

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 6th November, 1956.

## CONTENTS.

	Page
Writing-room for members, statement by the Speaker .....	1932
Assent to Bill .....	1932
Questions : Railways, (a) responsibility for fencing .....	1932
(b) freight rate on seeds from Eastern States .....	1932
(c) replacement of weighbridge, Bunbury .....	1932
(d) freight in cost of wheat production .....	1932
(e) closure of Burakin-Bonnie Rock line .....	1933
(f) earnings and losses, country and suburban services .....	1933
(g) receipts and expenditure .....	1933
(h) expenses and revenue, branch lines .....	1933
(i) cost of re-sleepering, Burakin-Bonnie Rock section .....	1934
(k) discontinuance of Gnowangerup-Ongerup line .....	1934
(l) distances and freights, Burakin-Bonnie Rock section .....	1935
(m) freight on Katanning-Pingrup line .....	1935
(n) recommendations of committee on closure .....	1935
(o) closure of lines and resultant staff position .....	1935
(p) freight on grain and superphosphate .....	1935
(q) closure of lines and savings in fuel, etc. ....	1936
(r) alternative transport, Bonnie Rock-Burakin route .....	1936
Government Tourist Bureau, (a) expenditure and revenue .....	1936
(b) grants to country bureaux .....	1936
Education, (a) additional classrooms, Carey Park school .....	1937
(b) attendance at Double View school .....	1937
(c) school bus contracts .....	1937
(d) high school enrolments .....	1937
(e) replacement of Hoffman mill school .....	1937
(f) Canning Vale school .....	1937
State Government Insurance Office, commencement of building operations and expenditure .....	1938
Loan funds, expenditure on Wundowie, classrooms and hospitals .....	1938
Police station, Bunbury, repairs and renovations .....	1938
Housing, (a) Hamersley-Marmion area .....	1938
(b) Denmark and Mt. Barker applications .....	1938
(c) Brentwood and Mt. Yokine construction .....	1939
Water supplies, (a) Lake Grace and Dumbleyung services .....	1939
(b) amplification of reply .....	1939
(c) Pingelly reticulation .....	1939
(d) Wagin scheme .....	1939
(e) Piesserville and Woodanilling connection to comprehensive scheme .....	1939

## CONTENTS—continued.

estions—continued	Page
(f) Perenjori and Coorow reticulation .....	1939
(g) Roleystone scheme and availability, Holden-rd. ....	1939
Shipping, fendering facilities, Geraldton wharf .....	1940
Transport, (a) importation of heavy duty chassis .....	1940
(b) handling of forest logs .....	1940
(c) unlicensed carting of wool .....	1940
Roads, (a) maintenance in Shark Bay area .....	1940
(b) probable Gnowangerup-Ongerup section .....	1941
Agriculture, investigation of "Festival of Britain" flower .....	1941
Hospitals, country bed averages and subsidies .....	1941
Treasury, cash position and outstanding bills .....	1942
Potatoes, net price per ton since 1950 .....	1942
War service land settlement, Jerramungup and Ongerup areas .....	1942
Electricity supplies, (a) position at Eaton .....	1942
(b) South-West power scheme and farms .....	1942
Medical school, progress and intake of students .....	1942
Government supplies, method of acquiring .....	1943
Wheat, (a) deliveries to Burakin-Bonnie Rock railway sidings .....	1943
(b) bulk handling facilities, Burakin-Bonnie Rock .....	1943
Roelands quarry, duties of caretaker, annual cost, etc. ....	1943
Emu fence, specifications, length, cost, etc. ....	1944
Doggers, number, wages, transport, etc. ....	1944
Coalmining, future of Westralia and Black Diamond mines .....	1944
Coke supplies, use in slow combustion stoves, etc. ....	1944
Lands, Eneabba farms, capital cost and improvements .....	1945
Rural & Industries Bank, savings bank section .....	1945
State Savings Bank, agreement with Commonwealth .....	1945
Bills : Land Act Amendment (No. 3), 1r. ....	1945
Firearms and Guns Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1945
Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Limited), Act Amendment 3r. ....	1945
Land Act Amendment (No. 1), report .....	1945
Local Government, Com. ....	1945
Administration Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1963
Death Duties (Taxing) Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1964
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report .....	1965
Brands Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r., Com. report .....	1969
Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r. ....	1977

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

**WRITING-ROOM FOR MEMBERS.***Statement by the Speaker.*

The SPEAKER: I desire to inform members that I have made available accommodation adjoining the Speaker's room for use as a writing-room for Legislative Assembly members only. Six writing-tables have been placed there for members' use and convenience. This room is part of the Speaker's accommodation and will revert to him for his use when the necessary accommodation is provided for members in the additions to be made to Parliament House. The room is definitely not to be used as a conference or meeting room, and members will be expected to maintain silence and not disturb others who want to work.

**ASSENT TO BILL.**

Message from the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the Geraldton Sailors and Soldiers' Memorial Institute Act Amendment Bill.

**QUESTIONS.****RAILWAYS.***(a) Responsibility for Fencing.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What responsibility does the W.A.G.R. have in respect of building fencing along railway routes—

- (a) metropolitan area;
- (b) country—

- (i) through townsites;
- (ii) through settled rural areas;
- (iii) through rural areas not yet settled?

(2) Who is responsible for the maintenance of such fences, including damage by fire?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) In accordance with a Full Court ruling, no legal responsibility rests with the Railway Department.

(2) Answered by No. (1). Modification has been made departmentally as follows:—

- (a) To prevent unauthorised entry or exit from stations, fences have been erected where deemed necessary and maintained.
- (b) Where fences have been erected at station yards as a safeguard against trespassing stock, these are maintained.
- (c) Where it has been found necessary for the railway to intersect a farmer's property, land resumption has been effected and the farmer's boundary fence made secure by provision of cattle pits, which are maintained.

(d) On some main lines where fast passenger trains run through heavy stock country, part maintenance of the boundary fence of adjoining property has been assumed as deemed necessary and subject to finance being available.

*(b) Freight Rates on Seeds from Eastern States.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Referring to my question answered on Wednesday, the 30th October, giving freight rates for seeds from Victoria and South Australia to Merredin, Northam and Perth, what is the reason for charging £2 12s. 2d. less for carting one ton an extra 170 miles to Perth than to Merredin?

(2) Does the Government agree with such policy?

(3) If not, what steps are being taken to alter it?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

Special rates apply on goods consigned from capital to capital only. These rates are fixed by agreement between the States and have operated since the opening of the trans-Australian railway.

The question of these inter-capital rates was raised by this State at a recent conference of railway commissioners and is now under review by State and Commonwealth railway authorities.

*(c) Replacement of Weighbridge, Bunbury.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it the intention of the Government to replace the public weighbridge that for many years was operated by the W.A.G.R. near the goods shed in Bunbury?

(2) If not, why not?

(3) If so, when?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) No.

(2) The weighbridge is not required for railway purposes.

(3) Answered by No. (1).

*(d) Freight in Cost of Wheat Production.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

Is he now able to supply the figures on which the item "Freight" is assessed in the cost of production of wheat?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

The matter was referred to the Australian Wheat Board, Melbourne, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics Department, Canberra, but neither of these authorities could give sufficient information to enable a reconciliation to be made between the index figures and those of the Western Australia Government Railways.

*(e) Closure of Burakin-Bonnie Rock Line.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) If the recommendation of the inter-departmental committee to close the Burakin-Bonnie Rock railway is implemented, what is the earliest date on which the closure could be effected?

(2) What amount is it expected will be required to place the roads in the area in a condition capable of carrying the very heavy additional traffic that would ensue as a result of the closure of this railway?

(3) Is it proposed to route the roads over which this traffic will traverse, to points along the Wyalkatchem-Mukinbudin railway, or would the traffic pass over a road parallel with the existing railway?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It would not be practicable to close this line before the end of the 1956-57 season.

(2) It is not anticipated that the additional traffic will be such as to warrant any undue expenditure immediately. If the line is closed, roads will be maintained or improved progressively to meet the demands placed upon them.

(3) This has not yet been determined but the general principle in the event of railway closure would be to convey traffic to or from the nearest railway point.

*(f) Earnings and Losses, Country and Suburban Services.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What proportion did the income from the following services bear to the total earnings of the Railway Department in each of the five years ended the 30th June, 1956—

The details are as follows:—

	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.
	£	£	£	£	£
1. (a) Total Earnings .....	9,163,532	7,972,280	11,374,307	12,530,410	13,274,166
(b) Earnings from suburban coaching .....	256,178	162,235	247,062	302,221	372,421
2. (a) Total working expenses including deprecia- tions .....	11,281,779	13,008,153	14,751,011	14,925,995	16,123,763
(b) Working expenses suburban coaching .....	991,305	924,605	1,290,830	1,261,169	1,468,995

Suburban passenger service;  
suburban goods service;  
country passenger service;  
country goods service?

(2) What proportions, respectively, did the losses on these four services bear to the total operating loss of the Railway Department in each of the five years mentioned?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.
	%	%	%	%	%
1. Suburban Passenger .....	3	2	2	2	3
Country Passenger .....	11	10	9	8	8
Goods .....	76	74	80	81	81
2. Suburban Passenger .....	28	14	25	27	28
Country Passenger .....	29	23	33	33	25
Goods .....	57	66	43	43	50

Goods traffic is not separated into country and suburban.

*(g) Receipts and Expenditure.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What have been the—

(a) total earnings of the Railway Department;

(b) income received from suburban rail services;

in each of the five years from 1950-51 to 1955-56 respectively?

(2) What have been the

(a) total working expenses (excluding interest) of the department;

(b) working expenses in respect of suburban passenger rail services;

in each of the same five years?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

Brookton—Corrigin;  
Lake Grace—Newdegate;  
Lake Grace—Hyden;  
Burakin—Bonnie Rock;  
Kondinin—Merredin;  
Brookton—Corrigin;  
Wyalkatchem—Merredin;  
York—Merredin;  
Bruce Rock—Narrogin?

*(h) Expenses and Revenue, Branch Lines.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

What were the working expenses of, and the revenue derived from, the following railway lines for the year ended the 30th June, 1954, and the year ended the 30th June, 1955, respectively—

Busselton—Flinders Bay;  
Elleker—Nornalup;

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

The details are as follows:—

Section.	Working Expenses including Interest and Depreciation.		Revenue.	
	1954.	1955.	1954.	1955.
	£	£	£	£
Busselton excluded to Flinders Bay	77,147	80,902	31,642	31,314
Elleker excluded to Nornalup	70,036	76,011	13,687	13,936
Brookton excluded to Corrigin excluded	34,228	41,898	5,771	8,918
Lake Grace excluded to Newdegate	36,061	36,470	7,597	12,393
Lake Grace excluded to Hyden	40,959	42,278	10,439	11,373
Burakin excluded to Bonnie Rock	51,422	53,373	12,496	11,606
Kondinin excluded to Merredin excluded	105,297	96,460	31,381	38,353
Wyalkatchem excluded to Merredin	94,704	105,569	31,722	39,390
*York excluded to Bruce Rock excluded	100,463	113,472	48,064	58,550
*Narrogin excluded to Merredin excluded via Corrigin	203,550	217,493	141,062	160,784

\* These two sections cover the railways mentioned by the hon. member but with a different subdivision.

(j) *Cost of Re-sleeping, Burakin-Bonnie Rock Section.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

What amount has been spent in re-sleeping the Burakin-Bonnie Rock line in each of the following years:—

Year ended the 30th June, 1954;

Year ended the 30th June, 1955;

Year ended the 30th June, 1956?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

Year ended the 30th June—

	£
1954	17,097
1955	22,928
1956	34,360

(k) *Discontinuance of Gnowangerup-Ongerup Line.*

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

(1) For each of the years 1953-54, 1954-55, and 1955-56, how many bushels of grain, bales of wool, tons of super-phosphate and tons of other freight were carried by rail to and from—

(a) Ongerup;

(b) other sidings east of Gnowangerup?

(2) In the event of the Gnowangerup-Ongerup railway being discontinued, is it proposed that grain grown by farmers in the areas concerned will be—

(a) carried by road to Albany; or

(b) carried by road to bins at the various sidings; or

(c) carried by road to Gnowangerup?

(3) In the event mentioned, will wool and other farm produce be carried—

(a) by road to Albany, or

(b) to where?

(4) If such carriage by road is proposed, will it be —

(a) by hauliers employed by farmers; or

(b) by hauliers subsidised by the Government to keep charges to the equivalent of railway rates; or

(c) by Government transport services at railway rates; or

(d) how otherwise?

The MINISTER replied:

1. (a)—

	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.
	tons.	tons.	tons.
<b>Traffic to Ongerup—</b>			
Grain	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Wool	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Super	1,724	2,677	2,199
Other traffic	1,321	1,577	1,689
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,045</b>	<b>4,254</b>	<b>3,888</b>
<b>Traffic from Ongerup—</b>			
Grain	2,061	2,726	1,858
Wool	129	135	190
Super	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Other traffic	3,214	1,742	4,972
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,404</b>	<b>4,603</b>	<b>7,020</b>

(b)—

	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.
	tons.	tons.	tons.
<b>Traffic to other sidings—</b>			
Grain	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Wool	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Super	4,744	3,275	1,670
Other traffic	829	959	1,052
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,573</b>	<b>4,234</b>	<b>2,722</b>
<b>Traffic from other sidings—</b>			
Grain	6,894	754	3,912
Wool	395	375	447
Super	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>	N <sup>4</sup>
Other traffic	4,803	10,173	4,022
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12,092</b>	<b>11,302</b>	<b>8,381</b>

(2) Details of alternate arrangements for transport of grain from the area are still to be determined. It is expected that,

for some time at least, Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. can arrange to continue receivals at existing bins along the line from which points road transport will be arranged to Gnowangerup.

(3) The general principle of discontinuance of railways would be that traffic would in future be carried by road to or from the nearest point on a continuing railway. In connection with the new development taking place in the Jerramungup area, consideration will be given to allowing direct road transport to Albany if the Ongerup line is closed.

(4) Probably by private road hauliers. If the farmers as a whole would prefer to employ their own individual carriers, it would relieve the Government of the responsibility of making cartage arrangements; but it is believed that the calling of tenders by the Government would secure lower haulage rates. The principles related to cartage subsidy envisage transport to or from the nearest railway point but if road haulage is undertaken direct to the port subsidy assistance should be unnecessary.

*(l) Distances and Freight, Burakin-Bonnie Rock Section.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What is the distance from—

- (a) Bonnie Rock;
- (b) Wialki;
- (c) Beacon;
- (d) Kulja;

to Fremantle respectively?

(2) What is the freight payable on a ton of—

- (a) wheat;
- (b) wool;
- (c) agricultural machinery;

from each of the above four sidings to Fremantle?

(3) What amount, in each case, of the total freight payable is credited to Burakin-Bonnie Rock section?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1)

- (a) 256 miles.
- (b) 240 miles.
- (c) 224 miles.
- (d) 188 miles.

(2)

	Wheat. s. d.	Wool. s. d.	Agricultural Machinery. s. d.
(a) ....	50 10	130 1	178 5
(b) ....	49 2	135 8	172 10
(c) ....	47 4	132 2	167 1
(d) ....	43 4	123 1	152 1

(3)

	Wheat. s. d.	Wool. s. d.	Agricultural Machinery. s. d.
(a) ....	15 1	41 3	55 0
(b) ....	12 3	33 11	43 2
(c) ....	9 4	26 0	32 10
(d) ....	1 10	5 3	6 6

*(m) Freight on Katanning-Pingrup Line.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

How many—

- (a) bushels of barley;
- (b) bushels of oats;
- (c) bales of wool;
- (d) tons of super.;
- (e) trucks of livestock;
- (f) bushels of wheat,

have been hauled to Katanning from the branch line running east from Katanning to Pingrup for the past five years ended the 30th June of each year?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

	(a and b) tons.	(c) tons.	(d) tons.	(e) tons.	(f) tons.
1952 ....	2,271	452	NH	142	18,605
1953 ....	2,606	33	NH	61	14,029
1954 ....	5,898	402	NH	157	7,887
1955 ....	1,784	560	NH	73	10,744
1956 ....	6,451	486	NH	94	12,402

*(n) Recommendations of Committee on Closure.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Transport:

With reference to the report of the inter-department committee which dealt with the proposed closure of certain railways in Western Australia, does the Government intend to carry out all the recommendations of that committee in respect to railways that will be closed?

The MINISTER replied:

Decisions have as yet been made only in respect of recommendations (i) and (ii) of the committee's report.

*(o) Closure of Lines and Resultant Staff Position.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What will be the number of transfers involving railway employees should the closure of 842 miles of railway be effected?

(2) Should the 842 miles of railway be closed and employees transferred elsewhere, would the railway system be then fully staffed?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) Three hundred and fifty.

(2) Yes, with the exception of certain specialised staff.

*(p) Freight on Grain and Superphosphate.*

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What is the freight for grain and superphosphate per mile—

- (a) rail freight;
- (b) paid by the Government to road contractors?

(2) If the price paid to the contractors is greater than rail freight, does the difference represent a subsidy paid by the Government?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) (a) For the year 1955-56 the average railway earnings per ton per mile were—

Grain	3.14d.
Superphosphate	3.29d.

(b) The rates paid to road contractors are the result of tenders. In tenders recently accepted for carting during the 1956-57 season, the rates per ton per mile varied in different areas as follows:—

	From	To.
Wheat	5d.	8½d.
Oats and barley	6d.	9d.
Superphosphate: When back-loaded against wheat	5d.	7½d.
Non-back-loaded	5½d.	8½d.

(2) In the areas for which tenders have been called, the difference between road haulage costs and railway rates for the particular area is paid as subsidy by the Government.

(q) *Closure of Lines and Savings in Fuel, etc.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What amount of—

(a) coal;

(b) fuel;

will be saved weekly when the traffic on the lines referred to in the motion moved in the Legislative Council by the Minister for Railways, is suspended?

(2) What will be the weekly financial saving?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) (a) Coal—171 tons.

(b) Oil Fuel—1,555 gallons.

(2) £674.

(r) *Alternative Transport, Bonnie Rock-Burakin Route.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Should the railway from Bonnie Rock to Burakin be closed, what alternative system of transport would be substituted?

(2) Would the responsibility for the carriage of commodities now being carried by rail be assumed by the Government from their present points of delivery, or would the individual be required to deliver to the nearest existing continuing railway?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Road transport.

(2) Where railways are closed, the general principle will be that goods will be conveyed by road to the nearest continuing railway point. If conditions are such that an organised road service is necessary, the Transport Board will be required to arrange it. This will be the case in connection with grain and fertiliser and it is expected that arrangements can be agreed upon with Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. to continue receiving wheat at existing bins from which road transport will be provided to the nearest continuing railway.

#### GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU.

(a) *Expenditure and Revenue.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Mines:

What was the total expenditure and total revenue of the Western Australian Government Tourist Bureau during each of the financial years from 1950-51 to 1955-56?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (for the Minister for Mines) replied:

	Expenditure.	Revenue.	Cash Collections.
	£	£	£
1950-51	22,364	8,409	162,199
1951-52	28,537	12,138	218,377
1952-53	28,763	12,377	227,956
1953-54	27,776	12,828	248,687
1954-55	31,986	13,741	275,210
1955-56	33,683	15,232	338,284

In considering the amount of revenue in relation to collections, it should be noted that the W.A. Government Tourist Bureau carries out a considerable amount of work and collection of revenue for Government and semi-Government authorities, such as the Rottnest Island Board, the Railway Department, Caves House and the State Shipping Service, without any commission payment.

(b) *Grants to Country Bureaus.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What is the maximum amount of subsidy the Government will at present grant country tourist bureaus?

(2) What is the basis of such grants?

(3) What were the individual grants to the various country tourist bureaus during each of the financial years from 1950-51 to 1955-56?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (for the Minister for Mines) replied:

(1) For the year 1956-57—£750. Prior to the current year, the maximum amount payable was £500 to each approved country bureau.

(2) Payment is made at the rate of 10s for each £1 raised by the country bureau by way of donations, commissions and any other earnings.

(3)

	Geraldton.	Bunbury.	Albany.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
1950-51	600	250	75	825
1951-52	500	500	75	1,075
1952-53	500	500	89	1,089
1953-54	500	500	75	1,075
1954-55	500	500	75	1,075
1955-56	500	500	75	1,075

**EDUCATION.***(a) Additional Classrooms, Carey Park School.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What are the Government's intentions in relation to providing additional classrooms at the Carey Park school in the near future?

(2) If it is proposed to provide additional urgently needed classrooms at this school at an early date—

(a) when will building operations commence;

(b) what number of classrooms is it proposed to add immediately and ultimately;

(c) what is the estimated cost of the immediate additions?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The erection of two additional classrooms.

(2) Not known at present.

*(b) Attendance at Double View School.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Education:

(1) How many children are attending Double View school.

(2) What is the estimated increase commencing January, 1957?

(3) Will there be sufficient accommodation available?

(4) If not, will it be necessary to transfer some classes to other schools?

(5) Will he consider the transfer of the two Bristol classrooms from Odin-rd., Innaloo, school, not now in use, to Double View, so as to minimise the number it may be considered necessary to transfer?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 945.

(2) It is expected the numbers will decrease to 900.

(3) and (4) This depends on the erection of two classrooms at Scarborough.

