vote, put it in an envelope as required in the Bill, and hand it back to the returning officer and go away satisfied.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. It is similar to the wording of the Bill but not as clear, as is evident from the explanation given by Mr. Griffith. If he had not given that explanation we would not have known its purport.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary has used a feeble argument. If I had not explained it I am sure he would have castigated me. When I see what is going on in this Committee tonight where people are being disfranchised, it makes me wonder.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

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

Ayes	.....	8
Noes	.....	14
Majority against	.....	6

Ayes.

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That the word "deliver" in line 29, page 4, be struck out and the words "hand to" inserted in lieu.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think the hon. member is doing what I suggested, but he is getting ridiculous. These are consequential amendments. Others have already been defeated.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think they are consequential, Mr. Chairman; and I do not wish to proceed with them.

Amendment put.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. member moved an amendment. I stated the question and I wanted to know if he would move a motion to withdraw the amendment.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think you are perfectly right in regard to what actually took place. I moved the amendment without explanation. The Chief Secretary said it was consequential, following which I said I would not proceed with it.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment was moved.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I asked permission to withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: So far as I am concerned, an amendment was before the Chair. We will clarify the position. The hon. member desires to withdraw his amendment. I think that will be agreed to.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I ask permission to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 and 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Section 93 repealed and new section substituted:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Committee decided previously that it would not take out the words, "or in any part of the State

declared to be a remote area under the provisions of section ninety-three." As the amendment I propose to move is consequential, it is not my intention to proceed with it.

Clause put and passed.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Have you put Clause 6?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, most decidedly.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There are three amendments on the notice paper in my name.

The CHAIRMAN: I put the clause and the hon. member did not go any further. There is no other amendment on the notice paper to Clause 6.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Yes there is.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member desires to go on with his amendment I am prepared to allow him to do so.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That Subsection (5) of proposed new Section 93 be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—

- (5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall keep and maintain as a separate part of the roll of each province or district as aforesaid the names of all electors registered as general postal voters.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My information from the department is that this would not be practicable. Further than that, even if it were, it would be necessary to amend some other portions of the Act for it to be done. It is considered that the list kept by the Chief Electoral Officer should be sufficient for the purpose.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The point at issue is that where a roll is maintained that roll is public property and can be inspected, and can be cleansed by any political party by way of lodging necessary objections. However, if the Chief Electoral Officer is going to keep a list he will surely have it in a drawer or some other place which is not open to inspection by the public. All I want is that the Chief Electoral Officer shall keep and maintain a separate roll of electors of remote areas. There are not going to be many of them. By a remote area I do not mean a province like mine, with 35,000 or 36,000 voters—that is not a remote area. I refer more to the North-West Province where members are elected by 1,000 electors.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member would make the Committee believe that these people would not appear on the roll.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not say that at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I said it would appear so to members of the Committee.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You said there would be a list in the drawer.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I said a list in the electoral office, but I did not say they would not be on the roll. The hon. member has been talking about lodging objections. What is going to prevent anyone from lodging an objection to a person being on the North Province roll? He is still on that roll; but the Chief Electoral Officer will have a list of people to whom postal ballot papers will be made available.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am as fully aware of the situation in regard to the Electoral Act as is the Chief Secretary; and in respect to the North Province there is a roll in the same way as there is a roll for the Minister's province; and on that roll are the names and addresses of the persons entitled to vote. However, subtracted from that roll to get the list the Chief Secretary referred to would be the names of people who are classified as living in a remote area. Those names would be taken from the roll and put on this list which the Chief Secretary refers to. If the whole of the roll in respect of the North Province or the whole of the roll in respect of the North-East Province is going to be defined as a "remote area" and everybody on those rolls will then be in that category, this has a greater odour than I had thought it had.

The Chief Secretary: From the sublime to the ridiculous.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Carnarvon is a distant place; but it is not a remote area, as it is only about 3½ to 4 hours travelling time away by plane. The same applies to portion of Kalgoorlie situated in the North-East Province. I think the Chief Secretary likes to make members of the Committee think I am trying to mislead them. However, they know what I was talking about. I was talking about the names of people being subtracted from that roll and being listed as living in remote areas. I asked for a separate roll of these people so the rolls will be open for public inspection; and if information is received by any political party that a particular man no longer lives in a certain area, the roll can be inspected to see that his name is on the remote area roll. If necessary an objection can be made and his name taken off. It is as simple as that, and it is not misleading as the Chief Secretary would have the Committee believe.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I move—

That the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

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

Ayes	.....	6
Noes	.....	18

Majority against 12

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. A. R. Jones

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. G. MacKinnon
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. E. M. Davies

(Teller.)

Pairs.

<i>Ayes.</i>	<i>Noes.</i>
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Motion thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—Section 94 repealed and new section substituted:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have an amendment on the notice paper, but as it is consequential on one that was not agreed to I shall not proceed with it.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Section 99B amended:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The provision in the Bill is an attempt to prevent anyone but someone from the electoral office from entering a hospital or institution to give a ballot paper, etc., to an elector. If a member votes against the amendment I have on the notice paper he will prevent a person who has a wife or relative in hospital, from saying to his wife or relative, "Here is an application for a ballot paper to vote on Saturday."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to have a look at his amendment which applies to page 10, and actually to Clause 8.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What I am doing is attempting to amend Clause 8 but my amendment appears on the notice paper as dealing with Clause 10. The Committee has gone past Clause 8.