(5) It is not considered advisable to erect further classrooms at Double View.

*(c) School Bus Contracts.*

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

(1) Has agreement yet been reached between the department and the W.A. Transport Association regarding rates to be paid in regard to school bus contracts?

(2) If not, what is the present position and when does he expect the matter will be completed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) A reply is awaited from the W.A. Transport Association.

*(d) High School Enrolments.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Education:

(1) At which high schools will children graduating in December, 1956, from Hollywood, Nedlands and Dalkeith State schools be expected to attend at the commencement of the 1957 school year?

(2) At which high schools will children who live in Hollywood, Nedlands and Dalkeith and graduating from 9th standard in December, 1956, be expected to attend at the commencement of the 1957 school year?

(3) What will be the respective positions in December, 1957, and the commencement of the school year 1958?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Children from primary schools will attend as follows:—

Nedlands and Dalkeith to Claremont High School.

Hollywood to Perth Boys' High, Perth Girls' High, Girdlestone High, or Perth Junior Technical High.

(2) John Curtin High School.

(3) As at present, unless the Hollywood high school is ready for occupation.

*(e) Replacement of Hoffman Mill School.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware that the Hoffman Mill school building is 70 years of age and in a very bad state of repair?

(2) Will favourable consideration be given to replacing this building with the new vacant Treesville school?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Approval has been given to the removal and modernisation of a building from Cookernup.

*(f) Canning Vale School.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has a firm decision been made in connection with the building of the new school at Canning Vale this financial year?

(2) Is the school to be built by private contract or by the Public Works Department?

(3) What date is work expected to commence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) This item has been included in the school building programme.

(2) and (3) Not known.

#### STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

##### *Commencement of Building Operations and Expenditure.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) On what date did building operations commence on the new State Government Insurance Office building?

(2) When was it originally contemplated this building project would be completed and when is it now considered it will be finished?

(3) What was the estimated original cost of this project?

(4) What is—

(a) the total expenditure on this project to date;

(b) the estimated amount to be expended in the future to complete the building?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The 2nd February, 1954.

(2) (a) August, 1956.

(b) End of November, 1956.

(3) The architect's original estimate for the project was £426,500.

(4) (a) £398,396 8s.

(b) £85,000.

Since the architect prepared his estimate a considerable amount of additional work has been included and there have been a number of increases in the basic wage with consequent effect on cost of materials.

#### LOAN FUNDS.

##### *Expenditure on Wundowie, Classrooms and Hospitals.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) Regarding the proposed expenditure of £261,000 out of loan funds this year for additions to Wundowie Charcoal Iron Works and in view of the inability of the Government to provide essential classrooms and hospitals because of insufficiency of available funds, will he agree that the expenditure on Wundowie shall be postponed and the funds utilised in providing additional classrooms or hospital facilities this year?

(2) If not, does he believe that in the interests of the people of the State it is more important this year to enlarge Wundowie rather than to provide the essentials referred to?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) No. Construction is already in hand with some contracts let.

It is now anticipated that expenditure on the works will not exceed £200,000 in this current year. Of this sum, £56,000 is for replacements and improvements of the existing plant and £144,000 for extensions to the plant.

(2) The enlargement of the plant at Wundowie will—

(a) Provide permanent employment for 100 additional men with homes adjacent to the works.

(b) Improve the trade balances of this State and Australia, to the extent of £1,000,000 annually in sterling and dollars by the export of pig iron.

(c) Progress from a pilot plant scale to a sound payable position.

(d) Develop the surrounding country economically for closer farming settlement.

#### POLICE STATION, BUNBURY.

##### *Repairs and Renovations.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Police:

(1) When will the new charge-room, and repairs and renovations to the Bunbury police station be completed?

(2) What will be the total cost of such work?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The 21st December.

(2) £1,150.

#### HOUSING.

##### *(a) Hamersley-Marmion Area.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Housing:

Will he indicate if there are any proposals to erect houses under the Commonwealth-State rental agreement in the Hamersley-Marmion area and if so, how many, during the next financial year?

The MINISTER replied:

The commission does not propose building in the Hamersley-Marmion area next financial year.

##### *(b) Denmark and Mt. Barker Applications*

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

(1) How many applications for homes are outstanding at—

(a) Denmark;

(b) Mt. Barker?

(2) What homes does the commission propose to build this financial year in respect of these applications?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Nil.

(b) 11.



(2) Nil. The commission at present has two vacant houses in Denmark and three in Mount Barker.

*(c) Brentwood and Mt. Yokine Construction.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is it intended to build houses under the Commonwealth-State rental scheme, the Workers' Homes Act, or the War Service Homes Act this financial year at—

- (a) Brentwood;
- (b) Mount Yokine?

(2) How many houses will be built in each area, and under which scheme or schemes?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Yes.
- (2) Brentwood — seven war service homes. Mt. Yokine—38 Commonwealth-State agreement homes. Nollamara—119 Commonwealth-State agreement homes and 100 war service homes.

**WATER SUPPLIES.**

*(a) Lake Grace and Dumbleyung Services.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

When will an announcement be made of a commencement date of—

- (a) enlargement of the dam and reticulation of Lake Grace?
- (b) reticulation of Dumbleyung?

The MINISTER replied:

When the time is propitious.

*(b) Amplification of Reply.*

Mr. PERKINS (without notice) asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Further his reply to my question regarding water supplies at Lake Grace and Dumbleyung, what factors would influence the arrival of a "propitious time," and is such "propitious time" likely to arrive before Christmas?

The MINISTER replied:

The Minister's judgment would determine the propitious time. I am unable to say when the time is likely to arrive.

*(c) Pingelly Reticulation.*

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

(1) When will work commence on the renewal of the water reticulation system in Pingelly?

- (2) Which department will do the work?
- (3) When should the work be completed?
- (4) What is the estimated cost?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is planned to commence work in March, 1957.

- (2) Public Works Department.
- (3) December, 1957.
- (4) £25,000.

*(d) Wagin Scheme.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is he in a position to advise whether or not the existing facilities for water reticulation at Wagin will be taken over by the Water Supply Department?

(2) Will the holding dam at Pantapin, which is situated three miles south-east of Wagin, be used as a holding dam?

(3) When does he intend to negotiate with the Wagin Municipal Council for the purpose of taking over the scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) In the near future.

*(e) Piesseville and Woodanilling, Connection to Comprehensive Scheme.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Will it be possible for residents at Piesseville and Woodanilling to be connected to the comprehensive water scheme?

(2) If so, what prior arrangements or agreements have to be made before the connections can be made?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The local authority should make application to have a water supply provided.

*(f) Perenjori and Coorow Reticulation.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) When will the town of Perenjori be reticulated?

(2) What action has been taken to obtain a reasonable supply of water for the township of Coorow?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) When other works of higher priority have been completed and the necessary funds are available.

(2) Investigations to date have failed to locate a suitable site for a dam.

*(g) Roleystone Scheme and Availability, Holden-rd.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) When is it expected that the Roleystone water scheme will be completed?

(2) When will water be available in Holden-rd. in order that the new school can be served with a septic system?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is anticipated that the Roleystone water scheme will be completed by 30th June, 1957.

(2) Holden-rd. is included in the scheme but an extension of about 12 chains will be still required to serve the school.

### SHIPPING.

*Fendering Facilities, Geraldton Wharf.*

Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the damage caused to shipping because of the lack of fendering at the Geraldton wharf and that a sum of money has been allocated for this work, will he say when it is expected that this work will commence?

The MINISTER replied:

Early January, 1957.

### TRANSPORT.

*(a) Importation of Heavy Duty Chassis.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is he aware that considerable difficulty has been experienced by private bus companies operating passenger transport owing to the restriction of import licences to import heavy duty chassis?

(2) What steps has he undertaken in view of the proposed formation of the transport trust, to ensure that a sufficient number of chassis will be imported to maintain and provide the ever increasing demand for passenger transport?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. While there is a delay of nine months or more in securing delivery of new chassis from overseas, this difficulty is one of supply rather than import restrictions.

(2) Delays in delivery of new equipment have already been noted. Whether a transport trust is formed or not, traffic will need to be catered for by existing vehicles until replacements become necessary and obtainable.

*(b) Handling of Forest Logs.*

Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Transport:

As the reply to my question of the 31st October regarding transport restrictions on the conveyance of logs means that the same forest logs which could be brought by road to Perth would, if first milled at the forest mill, have to be railed, will he adjust the anomaly by either—

(a) permitting road transport in both cases;

(b) disallowing road transport in both cases?

The MINISTER replied:

It is considered unreasonable to require logs to be railed while adequate facilities do not exist. The same difficulties do not relate to the handling of sawn timber.

*(c) Unlicensed Carting of Wool.*

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is he aware of any vehicles transporting goods without the requisite licences?

(2) As reported in "The West Australian" of the 23rd October, 1956, a truck overturned near Ravenswood, carting bales of wool from a country area. Was this vehicle licensed in accordance with the provisions of the Transport Co-ordination Act? If not, is a prosecution pending?

(3) Was the vehicle, which subsequently picked up the load and transported it to its destination, licensed in accordance with the aforesaid Act? If not, what action is being taken?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) I am not aware of any specific instances but breaches of the Act are reported from time to time.

(2) The vehicle was not so licensed and the owner is being prosecuted.

(3) The owner of this vehicle is also being prosecuted for operating without a licence.

### ROADS.

*(a) Maintenance in Shark Bay Area.*

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the fact that Wapet will be taking heavy drilling equipment to the Shark Bay area in the near future, will he advise the House—

(1) If he considers that the road from the turn-off on the North-West Coastal Highway to Shark Bay is capable of carrying the loads which will be required in this project?

(2) Will he have steps taken to see that in the event of the movement of heavy machinery over this road, it is kept in good repair so that the normal traffic in and out of Denham is not interrupted in any way?

(3) Has he received a report of the damage which was caused to this road recently by the cartage into Denham of heavy equipment by or on behalf of Wapet?

(4) If so, has any action been taken to repair this road and to what extent?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Until details of the loading together with the types of vehicles associated with the proposed movement are known, it is

not possible to assess values. Before any movement is permitted, such an assessment will be made.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes, and as a result, a police heavy haulage squad is in operation in the area to check unauthorised excess loadings.

(4) Repairs have been carried out to the section approximately 27 miles from Denham where traffic was held up.

*(b) Probable Gnowangerup-Ongerup Section.*

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

(1) In the event of the railway between Gnowangerup and Ongerup being discontinued, and taking into consideration the tremendous development taking place on the areas surrounding Ongerup and the very considerable increased quantities of heavy freight of various types that must ensue amounting to many thousands of tons per annum, plus other types of freight in large quantities, what type of road is it proposed to provide for carriage by road transport?

(2) If it is not proposed to provide sealed heavy duty roads, how does he anticipate that the roads will stand up to the many thousands of tons of heavy freight referred to, bearing in mind the damaging effect on such highways as the Perth-Albany road, as a consequence of the carriage of wheat and super in the past when rail traffic was disorganised?

(3) Whatever is proposed in regard to road construction, which roads leading to and from Ongerup, including the road to Albany, is it proposed to construct?

(4) When will such roads be completed?

(5) What will be the likely cost of such roads per mile and will such cost be borne from Main Roads Department funds?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Progressive improvement of the road system is being carried out to meet the requirements of road transport. This will continue by stages as considered necessary.

(2) It is anticipated that by a system of progressive improvement the roads will meet the additional requirements.

(3) The improvement of the Lake Grace-Albany and Gnowangerup-Ongerup-Esperance roads will continue.

(4) Under the stage construction principle of improving roads, finality in development is indeterminate.

(5) The cost per mile will vary in relation to the stage to which the roads are improved. The cost of such improvement is being met from Main Roads Department funds.

## AGRICULTURE.

### *Investigation of "Festival of Britain" Flower.*

Mr. GAFFY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Owing to its prolific growth, will he have the flower known as "The Festival of Britain" investigated to ascertain whether or not it is a weed?

(2) Will he also ascertain whether this flower could develop into a pest?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

## HOSPITALS.

### *Country Bed Averages and Subsidies.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Adverting to the question asked by me on the 30th October, what were the daily bed averages of the following hospitals for the year ended the 30th June, 1956:—

Pinjarra;  
Kellerberrin;  
Bridgetown;  
Manjimup;  
Norseman?

(2) Why, in comparison with the amounts being made available to the other four hospitals, is the subsidy to be paid to the Kellerberrin hospital for 1956-57 so small?

(3) In view of the very moderate calls made on Consolidated Revenue by the Kellerberrin hospital, could the cost of some very urgently needed works at that hospital—in particular the additions to staff quarters and patients' ablution block—be financed by means of a special grant?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Pinjarra	....	23.1
Kellerberrin	....	20.9
Bridgetown	....	17.2
Manjimup	....	19.4
Norseman	....	14.6

(2) Subsidies to hospitals are based on requirements. Estimates for each hospital are prepared on the basis of an economical rate of expenditure, from which is deducted the estimated amount of revenue collection, and a subsidy granted covering the deficit. Hospitals are dealt with individually, as different circumstances arise in different areas.

(3) Plans are at present being prepared for a new ablution block at Kellerberrin hospital, and it is anticipated that expenditure will be provided from revenue.

Additions to the nurses' quarters, which will be costly, will need to be financed from loan funds when available.

If possible, it is desired to include the quarters and ablution block under the same contract.

**TREASURY.***Cash Position and Outstanding Bills.*

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Treasurer:

(1) What was the cash position at the Treasury on the 31st January, 1953?

(2) What Treasury bills were outstanding at that date?

(3) What was the cash position at the 31st October, 1956?

(4) What Treasury bills were outstanding on the same date?

The MINISTER replied:

The details are as follows:—

*Net Prices per Ton.*

	No. 1 Pool.	No. 2 Pool.	No. 3 Pool.	1st 1A Pool.	2nd 1A Pool.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1950-51	18 5 4	17 14 0	20 15 2	.....	.....
1951-52	25 8 5	22 14 8	28 4 11	.....	.....
1952-53	22 5 8	23 15 4	29 8 9	.....	.....
1953-54	28 14 2	20 15 0	28 15 6	16 12 4	14 11 2
1954-55	18 3 4	17 8 6	30 14 10	11 10 1	18 17 8
1955-56	30 5 0	24 19 0	31 14 9	16 19 0	57 9 4

*Note.*—Prior to 1953-54 grade 1A potatoes were included in the other pools.

**WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.***Jerramongup and Ongerup Areas.*

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

(1) How many settlers are now on their war service land settlement farms at Jerramongup and other project areas in the districts surrounding Ongerup, where W.S. L.S. development is taking place?

(2) How many farms are being developed in the areas mentioned above for purposes of settlement?

(3) When development on such areas is completed, how many settlers is it expected will be in occupation on farms there?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Twenty-one.

(2) One hundred and forty-six.

(3) One hundred and forty-six.

**ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.***(a) Position at Eaton.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has a recent survey of Eaton and the localities in close proximity been made by officers of the State Electricity Commission?

(2) When can potential consumers in this area expect to be connected to the electricity supply?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

The TREASURER replied:

(1) £5,467,812 were at bank and in hand

(2) £2,078,000.

(3) £2,692,724 were at bank and in hand

(4) £3,000,000.

**POTATOES.***Net Price Per Ton Since 1950.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

What was the net price per ton received by growers in respect of potatoes in each pool since 1950?

(2) When 100 houses are ready for connection in Eaton and loan funds are available.

*(b) South-West Power Scheme and Farms*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it still the policy of the State Electricity Commission to insist on four farms per mile when supplying power to properties from the South-West power scheme?

(2) When can it be expected that this scheme will be extended to areas where there are less than four farms per mile?

The MINISTER replied:

The State Electricity Commission extends one-third of a mile to a farm if electricity is to be used freely for farming purposes.

**MEDICAL SCHOOL.***Progress and Intake of Students.*

Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

(1) Can he acquaint the House with progress on establishment of the medical school?

(2) Will there be an intake of students in 1957, and, if so, in what numbers?

(3) If there is to be no intake in 1957, when is the first intake expected?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Eight professors have been appointed and will be here by the end of December or early in the New Year. Two have already established their units.

The department of Physiology building has been adapted and completed.

Plans for the departments of Anatomy and Biochemistry are almost completed and are awaiting the arrival of the professors.

The radium block alterations at Royal Perth Hospital, including an additional storey, are nearing completion.

Work is about to commence on alterations for the department of Pathology.

The medical library has been finished. Other alterations at the Royal Perth Hospital are nearing completion.

All developments in connection with the medical school are proceeding according to plan and in no detail is the scheme behind schedule.

(2) and (3) Yes. Between 15 and 20 sixth year students from Adelaide and first year medical students from Western Australia.

### GOVERNMENT SUPPLIES.

#### *Method of Acquiring.*

Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

With reference to my question of the 31st October, 1956, regarding Government supplies and particularly as regards the supply of desks and seats—

(1) Does his answer mean that manufacturers and suppliers other than the State Engineering Works

have not been given an opportunity to tender since 1948 for Education Department desks;

(2) Is it normal to extend contracts of this nature without recalling tenders at the end of the supply period?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) It is not unusual in cases where satisfactory quotes have been obtained from a State trading concern.

### WHEAT.

#### *(a) Deliveries to Burakin-Bonnie Rock Railway Sidings.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What was the total quantity of wheat delivered to sidings along the Burakin-Bonnie Rock railway in the following seasons:—

1946-47;

1949-50;

1951-52;

1954-55?

(2) What was the number of individual farmers who delivered wheat to these sidings in each of the years mentioned?

The MINISTER replied:

The particulars required are as follows:—

Siding.	1946-47 Season.		1949-50 Season.		1951-52 Season.		1954-55 Season.	
	Quantity.	No. of Growers.	Quantity.	No. of Growers.	Quantity.	No. of Growers.	Quantity.	No. of Growers.
Bonnie Rock ....	4,513	2	21,255	6	41,833	8	32,452	15
Wielki ....	55,749	26	65,213	26	165,850	33	114,248	36
Dalgouring ....	.....	.....	.....	.....	20,169	6	41,006	13
Beacon ....	39,228	20	61,535	26	171,952	35	86,389	34
Cleary ....	.....	.....	.....	.....	29,917	5	36,437	13
Mollerin ....	70,037	21	102,742	24	133,178	26	112,403	29
Kulja ....	32,101	17	75,394	26	78,529	26	75,557	24

(2) Information supplied in No. (1).

#### *(b) Bulk Handling Facilities, Burakin-Bonnie Rock.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

In the event of the railway from Burakin to Bonnie Rock being closed, will the existing bulk wheat handling facilities continue to function or will they close also?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

This is a matter for determination when alternate means of transport are under consideration.

### ROELANDS QUARRY.

#### *Duties of Caretaker, Annual Cost, etc.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) When was stone last quarried at the Roelands quarry?

(2) Is there a caretaker in charge at the quarry?

(3) What are the caretaker's duties?

(4) What is the annual cost, including wages, of the quarry?

(5) When is it anticipated that further work will be undertaken at Roelands quarry?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) The 11th September, 1952.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Protection of buildings, plant and rollingstock from deterioration, fire and vandalism.
- (4) £1,200 approximately.
- (5) Dependent on the provision of loan funds to enable work to proceed on break-water extensions.

#### EMU FENCE.

*Specifications, Length, Cost, etc.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What are the specifications of the new emu fence that is to be erected?
- (2) What is the estimated length of the fence?
- (3) What is the estimated cost of the fence?
- (4) Have tenders closed?
- (5) If so, who is the successful contractor?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) General specifications are 3ft. 6in. rabbit netting all above the ground, two plain and one barb wire above the netting and 4in. apart, to a total height of 4ft. 6in. Wires droppered to the netting. Posts of cypress pine, 15 ft. apart (Detailed specifications occupy nine pages.)
- (2) 120 miles.
- (3) £56,000.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No decision yet.

#### DOGGERS.

*Number, Wages, Transport, etc.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many doggers are employed by the department to assist in keeping down the dingo menace?
- (2) What is the total cost in salaries, wages and allowances?
- (3) Do they own their own motor transport?
- (4) If so, how much per mile are they paid?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) Thirty-five at present.
- (2) £39,800 in 1955-56.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) A fixed rate of £5 12s. a week is paid to them.

#### COALMINING.

*Future of Westralia and Black Diamond Mines.*

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is he aware of the rumours to the effect that the Westralia and Black Diamond coal mines are to be closed?

(2) Is he aware of the large amount of public funds advanced by State Governments through Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd., for the development of these two coalmines?

(3) What action does the Government propose to take to preserve these two coalmines and to protect them from being flooded and as a consequence lost to the State for all time?

(4) Is it proposed to take action to ensure that these two mines, developed with public money, are to be preserved so that production of coal can be resumed at any time should the needs of the State warrant it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (for the Minister for Mines) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No loan moneys were allocated for these pits.
- (3) Until the mines are to be closed down, no action can be taken.
- (4) Answered by No. (3).

#### COKE SUPPLIES.

*Use in Slow Combustion Stoves, etc.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) What is the latest position regarding the supply of coke for use in slow combustion stoves, heaters, etc.—

- (a) for country users;
- (b) for metropolitan users?

(2) Can he inform the House of the reasons for the shortage?

(3) Is he aware that in some cases there is no alternative fuel?

(4) Is it correct that the shortage could have been reduced or avoided had certain local plant been constructed in a different way?

(5) (a) Is it correct that the consumption of Collie coal has been adversely affected by such plant?

(b) If so, in what way, and to what extent?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Mines) replied:

(1) (a) and (b) The demand for coke exceeds the supply.

(2) The demand for coke has increased and less is available from gas works.

(3) No. Charcoal can be used in slow combustion stoves and alternative equipment is available using other fuels.

(4) The shortage could have been reduced, but at the expense of efficient gas production.

(5) (a) Yes.

(b) By 23 tons per day.

**LANDS.***Eneabba Farms, Capital Cost and Improvements.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What is the estimated average capital cost of each of the farms now being developed at Eneabba?

(2) What are the proposed improvements for each of these farms before handing over to allottees?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Capital cost of developmental work at the time of allotment and occupation by lessee, £19,795.

(b) Further expenditure is necessary between occupation and final valuation during the build-up in carrying capacity. Such expenditure would include fertiliser capitalised for one or more years, administrative costs, interest, proportion of working expenses, cost of land and survey.

Average total estimated cost of established farm:—

	£
Land and land improvements .....	14,485
Structures—fencing, water supply and buildings .....	11,378
	<u>£25,863</u>

(2) Farm size 3,000 acres, of which 1,600 acres cleared and laid down to established pasture based on subterranean clover and Wimmera rye grass. Estimated carrying capacity not less than one sheep per established acre; also crop potential for approximately 400 acres. Farm boundary fence and established area divided into eight paddocks. Two bores, with water reticulated to each paddock and the house.

Buildings consists of standard house, shearing, machinery shed, yards and dip.

**RURAL & INDUSTRIES BANK.***Savings Bank Section.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Does the Rural & Industries Bank or the State need a charter or an authority from the Commonwealth Government to conduct a savings bank?

(2) If so, will he table a copy of such charter or authority in respect of the savings bank set up by the Rural & Industries Bank?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

**STATE SAVINGS BANK.***Agreement with Commonwealth.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) When does the agreement between the Commonwealth and State expire in respect of the W.A. State Savings Bank?

(2) What are the rights of renewal on either side?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Expired on the 15th August, 1956.

(2) The Government of Western Australia had the option of continuing the agreement for a further period not exceeding an additional 20 years.

**BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.**

1, Land Act Amendment (No. 3).  
Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

2, Firearms and Guns Act Amendment.  
Introduced by Mr. Crommelin.

**BILL—OIL REFINERY INDUSTRY (ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL COMPANY LIMITED) ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

Report of Committee adopted.

**BILL—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.***In Committee.*

Resumed from the 1st November. Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clause 42—Eligibility for registration as an elector:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on the clause after Hon. A. F. Watts had moved an amendment to strike out paragraph (c) of Subclause (1), with a view to inserting a new paragraph in lieu.

Mr. EVANS: I strongly oppose the amendment. Reading through the clause, one quickly gains the impression that those who support the amendment and persons holding similar ideas as the mover believe in the distinction between the haves and the have-nots. The greatest man ever to live on this earth who founded the Christian religion and who is God himself, does not believe in this distinction; yet the people who support the amendment think that they are greater than the divine power.

This is one of the clauses which has caused much fluttering in conservative circles; it relates to adult franchise. Along with other clauses, this is aimed at bringing about democratic elections in local government. It is not difficult to discover the real concern of the opponents to the principle of adult franchise. Under an unbiased examination, no one can justifiably seek the deletion of any part of this clause from the Bill. The objection to the clause certainly springs from political and greedy motives.

I would like to quote an extract from a book entitled, "Our Sham Democracy" which is to be found in the parliamentary

library. It was written by the same author who wrote, "Clearer Thinking." In speaking on this principle of adult franchise he says—

**Adult Franchise:** Those who claim that franchise should be kept in the hands of property-owners who possess "a stake in the country" may be dismissed at once. Give the franchise only to persons who have some common interest and they will use it to preserve their own interests, and to the devil with everybody else. Besides no one can really have a greater "stake in the country" than that of his own life, happiness and welfare. From this standpoint, every man and woman has an equal stake.

**Mr. Perkins:** Who wrote the book?

**Mr. EVANS:** A. E. Mander.

**Mr. Perkins:** Is he a communist?

**Mr. EVANS:** No, he is not a communist.

**The Minister for Transport:** He is not a member of the Country Party either.

**Mr. EVANS:** I would like to reiterate that in the second reading debate there were statements from the Opposition to the effect that their party was not concerned with local government and they accused the Labour Party of trying to infuse Labour Party policy into local government elections. As luck would have it, I have in my possession a copy of a card which I can show stamped "L.C.L." which came from Kalgoorlie. On this card there is provision for a person's name, address, and occupation and on the other side there is provision for his enrolment number from the Federal roll, his enrolment number from the Legislative Assembly roll, and his enrolment number for the Legislative Council.

Underneath that, there is the bombshell; there is provision for enrolment for the municipality of Kalgoorlie! It is stamped "L.C.L." and yet the Liberal Party does not take one iota of interest in local government elections! I would say it is the gag of the century, but the question is: Which century is it? The member for Stirling, I believe, in speaking on this particular clause, mentioned that the local authorities were highly perturbed at its inclusion. He claimed that no persons or bodies of persons had asked for the inclusion of the clause.

I would like to produce here a petition given to me for notice in this House and it is signed by 30 signatories. It was signed in less than 10 minutes and arose out of a discussion as to what was progressing in Parliament. It was signed at a cricket gathering. I could surprise one or two of the Opposition by quoting some names of people who are their supporters on the Goldfields and who voted against me.

**Mr. Nalder:** You must have had a busy week-end.

**Mr. W. A. Manning:** Are they ratepayers or otherwise?

**Mr. EVANS:** There are one or two school teachers among them who have no vote because they are boarding, but they are interested in the district. They belong to such organisations as national fitness and tennis clubs and give of their energies and spare time to the welfare of the district. However, they are deprived of a right to vote at an election to bring progress and welfare to the district.

Absentee land-owners under this amendment, would continue to have the right to vote in local government elections. These particular people could be away from the district and living elsewhere. The land they possess could be such that they could not sell it, and rather than let the Crown take it, they hope someone will be fool enough to buy it, so they retain that land. These people have a right to vote in a district where the vote is supposed to bring progress and welfare to the community.

Let us take the case of a ratepayer who has a vote. He would be interested in the district and his wife would likewise be equally interested. However, she has not the right to vote, yet that privilege is extended to the absent land-owner, and certain interests make sure it is! Members of the Opposition claim that we of the Labour Party are out of touch with the people because the local authorities are up in the air about this Bill. I would say in some cases that could be correct; in some cases it could be incorrect, but in most cases it is a rumour. Therefore, it seems to me that some members of the Opposition have a very keen sense of rumour.

**Hon. L. Thorn:** Terrible rumours are going around about you.

**Mr. EVANS:** I would give a little word of warning, "Rumour has a thousand tongues and 999 tell lies."

**Mr. W. A. MANNING:** It seems to me that we need to correct the impression given that the voters in the municipal elections are the property owners. I have already stated they are the occupiers and it is quite possible for a property-owner to have no vote at all because all his properties are occupied by people who can claim to vote. That is an important feature in the present Municipal Act and one which must not be overlooked in discussing this question. The Minister quoted last week the statement of a road board member who said—

Pass this Bill and let us have the use of the Bill and amend it later on. I think that is rather a remarkable statement because he is taking a good deal of notice of one person.

We have in this city the Local Government Association whose members comprise three cities, 17 municipalities and 11 road



boards. We have the Road Board Association of W.A. with 120 members outside the metropolitan area. All of these local governing bodies are opposed to this adult franchise clause. If the Minister can take so much notice of one person who makes a statement, surely we should take notice of the opinions of those experienced in local government.

The Minister for Health: I did not say one only. There are others, but one was quoted.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: There cannot be many of them because these people in the associations are emphatically against this clause and we should take notice of them. The Minister also quoted one road board chairman I believe, who said, "A change in the franchise as suggested in this new Bill would make no difference to the constitution of the board." I submit if it makes no difference in the constitution of a board, we are getting a very fair expression of opinion from the local governing authorities and should continue on the present basis where everyone is satisfied except a few members of this Chamber.

I feel it is idle to say that residents in a town contribute to its funds by paying a dog licence or an entrance fee to sports grounds, because they are simply paying for some service or privilege which they derive from the municipality or road board. It does not entitle them to anything else. Each year members have to calculate the estimated income and expenditure, and the difference between these two having been arrived at it is spread out over the ratable land in the local government area and charged in the form of rates. No one else pays these rates except the owners and indirectly the occupiers. Therefore, the people who foot the bill for the difference between income and expenditure are definitely those who either own or occupy the land in that area.

The Minister for Health: According to figures quoted, those in a municipality contribute only 50 per cent. and under the Road Districts Act 49 per cent.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: That may be correct, but the income under the other headings is for various services. Sometimes a local authority raises a loan for work in the municipality, and this loan has to be repaid over a period of 20 years. The municipality is, in fact, mortgaging the properties in that area for the repayment of a loan of, say £20,000 over a period of time.

It is not right that a person who has only resided in that particular area for six months should have a vote and commit residents in the area to the repayment of a loan over a period of up to 20 years. I claim there is no reason for it. A person residing in a hotel has all the amenities of the hotel and he pays for

what he gets. Would members suggest that he should have any say in regard to the raising of a loan on the property? It is ridiculous, and it is just as ridiculous for a person moving in and out of a town, and who is not vitally interested in it, to have a vote on the raising of money in the municipality; and that is virtually what it amounts to.

We have no evidence that this amendment is desired. I am sure the Minister must have been glad to find the one person who sympathised with this, but I feel we must take notice of the thousands who are against the adult franchise clause in the Bill, and I shall vote accordingly.

Mr. OWEN: I wish to express my opinion and that of many of my constituents on the clause. I think we will agree that those who foot the Bill should have the say in the management of the affairs of the district. Undoubtedly, those who pay the rates contribute very largely to the total sums spent by local governing bodies. The figures given by the Minister, in answer to what appeared an inspired question, showed that the ratepayers paid less than 50 per cent. of the income of one particular board. I say they paid a proportion of the other income in addition to their usual rates.

Over the week-end I made some inquiries into this question, and in the local authority of which I have the honour to be chairman, out of a total of 2,300 registration cards as vehicle owners, taking a proportion selected at random, I found that 82.6 per cent. of those who owned vehicles and paid registration fees were also ratepayers. I think that gives the lie direct to the Minister's assertion that the ratepayers pay less than 50 per cent. of the income of any local governing body. It has been mentioned that those who pay entrance fees to halls and sports grounds are contributing to the finances of the board and therefore should have a vote in its elections and a say in its affairs.

Mr. Nalder: Not all sports grounds are owned by the boards.

Mr. OWEN: That is so; but of those that are, I would say very few, if any, can be considered as paying their way. In the country the local governing bodies spend hundreds and sometimes thousands of pounds to provide an amenity for the district, and the return is practically negligible. Very often sports grounds are used only at week-ends, and in other instances just occasionally for large events such as agricultural shows and big sports gymkhana. In these circumstances, they are made available at a very nominal rate which is seldom more than £1 or £2 for the use of the grounds for the afternoon.

It is wrong to assume that those who pay to go into sports grounds are contributing in any great way to the local governing body. One might consider the

position of private halls and private sports grounds. Following the argument put up by the Minister, one would assume that it would be desirable that those who pay to go into a private theatre should have a say in the management of the theatre. It is all wrong.

During the debate on the second reading I said I had been asked by one of the progress associations in my electorate to oppose the Bill. The member for Kalgoorlie has said that these associations are interested in the progress of the districts and do quite a lot of work towards that end. I have here a letter from the Glen Forrest Progress Association—there is nothing political about this organisation—which states—

At the last meeting of the above association, concern was expressed by the ratepayers present at the Government's intention to incorporate a clause giving adult suffrage in the local government Act about to be presented to Parliament.

It was resolved to ask you to do all in your power to have this clause removed from the Act.

I read that to give the Committee some indication that progress associations are interested in the welfare of their districts and are definitely against this clause. I oppose the provision.

Mr. JOHNSON: I support the clause. The plea we have just heard that the people who pay the money are those who should have the say is the main support that this clause should have. The statistics given in answer to questions—they were not inspired questions—have indicated that it is most unusual for any local governing body to receive 50 per cent. of its income from rates. The questions covered the metropolitan and Goldfields districts, and in those areas there is only one body that produces 50 per cent. of its income from rates, and that is the Perth City Council. All the others get the majority of their income from other sources. That is an important point to remember.

The question dealt with road boards and municipalities spread over a considerable and important section of our local government areas, and the percentage of income received from non-rate sources varied from 62 per cent. to 88 per cent. on the Goldfields. In the municipalities in the metropolitan area they varied from 48 per cent.—the City of Perth; the only one under 50 per cent.—to 70 per cent., and in the road boards from 25 per cent. to 75 per cent.; and the board with the 25 per cent. is the outstanding one at Peppermint Grove.

The main argument is that the people who provide the money should have the franchise. The people who provide the money are, in the majority, not the ratepayers as such although some of them may

be ratepayers. The local government bodies have a number of responsibilities and it is in relation to these responsibilities that people desire the right to exercise the franchise. At present a large proportion of the women are excluded from the franchise because in many cases the husbands are the registered owners or occupiers of the property.

It is normal for the husband to be regarded as the head of the house, at least legally. Local government impinges on certain particularly feminine interests such as infant health clinics and kindergartens. On both these activities quite a lot of local government money is spent. If, however, we were to examine the roles of the people entitled to vote under the Act, we find that those who are interested in these activities are amongst the ones who are excluded.

I am not suggesting that with universal franchise there would be great interest in local government elections. I fancy they would continue as now—very dull affairs. The only people who would take part in them would be those with a special interest. It is fair to say that quite a number of people on local governing bodies are there because of special interests. When I was at school, I remember that a friend of the family entered a local governing body because he was concerned about having access to his own property. He remained a member of the authority for, I think, only three years and during that time a road passed his property and was bituminised. That situation is quite common and not an improper one.

In relation to the feminine interests to which I have referred, were the women given the right to express themselves, we might find in some areas, a difference in responsibility and outlook, because it would not be very hard—in fact, it would be quite natural—for them to develop a local pressure for something considered necessary, and that is particularly so in relation to these items. I fancy it is proper and correct that local pressures should be answered where the people who produce those pressures are property-owners or occupiers in their own right.

The people who pay rates are less than 50 per cent. of the income producers of local government. One can think of many ways in which special pressure would be applied. In the country, for instance, there would be mothers of children attending schools; they would be the most appropriate people to apply pressure in relation to school bus route services and such like. There seems to be no legitimate opposition to the proposition that everyone who is interested should have the right to vote at these elections.

This is not a proposal like at political elections, that the vote should be made compulsory. One can be sure that if it is a voluntary vote only those who are interested will vote. It is only natural

that people who are now in some position or other in local government will oppose the change. I think everybody who has taken part in the redistribution of boundaries in the political sphere realises that there is a natural opposition to change. It is only natural for anybody to feel that a system whereby he was elected must be a better one than one under which there is a possibility that someone else might be elected. We must discount pressure from local governing authorities because it is only natural that they would object to a change in this way.

Mr. Nalder: The opposition is not coming only from members of councils and road boards but also from ratepayers.

Mr. JOHNSON: My impression is that there is little opposition from ratepayers. The opposition that has come from them has been organised to some degree. We in this country are semi-democratic and for that reason alone the proposal in the Bill should be adopted. We hear the bicameral system of government in the political sphere praised, and yet nobody has suggested that it be adopted for local authorities. It might be possible to have an Upper House in local government; but no one has suggested it. I appeal to members to realise that ratepayers provide less than 50 per cent. of local government income and there are people who are non-ratepayers and who are disfranchised, particularly women, who should be given an opportunity to have a voice at local authority elections. I do not suggest that they will take advantage of that opportunity on every occasion, but they should have that right.

Mr. ROBERTS: I was amazed when the Minister for Health informed us that the Government did not intend to accept any amendments to the Bill; and I am more than pleased that he has now decided to accept them because the Bill is a most important one. It has been suggested that local governing authorities desire a new and consolidated Local Government Act. I agree with that, but I disagree with the statement that this Bill is the one which local governing authorities desire.

In the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Local Government there was no suggestion that an adult franchise clause be included in this measure. In my opinion, the principle of adult franchise in local government elections is bad. The Minister for Works said that it would cost about £1,500 to reprint the Bill and that was the main reason why the Government did not want to accept amendments. Yet in Hansard of the 21st August last, in reply to a question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Minister for Health stated that the cost of reprinting the Bill would be £450.

Mr. May: It has gone up since then.

Mr. Jamieson: What has that to do with the clause?

Mr. ROBERTS: May I draw members' attention to the fact that the Road Board Association of W.A. is comprised of 120 road boards and as regards the adult franchise clause in the Bill, this is what that association had to say—

It has been stated that, because adult franchise operates in Commonwealth and State elections—because local government is subservient to the State and because local government is the third arm of government—it is the right and democratic thing for adult franchise to apply to local government elections. History has been quoted to bolster the claim. Reference was not made to the historical record of the cause of the American War of Independence i.e. payment without representation. That is what the provisions of the Bill will force upon owners and occupiers who, doubtless, will be a minority, in total, as against those defined as "electors." Local government is indeed "local" in the accepted meaning of the word. The Local Government Department claims that every square mile of the territory of Western Australia has been allocated to local authorities' districts. It is from the land that each local authority derives the major part of its income on a community basis. Smaller avenues of income are derived from licence fees, etc.—motor-vehicles carts, dogs, hawkers etc., but the bulk of that income, in country areas, comes from owners and occupiers of land. All residents enjoy the amenities provided by the local authority, e.g. roads, footpaths, gardens, parks, street lighting, drainage, etc., etc. We do not see how or why it can be claimed that the granting of adult franchise in local government elections can be claimed to be democratic. An owner of business premises who does not reside therein would be disfranchised in respect to the property. To carry the point—take the main business blocks of the City of Perth. Except for the few people who would be qualified electors under the Bill, millions of pounds worth of valuable city property would be disfranchised. Is that democracy? Far from it. It would appear that the provisions to which we object are undemocratic, based on false premises and have a prejudiced outlook. We urge the Government to view the proposal in correct perspective. "Local government" represents the community which derives its income from that land allocated to its district (i.e. that which is not Commonwealth or State Government owned) through the owners or occupiers of that land. The owners and/or occupiers only are the people democratically entitled to vote at local Government elections and request is made that the status quo as per the Road

Districts Act be retained as the law of the land. The proposal in the Bill would leave local government open to exploitation and abuse—to serve personal and sectional ends and to make councils political stamping grounds. We desire to keep politics out of local government.

The Minister for Transport: Who wrote that tripe?

Mr. ROBERTS: The Road Board Association of W.A.

The Minister for Transport: It ought to be ashamed of itself!

Mr. ROBERTS: There is another local government association in this State called the Local Government Association of W.A. I would say that both these associations have a very good knowledge of the requirements of local government. The Local Government Association of W.A. comprises three cities, 17 of the 18 municipalities and 11 road boards throughout Western Australia.

The Minister for Transport: A minority of the people.

Mr. ROBERTS: As regards adult franchise the association had this to say—

The proposal is contrary to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Owners of property and ratepayers would be completely outvoted if adult franchise operated. The greater part of the business area of the City of Perth would be disfranchised as few people, if any, reside on business premises. Any council with more than 50 per cent. of the councillors, who are non-ratepayers, would spend the ratepayers' money how and when it wished, without ratepayers having any say in the matter. The proposal, if implemented, would undoubtedly lead to abuses of all kinds and would result in chaos. The proposal is entirely opposed to the principles of democracy—would completely undermine the principles of good local government, which have worked so well in the past and have attracted such worthy men to its ranks. The result of the proposals would be to reduce local government to the level of "a political stamping ground". Adult franchise for Commonwealth and State elections is justifiable because of contributions to revenues by way of income tax and indirect taxation. Such franchise is not justifiable in local government elections because the revenue of local authorities is derived from owners and/or occupiers of property which benefits from local government services and is subject to local by-laws. In all organisations including trade unions, the franchise is dependent upon a determined financial contribution by the members. There should

be no representation without taxation or contribution. Retention of the law, at present operative, is desired.

The Minister for Transport: That is the old slogan in reverse.

Mr. ROBERTS: Those men who comprise the Local Government Association must be admired for their civic-mindedness.

The Minister for Transport: Incurrable reactionaries!

Mr. ROBERTS: What is the Minister talking about!

The Minister for Transport: Fancy putting that sort of stuff on paper! Fancy people in a democracy agreeing with that sort of stuff!

Mr. ROBERTS: When the Minister has finished making his speech, I will continue. It is a great band of men and for the Minister to talk like that is so much rot. I am against adult franchise and I feel confident that the majority of members here, if they took notice of what local government really wanted, would agree with me.

The Minister for Transport: What about doing what the people want?

Mr. ROBERTS: The local authorities require a consolidated Act; they require an amalgamation of the Municipal Corporations Act and the Road Districts Act but they do not want an Act with such a contentious clause which is part of the Labour platform.

Mr. BOVELL: The Government could have speeded up the passage of this Bill had it adopted the recommendations of the Royal Commission appointed to investigate the incorporating of local governments under one measure. This is a large Bill and I appreciate the necessity for economy so far as the reprinting of it is concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: Would the hon. member kindly confine himself to the amendment?