The CHAIRMAN: That is true. The hon. member may speak to the clause before the Chair but his amendment would not be in order.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have no amendment to Clause 10. The notice paper is incorrectly printed. I will have to move to recommit the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 15, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment.

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 8.

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 8—Section 95 repealed and re-enacted with amendments:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move an amendment—

That Subsection (8) of proposed new Section 95, in lines 7 to 27, page 10, be struck out.

We know that the Royal Perth Hospital is a Government institution and under present conditions looks after its own postal votes; and people are sent there to take the votes of inmates. No other person has the right to go there except by arrangements made with the hospital board. If a person has a member of his family in the hospital there should be nothing to prevent him from taking an application for a postal vote to that relative. But this subsection states that unless authorised in writing by the Chief Electoral Officer a person cannot give a ballot paper to an inmate of an institution prescribed by the regulations. What a ridiculous state of affairs!

If my wife were in hospital I would have to go to the Chief Electoral Officer to get permission to give her a ballot paper. How stupid! Surely an institution should be able to conduct its own affairs. I think we can over-govern and over-regulate. I hope that members will agree to the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. One of the greatest abuses of the electoral system has been in hospitals and places of that description.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: What do you mean by "abuses"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have heard some hair-raising tales as to what has been going on in hospitals with regard to voting. Ned Kelly had nothing on some of them. The clause has been inserted in the Bill to stop these abuses. It has been suggested that it would impose too great a restriction. I cannot see that; but even if it did, I would still vote for it because that would be better than the position that has previously existed.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know what the Chief Secretary means when he talks of abuses; I have never known of them. This Bill completely alters the method of postal voting, and does away completely with postal vote officers. Is the Chief Secretary suggesting that people who have relatives in hospital would not get ballot papers to those relatives?

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then why do we not come down to earth and adopt a sensible attitude? If the Bill is agreed to there will be no more postal vote officers to carry out these abuses of which he accuses them. Yet the Chief Secretary has the temerity to foreshadow abuses of the new system.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: It is amazing to see the Chief Secretary bankrupt of ideas. He knows that every one of us would, if his wife were in hospital, get a ballot paper to her. I would.

The Chief Secretary: So would I.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I have heard on many occasions that no legislation should be passed if it is not acceptable to the people. So why does not the Chief Secretary agree to the amendment? Mr. Griffith has given us an opportunity to make this into a reasonable clause; but all the Chief Secretary has done tonight has been to say, "No, no, no."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: All Mr. Griffith is doing is to take something out of the Bill.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I have taken nothing out of the Bill. Do not talk such a lot of tripe!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have heard more tripe from the hon. member tonight than I have listened to for months. The hon. member's amendment merely takes something out of the Bill and puts nothing into it.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It will make a better Bill of it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will still leave loopholes for abuses which we want to stop.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: That is under the system that is existing now. This is a new system altogether.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot agree to this amendment, because it will remove the safety provision. Mr. MacKinnon accuses me of sitting tight and agreeing to nothing. I have sat in this Chamber for 28 years and have had that happening to me. Officers of the Electoral Department, who have recommended this legislation, know their business, and have submitted this legislation based on past experience. To agree to this amendment will be unlocking the door.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think we ought to examine a few of the Chief Secretary's statements.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I think we should vote him out of the Chair.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I gave very good reasons for moving this amendment. The clause prohibits any person from going to an elector with an application form

for a postal ballot paper. That means if a person were to visit a hospital he could not take with him an application form for a friend or a member of his family. He would have to get an outsider to do that. Even the witness to the signature has to be an outsider.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Where would the person get the ballot paper from?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That person can make application for a ballot paper from his home, in the way that bills are received. Under this provision that person will be prevented from doing that on behalf of his wife who is in hospital. He cannot even stay in the hospital ward while she is filling in the application form.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Why didn't you vote the whole Bill out?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary might want that. I believe that the Bill is commendable in an amended form. It is obvious that the Government does not want the Bill. The provision under discussion even prevents a person from signing his name on the certificate or the envelope containing the postal ballot paper. It prohibits him from taking custody of or transmitting to the Chief Electoral Officer the envelope containing that ballot paper. Yet a member of the Police Force can do anything he likes with the ballot paper.

Merely because in the past some abuse has arisen in respect of this provision the Government now seeks to introduce the prohibitions contained in this clause. It seems that the Government considers that every person is a criminal. I have experience of members of my own family being sick and I have had to attend to their personal needs, far more important than the filling in of the ballot paper; yet the Government seeks to deny a person the right to take an application form for a postal ballot paper to a member of his family.

I have reached the stage of complete exasperation and complete amazement at the action of the Government—which is supposed to represent the working class—in seeking to deprive the working man of his right to take a ballot to his wife. I hope that some sense will prevail in regard to this clause and that members will not be swayed by the comments of the Chief Secretary. I urge this Committee to agree to the deletion of the subsection under discussion.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	9
Noes	....	....	....	....	15
Majority against					6

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 20th November, 1957.

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Ayes.	
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hialop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	(Teller.)

Noes.	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	(Teller.)

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. F. J. S. Wise

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. today (Thursday).

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 12.40 a.m.

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

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

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