Mr. BOVELL: I am leading up to that, Mr. Chairman. The clause we are now considering is a most controversial one. From time immemorial it has been the responsibility of ratepayers to qualify for a vote by the rates which they contribute. This clause proposes to make a revolutionary and undesirable change. If we must have changes, they should be gradual. I support the Leader of the Country Party in his endeavour to retain the existing system of election by ratepayers. The member for Leederville has oftentimes said that ratepayers contribute less than 50 per cent. of the revenue, but that revenue is contributed at considerable financial sacrifice by the ratepayers concerned.

Most of us have found that in postwar years rates have risen enormously. On my own residence the rates have risen tenfold

and the landtax fortyfold, though admittedly the system has been changed from one of rental value to one of unimproved capital value. It would be wrong to deny ratepayers the right to elect their representatives to their own local authorities.

By this clause the Government is endeavouring to intrude party politics into local government matters. We are all aware of the objectionable features seen in other States because of party politics having been drawn into local government matters. People in the country districts particularly have given long hours of service in an honorary capacity for their district and if they are paying the piper, they should call the tune; if they cannot, then we will lose the services of men and women who have greatly contributed to good local government. I oppose the provisions of the clause and support the amendment of the Leader of the Country Party for a fair and just method of electing members of local authorities.

Mr. PERKINS: It is impossible for members of the Opposition to permit this clause to stand as it is. We have had strong reactions from districts which we represent; and this is not confined to members of the Opposition. If the Government is realistic, it will see that the reaction is equally strong from people who have supported the Labour Party for many years. I have no doubt that members on the Government side are talking to keep their courage up because the Government is committed to this measure.

We all subscribe to the principles of democracy which have been referred to from time to time. We all know that local government in this State has been limited by laws passed here, and the present Bill will limit local government to a far greater degree than the limitations placed on members of this Chamber. The Minister has referred to the revenues of local authorities that come from sources other than rates directly levied on ratepayers. We must realise, however, that local authorities have to account to someone else for the expenditure of that portion of their revenue.

If a country local authority expends that revenue in a way which displeases a great portion of the ratepayers, that section of ratepayers can appeal to the Minister who, on the advice of his departmental officers, can exert great pressure if he feels the expenditure is not justified. The Minister, of course, is elected by the popular vote of the people and is a member of this Chamber or of another place. The Leader of the Government must be a member of this Chamber. So any criticism of that expenditure can finally be debated here.

Although a superficial case can be made for the widening of the franchise—if I may put it that way—because of such a large portion of expenditure coming from sources other than the ratepayers, a closer examination will show a case for adult

franchise cannot be based on that point. The final responsibility rests with the Minister, who is responsible to the electors. Adult franchise has not been successful in other parts of Australia. In this State our local government is working at least as well as in other parts of the Commonwealth where there is adult franchise.

If people are elected to spend the ratepayers' money and are not directly responsible to the ratepayers, it is inevitable that an irresponsible attitude is likely to be adopted in the expenditure of that money. I hope we never see here the abuses that have cropped up in Sydney where there is adult franchise.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Have you looked into the abuses in Western Australia?

Mr. PERKINS: I have no doubt there are abuses here but not as great as those that exist under the other system. If there are abuses, the ratepayers can correct them. If there is criticism on some wider account, such as improper attention to health matters, then the Minister has plenty of power to take action against the local authority concerned. Indeed, at the moment there are complaints that the Minister goes too far in that regard. But the final responsibility rests with the Minister. The Government has no mandate to hold up this measure merely to retain this clause. It should incorporate the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Country Party. If this is not done, the responsibility will rest with the Minister and the Government concerned.

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

Mr. CROMMELIN: I oppose this clause which aims at giving adult suffrage to all the residents of a municipality. It is against the recommendation of the Royal Commission. This Bill has been before Parliament on three occasions, and every time it has been rejected mostly on account of this provision. It is reasonable to say that during the last three or four years the constitutions of the local governing authorities have changed considerably both in respect of new mayors, new chairmen, new councillors and new road board members; but it is reasonable to assume that the people who are on the local governing authorities today still have the same ideas as were held three or four years ago.

If a man or woman is paying taxes, I agree that he or she is entitled to a vote in parliamentary elections; but the position is somewhat different in regard to road boards and municipalities. The Minister said that many people who live in municipalities contribute to the earnings of the local authority, and that is true. On numerous occasions he has pointed out that some of the municipalities obtain only 40 to 48 per cent. from direct rates. But at least all the people living in the area

contribute by petrol tax and still provide the vast majority of the earnings of the municipality.

It was also stated by the Minister that we should be democratic and give everybody the right to vote. But I would point out in justification of some of the municipalities that they are very democratic in a small way.

The Minister for Transport: Very small.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Yes; but the Minister will agree that a lot of municipal libraries have been established to which the ratepayers have contributed everything, but they go so far as to say that everyone in the municipality may take out a book at no charge, and that anybody who goes into the municipality to work and every child from a surrounding district who goes to the district for his or her education may have the same privilege. That is a democratic outlook. This provision could have extraordinary effects. I would refer to the municipality of Nedlands which is a very big one.

The Premier: Wealthy, too.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Quite wealthy. In that municipality there is the Hollywood hospital, the Commonwealth migration camp, Seaward village and, last but not least, the Old Men's Home. Under this provision the people at the Graylands camp, for which the Commonwealth pays no rates whatever, would have the privilege of voting, and the same would apply to the other institutions I have mentioned. A number of men live with their wives at Seaward village, which is controlled by the Department of the Army, and there is a big staff at the Hollywood hospital. Again, if the Minister can work out to what extent the inmates at the Old Men's Home contribute to the Nedlands Municipality, I would be very pleased to hear it.

Mr. Lawrence: What would be the staff at Hollywood?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I do not know. I imagine it would be at least 100.

Mr. Lawrence: You are well below the mark.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I am being very moderate.

The Minister for Health: They would be very worthy citizens.

Mr. CROMMELIN: They are.

The Minister for Health: The same applies to the people at the Old Men's Home.

Mr. CROMMELIN: They are very worthy citizens, but one cannot imagine that they make any contribution to the municipality.

The Minister for Health: I do not think they would be irrational.

Mr. CROMMELIN: I suppose not. They would not be there if that were so; they would be down in my electorate.

The Minister for Transport: Voters or non-voters?

Mr. CROMMELIN: That is a moot point.

The Minister for Transport: They would be non-voters.

Mr. CROMMELIN: That applies to a lot of people there. They would not be on the electoral roll. But a lot of people such as the doctors and resident staff would have a vote. I was leading up to the point that extraordinary things could happen under this provision. When these local authorities want to raise a loan, they have to advertise in the paper. If 50 ratepayers, or 10 per cent. of the people, sign a petition for a vote to be taken on the matter, a poll has to be taken. It is logical to assume that in any of the places I have mentioned 50 people could be found to sign a petition, and it would be possible for a very small minority to prevent a loan being raised.

Mr. Potter: That has been done without this provision.

Mr. Jamieson: They do it now; so why worry.

Mr. CROMMELIN: But they have to pay rates before they have a vote. In some places there is joint ownership of a property and only one of the parties has a vote; but on other occasions, where rent is paid, a man and a woman could have a vote and quite a few women would be given this opportunity.

It was suggested by the member for Leederville that some men joined a local authority merely to get a new footpath in front of their homes. That may be so in few instances; but I think that the average man who gives up his time to work for local authority does not submit himself for election for the glory of it, or for what he can gain, but because he is public-spirited just as we are who are elected to Parliament. So the suggestion of the member for Leederville was not a very good effort.

Mr. Johnson: You haven't had much contact with local authorities.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Perhaps I have not; and yet perhaps I have had a little more than the hon. member, and that could help a little.

The Premier: Very little.

Mr. CROMMELIN: Very little, perhaps. Not every one who lives in a municipality makes a contribution by way of rates. I would instance the case of middle-aged people with grown-up families. Their children who are over 21, unless they actually own a car or some other vehicle, cannot make any contribution towards the upkeep of the local authority, and that does not seem to be quite fair.

Someone suggested that there are a lot of very clever people, like doctors, who live in hotels and are worthy of having a vote

on account of their standing in the community. But I should imagine that they are living there only temporarily and possibly when the housing position catches up, they will be only too glad to get into places of their own. If this clause would do any good, I feel that local authorities would be only too happy to accept it; but as road boards and municipal councils are strongly opposed to it, I feel that the position should remain as it is, and I therefore oppose the clause.

Mr. NALDER: I oppose the clause. During the week-end I was in contact with members of some of the local authorities, and they went so far as to say they would prefer not to have the Bill rather than to see it passed with this clause in it. They consider that the provision is entirely unnecessary. People like school teachers, bank managers and employees of Government departments who go into a particular district do so only for the time being—usually for a maximum period of five years—and they are not particularly interested in the local authority. They would prefer to allow the people who have lived in the district to carry on its affairs. They do not want to interfere and would rather leave the management of the place to those who have lived there for a number of years and have the interests of the district at heart.

Mr. COURT: As I said at an earlier stage, the contentious provisions of this Bill must be viewed as an overall pattern if one is to see what the Government is attempting. In that way one can see in this measure the exact pattern of what Mr. Cahill introduced into the local government legislation of New South Wales. I do not think the Minister for Health would like to be regarded as Mr. Cahill is in New South Wales, where he is known as the father of everything bad in local government. The local government administration there is the worst of its kind in the British Commonwealth—

The Minister for Transport: Rubbish!

Mr. COURT: Nowhere else is there so much corruption.

The Minister for Transport: A lot has been cooked up in the Press, but not much has been proved.

The Premier: Do you know of any country in the world where there is more corruption in business than there is in Sydney?

Mr. COURT: I do not think business corruption there can hold a candle to the local government situation in that State. We know of definite instances of maladministration and corruption in local government elections in New South Wales.

The Minister for Transport: But only concerning one or two local authorities.

Mr. COURT: All that is a direct product of this provision for adult franchise.

The Minister for Transport: Why are you afraid of the people being given the right to express their views?

Mr. COURT: I am not afraid of the right people being given that right.

The Minister for Transport: Who are you to decide which are the right people?

Mr. COURT: People with property in the areas concerned—

The Minister for Transport: In a democracy everyone over 21 years of age has a vote.

Mr. COURT: But the position here is completely different.

The Minister for Transport: Yes, vested interests all the time.

Mr. COURT: This is not a matter of vested interests.

The Minister for Transport: You are concerned with property, not people.

Mr. Roberts: Do you say members of local government are of that opinion?

Mr. COURT: If local government could tax its citizens as a Government does, the position would be different. A Government taxes on a basis of income regardless of the possession of property or how people dispose of their income. Citizens have obligations to the State or nation which the ratepayer does not have to the local authority. The local authority administers the district and provides for the health, safety and general well-being of residents and it is only fair that those who pay for that service should have the right to elect their representatives.

The Minister for Health: But every citizen makes a contribution.

Mr. COURT: The Minister could say that if I went to the pictures at Claremont, I made some contribution there, but, in fact, I would only be paying for the entertainment. The owner of the theatre pays the rates and I merely buy some of the service he provides. Most entertainments held in local authority halls are for charity.

The Minister for Health: Local authorities charge rates to pay for roads, footpaths and so on.

Mr. COURT: The ratepayers pay for those things—

The Minister for Health: And the citizens.

Mr. COURT: The Minister has never seen a local authority notice stating that a park or reserve is to be used by ratepayers only. Members opposite keep referring to motor licences, but there again one simply pays for a service. A common authority fixes the charge which is the same no matter what distance a vehicle travels in the year or what part of the State it traverses.

The Minister for Works: Do you call the ratepayers the owners or occupiers?

Mr. COURT: The Minister knows that under our law at present an occupier can be a person who has a vote—

The Minister for Works: That does not answer the question.

Mr. COURT: I regard either the owner in occupation or the prime occupier of premises as the ratepayer—not members of his family or boarders.

Mr. Evans: What about absentee owners of property?

Mr. COURT: They make their contribution through rates, but in fact seldom claim their votes. If the clause were passed in its original form, we could see an annual meeting of ratepayers which councillors could not attend except by courtesy of the ratepayers. The Government has acknowledged that ratepayers have some prior claim over those who do not make a direct contribution and the measure provides that if the mayor or president is not there and his deputy is absent, the ratepayers can elect their chairman, which is an admission that they have special rights and privileges. I support the amendment.

Mr. JAMIESON: The jargon of the member for Nedlands does not differ much from that of Newspaper House. As yet, I have heard no reason why the clause should be amended. Many parts of the British Empire have this provision and there is little that can be said against it. Members opposite would give the local manager of an oil company in charge of a country depot the right to vote, but would refuse that right to a responsible citizen who might be secretary of the local progress association.

Apart from the letters mentioned by the member for Bunbury, there have been few instances of anyone objecting to this provision, which indicates that the people generally are not worried about it. The member for Katanning said that people temporarily in a district are not interested in it, but he represents his electorate temporarily and should be interested in their welfare. I think a person keen enough to seek local government office would bring some enthusiasm to the work. There are many ratepayers, possibly, who cannot sign their names and many learned people who would not be entitled to a vote.

Mr. Nalder: That is an exaggeration.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not think it is. The member for Nedlands did not say much about the position in Queensland but if he thought this provision would react in favour of his political party, I have no doubt he would defend it. If there is an issue to be decided in any district that may affect everybody, there may be a fairly reasonable number of votes cast.

Mr. Court: Is not that a reflection of the people's satisfaction with the present system?

Mr. JAMIESON: No, it is an indication that people are not aware whether they are entitled to vote or not. If we make the qualifications general they would be more likely to know whether they were entitled to vote at any election. It adds only to the confusion already existing by providing qualifications in regard to one election and different qualifications for another. Therefore, there is every justification for making uniform the qualifications: whether they apply to a local government election or any other election.

Mr. Court: I do not think there is any confusion in the public's mind. If the issue is big enough, the people vote.

Mr. JAMIESON: That shows how infrequently the member for Nedlands moves among the people to investigate matters such as this, because I can assure him that many people become confused with the qualifications relating to the various elections that are held.

Surely an employee in any district would appreciate the needs of the district in the same way as his employer. Such an employee might have been a storekeeper in Bunbury who had lost his capital and who had been forced to take up employment in, say, the Darling Range electorate. Surely people such as those are entitled to some consideration and should not be subjected to the whims and desires of those who object to this Bill. The member for Bunbury is using the same jargon as those people in his electorate who have very fixed ideas on this subject.

Mr. Roberts: There are some very good Labour supporters among them, you know.

Mr. JAMIESON: There may be, but I still maintain that this is a good time to interest more people in local government affairs and I support the clause.

Mr. POTTER: I am surprised the members opposite are opposed to this clause when we realise that their historical role is for an enlargement of the franchise.

Mr. Jamieson: Not a hysterical role?

Mr. Hall: Not rock-n-roll?

Mr. POTTER: We should take their minds back to the Boston tea party which was brought about through the imposition of taxation without representation. The same principle applies to local government elections. It has already been explained that most people contribute towards the revenue of their local authority in some form or other. In answer to those members who say that such people, because they are not paying rates, should not be entitled to a vote at a road board election, I would point out that there are many people who do not pay taxation but who are still entitled to vote at State and Federal elections.



The member for Roe has said that we have no mandate to bring this Bill forward, but the electors knew where we stood in this matter and, in my opinion, that can be regarded as a mandate. The member for Narrogin has said that sometimes the owner of a property is disfranchised and yet the lessee is not. That is something that is entirely wrong because the owner should be entitled to have a vote at local government elections. Long before the Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the introduction of this legislation, even before the last war, I studied the amalgamation of the Road Districts Act and the Municipal Corporations Act and no doubt many years hence we may still be debating a Bill similar to this one. In my opinion, however, it is a measure that is long overdue and it is extremely desirable that the franchise should be extended.

Mr. ACKLAND: Whilst freely admitting that anybody who speaks to this amendment is wasting his time, I still feel that those who have strong opinions on this point should say something because it is the most vital and contentious clause in the Bill. The Minister for Works has said that the local authorities want a new Act as soon as possible and that, if necessary, it could be amended at a later date, but I do not believe that for a moment. I have had as much experience in local government as anybody in this Chamber. I was for 20 years a member of a road board, 16 of which were served in the office of chairman and for a great many of them I was a member of the executive of the Road Board Association.

It amazes me, therefore, to hear the Minister for Transport passing deprecatory remarks about members in this Chamber who have been members of road boards because his own father, for many years, was chairman of the Road Board Association of Western Australia. He did a wonderful job and he was as good a Labour man as anybody on the other side of the Chamber now. He never introduced politics into discussions of the Road Board Association. However, this Bill represents a political platform of the Labour Party and it is politics all the way.

Mr. Evans: It has been politics for a long time.

Mr. ACKLAND: A Royal Commission was appointed in October, 1950, to inquire into this legislation and its report could have been given effect to before 1953. That Royal Commission made some definite and very sound recommendations, but they are completely at variance with this clause.

The Minister for Health: The Royal Commission did not recommend adult franchise.

Mr. ACKLAND: I know. This is what it recommended. One of the recommendations dealing with qualifications of electors provided that in the case of municipalities the owner should be enrolled automatically while the occupier on application should be enrolled in the same way as the owner. The occupier who applied not later than the 15th January of each year would be retained and would not be displaced until application from his successor was made or an objection from such other interested parties was raised. Had a Bill containing such a provision been introduced, it would have met with the unanimous approval of all people.

It has been said that the road boards want a new Act and that the present legislation was framed in the horse and buggy days; but they do not want an Act with such a clause as this. They would rather work under the present Act. I know that Government members will vote solidly for this measure but I hope there is enough opposition so that it will not become law. We were threatened that we would have to accept the responsibility for the situation if a new Act is not passed. Everyone on this side of the Chamber is willing to take that responsibility.

The Minister for Health: You are willing to agree to the Bill if you have everything your own way, irrespective of Government policy.

Mr. ACKLAND: The Minister is adopting the attitude which he now accuses me of adopting. There are over 120 road boards in this State and every one of them is opposed to this clause. There are seven road boards in my district and each one of them would rather work under the existing Act than under a new Act which incorporated the clause under discussion. Hundreds of men, including the father of the Minister for Transport, have done a tremendous amount of work for the good of this State in a voluntary capacity.

The Minister for Transport: I think this should be explained to you. The late father of the Minister for Transport believed 100 per cent. in the clause now under discussion.

Mr. ACKLAND: I can assure the Minister that I attended far more meetings of the executive committee than his late father. If he thought that way, he must have been so loyal to the decisions of conferences of road boards that to my knowledge he made no mention of his view in that regard. That would even put him on a higher pinnacle. I had a great regard for him although his politics and mine were as far apart as the two poles. Everyone who came under his chairmanship held him in the highest respect. To hear his son, the Minister for Transport, speaking in the disparaging manner about the

people who gave such service to the State, is something I cannot appreciate. I support the amendment.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I support the amendment which seeks to delete from this clause the provocative and objectionable provision.

**The Minister for Education:** How were you elected?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** The Minister can speak in a moment. He will have that opportunity.

**The Minister for Education:** How were you elected?

**The Premier:** That is a mystery to everyone.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** The Minister will have every opportunity to speak.

**Hon. L. Thorn:** It has nothing to do with the Minister how you were elected.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I support the amendment because I believe the clause is unfair, unjust and undemocratic. What is seeks to do is discriminatory in the worst possible form. Of course, members opposite are attempting to brutalise this measure through the Chamber. They have the brutal majority and their votes will decide the issue. The course taken by them is one of attack. Undoubtedly, they are of this frame of mind, "Let us attack them on this objectionable clause and tell them how undemocratic they are," thus trying to cut the ground from under our very feet. To members on this side this is a most objectionable clause and we cannot support it.

There is no public demand whatever for adult franchise in local government. The only demand for this arises from the Labour Party's political platform. They are attempting to bring this about in order to achieve their socialistic objective. Some members opposite laugh at these remarks, but they are substantially true. What the Labour Party is attempting to do is to amalgamate the local authorities into great sections, and incorporate them under one great local governing authority, with a view to abolishing Parliament and governing the State by this great local authority. That is what they are after. One step towards that end is to adopt adult franchise in local government. It is most unfair and discriminatory because a road board or municipality could be overwhelmed by the votes of people who have not contributed to the funds, except perhaps in an indirect manner.

It was said by several speakers opposite that the residents in a district who are not ratepayers or occupiers of premises contribute to the local authority's funds by virtue of going to the pictures or paying motor-vehicle licences. As was pointed out by the member for Nedlands they do that in an indirect manner, and for that payment they are provided with a

service. But so do the ratepayers, occupiers and owners of property contribute in the same manner.

It is discriminatory to give those persons a vote and enable them to overwhelm the votes of the ratepayers. This could bring about irresponsibility in local government and very many abuses. There is no need for me to go over all the reasons which have been put forward by members on this side. In second reading debates on three previous occasions, and in the debate on this Bill, members on this side of the Chamber have pointed out with some force that they object most strongly to the adult franchise clause.

**The Minister for Health:** Would you like to follow the English system?

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** Would the Minister like to follow the recommendations of the Royal Commission?

**The Minister for Health:** I do not need to follow a conservative recommendation.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** The Minister makes mention of the recommendations of Royal Commissions when it suits his purpose.

**The Minister for Health:** When we get a conservative attitude like that it must indicate that the atmosphere in Cottesloe is very irritating.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The member for Cottesloe has the floor.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** Speaking personally, I have no objection to people who are not owners or ratepayers having a vote in local government providing that such people made a financial contribution.

**The Minister for Health:** Of course they do.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** The Minister can speak on this afterwards.

**The Minister for Health:** I have already spoken.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I might suggest that people who are desirous of obtaining the franchise in local government should make a financial contribution to the funds, to the extent of the lowest rate payable in that district. If that happened, it would be quite fair to give them a franchise. They would contribute to the funds of the local authority in the same way as the ratepayers. But that is not equivalent to the property qualification at all. If everyone made a direct contribution to obtain a vote then I would be in agreement. If the lowest rating in a district happened to be £3 or £4 a year, then before anyone can record a vote he should contribute at least that sum to the local authority annually. There would be no argument in that case.

I hope that members opposite will take these words to heart. The people generally take a long time to be aroused. Members opposite have made so many mistakes that the time is fast approaching. The Premier

can see the writing on the wall. I feel that we should all support the amendment because it seeks to delete from the clause the objectionable portion, one which all thinking people, apart from those who are biased politically, would support.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** In my view this is one of the most radical alterations made in connection with local government. It is not democratic as it proposes to take away from those who contribute to the funds of local government the responsibility of deciding the issues of local government matters. Never before has it been claimed that when one does not contribute, one should have the right and responsibility to say what should be done with what is contributed.

**The Minister for Education:** Do you believe in adult franchise for the Legislative Council?

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** I do not think it is wise that this should be extended into local government.

**The Minister for Education:** What about adult franchise for the Legislative Council?

**Hon. Sir Ross McLarty:** There is a separate Bill now before the House.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** If this clause remains in the Bill, it will take away the incentive from public-minded citizens who desire to serve in the community in an honorary capacity. As regards those who vote at the present time at local government elections, where property is concerned it is the owner or occupier who has the right to vote. Further, one person in at least every household would have the right to vote and, of course, exercise that vote.

The present method of electing members to a road board or municipal council is only half the function of local government. Members of municipal councils or road boards are always available to be approached by people who wish to discuss matters with them. It also often happens that members of organisations put their views before local governing bodies by way of a deputation. If this clause remains in the Bill, I can see difficulties in regard to a road board making up its roll.

**The Minister for Health:** It will simplify the matter.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** It looks to me as though it is going to be a difficult matter. I venture to suggest that there will be a time when road boards will not know who has the right to vote. The member for Leederville touched on a point regarding women being disfranchised. However, in the amendment which is on the notice paper standing in the name of the Leader of the Country Party, he proposes to do something about that.

Mention has also been made of those who are objecting to this provision being in the Bill and the member for Beeloo suggested that this opposition came from

local authorities themselves. I have here quite a deal of correspondence from not only local authorities but from Farmers' Union branches and the Farmers' Union itself, and I propose to read some of these. The first one is from the Drakesbrook Road Board and reads as follows:—

I wish to advise that at the last meeting a resolution was passed recommending the continuance of the present method of electing a chairman, this recommendation to be forwarded for your information and consideration.

One from the Farmers' Union in my electorate, reads—

At our monthly meeting held last night, I was requested to write to you and state members' opposition to the adult franchise provisions in the Local Government Bill now before Parliament. Under the Bill, road board members could consist entirely of non-ratepaying members and it does not need much imagination what could happen if such a thing came into being.

Members sincerely hope you will oppose that part of the Bill.

The following letter is from the Farmers' Union headquarters. It reads—

The proposal to allow adult franchise in connection with local government elections is opposed by this Union. Consideration was given to this matter at a meeting of the general executive some time ago when viewpoints submitted by our branches were examined.

It is felt that there is no justification whatsoever in extending the franchise to all adults, whose only qualification is that they have resided in the area for at least six months. If the proposal is approved by Parliament it could easily be that the majority of electors in most road board areas would be those who make no contribution to the board's finances and yet could have the deciding voice in how ratepayers' contributions should be spent.

It may be argued that because adult franchise is allowed in Legislative Assembly elections, the same privilege should be extended in local government elections, but this argument has no force because everyone who is on the parliamentary roll, in addition to making some contribution by way of direct or indirect taxation to Government funds can, as a citizen, be called upon to discharge certain duties to the State, and accordingly is entitled to the right to exercise a vote. On the other hand, a road board cannot call upon the individual to discharge such duties, and the extension of the franchise to non-ratepaying adults gives them the

right to a voice in the expenditure of moneys to which they have made no contribution.

The member for Kalgoorlie, in supporting the Bill and this particular clause, claimed that it was the view of the Goldfields people that it was desirable. I have a communication here from a conference of Goldfields local bodies and the relevant paragraphs are as follows:—

The subject of the new Local Government Bill was introduced at a recent meeting of this conference and discussion centered around the provisions for adult franchise in connection with local government elections and the system of valuation.

It is the considered opinion of this conference, which represents nine local authorities from Leonora to Esperance and west to Southern Cross, that if the particular clause dealing with adult franchise was allowed to go through, ratepayers would virtually cease to manage the affairs of local government and its control could be taken over by a force of irresponsible persons with probably no special interest in the district whatever, thereby upsetting the smooth working of a local authority.

It does not require very much imagination to see what the Goldfields local authorities suggest could easily come about. The member for Subiaco accused us of getting hysterical about this. There is quite a lot of hysteria in the community at the moment. I can agree with him when we consider that the majority of people interested in the affairs of local governments would become hysterical about it.

The Premier: Why don't you get Tony McGillop to organise a campaign about it?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: If the Government is sincere in its desire to help local government, I cannot understand why it does not drop such an objectionable clause and let us get on with the job of getting this legislation on the statute book. I oppose the clause and support the amendment moved by the member for Stirling.

Mr. ANDREW: Quite a lot has been said in regard to this particular clause.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: There is more to come.

Mr. ANDREW: I think most of the statements made have been redundant. There have been many assertions and many statements one way or another, and it appears that the people making them, particularly the member for Cottesloe, think that they carry some weight.

The Premier: The member for Cottesloe is wearing a red tie.

Mr. ANDREW: I have tried to sort out the arguments and there appear to be three. Firstly, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party stated that non-ratepayers could comprise

the whole of a local authority, and I do not think that would be a desirable state of affairs. The Leader of the Opposition was very fair about this matter. He did not think it would happen, but he talked about the possibility of it happening.

Technically, many things are possible but actually impossible. I think we can disregard that particular argument. The second argument put forward by the Leader of the Opposition was that a group of workers in a country town on a big works project could influence the composition of a local authority by casting their votes in certain directions. They would have to be there six months to be put on the roll. On analysis that could happen, but only once in a very long while.

Mr. Ackland: It could happen any time in Dandaragan where there are only 120 ratepayers.

Mr. ANDREW: These things are mostly improbable. I do not think these workers would influence a road board because the district would not be their home. Most of them would not be bothered voting at the election. If they did they would only make a difference to one man in the particular locality where they were. The other members of the board could outvote him.

Mr. Nalder: That would not be the case with the election of the president of a shire.

Mr. ANDREW: I say it could affect it, but it would seldom affect it. The leading article in "The West Australian" of yesterday morning says, in the last sentence—

No quibbling in the name of democracy can destroy the proposition that the people who pay the rates should call the tune.

That is really the main argument put forward by the Opposition. The member for Cottesloe said that the loan rate of the local authority with which he was concerned was £19,000 and other income was £30,000. Therefore, the ratepayers have paid in rates 40 per cent. of the income.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: But the ratepayers contribute to the other sections, too.

Mr. ANDREW: I know, but they do not contribute the whole of the other 60 per cent. If the principle is that those who pay should call the tune, the others should have the vote.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: If they pay the £19,000, fair enough.

Mr. ANDREW: To say that those who pay should call the tune, goes much further than only to the ratepayers. Not one member of the Opposition replied to the statement in my second reading speech that 90 per cent. of those to be added to the roll would be the wives of ratepayers, and the other 10 per cent. would

be made up of their unmarried children who had not left home. These people would be more interested in the welfare of a district than a person who was holding a block of land for speculation.

In Victoria Park we have a ratepayers' association the members of which give a great deal of their time to the welfare of the district. Approximately half of those people are not ratepayers. They are the type of people who would be going on the roll. The member for Cottesloe said that the Bill was unjust, undemocratic and objectionable. I asked him to substantiate those charges but he has not done so.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They have been substantiated for the last three years.

Mr. ANDREW: The Opposition has been floundering. It has been looking for arguments, but it has only been able to put forward very weak ones.

Mr. EVANS: Before tea I said that I had a petition served on me containing 30 names. Most of them were ratepayers and they affirmed the Government's intention to bring in adult franchise on a certain basis. Tonight I have received another list and one of the names on the bottom is that of a member of the Kalgoorlie Road Board.

Mr. Roberts: What is his name?

Mr. EVANS: Alice in Wonderland!

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Fancy reading out a petition with a name like that on it!

Mr. EVANS: Someone in Kalgoorlie took the trouble, on my behalf, to ask the opinions of a few people. He found that the local authorities on the Goldfields had not asked the ratepayers their opinions on the matter. I do not think any local authority in the State did. There are three local authorities on the Goldfields. The Kalgoorlie Road Board has 7,500 ratepayers; the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council has 10,000 ratepayers and the Boulder Municipal Council 7,000 ratepayers.

On the road board there are nine members and on each of the two councils 13 members, making a total of local government members of 35. If they were unanimously opposed to this provision it would mean that 35 men would be responsible for the opinions of 24,000 people. Is that just? That applies if the 35 were unanimous, but I have reason to believe that they are not because written in red ink on this document is the signature of one member of the Kalgoorlie Road Board, and I know of two members of the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council who are opposed to it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We are opposed to it, too.

Mr. EVANS: They are in favour of adult franchise. I would like the Opposition to say whether they would agree to a referendum of ratepayers throughout the State.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If the Bill, as introduced, becomes law, every person residing within a district, whose name appears on the electoral roll, will be eligible to take a seat on the local authority. A person who was not a ratepayer would have a say in the disbursement of the local authority's funds. We have to analyse what a ratepayer is. He can only be one thing—the person in whose name the property is registered and whose responsibility it is for the payment of the annual rates. Under the Municipal Corporations Act the occupiers of premises have the right to vote, but under the Road Districts Act the position is different. The ratepayer is the person who is responsible for the repayment of the loans and therefore he should be the one to say who shall represent him on the board and make the decisions as to what loans shall be raised.

Some eight or nine years ago I was of the opinion that elections for local authorities should be on the basis of complete adult franchise, just as the Legislative Assembly is, and for the first two or three months that I was a member of a road board I continued to hold that belief. Therefore I do not condemn anyone who believes that the Bill is democratic and desirable. Those who believe that, are, in the main, people who have not had experience on a local authority.

I was not a member of the road board for long before I began to revise my ideas, and after I had been a member for 12 months and fully understood its operations, I realised the unsatisfactory state of affairs which could come into being if we had complete adult franchise. I was six years a member of a road board, and from that experience I was satisfied that complete adult franchise for local government was not altogether desirable.

If we approach this question in a sane, logical and non-party political attitude, we can come to only one conclusion and that is to support the amendment. Let me illustrate that by giving one or two instances that could occur if we had adult franchise in local government. There could be a disgruntled football club in a district. I am not talking so much of the metropolitan area.

The Premier: There is no such thing.

Mr. OLDFIELD: South Fremantle are not too happy! These instances could not happen in the metropolitan area because the population is too compact and dense.

The Minister for Education: The population is not so dense as you think it is.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I know the Minister is having difficulty in educating some of them! Earlier the member for Moore

mentioned that the Dandaragan Road Board has 100 ratepayers whereas the Perth City Council has 40,000 or 50,000 and probably the road boards in the North-West would have less than 100. But in a fair sized country district there might be a sporting body, or a football club, which was dissatisfied because the local board had not seen fit to develop the local playing fields.

That club would be comprised of young people who would not be aware of the responsibilities of the board as regards the provision of roads and other services in the district. Also, there might be a well meaning but misguided band of people who wanted to build an infant health clinic at all costs and to the detriment of more deserving services. Members of those organisations could take control of the board, if there were adult franchise, by electing to it members of their own bodies. In that way they could commit the board to an expense which would be far beyond its economic resources.

That could send the district almost bankrupt. I have been associated with one district in the metropolitan area which almost went bankrupt in 1947, and the member for Maylands could tell a much better story about it because he was on the board for some years.

The Minister for Health: Who would be responsible for it financially if the board went broke?

Mr. OLDFIELD: The district.

The Minister for Health: No, the Government.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If a board goes bankrupt through mismanagement or misappropriation of funds the Local Government Department will put a commissioner in charge and the board members will be dismissed, if it is mismanagement, or perhaps sent to gaol if it is misappropriation of funds on their part. But the property-owners of the district will still have to pay the money necessary to put the district on a sound financial footing.

The Minister for Health: But the Government is responsible.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Government will recover the money from the district over a period of years. The position is worse when a board goes nearly bankrupt. That was the case in Bayswater and it has taken at least 20 years for the district to recover and make some progress.

The Minister for Health: The Government is responsible for any debts.

Mr. Toms: They started to progress years ago.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It took at least 10 years for the district to make any progress. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I say that these things might not happen, but we must look at matters in a logical way and cast aside our political beliefs. As a result, I support the amendment.

Mr. TOMS: I know that members opposite have been waiting for me to state my views in regard to this matter.

Hon. D. Brand: We would like to hear the member for Murchison next.

Mr. TOMS: I wish to state my own views and not the views of the board. I support the clause as printed. Much play has been made and a decent-sized bogie has been built up against adult franchise, but I think I can speak as one who has had a fair amount of experience. Why, the Opposition even dragged the school teacher who comes into the district to educate children into the argument and they say he is not contributing towards the welfare of a district.

For my part, I am afraid that far too often we are inclined gauge progress by £ s. d. The member for Victoria Park gave an instance of a progress association in his electorate which was composed of people 50 per cent. at least of whom are not directly paying rates. I say, "not directly paying rates" because the majority of people in a district do pay rates either directly or per medium of rents. The landlord would use portion of the rent he receives to pay his rates.

Members opposite have said that there is no public demand for this clause. I have heard no public outcry against it. I have been associated with a local authority for 12 years and I think I am fairly well known throughout that particular district. Not once since it has been mooted that this Bill was to be brought before Parliament, has any person come to me saying that he was opposed to any of its clauses. I say that because I believe public attention has not been drawn to these things as much as members opposite would have liked.

Members have spoken of the Local Government Association in a praiseworthy vein and in a derogatory fashion. I have been associated with this association and it would be interesting if members opposite were to get hold of the "Local Government Gazette" and see the attendances at the association meetings and also the lists of apologies. No real attempt has been made by local governing bodies to bring this matter forward, but the move has come from the inner circle, as it were, of the Local Government Association.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I do not think that is correct. We have had letters from almost every road board in the State.

Mr. TOMS: I can tell the Leader of the Opposition that it is correct. I remember receiving a circular with a list of printed questions asking the various road boards their opinion of such and such a clause in the Bill. That is true. The word "democracy" has been used quite a lot and rather idly. In suggesting adult franchise, we are at least attempting to protect democracy.

We know from experience the small alterations that there are in the electoral rolls and during the week-end I took the trouble to check the rolls for the district. Well over 50 per cent. in the electorate are owners of property and surely members are not going to try to tell me that the other percentage will try to defeat the present members of the board for their own ends! If we have adult franchise, we might have elected to boards people who, although not directly ratepayers, will be able to manage the district and its affairs better than is the case at present.

Mr. Court: The reverse could apply, of course.

Mr. TOMS: The hon. member is building up bogdies.

Mr. Court: That applies in other States.

Mr. TOMS: Even the hon. member's leader was gracious enough to acknowledge that it was highly improbable. Some members have said that we should not have adult franchise because only the ratepayers are paying money towards the development of the district. If people are not paying money directly in that way, they are paying it in other directions. All men are liable to be called up for military service, if they are 21 years of age, and they have to serve their country. So why should they not have the right to serve their country in times of peace? I support the clause as printed.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I did not intend to debate this clause, but as I know the set-up of road boards, I must admit that I am in favour of the clause as printed. I was entrusted by a road board to compile a roll and only landlords, occupiers of land and managers of stations at present are entitled to vote at local government elections. A small majority of the road boards favour adult franchise; a lot of them are opposed to it. I agree with the member for Maylands that we could secure good talent. I know of a number of road boards that are badly handled.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Which ones?

Mr. O'BRIEN: Those who subscribe to the revenue and those over 21 years of age who are enrolled in their respective wards should be entitled to a vote. I would like to see a provision inserted in the Bill to make it compulsory for ratepayers to be enrolled for their respective districts. At the present time, one has to run around to find those people who are eligible to be enrolled to place their names on the district rolls.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Once they become ratepayers, they are automatically enrolled.

Mr. O'BRIEN: No; they must make application.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I thought it was the occupier that made application, not the landowner.

Mr. O'BRIEN: The occupier makes application. I support the clause as printed in the Bill and oppose the amendment moved by the Leader of the Country Party.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It has been said that to give all citizens the right to take part in the administration of the affairs in their own locality will allow those who have no interest in their district to take charge of affairs. That is not factual. There are responsible people such as school teachers, etc., who should be entitled to vote. They are framing the destiny of the State.

Mr. Ackland: Should they be responsible for the loans raised in the district?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They would be as responsible as everybody else.

Mr. Ackland: Why?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They contribute indirectly. If they stay at a hotel, they help that hotel. Both in England and the United States there is adult franchise, yet we are making a fuss about it!

Mr. Roberts: Some of those people may have a vote in some other locality.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They cannot because they must be on the electoral roll and can only have one vote. Under the old system if a man owned property, he could have four votes. Is that just? Of course it is not! Members opposite call themselves Liberals, but I would say they are Conservatives. Rates are paid by the ratepayers so that they may be provided with roads and other facilities.

Mr. Ackland: They have to meet the cost.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Of course they do, and the same thing applies to the citizens of Western Australia; they have to meet the cost of the Government. People like station-masters who assist the primary producers; policemen, who are generally fine types and protect ratepayers; and post-masters, should all be given a vote.

Mr. Ackland: Many of these people pay rent.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Some do, but those who do not are not entitled to a vote; yet they are entitled to a vote in the election of a national Government.

Mr. Ackland: There is no parallel.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Of course there is a comparison. England and the United States have adult franchise.

Mr. Court: Because they have a different scope of responsibility. The English local authority is responsible for education, health and so on.

**The MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** The Government is responsible for the local authorities and the Government foots the bill if they go broke.

**Mr. W. A. Manning:** The ratepayers are responsible. Has the Government ever footed the bill?

**The MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** I happen to know because I was an auditor for 10 or 12 years; that was before they made a fuss about inspectors from the department going in. Now they would not do without them. There is always an outcry when a change is mooted. The people concerned are important; they include professors, doctors and legal practitioners. It is democratic to give people who are responsible a vote, particularly if they live under adverse conditions. Yet the Conservatives on that side of the House do not want a change.

**The Minister for Education:** Tories!

**The MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** I hope the clause will be agreed to as it stands.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** I have already spoken on this clause.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I would draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to Standing Orders dealing with repetition.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** I can assure you I will not be tedious, Mr. Chairman. We regard this as the vital clause in the Bill and that being so, the Government would expect us to put up a fight in relation to it. If the Government insists on this clause remaining in the measure, then the whole Bill could very easily be lost. The Minister implied that we do not regard people who are not ratepayers as responsible citizens. That of course is not a fact.

We admit that a number of people who are not ratepayers are deserving and responsible people, but that does not affect the principle contained in the clause. We contend that ratepayers have to foot the bill and not the people generally. Surely that is a fair attitude! Today we have the Federal Government, the State Government and local government; they are all taxing machines.

**The Minister for Health:** Why not put them on the same basis?

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** We know that today rates are increasing tremendously, whether they be ordinary rates, land rates, water rates, health rates, or vermin rates—they are all increasing. That being so, surely those ratepayers who have to shoulder the responsibility are the people who should have the say. Dealing with the Minister's argument about a non-ratepayer being a responsible citizen and so on, would he be so concerned if a referendum were held in a district to raise £20,000 or £30,000 on loan which would impose an additional rate on the ratepayers?

Is it logical to assume that he would take the same outlook as the ratepayer? I do not think so for one moment.

**The Minister for Health:** The ratepayers would be in the majority.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** They might or they might not be; it would depend on the circumstances. Members on this side have explained that a migratory population might go into some district and might be there for only a limited time and have no real permanent interest in the district. There could be some proposal to spend a big sum of money, perhaps on a swimming pool or a recreation ground, which these people would probably strongly favour. But they would not pay for it; it would be the ratepayers who would pay.

The argument of the Minister about going to a picture show and paying to see a film is fallacious, though it might not be so in regard to paying an entrance fee to a swimming pool, because that would be revenue which would go towards the payment of the debt on the pool. We regard this as a vital clause. I have listened to the Minister's speeches and to those of members opposite and have tried to weigh the pros and cons.

It might be said that I have a prejudiced view in this regard; that my mind is already made up. But after hearing all the arguments put forward from the Government side, I have not heard one that convinces me that the whole of the populace should have a vote and that the ratepayers should still be the persons responsible for meeting any additional obligations that might be imposed. The word "democracy" has been freely bandied about. But is it democracy for people who do not pay directly to force those who have to pay, whether they favour a proposal put forward or otherwise?

**The Minister for Education:** Would you say that if they paid taxes, they would be entitled to a vote?

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** I did not say that. I said if they paid rates.

**The Minister for Education:** The people of Western Australia pay rates and taxes but are not entitled to vote for the Legislative Council.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** Let me remind the Minister that a Bill relating to that matter is before the House, and I have already made a very good speech on it, if the Minister would care to look it up. Coming back to this Bill, there is no demand for this clause at all. The people generally are not deprived of anything. Every public facility that is provided by local authorities is available to the ordinary citizen. So why is there a need for this drastic change? I would say that the attitude of local authorities who are strongly opposed to this measure should be taken into consideration, because it is



generally recognised that they have given their services in a voluntary capacity, with the object of furthering the progress of their district. As the Minister admits, we have been well served by local governing authorities.

The Minister for Health: We respect them very highly.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: That is so. They are free from party politics, but that will not be so if this clause is agreed to. The freer a local governing authority is from party politics, the better it functions. We do not agree that the present provision is undemocratic or that the people are suffering to any extent at all. We oppose the clause.

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

Ayes	18
Noes	24
Majority against	6

#### Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Brand	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Owen
Mr. Court	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thorn
Mr. I. Manning	Mr. Wild
Mr. W. Manning	Mr. Hutchinson

(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hall	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Potter
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May

(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Mann	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Sleegman
Mr. Watts	Mr. Gaffy

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Progress reported.

## BILL—ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

### Second Reading.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [9.42] in moving the second reading said: This Bill and the related Bill, which will follow, to amend the Death Duties (Taxing) Act are Bills calculated to establish a better system of applying death duties or probate duties in Western Australia. For many years there has been widespread criticism of the existing system of applying those duties. That system operates on a percentage basis and does have some very peculiar results in its application. Many anomalies and injustices have arisen under it.

I am not suggesting that the legislation introduced in this Bill and in the succeeding Bill will overcome totally the anomalies that have existed and still exist, but I think they will represent a fairly solid practical contribution in that direction. In addition, members of the Grants Commission have now consistently for many years penalised Western Australia because our rates of collection of probate duties have been below the average rates applying in the standard Australian States. Because our rates have been below those of the standard States we have suffered penalties by the Grants Commission.

The main alteration to be effected by the succeeding Bill is in the proposed abolition of the percentage system and the substitution for it of a system charging so much in the £ for each complete £ of income over and above £1,000. I think members will gather from that that the existing exemption of £200 of final balance in any estate is to be raised by the legislation to £1,000.

Another provision of the Bill would give the Treasurer the discretion to defer payment of the whole or any part of any duty which might be payable in respect of any estate where the value of the estate on final balance does not exceed £10,000 and the value of any dwelling-house in the estate does not exceed £6,000, provided the widow of the deceased person has ordinarily used the dwelling-house for purposes of residence.

This amendment was finally decided upon only after a considerable amount of thought had been given to the proposal. Initially it had been thought that the proposal now in the Bill might have been made rather more generous than it is, but on close investigation it was found that to have done what was first suggested would have created what might be described as loopholes for others in many directions, and consequently the first thought in the matter had to be abandoned and the proposal now in the Bill was the one finally determined upon.

The Bill also restricts and determines the benefits of Section 100 of the Act which provides for half-duty on estates of persons dying before the proclamation of the proposed amending Act and estates not exceeding £6,000. The Bill also re-words a principal section of the Act in connection with concessions which are granted to widows and children of a deceased person where the children are under the age of 16 years at the date of death of the deceased person. Re-wording was required to enable the benefits in the Act in this direction to continue, and was made necessary by virtue of the proposed change from a percentage application of probate duty to the rate in the £ as will apply under the suggested new system.

Broadly, those are the main provisions of the Bill, which is probably the less important measure of the two. The Bill which is to follow immediately is the important one, because it sets out the amount in the £ which is to be applied and the progressive graduations in the value of estates on final balance. I hope to give to members not only detailed information as to what the new system will be in fact, but also a comparison of the rates which apply under the existing system and the rates which will apply in each similar case in the future under the proposed new system in the event of that new system being accepted by Parliament. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, debate adjourned.

### BILL—DEATH DUTIES (TAXING) ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

**THE TREASURER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [9.50] in moving the second reading said: As I explained when dealing with the previous measure, this Bill sets down the rates which it is intended shall apply in the event of the Bill becoming law. I also mentioned previously that probate duty is payable at

present on estates where the final balance exceeds £200. This Bill proposes to increase the exemption up to and including an amount of £1,000.

Before proceeding to quote the new rates and the new system, I will give members some information regarding the average duty per capita as paid in the six States of the Commonwealth of Australia and also the figure which is the average for Australia. In New South Wales the average duty per capita is £2 7s. 1d. per annum. In Victoria it is £2 4s. 6d., in Queensland £1 16s. 2d., in South Australia £2 0s. 6d., in Tasmania £1 10s., and in Western Australia £1 7s. 10d. The average for all the States is £2 2s. 3d.

I might also mention at this stage that the proposals in this and the preceding measure will do the things which I have already explained and will give, by way of additional income, approximately £100,000 during the current financial year and approximately an additional £170,000 in a full financial year. The proposed new system of applying probate or death duties will be found on page 5 of the Bill and I propose to read the table set out there in order that it might appear in Hansard. Later I will read the comparisons between what would apply under the existing law and what would apply under the proposed new table.

The proposed new table reads as follows:—

Amount of Final Balance.				Rate of Duty.			
£				£ s. d.	s. d.		£
0—1,000	....	....	....			exempt.	
1,001—5,000	....	....	....			1 6 for each complete £1 over	1,000
5,001—10,000	....	....	....	300 0	0 plus 1 9	" "	5,000
10,001—15,000	....	....	....	737 10	0 " 2 4	" "	10,000
15,001—20,000	....	....	....	1,320 16	8 " 2 8	" "	15,000
20,001—25,000	....	....	....	1,987 10	0 " 3 0	" "	20,000
25,001—30,000	....	....	....	2,737 10	0 " 3 4	" "	25,000
30,001—35,000	....	....	....	3,570 16	8 " 3 8	" "	30,000
35,001—40,000	....	....	....	4,487 10	0 " 4 0	" "	35,000
40,001—45,000	....	....	....	5,487 10	0 " 4 4	" "	40,000
45,001—50,000	....	....	....	6,570 16	8 " 4 8	" "	45,000
50,001—55,000	....	....	....	7,737 10	0 " 5 0	" "	50,000
55,001—60,000	....	....	....	8,987 10	0 " 5 4	" "	55,000
60,001—65,000	....	....	....	10,320 16	8 " 6 8	" "	60,000
65,001—70,000	....	....	....	11,737 10	0 " 6 0	" "	65,000
70,001—75,000	....	....	....	13,237 10	0 " 6 4	" "	70,000
over 75,000	....	....	....	14,820 16	8 " 6 8	" "	75,000

The table of comparisons contains a considerable amount of detail which I think it is desirable to have in Hansard in order that members who wish to study it in detail may have an opportunity of doing so. We will take the widows first and compare them under the present system with what would happen under the proposed system and then take all the others concerned under the present system and compare them with what would be their position under the proposed new system. The figures relating to widows under the

present arrangement and as proposed under the Bill are set out in the following table:—

£	Under Present System			Under Proposed System		
	Minimum	Maximum		Minimum	Maximum	
	£	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
0-200	....	—	—	—	—	—
201-500	....	1 2 10	0	—	—	—
501-1,000	....	5 10 0	0	—	—	—
1,001-5,000	....	15 125	0 0	9 150	0 0	0
5,001-6,000	....	125 150	0 0	150 0 0	193 15	0
6,001-8,000	....	240 341	6 8	258 6 8	375 0	0
8,001-10,000	..	396 510	0 0	421 17 6	553 2 6	6

From there on the concession which applies to widows and others in similar circumstances disappears and everybody comes under the same rates. That applies at present and will continue to apply on that principle under the proposed new

system. The comparison in respect of others under the prevailing system and under the proposed new system, up to the maximum amount of £10,000 worth of estate on final balance would, by way of comparison, be as follows:—

	Present Duty.						Proposed Duty.					
	Widow, etc.			Others.			Widow, etc.			Others.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
0- 200												
201- 500	1	0	0	2	10	0						
501- 1,000	5	0	0	10	0	0						
1,001- 5,000	15	0	0	125	0	0						
5,001- 6,000	125	0	0	150	0	0	150	0	0	300	0	0
6,001- 8,000	240	0	0	341	6	8	258	6	8	387	10	0
8,001-10,000	396	0	0	510	0	0	421	17	6	562	10	0
Widows and Others.							Widows and Others.					
	Minimum.			Maximum.			Minimum.			Maximum.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
10,001-15,000	720	0	0	1,230	0	0	737	12	4	1,320	6	8
15,001-20,000	1,280	0	0	1,900	0	0	1,320	18	4	1,987	10	0
20,001-25,000	2,000	0	0	2,500	0	0	1,987	13	0	2,737	10	0
25,001-30,000	2,625	0	0	3,150	0	0	2,737	13	4	3,570	16	8
30,001-35,000	3,300	0	0	3,850	0	0	3,571	0	4	4,467	10	0
35,001-40,000	4,025	0	0	4,600	0	0	4,467	14	0	5,487	10	0
40,001-45,000	4,800	0	0	5,400	0	0	5,487	14	4	6,570	16	8
45,001-50,000	5,625	0	0	6,250	0	0	6,571	1	4	7,737	10	0
50,001-55,000	6,500	0	0	7,150	0	0	7,737	15	0	8,987	10	0
55,001-60,000	7,425	0	0	8,100	0	0	8,987	15	4	10,320	16	8
60,001-65,000	8,400	0	0	9,100	0	0	10,321	2	4	11,737	10	0
65,001-70,000	9,425	0	0	10,150	0	0	11,737	16	0	13,237	10	0
70,001-75,000	10,500	0	0	11,250	0	0	13,237	16	4	14,820	16	8
100,000				13,000	0	0				23,154	3	4
120,000				24,000	0	0				29,820	16	8
200,000				40,000	0	0				56,487	10	0
300,000				60,000	0	0				89,820	16	8
500,000				100,000	0	0				156,487	10	0

That sets out clearly a comparison of the rates which apply at present and those which will apply under the proposed new set-up. It will be seen that on the lowest existing rates total exemption is to be granted and on the present lower existing scale the proposed rates will be below those in some instances. Then there is a gradual increase in the amounts that will be paid in future compared with what are paid now followed by a steep increase in the payments made under the proposed new system compared with those that apply at present.

The only consolation that I have under the proposed new set-up is that I have never had any personal ambition to be the richest body in Karrakatta cemetery. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 30th October.

**HON. D. BRAND** (Greenough) [10.10]: This Bill merely aims at validating the action taken by the Minister from time to time in respect of orders issued which impose water restrictions in the metropolitan area. By way of answer to an interjection the Minister indicated that, to date, the action of the Minister had not been challenged but evidently the Crown Law Department felt that such a challenge was foreshadowed and no doubt that is the reason for this validating Bill appearing before us now.

In his second reading speech the Minister explained that because of the peculiarities of the system supplying the metropolitan area, the fact that there was not sufficient reserve in the catchment area and because we did not have the capacity in the conduit to meet peak demands, it was necessary, at very short notice, to ration the supply of water with a fair degree of severity from time to time, and it was the Minister who had to make the decision. Therefore, in this Bill it is provided that the Minister shall be empowered, from time to time, by an order published at least once in a daily newspaper, to prohibit, regulate and impose restrictions, etc. I hope that the Minister, in the publication that is to be made, will ensure that all the people will be fully aware that such a restriction is intended to be imposed.

As a past Minister for Water Supplies, I can assure the House that no Minister relishes the idea of announcing water restrictions. He would be far happier if he could give all the consumers in the metropolitan area all the water they are entitled to according to their rating and allow them to pay all the excess water rates that would have to be paid if a plentiful supply of water was made available. I think we have reached the stage, as far as the metropolitan water supply is concerned, whereby some means can be used to have people limit the water that they use during the summer months either by the imposition of a higher excess water charge or by a direct personal appeal.

We know that the Government is planning to provide more water through the provision of the Serpentine reservoir. Even during the period I was Minister in charge of the department, I suggested long range plans to cover certain streams to enable a greater supply of water to be made available to the metropolitan area, but taking these additional sources of supply into consideration, there will always be the possibility that, during an intense heat wave, even on a day's notice, severe water restrictions in the metropolitan area will have to be applied. We do not know what lies ahead of us, of course.

Within ten years it may be possible, through some technical method, to convert salt water to fresh water. I believe that such an achievement is possible. I have drawn the Minister's attention to a publication from America which states that a professor in that country has made great progress in research to this end.

Mr. Evans: You believe so!

Hon. D. BRAND: Of course I do, in view of the fact that the supply of water in the Commonwealth of Australia is one of the greatest problems that faces all State Governments.

Mr. Lawrence: On what do you base your belief?

Hon. D. BRAND: I anticipate that within a short space of time an economical method may be devised to convert salt water into fresh or even treat brackish water that is obtained from underground in such a way as to make it suitable for use on gardens, etc. My attention has also been drawn to a statement made by a Minister in the Israeli Government to the effect that that Government intended to expend a large sum of money on a system of conversion of salt water, slightly different from the system being experimented on in the U.S.A. This is through a method of condensation. Because of the difficulty in obtaining water in Palestine, which has a limited area and a rapidly growing population, the Israeli Government has devoted a large sum of money to be spent on this project and for a pilot plant to be established to take advantage of the latest developments.

Whilst I do not anticipate that we shall be establishing a plant on the seashore to pump salt water from the sea for conversion to fresh water, anything can happen these days. We can look forward to the time when restrictions on fresh and potable water to the metropolitan area will not be as great as they are under existing conditions.

When the Minister is clothed with authority to impose, without challenge, water restrictions on to the people, he should be mindful of the high water rates they are paying. I am sure that the Minister and his advisers will do everything possible to ensure that the resident in the metropolitan area will receive as much water as it is possible to obtain. In his concluding remarks the Minister stated it was not so much that we did not have the water available, but the restrictions were imposed because of the limited size of the conduits leading from the hills reservoirs.

One way of alleviating the water restrictions is to increase the storage capacity in the metropolitan area. I do not know the Government's plans, but there is yet space available for the excavation of more reservoirs at Mt. Yokine. In my time, the reservoirs constructed were 30,000,000 gallons in capacity. The metropolitan residents must realise that a great capital cost is involved in providing such reservoirs.

At present, in spite of the pipeline from Mundaring, in spite of the pipeline from Canning Dam, and in spite of a pipehead from the Serpentine River, there is still the possibility of very severe water restrictions. It is a great pity that residents in the metropolitan area do not limit their gardening activities, particularly those who develop backyard gardens. Some of them are very large and take a great quantity of water to keep them going.

We recognise that when restrictions are imposed, the supply is limited and watering has to be done by hand. It is very disheartening and frustrating to see good gardening work fade away because of the insufficiency of water. Until we can obtain sufficient money to provide the capital works necessary—and they will involve millions of pounds—the metropolitan area must be prepared to face up to the restrictions.

I would ask the Minister whether the Bill would empower him to impose restrictions in country centres. If such a power was necessary, he would have to amend the Public Works Act. I would ask him if he intends doing so and if the Act is sufficiently wide.

The Minister for Water Supplies: The power has not been questioned.

Hon. D. BRAND: Up to date it has not been questioned, but after the debate on this matter it might be questioned because the member for Kalgoorlie knows that no

one is more resentful than the Goldfields residents when water restrictions are imposed. On the other hand, we know it is not possible to get the water there because of pumping and pipeline limitations, and for other reasons. The people in the Goldfields and Kalgoorlie in particular will quickly challenge the Minister's power in this regard if loopholes exist. I support the Bill. No one has challenged the Minister's right to impose restrictions up to this stage. If there is any doubt in that regard, this House will support the move to provide the necessary authority.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 147A. added:

Hon. D. BRAND: I draw attention to the wording of Subclause (6). I wonder whether an innocent person will find himself in a serious predicament if this clause is agreed to. If through accident, chance or a break in the line there is a leakage of water, and the person concerned did not report the matter to the department, what would be the position?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It is true that power is given to the department to proceed against anyone for using excessive water if he took no action to prevent a dripping tap or a leak in the pipe. No innocent person would be proceeded against. The provision is intended to cover the position of a person who allows his tap to drip, know-stantial quantity of water in 24 hours, by ing that by so doing he can obtain a sub-saying he was not aware the tap was dripping.

This clause is intended to give the Minister power to proceed against a person for using water to defeat the restrictions. If this power is not available, people will be able to defeat water restrictions. I would point out that no prosecution can be taken without the consent of the Minister. It is unthinkable that an innocent person would be proceeded against because of this power. No prosecution with regard to contravention of regulations is undertaken by departmental officers without reference to the Minister. Under the Act, the Minister is given power to launch prosecutions, but naturally he will not give any direction in this regard unless he is satisfied that the prosecutions ought to be launched.

Where a person is found to be breaking the regulations, a report is made and a recommendation may be made for a prosecution, but no action is taken unless the Minister agrees that the prosecution should be launched. This provision is very necessary to ensure that no loophole can be

found to defeat the restrictions. People who wish to water grapevines or fruit trees and who do not wish to stand near them and water by hand, will turn the water on very slightly and leave the hose running. In 24 hours a great amount of water could be used on those trees, as much as two hours of watering by hand.

Mr. Oldfield: How will this provision be policed?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The inspectors will go round.

Mr. Oldfield: At midnight?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: We do not advertise when they will go round. If the department suspects that a person was using water contrary to the regulations, they will attempt to catch him in order to launch a prosecution. The purpose of the regulation-making power is not to punish people but to preserve water in the interests of those who play the game during water restrictions. In a period of heavy draw, and we are likely to have it this summer because already 70,000,000 gallons have been drawn in one day and the summer has not even started, this is important. The 70,000,000 gallons is pretty close to conduit capacity.

Hon. D. Brand: What was the maximum consumption last year?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It reached 90,000,000 gallons. When a heavy draw like that occurs we get unfortunate people on high levels who obtain no water at all because there is a heavy draw on the water lower down. Unfortunately people use sprinklers at the one time and this is usually when they get home from work. They put the sprinkler on whilst they have their dinner. Therefore there is a period of maximum draw at certain times in the day. At such periods, some unfortunate people cannot get enough water to fill a kettle in the high levels, nor will they until we are able to increase the conduit capacity and bring more water down to keep our service reservoirs up to high levels.

It is necessary in the general interest to prevent some people from using too much water at certain times in order that other people can get some water at those periods. If there is a loophole in the regulations, quite a lot of people who will not stand and hold a hose, leave the tap half turned on and allow a lot of water to trickle around the rose-bed.

The regulation is to give the Minister power to deal with the unauthorised use of water. Naturally he will have to be satisfied, before he launched any prosecution, that it was deliberate and that a large quantity of water was being utilised in that way. No responsible Minister would authorise a prosecution because some person in all innocence did not quite turn the tap off. It is not for that purpose

at all. It is to be used where an appreciable quantity of water is coming through for the purpose of defeating the regulation.

Hon. D. BRAND: There is a tendency when drawing up legislation to close all loopholes on the department's side so that it is very simple for it to place the onus on the consumer. In the event of inspectors going around, I think there should be a system of warnings implemented and people warned at least once with respect to the fact that they are breaking regulations. A great deal of encouragement should be given to people to draw on the water available to them from underground, and it is a great pity that as yet a system of rating has not been devised whereby those who could afford it are encouraged to use water from this source. It would make more water available for those who could not afford to draw water from underground, and it would save people from the frustration of restrictions.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I would like to hear from the Minister how the inspectors are going to police this regulation. How are they going to catch people who water grape-vines by leaving the hose running all night long?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: I would say that the only way the regulations can be policed is for inspectors to go throughout the various districts and observe what is taking place. They do that at different hours. Where they find a person is using water contrary to the regulation, they take particulars and make a report. The regulations usually provide that during certain hours of the day and night watering of gardens by mechanical sprinklers should not be permitted, but persons are able to water their gardens at any time by hose held in the hand. That is the usual type of regulation imposed in the metropolitan area.

In some country towns unfortunately it has been necessary to impose a complete prohibition on garden watering by any means during certain hours. We are gradually improving that situation in those towns and I hope one day we will be able to extend to country districts the same consideration we are able to give in the city. The position in the city is deteriorating somewhat because of our greater population and the fact that so far we have not had sufficient funds to provide the additional storage and conduit capacity to keep up the supply.

The policing of regulations will be done as in the past; inspectors will enter properties where they have reason to believe sprinklers are being used, and if they see them in the prohibited hours they will make a report of the matter.

Mr. Oldfield: How will they have reason to believe a tap is dripping?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: They will see the water running out.

Mr. Lawrence: They will need to have a warrant to enter my property.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: They have power under the regulation. If the hon. member leaves his tap turned on and uses a mechanical sprinkler during the prohibited hours, he will see somebody on his property.

Mr. Lawrence: What if the tap over the bath is dripping?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It is not likely that inspectors will be going inside to see if taps are dripping over baths because that is not watering the garden. People will see these taps do not drip because they have to pay for excess water. The inspector is concerned with taps which drip outside in order to water trees and vines. This regulation is to prevent people from using water in an unauthorised manner. It has been brought to my notice already that people who have no meters on their property are watering their trees during the night. Thousands of gallons of water can be consumed in that way. If the people have no meters they suffer no penalty.

The people who have brought this to my notice have signed their names to the correspondence and they have only done this because they think it is unfair. This power is essential and I cannot imagine that any Minister at all would want to abuse this power and proceed against innocent persons, because the whole purpose is not to punish people or get fines but to stop people from using water during periods when it should be conserved.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I appreciate the difficulty the Minister has in trying to make limited quantities of water available in the existing conduits. However, I am not altogether happy with this approach to the problem. There is something underlying it which is most un-Australian. That is why I questioned the Minister as to how it was going to be policed.

Mr. Lawrence: What do you mean by "un-Australian?"

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Minister said that if he had reason to suspect people were watering their trees in the backyard with a length of hose or allowing the tap to run through the night, they would be prosecuted. I think it is obvious that the manner in which this is to be policed will give rise to anonymous letters and phone calls. It is un-Australian for Government departments to heed any information which is anonymous, unless it be the Police Department. It is something we are not used to in this country, and I hope we are able to maintain decency in this respect.

Mr. ROBERTS: A most interesting point has been raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in regard to the dripping tap. Some members here are the parents of very young children and on a very hot day kiddies will turn on taps, play with water and get under the taps or sprinklers. I was wondering whether the Minister would have another look at this provision and, after the word "allows," include words something like these "after being cautioned by an inspector of the department." This would give the individual concerned an opportunity to rectify some action of his children in leaving a tap on.

The Minister for Water Supplies: There is no danger of that.

Mr. ROBERTS: I thought it might obviate the necessity for the direct action being taken.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

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

##### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 30th October.

MR. O'BRIEN (Mount Magnet) [10.47]: The Bill seeks to amend the Act so as to compel people to have their stock branded. If the measure becomes law, the owners of large stock will have to brand that stock with a firebrand at the age of six months. In my opinion, firebranding is the most practical and permanent way of branding stock. It is true that large stock such as cattle have earmarks, but it is possible that earmarks can be mutilated and cut out.

Mr. Ackland: Cannot that apply to a firebrand?

Mr. O'BRIEN: Firebranding, if properly applied, is considered to be the most permanent and practical way of marking a beast, and also horses. For many years horses have been branded on the nearside shoulder, and racehorses on the neck. One member referred to the branding of sheep. The C.S.I.R.O. has now made available a branding fluid known as Jumbuk branding fluid in red, blue and green colours, but in my opinion, that has nothing to do with the measure. The Bill provides for firebranding, and a firebrand is one made of iron that is made hot and applied to the beast so that identification can be assured. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE**  
(Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren—in reply)  
[10.50]: Quite a number of members have given some rather unusual reasons as to

why the Bill should not be proceeded with. One of the least praiseworthy efforts was that of the member for Roe who felt that we ought to view with suspicion any amendments suggested by the Department of Agriculture. That is a silly reason for any practical farmer to put forward. If it were not for the Department of Agriculture, and the expenditure by that department of about £1,000,000 a year of the taxpayers' money, a great many farmers who have arrived at some reasonable success in their lives could not possibly have done so. There is no doubt that the department and the wonderful work it has done has short-circuited many of the difficulties that confront farmers from time to time, and the department has solved for them many problems before they have actually arisen.

Mr. Nalder: Is not that the reason for the existence of the Department of Agriculture?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** I am only referring to the statement made by the member for Roe. Whether or not there is any merit in the references made by other members, the remarks made by the member for Roe should not be given serious consideration. Some matters were raised by other members that are entitled to far more consideration than those that were put forward by the hon. member.

One of the principal things that members who spoke against the Bill wanted to know was the amount of interest that I said was being shown in the measure by producers and by operators. Members asked for more details in that connection. I have to confess that the only written request for the compulsory firebranding of cattle was that received from the Meat and Allied Trades Federation. A good many opinions have been expressed verbally by owners that the compulsory firebranding of cattle would safeguard the interests of the owner, and to that extent they have no objection to these proposals.

I took the opportunity to ring up the general secretary of the Farmers' Union, and although he could not speak with the authority of his organisation, because its conference had not then been held, he expressed his personal view that the union should raise no objection to it. If we forget our own petty requirements, realise that it is easy to say that a farmer should be the best judge of how to protect his assets and stock, and look at the broad subject of the necessity for branding in some way, we find that a Bill of this kind becomes necessary.

The other day the member for Kataning asked questions in regard to this very matter. The information I provided him with showed clearly, I think, that we could not effect prosecutions under the Act at the present time. We cannot expect to effect prosecutions and we cannot expect the officers of the department to handle

their job at all well when a man can, voluntarily, either earmark or firebrand his stock.

Although the parent Act in almost all its provisions refers practically exclusively to the necessity for firebranding, a few years ago an amendment was carried in the Legislative Council enabling a farmer to do this, or something else, at his option. In these circumstances, members can see that it is quite impossible for the Department of Agriculture, through its officers, to make a proper inspection at any time or to undertake any sort of prosecution.

Members might also bear in mind that practical farmers everywhere, even including those in this Chamber, will admit that the only successful way of identifying an animal is to have it firebranded, and certainly not branded by any other method that we have yet been able to devise. The Leader of the Opposition, with all his experience, does not see anything wrong with the Bill; he does not see anything wrong with the last portion of it which recommends that there shall be firebranding within six months of age. Apart from those who do not agree with the idea of the departmental officers having this authority, I can find no one who can suggest a good reason why the Bill should not be proceeded with.

Mr. Ackland: We said we did not think it necessary in many instances.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Because the hon. member did not want to have authority over him.

Mr. Ackland: Nothing of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Roe admitted that.

Mr. Ackland: It did not apply to all of us.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The members who spoke were at sixes and sevens, and some were opposing others, yet they remained loyal in deciding, at the last, that they wanted to see the Bill defeated. I am informed that it is normal procedure to brand calves at the time of castration, when they are about one month old; and at the same time when heifer calves are treated in a similar manner. I am also informed by practical men, as well as by our own departmental officers and those associated with meat works, that with careful handling, bruising should not occur and, in fact, does not occur, as the Leader for the Opposition said when he was speaking to the Bill. So the argument raised by members opposite on that point has no force at all.

Mr. Nalder: You really do not know what you are talking about. Cattle marketed as baby beef definitely should not be branded because it spoils the meat.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: My information is that it does nothing of the kind.

Mr. Ackland: Don't you realise—

The SPEAKER: Order! I must have order while the Minister is making his speech. Members will have an opportunity of speaking in Committee.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is absolutely no truth in it whatsoever.

Mr. Nalder: The Minister does not know what he is talking about.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If that is so, the Leader of the Opposition does not know what he is talking about, because he supported it.

Mr. Nalder: He was dealing with a different proposition altogether. He does not market his cattle as baby beef.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Members can do what they like with the Bill, but it does not alter the fact that over the years experience has shown that the Act is unworkable at present and there are many farmers who, for selfish reasons, want that position to remain. That is the truth.

Mr. Ackland: For practical reasons.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The proposition in the Bill will overcome that and make it possible for the first time, if we do have compulsory firebranding of cattle, for inspectors to police the Act as they should. They cannot do that now because there is no obligation on a farmer to firebrand or earmark, and unless there is something definite laid down, it is impossible for a stock inspector to carry out his duties in a proper manner.

To that extent, when the member for Roe spoke about the Department of Agriculture, he was speaking the truth because it is impossible for the department to police the Act as it should be policed. I have had inquiries made not only from producers of stock but also from people who handle it in other ways and we have decided that this is the most sensible amendment to bring before Parliament. Members who have spoken against the Bill have contributed nothing towards the debate and have given no reasons why the Bill should not be passed. I believe that if it is agreed to, it will be in the interests of farmers.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	22
Noes	....	....	....	14

Majority for .... 8

Ayes.	
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Evans	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hall	Mr. Nuisen
Mr. Heal	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Sewell

(Teller.)



## Noes.

Mr. Ackland  
Mr. Bovell  
Mr. Brand  
Mr. Court  
Mr. Crommelin  
Mr. Grayden  
Mr. I. Manning

Mr. W. Manning  
Mr. Nalder  
Mr. Oldfield  
Mr. Owen  
Mr. Perkins  
Mr. Roberts  
Mr. Hutchinson  
(Teller.)

## Pairs.

Ayes.  
Mr. Kelly  
Mr. Sleeman  
Mr. Gaffy  
Mr. May

Noes.  
Mr. Mann  
Mr. Hearman  
Mr. Watts  
Mr. Cornell

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Heal in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3, Section 27 amended:

Mr. PERKINS: So far as I can see, it is not possible for us to amend these provisions even though they are the operative clauses of the Bill. All I can say is that I am opposed to this and the next clause and if this clause were defeated, I think the Minister would agree that it would be useless to go on with the Bill. Unfortunately, the volume of Hansard which contains the second reading debate, apart from the Minister's introduction, is not yet available to members and so it is impossible to check to see exactly what was said on that occasion. I will not deny that I said anything attributed to me by the Minister.

The Minister for Agriculture: I have a copy of your speech.

Mr. PERKINS: Perhaps we do say a word or two here or there which we do not mean in exactly the same context as the Minister quotes. The provisions in this measure, particularly in this clause, are impracticable and I believe that the Minister has been badly advised by his departmental officers regarding the ease of operation of these provisions. They could make it difficult to administer the Act as well as become a hardship on the producers who handle cattle only as a minor sideline.

I have no doubt that the Minister's references were mainly to the pastoral areas of the State and much of what he spoke about applies in those areas. However, although I do not have a great knowledge of the south-west portion of the State, I do know a good deal about the position in my own electorate and in the wheat and sheep areas particularly where cattle are run as a minor sideline. These proposals will be impracticable and impossible to enforce. In some cases they would cause hardship as well.

Mr. Andrew: Give us some instances of it.

Mr. PERKINS: If the hon. member will give me a chance, I will do so. If he listens he will probably become better informed than he is at present. In these areas there

may be only a milking cow on a farming property and the provisions in this Bill will force a farmer to brand a calf of a domestic cow before it reaches the age of six months. Those who know farming know how ridiculous such a proposition is. Most of those cattle have not been branded in the past, and I will admit that many of them have not been earmarked either because it is so easy to trace them. I will agree that the position is different in areas where cattle are run as a major activity.

Great hardship will be caused when some of these unbranded cattle are offered for sale and it will be absolutely impracticable for the departmental inspectors to go round the farms and examine cattle on the different properties. There will not be sufficient inspectors to police the farming areas of Western Australia. As a matter of fact, the department does not attempt to police the branding of sheep and what happens is that the inspector arrives at a saleyard while the sale is in progress and if he finds that sheep are not earmarked or branded in accordance with the Act, action is taken against the person in possession of that stock.

We do not hear much about prosecutions because more often than not the owners are told by the inspector to take their stock home immediately, which means that they cannot be offered at that sale. What will happen if an odd milking cow is brought into one of these country sales and it is not branded? Is the inspector going to say that the owner has to take that animal home without offering it at the sale?

The Minister for Agriculture: It is no use having an Act unless it is policed.

Mr. PERKINS: That will be the position if this Bill is passed.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the position you want to retain.

Mr. PERKINS: The present Act provides that they must be earmarked but in many cases they are not. I think it would be possible to enforce the earmarking of cattle, although I admit that there are not a great many which are not earmarked at present. But it is much more difficult to enforce the firebranding of cattle where only a few cattle are kept on a particular property. In most cases the owners have not much experience of firebranding nor have they the facilities for doing this. The Minister should allow some latitude. It would be more practicable if it were confined to the areas that specialise in cattle raising.

The provision relates to the branding of cattle under six months old. I cannot understand the Minister saying that no damage will result to calves of that age if they were firebranded. Surely he realises that calves three or four months old resist if they are held for firebranding and as a result damage is often done to them. Those who specialise in marketing

baby beef endeavour to see that the animal has no check at all. I have yet to be convinced that the branding of calves under six months old will not check them in their growth.

The Minister for Agriculture: They have been branded at one month without damage.

Mr. PERKINS: It is possibly easier to brand them at one month than it is when they are older. I think the member for Harvey is better informed on this aspect than the Minister. I am astounded at the advice given to the Minister by his departmental officers. This sort of thing happened once before and it was rejected, and I hope the Committee will take a realistic view and not agree to this provision.

Mr. ACKLAND: I did not like the Minister's remark that the Opposition is more concerned about opposing controls than anything else. I have no objection to controls that are desirable, necessary and warranted.

Mr. Nalder: And when they can be effective.

Mr. ACKLAND: That is so. I agree that the departmental officers do a very good job in the improvement of agriculture in this State. But at times they are off the beam.

Mr. Nalder: I do not think we can blame the departmental officers in this case. I think it is the Meat and Allied Trades Federation that is responsible.

Mr. ACKLAND: I think the federation approached the officers of the department and the latter made a recommendation to the Minister. I would like to see this clause amended. There are possibly many cases where branding is desirable and necessary, particularly in the pastoral areas where it is in the interests of the owners to brand. The Leader of the Opposition who has hundreds of cattle coming forward at Pinjarra, probably finds it necessary to brand.

Mr. Nalder: He does not market them as baby beef.

Mr. ACKLAND: That is true but there are hundreds of producers running a few cattle in conjunction with their agricultural activities. They probably use a beef bull or an Aberdeen Angus to breed baby beef and those cattle are constantly under the eye of the owner.

The Minister is misinformed when he says that the branding of cattle under six months of age does not damage the carcass and the hide. Not only does it affect the hide of the young beast but it is also very cruel and unnecessary. The Minister should report progress and have another look at this. We would all support an amendment which provided for this to be

done in the interests of those who needed it; those people who run hundreds of head of cattle and grow them to maturity.

The Minister for Agriculture: Except when they get out. If I had a small herd, I would brand every one.

Mr. ACKLAND: It is their responsibility and not that of the departmental officer. These cattle are mostly running with their mothers; they are sold long before their mothers calve a second time.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Act says they must all be branded. One or two of you people do not believe in it at all.

Mr. ACKLAND: I do, and had the Minister been paying attention he would have heard me say that it is probably necessary in certain cases.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is as important as the licence number on a car.

Mr. Nalder: That is absolute rubbish.

Mr. ACKLAND: I shall certainly vote against this clause.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am surprised at the Minister's attitude to this measure. He should have thrown the Bill out. The original Act makes it optional for a farmer to either brand or earmark. In cases where cattle are bred they are both branded or earmarked, so from that point of view the Bill achieves nothing. The farmer does it in his own interests. He cannot sell cattle without an identification mark—either a brand or an earmark.

Mr. Lawrence: Brands can be erased by a detergent.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I do not know about that but they can be erased so that they will not be recognised.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is not true either.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: The practice in the South-West is for the police constable to inspect the cattle and if he finds them without a brand or earmark he lodges a complaint and if possible the cattle are marked by the owner or he is instructed that he must not sell his cattle in future without a brand or earmark. That has been in operation for a number of years.

I strongly object to the branding of calves which are sold as baby beef. It should be left to the farmer to brand provided he does so before they reach 12 months. No good purpose can be served by firebranding a vealer before he reaches the age of six months if he is to be sold at seven or eight months. It will only cause considerable damage to the hide and the animal itself. Breeding vealers for baby beef is a highly specialised industry and every endeavour is made to ensure that there is no setback in the growth rate of the animal because if there was, the farmer could lose £1 or £2 a head. That may

mean nothing to the Minister but it does to the breeders. I am not sure that the R.S.P.C.A. will not object to it.

The Minister for Agriculture: The other day you said that most cattle owners brand their cattle and now you are crying for the assistance of the R.S.P.C.A. What is wrong with you?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: There is no purpose in doing it on so young an animal that has to be killed when it reaches seven or eight months.

The Minister for Agriculture: Didn't you hear what your own leader said about that point? He is a man with as much experience as you have.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: His is an entirely different type of business. The Minister would not understand, but let me explain for the benefit of other members. The Leader of the Opposition is breeding cattle with a view to raising them into three or four year old animals. If they are reared in a paddock, it is easy to handle them while they are young and still with the mother, and they can be branded for that purpose.

My objection is to firebranding fat little animals which are to be sold when they reach seven or eight months. It is imperative that they receive no setback at all. No good purpose would be served in firebranding them. If identification marks are required, they can be earmarked. That would not give them anywhere near such a setback or cause damage to them.

The other day the member for Blackwood mentioned the difference between branding with a figure 8 and with a figure 7. If the branding iron was too hot, the figure 8 could take a piece of skin the size of the figure clean off the animal, whereas the other figure possibly would not do so. All these aspects have to be taken into consideration. If it is necessary to brand calves, let it be done, as provided in the Bill, either at 12 months of age or at 18 months of age. That would be reasonable, because the animal would have reached the age at which it would have passed the vealer stage; and if it is on the property at 12 months, it means that it is to be grown into a big beast and it is necessary that it should be branded.

It should be left to the discretion of the farmer whether he brands before the age of six months or before the age of 12 months, or whether he brands or earmarks. Branding is for the farmer's own protection, and if he feels it necessary to have his animals firebranded at a certain age, he will certainly do it. I cannot help feeling that if the Minister were really familiar with the cattle industry, he would see the points we are trying to make.

Mr. NALDER: I support the move to take this clause out of the Bill. The Minister appears to have acted on the request of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation

and not on an approach from any farmers' organisation. Other members have ably demonstrated why young animals, and especially those to be marketed as baby beef, should not be branded. I ask the Minister: How is it going to be possible for any officer of his department to be able to tell the age of a six-months-old animal? Plenty of animals at two and three months could easily be put in a pen of animals that were nine and ten months old. On the other hand, animals that have had a rough spin in their youth could, at 12 months of age, be classed as being only three or four months old. Who is going to tell the age of an animal? We cannot open their mouths or lift up their tails to tell the age. The position is different with sheep. We can tell the age of a sheep by looking at its mouth.

The point has been made that animals stray. People who breed for baby beef marketing run their cows and calves together, and a calf will not stray from its mother except in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, a calf need not be branded for identification purposes as has been suggested by the Minister. This knocks out that argument. The marketing of baby beef is becoming a very big business in this State and in other parts of the world, and it is going to overtake the industry of carrying cattle to a mature age of two or three years. I am sure that members would prefer to buy rump steak from baby beef that is six months old than from a three or four-year-old steer.

The Minister would be well advised to withdraw the Bill or, as has been suggested, give further consideration to it. The measure is unnecessary and the reasons given for its introduction are without foundation. It will not be of any advantage to the industry. The only valid reason submitted by the Minister is that there has been a request from the Meat and Allied Trades Federation. I can see the reason of that body. Its members want to be able to identify the hides of the animals. From time to time they probably get their hides mixed and they want the animals branded so that when they go to the slaughterhouse they will not have any difficulty in recognising the hides.

Mr. O'Brien: That is very important.

Mr. NALDER: Why should not they put their own brands on? Quite a number of farmers deal in cattle by buying and reselling them. What is going to happen if an animal has been three or four times to the saleyard? A dealer might have 50 head of cattle, each with a different brand. What advantage will this measure be? How is the Minister to solve that one? An officer of the department might have to inspect a pen of 10 bullocks each with a different brand. The farmer will not be able to tell the officer where he bought

each of the beasts. I think the Minister would be well advised to withdraw the Bill, because it will not work. Not one fat lamb at Robbs Jetty for export is branded or earmarked and we put forward the same plea on behalf of those breeding baby beef.

Mr. NORTON: We have heard a lot tonight from members opposite about branding cattle, but only in respect of baby beef. As usual they can see only their side of the question. In the case of a market gardener or fruit grower, for instance, damage may be caused just as much by a straying calf as by a full-grown cow. Cows tear and do not bite their food off with a cutting action and cause great damage in market gardens.

In the last 12 months a dairyman in the metropolitan area was fined in the vicinity of £1,000 for his cattle having trespassed on a market garden. They were branded but if an unbranded animal trespassed and caused a lot of damage, the owner would not claim him. The hon. member said calves would not go far from their mothers, but who would be responsible if a calf, not branded, strayed on to a road and caused severe damage to a car.

Hon. D. Brand: Who is responsible if they are branded?

Mr. NORTON: The owner of the brand unless he can prove he sold the beast to someone else.

Mr. Ackland: The Act says the beasts must be branded.

Mr. NORTON: Members opposite say they are not complying with the Act.

Mr. PERKINS: I hope the Committee does not pay too much attention to the member for Gascoyne. It is hard to debate Clause 3 without making reference to Clause 4. We do not object to making earmarking compulsory, and it is possibly a more reliable identification of ownership than is a brand. In a dispute of ownership of sheep the earmark is nearly always taken as a truer indication of ownership than a brand.

Mr. Norton: We are talking of firebrands.

Mr. PERKINS: There can be considerable dispute about a firebrand that has not been well applied. The member for Katanning contrasted the different attitude the department is now taking in regard to baby beef as against lambs, and, as he says, lambs can be marketed without either earmarks or brands. Has the Minister consulted that part of his department which advises growers on the production of baby beef in particular? We suspect there has been no detailed discussion between him and those officers of his department or, if there has, the advice given him seems at variance with that given by the section of the department which

continually stresses the need for marketing baby beef and export lambs with as little bruising and blemish and as much bloom on the carcass as possible.

I agree with what the member for Harvey said about the danger of disturbance to young cattle if handled to the extent necessary to firebrand them. In view of the importance some of us attach to this question, I think the Minister should make a fuller statement as to the reaction of officers of the department. I have no doubt this suits the brands section of the department, but has the Minister discussed it in detail with the other officers of the department to whom I have referred.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am surprised at the attitude taken by the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. Norton: You would know why if you had had my experience.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: In the present Act it is compulsory to mark the cattle—

Mr. Norton: At 12 months.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: Yes, either by branding or earmarking.

Mr. Norton: I am supporting a younger branding.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: If the hon. member wants that, he should support the optional idea.

Mr. Lawrence: Have you ever had your ear bitten?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: That would adequately cover the requirements of the member for Gascoyne. If it remained optional either to brand or earmark, it could be done at a younger age, but my objection is to the compulsory firebranding. What will be the position of a stud stock breeder who at present earbrands only by way of a tattoo.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is there exemption in the Act for that person now?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am asking the Minister.

Mr. Perkins: I am sure the Minister does not know.

The Minister for Agriculture: I am asking before I reply to the question.

Mr. Lawrence: I cannot hear the hon. member for all the interjections.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask members to be quiet as the member for South Fremantle is getting hard of hearing lately.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: Are the stud stock breeders to be compelled to firebrand their stud cattle?

The Minister for Agriculture: I am trying to tell you that the position will not be changed. The protection they now have under the Act will still obtain.

Mr. Perkins: But it says "all" here.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: This gets worse as it goes along.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are only wasting time.

Mr. HALL: We have heard so much bull tonight that I think it is nearly boloney. I think Country Party members are fortunate that they live in such an honest country because if we had cattle rustlers here, I am sure they would be running around with branding irons day and night.

Mr. Ackland: They could still do that if they wanted to.

Mr. HALL: I wonder what would happen if wandering stock derailed a train and the authorities had to trace the brand on the stock. Who would take the blame for loss of life?

Mr. Nalder: The coroner's report would be "accidental." That has already been proved in a court of law.

Mr. HALL: I think it is necessary for them all to be branded so that they can be traced.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I move—  
That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	15
Noes	23
Majority against	8

## Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Brand	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Court	Mr. Owen
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Roberts
Mr. I. Manning	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. W. Manning	(Teller.)

## Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Brady	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hall	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May
Mr. Lawrence	(Teller.)

## Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Mann	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Watts	Mr. Gaffy
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nulsen

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. ACKLAND: If members opposite will cast their minds back to four or five years ago they will remember that those who are opposing the Bill now opposed a similar proposal on that occasion and forced the Government of that day to withdraw it. There is no irresponsibility about our attitude.

Mr. Nalder: The present Government, who were then in Opposition, supported us on that occasion.

Mr. ACKLAND: That is quite so. The Minister accuses us of not knowing anything about it but he does not know what he is talking about. There is nothing to say that a stud stock breeder will be exempt. In some cases the stud cattle are worth hundreds of thousands of pounds and their hides have to be unblemished for show appearance sake at any rate. We are not worried about the people in the North, because there it is necessary to do it.

We are asked to agree to the branding of calves that are still running with their mothers, but we consider that they should be treated on the same basis as fat lambs. The Minister would be advised to follow that principle. Members opposite should not run away with the idea that our action on this occasion is being taken merely to oppose the Government's wishes because we adopted exactly the same attitude when we were on the other side of the Chamber and the members on the Government side were sitting in opposition.

Mr. PERKINS: Surely the Minister is going to reply? I have risen to my feet because we have been caught before with the question being put. We have, from this side of the Chamber put forward arguments and the Minister has ignored them.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Your Ministers did the same.

Mr. PERKINS: It is obvious that the Minister has not studied the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to resume his seat. The member for Roe should confine his remarks to the particular clause under discussion.

Mr. PERKINS: Very well, Mr. Chairman. This clause provides that all cattle over the age of six months must be fire-branded. The Minister should inform the Chamber whether he has consulted the officer who deals with this question or is he merely relying on the opinion of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation which for some purpose of its own would like hides to have brands on them and no doubt the Department of Agriculture would find this method to be more simple.

Then again, the Minister should also reply to the questions that have been asked as to whether this clause will apply to all stud cattle and whether the cattle will have to be earmarked. The Minister surely does not expect us to accept this clause merely on his say-so. I am sure that if his colleagues were on this side of the Chamber, they would have objected to the treatment that the Minister has meted out to us tonight. Our requests are reasonable. We have heard speeches from two of the Minister's supporters that the

Bill is necessary to guard against accidents and damage to market gardens, but that is going to considerable lengths.

We are not satisfied that earmarking would be sufficient to identify cattle but I am sure growers would prefer to earmark cattle under the age of six months rather than firebrand them. It would certainly be much easier. The Minister should deal with those points. If he has not the information available, he should agree to the adjournment of the debate.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** Will the Minister be prepared to amend the clause in such a way as to exclude the provision to require baby beef cattle to be branded before they reach the age of six months?

**The Minister for Agriculture:** No.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** I am extremely disappointed at the attitude of the Minister towards this matter.

**Mr. Ackland:** He is doing a disservice to the industry.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** I am surprised that the Minister has teamed up with the Allied Meat and Trades Federation against the rest of the members of the industry.

**Mr. Ackland:** The question of vested interests, I think.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** That is not true.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** From what the Minister has said he intends to adopt a belligerent attitude in regard to this matter, but he is asking too much if he expects a man who is a specialist in producing baby beef to place an unnecessary firebrand on these calves before they reach the age of six months. It is quite unnecessary to brand them if they are earmarked before they reach the saleyard.

The Act as it stands has worked very well in the country districts. My electorate probably contains more cattle than any other area in the State. We have cattle of all ages passing through the saleyards, from baby beef to grown cattle. Without exception the grown cattle are both branded and earmarked, but vealers are not branded because it is considered to be inadvisable. I am sure the Minister has no regard for the interests of the producer. It does not mean anything to the Minister if the farmer loses £1 or £2 per head due to a setback in his animals.

**Mr. Nalder:** It will cost him more than that.

**Mr. I. W. MANNING:** If the Minister were to ask Mr. Cullity, who is one of his officers, and who is interested in beef cattle experiments at the Wokalup research station, I am sure he would find that he would support my argument. They are carrying out considerable research into the growth weight of animals and perhaps

the Minister might ask them to undertake some research into the setback which animals might suffer through being firebranded.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** I was looking at the introduction of an amendment to the Brands Act dated the 4th November, 1952. I said during the second reading debate that I believe in the branding of stock and gave reasons why. I notice that in 1952 when the then Minister for Lands introduced the Bill he said—

The Farmers' Union of Western Australia requested that the Act be amended to make it compulsory for cattle to be branded before they attained the age of 12 months. However, the Pastoralists' Association has requested that the present age of 18 months be retained in the pastoral area. Effect is given to both these requests in the Bill.

Since then there has been a marked increase in the breeding of baby beef and I would suggest that the Minister consult his advisers and see if that class of stock cannot be exempted particularly in view of the difficulties and the arguments put forward tonight. They have impressed me, and the Minister should report progress.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** If necessary, I would rather have amendments moved in the Legislative Council. I intend to have another look at it.

**Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY:** I do not think the Minister would lose much time if he consulted his officers.

**Mr. PERKINS:** The Minister should not consider this a party matter. In that connection, I would like to read what the present Minister for Works had to say at page 2077 of Hansard for the year 1952. It was as follows:—

The Minister will recall that when I spoke on the second reading, I said I was not happy about this provision in the Bill, and now that I have heard from the members for Roe and Kimberley I am satisfied that I had good grounds for my remarks.

Subsequent to that the Minister gave up his opposition to the amendment and that is why the Act appears as it does today. I hope the Minister will take the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and seek further information from his officers.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I think the Minister lessens the value of this Chamber by not speaking to the remarks made on this measure.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** I do not believe in tedious repetition.

**Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON:** I do not think there has been any tedious repetition.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member should stick to the clause. I have already asked the member for Roe to do so and the same applies to the hon. member.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The Minister should make some reply to this debate. We do not know where we are. The Minister says we are only repeating ourselves, but if we are it is in the interests of sound commonsense. Instead of sitting on his broad seat, the Minister should reply to these questions that have been asked.

Mr. NALDER: It is evident that the Minister does not appreciate the position nor does he know what we are talking about. He should report progress and seek the advice of his officers. The Minister is being most unreasonable; he will give us no satisfaction, nor will he answer the questions that have been asked. Instead of sitting down and saying nothing, he should agree to progress being reported.

Mr. ACKLAND: I move—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	....	....	14
Noes	....	....	22
Majority against			8

#### Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. W. Manning
Mr. Bovell	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Court	Mr. Owen
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Roberts
Mr. I. Manning	Mr. Hutchinson

(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hall	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. May

(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Mann	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Watts	Mr. Gaffy
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Oldfield	Mr. Lapham

Motion thus negatived.

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

Ayes	....	....	22
Noes	....	....	14
Majority for			8

#### Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hall	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. May

(Teller.)

#### Noes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. W. Manning
Mr. Bovell	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Court	Mr. Owen
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Roberts
Mr. I. Manning	Mr. Hutchinson

(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Mann
Mr. Sleeman	Mr. Hearman
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. Watts
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Cornell
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Oldfield

Clause thus passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### BILL—RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

#### Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st November.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [12.30 a.m.]: I would like to express my appreciation of the Premier's action in allowing me to continue the debate at this late hour. As members know, I am journeying to the Warburton Ranges shortly and the Premier has courteously allowed me to make my second reading speech on this Bill.

A recent extension of the activities of some of the Associated Banks throughout Australia has been to encourage savings bank business, and a statutory authority for this has been given by the Commonwealth Parliament. I think at this stage it would be appropriate for me to read the charter under which these banks operate. The banks concerned are the Australia and New Zealand Bank, the Bank of New South Wales and the Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney. They are the three banks covered by the charter given by the Commonwealth Parliament which permits them to engage in savings bank business.

The Premier: Would the hon. member like leave to continue his remarks at the next sitting?

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: If you bring it on first thing tomorrow.

Mr. BOVELL: If I can speak later today, it will be all right. The charter reads as follows:—

Commonwealth of Australia.

Banking Act, 1945-1953.

Authority to Carry On Banking Business.

In pursuance of section eight of the Banking Act, 1945-1953, I, Sir William Joseph Slim, the Governor General in and over the Commonwealth of Australia, acting on the advice of the Federal Executive, hereby grant to

(in this

Authority referred to as "the Savings

Bank") an authority to carry on banking business in Australia, subject to the following conditions:—

1. The Savings Bank shall not, in the course of that business, receive a deposit from a company or other body engaged in or formed for the purpose of trading or acquiring pecuniary profit.

2. The Savings Bank shall not, in the course of that business, permit a cheque to be drawn on an account maintained with the Savings Bank, not being an account maintained by a local authority, friendly society, co-operative society or any other society, body or club.

3. The Savings Bank shall not, in the course of that business, place money on deposit in Australia (whether fixed or current account) with a Bank other than a bank specified in Part I of the First Schedule of the Banking Act, 1945-1953, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia or the Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia.

4. The Savings Bank shall at all times maintain in investments of the following kinds an amount which, together with cash on hand in Australia and moneys on deposit in Australia with Banks, is not less than the amount on deposit in Australia with the Savings Banks:—

- (a) securities issued by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, including Commonwealth Treasury Bills;
- (b) securities issued by the Government of a State;
- (c) securities issued or guaranteed by an authority constituted under an Act or a State Act;
- (d) loans to building societies the repayment of which is guaranteed by the Commonwealth or a State; and
- (e) loans for housing or other purposes on the security of land in Australia.

5. The Savings Bank shall at all times maintain in investments of the following kinds an amount which, together with cash on hand in Australia and moneys on deposit with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, is not less than seventy per centum of the amount on deposit in Australia with the Savings Banks:—

- (a) securities issued by the Government of the Commonwealth, including Commonwealth Treasury Bills;
- (b) securities issued by the Government of a State; and
- (c) securities issued or guaranteed by an authority constituted by or under an Act or State Act.

6. The Savings Banks shall at all times maintain in investment in Commonwealth Treasury Bills an amount which together with moneys on deposit with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, is not less than ten per centum of the amount on deposit in Australia with the Savings Bank.

7. For the purpose of these conditions, the amount on deposit in Australia with the Savings Bank includes interest credited to the accounts of depositors.

That authority is signed by His Excellency the Governor General and the Federal Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden. I have read that charter in order to have it included in Hansard to give members an opportunity of seeing the conditions under which the savings banks operate by authority from the Commonwealth Parliament.

The Rural & Industries Bank of Western Australia has now entered the field of savings bank business and no objection can be raised to this sphere of activity by that institution provided, of course, fair competition methods are adopted with the other savings bank organisations in the State. As the authority under which the associated banks are permitted to operate a savings bank business is of Commonwealth origin, legislation having similar effect should only be approved by the Parliament of Western Australia in relation to savings bank activities by the Rural & Industries Bank. The Bill proposes to establish a savings bank division of the rural department of the Rural & Industries Bank and confers powers on the commissioners of the bank to carry on within the rural department the business of banking generally in all forms recognised by law and without limiting the generality of that power.

I would like the Minister in reply to give some clarification of the portion of the Bill regarding the powers of the savings bank which we know is already operating under authority from His Excellency the Governor. I desire, Mr. Speaker, to give some indication of amendments which will be moved in relation to the Bill now before this Chamber. The portion of the Bill dealing with the power of the commissioners to operate trustee accounts and so on should be transferred to the Trustee Act in order that all institutions engaged in savings bank business can be given the opportunity of a similar privilege in Western Australia. When the Bill goes into Committee, I propose to move in that direction. I think the Minister will agree that it is necessary to give all savings bank institutions in this State equal opportunity of engaging in the business.

The Minister for Lands: You will put all your amendments on the notice paper?

Mr. BOVELL: I may say in reply to that interjection that I have already given the Clerk of the House the amendment



which I propose. Another amendment which I desire to fore-shadow is in regard to where the commissioners direct that a savings bank account should be closed. The Bill says notice of that direction shall be sent to the depositor concerned. I think, in fairness to the depositor, that notice should be in writing and I propose to seek an amendment in that direction.

The matter of permitting clients of the Rural & Industries Bank's savings bank department to operate by cheque at the will of the commissioners should, I think, be limited as it is in the Commonwealth Act relating to savings banks. Here I desire to foreshadow an amendment restricting the use of cheques with savings bank accounts. The general banking department of the Rural & Industries Bank gives its clients an opportunity to engage in cheque accounts, and I do not think the authority enabling the savings bank to engage in full-scale operation by cheque account should be countenanced. I hope the Minister will agree to the restriction of this activity in view of the fact that the general banking section of the bank makes adequate provision for that facility.

In relation to the distribution of the funds of the bank for advance purposes, I feel that the clause of the Bill which allows the commissioners to utilise funds in any other prescribed manner, without limiting that manner, is a dangerous provision. It certainly does not conform to the charter which other savings banks enjoy. Furthermore, the Bill, if passed, will enable the commissioners at their discretion to lend moneys in deposit in the savings bank division to a person or body for the purchase or erection of a dwelling, or for any other purpose approved by them against such security as they think fit. That, I feel, is another dangerous provision and I ask the Minister to give consideration to its deletion.

The Minister for Lands: Why is it dangerous?

Mr. BOVELL: Because, in my opinion, authority for the commissioners to make advances in this direction is given elsewhere in the Bill.

The Minister for Lands: No, it is not.

Mr. BOVELL: I feel that this portion is not specific enough and it leaves too much to the discretion of the commissioners. I consider therefore, that their jurisdiction in this direction should be curtailed. I do not oppose the establishment of a savings bank department of the Rural & Industries Bank. I read the Minister's speech in regard to the deposits which, I understand, are now approximately £1,250,000. This represents a very creditable performance by the commissioners and officers of the bank and I hope that the savings bank business of the Rural & Industries Bank will continue to grow. I do not know that there is anything further that I desire to say in connection with the establishment of a savings

bank department but there are other features of the Bill which I wish briefly to comment upon.

Another amendment in the measure raises the 25-year limit on loans at the commissioner's discretion. From the Minister's speech, I understand it is necessary to provide a longer term for the repayment of loans, mainly to primary producers and especially to those engaged in the dairying industry. General banking practice is that advances are restricted to being repayable on demand, but in view of the special nature of the proposed advances to assist dairy farmers—in particular to develop their holdings—I certainly support the proposal.

The Bill also seeks to empower the commissioners to grant free-of-interest loans subject to the approval of the Minister and the consent of the Governor. This, of course, could prove a danger to the financial stability of the bank and I desire the Minister, when replying, to clarify the position and to assure us that the depositors' funds will not be utilised for this purpose. I have no objection to the Government making funds available through the Rural & Industries Bank in this way, but I do not think it advisable to jeopardise the depositors' funds by making free-of-interest loans.

I would, therefore, like the Minister to say where these funds are to come from—whether depositors' funds are to be utilised or whether the Government will provide funds through the Treasury, for specific purposes, for free-of-interest loans. We may have the position that Government policy includes free-of-interest loans for housing schemes and financial assistance to primary and secondary ventures of financial instability, and this may cause some financial instability to the bank, which is not desirable.

In Western Australia we have a bank of our own established, and we can only hope that it will progress on the lines of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. I have no hesitation in saying that we should encourage the growth of our own bank. I do not want to have the depositors' funds utilised for the purpose of implementing some Government-policy schemes and thus jeopardising, perhaps, the successful functioning of the bank.

Mr. Jamieson: Is not this a socialistic bank?

The Minister for Education: You are adopting a different policy from that on the State Government Insurance Office Bill; a bit of a somersault.

Mr. BOVELL: A further provision in the Bill is in connection with the registering of second mortgages by the Rural & Industries Bank to permit of advances under the Government's scheme to assist dairy farmers. If I have read the Bill correctly, I understand that instead of the associated bank having to discharge its first mortgage and the Rural & Industries

Bank having to register the first mortgage and then the former first mortgage of the associated bank being registered as a second mortgage, the position will be, to facilitate the making of these advances and to save expenditure and inconvenience to the settler as well as to the institutions, that the Rural & Industries Bank will register a second mortgage but by certain writings the advances made under that second mortgage will take priority over the first mortgage already in existence.

I do not know that at this late hour I can say anything further on the Bill. I have foreshadowed some amendments to which I hope members will agree and, as already indicated, notice of them has been handed to the Clerk of the House and they should appear on Thursday's notice paper. I support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. Court, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 12.51 a.m.  
(Wednesday.)*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, 7th November, 1956.

### CONTENTS.

	Page
Auditor General's report .....	1980
Questions : Health, x-ray clinic visit to South-West Province .....	1980
"Rock Around the Clock," behaviour of teenagers .....	1980
Betting, bookmakers' fees .....	1980
Hospitals, Albany buildings .....	1981
Rest centres for the aged, Government grants .....	1981
Railways, standardisation of gauges .....	1981
Education, free school books .....	1982
Phosphatic rock, deposits .....	1982
Bills : Supply (No. 2), £18,500,000, 2r. ....	1982
State Trading Concerns Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1985
Land Act Amendment (No. 1), 1r. ....	1986
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1986
Factories and Shops Act Amendment (No. 1), 2r. ....	1986
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 3), 2r. ....	1988
Brands Act Amendment (No. 2), 1r. ....	1989
Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Limited) Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1989
Friendly Societies Act Amendment, 2r., Com. recom., reports. ....	1990
Profiteering and Unfair Trading Prevention, recom. ....	1998
Adjournment, special .....	1994

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

### AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

The PRESIDENT: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1956. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

### QUESTIONS.

#### HEALTH.

*X-ray Clinic Visit to South-West Province.*

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON asked the Chief Secretary:

What towns or districts ultimately to be visited in the South-West Province by the mobile chest x-ray clinic, have not yet been visited, or completed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Serpentine-Jarrahdale.  
Murray.  
Drakesbrook.  
Dardanup.  
Preston.  
Augusta-Margaret River.  
Nannup.  
Balingup.  
Upper Blackwood.

### "ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK."

*Behaviour of Teenagers.*

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON (for Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham) asked the Chief Secretary:

Considering the reports of riotous behaviour of teenagers in other States and countries, following the screening of the film "Rock Around the Clock," and the orderly behaviour of our own teenagers in Western Australia, can the Minister advise the House if the one isolated incident of exhibitionism in Perth was a spontaneous and uninspired outburst, or is there reason to believe that it was the result of deliberate incitement by commercial agents to create the scene?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

There is no information that this incident was anything but a spontaneous outburst.

### BETTING.

*Bookmakers' Fees.*

Hon. L. C. DIVER asked the Chief Secretary:

Having regard to the Treasurer's statements of Tuesday the 9th, and Thursday, the 18th October, as to bookmakers' licence fees—

- (1) Has the Betting Control Board decided what scale of fees will in future be charged off-course bookmakers?
- (2) If the answer is in the affirmative, what is the proposed scale of fees?