

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause (2) the word "such" be struck out and after the word "liability" in the same line the words "in regard to such share" be inserted.

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

Clauses 427 to 438, First Schedule to Thirteenth Schedule—agreed to.

Progress reported.

MOTION—TRAFFIC.

As to Co-ordination of Road Services.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 27th January of the debate on the following motion by Mr. Cross:—

That in the opinion of this House, in view of the serious position facing passenger transport authorities, due to the war, the Government should take immediate steps to set up a special committee to re-organise, co-ordinate, regulate and direct all passenger transport routes, companies and vehicles in the Greater Metropolitan Area in the best public interests for the duration of the war and six months thereafter.

On motion by Mr. Cross, Order of the Day discharged.

BILL—EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Order Discharged.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 8th December of the debate on the second reading.

On motion by the Premier, Order of the Day discharged.

House adjourned at 5.15 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 24th February, 1943.

	PAGE
Leave of absence	2512
Motion: Youthful delinquents, detention conditions, to Inquire by Select Committee	2512
Bills: Coal Mine Workers (Pensions), 2R.	2517
Vermin Act Amendment, Assembly's Message	2531
Public Authorities (Retirement of Members), 2R.	2531
Adjournment, special	2532

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, leave of absence for twelve consecutive sittings granted to Hon. H. V. Piesse (South-East) on the ground of ill-health.

MOTION—YOUTHFUL DELINQUENTS, DETENTION CONDITIONS.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [2.19]:

I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon—

- what provision should be made by the State for the care and reform of youthful delinquents;
- the conditions of Barton's Mill prison as a place of detention for male youthful delinquents, and of York for females, and whether improvements can be effected at such places for such purposes; and
- the results that were achieved by the investigation which on or about the 23rd June, 1937 (according to a statement of the Minister controlling the Child Welfare Department) had been in progress for 12 months prior to a deputation to that Minister at that time.

I think it only right, if you will permit me, Mr. President, as several members are aware of the fact that it was my intention to move the adjournment of the House last Tuesday, to explain that owing to a little misunderstanding I did not proceed with that motion. On reconsideration, I decided to bring forward the motion standing in my name today. Several months ago, feeling alarmed at the rumours I have heard about the Barton's Mill prison, I took the opportunity, in company with the member for the district, to visit the prison and there saw much that called for commendation.

Remembering the many dreadful reports that had been spread about the conditions obtaining at the prison at Barton's Mill, and feeling pleased with what I had observed, I thought it my duty to make known to the public my impressions. I therefore wrote to the editor of "The West Australian" a letter which was published with the exception of one paragraph in which I had suggested that the magistrate of the Children's Court, who had uttered some severe strictures on the Barton's Mill institution and the conditions obtaining there, should endeavour to take advantage of an opportunity to inspect the prison himself for the purpose of ascertaining the many difficulties

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

that have been overcome and the splendid chance that the men who had slipped and been sent there, had of making a come-back and rehabilitating themselves so that they could, when they had served their punishment, again take their places in the public life of the State. I have never visited the gaol of Fremantle, but I have heard enough about it to know that it was a prison in every sense of the word. At Barton's Mill men certainly are subject to detention while serving sentences, but I feel I need not take up the time of members in making a comparison between the two institutions. As I say, I visited the Barton's Mill prison several months ago and am still an admirer of the good work done there. I care not by whom it is performed.

I understand the Chief Secretary is the Minister controlling gaols and therefore some credit is due to him for what has been done, as well as to the Controller-General of Prisons and his staff. I am ready to give him credit for all that has been done. Not having heard so very much since my visit of the horrible stories that were being circulated about Barton's Mill, I thought things were settling down and that conditions were becoming more stable and decent. To my surprise, however, I read in "The Daily News" of the 13th February, not one of the numerous letters written to the paper by persons deciding to remain anonymous, but an editorial, which concluded with the following sentence:—

In this respect the prison conditions are a step back to the barbarity of something like a century ago. So far from being a reformatory agency Barton's Mill gaol is a likely source of further corruption. It is a reproach to the State and a disgrace to its Government that youthful delinquents have sometimes to be sent to such a place.

I do not think I should be ashamed to say so, but I went and had a talk with the editor of "The Daily News." I told him that I had been to Barton's Mill and reminded him of the letter I had written to "The West Australian." I asked him if he had anything substantial on which to base an article of that description. He knew who I was, and I have not asked his permission to make these remarks, but I think I am entitled to do so. He assured me that he had. I believe him to be an honourable man. He is a man who occupies positions outside of his newspaper activities which entitle him to be treated as an honourable man, so I considered

it my duty to take this matter up again, as I was on the eve of doing several months ago.

Therefore, I gave notice that I would move the adjournment of the House. But, as I have said, owing to a slight misunderstanding I withdrew that notice, and on giving the matter further thought, and solely with a view to ascertaining the real position and getting to the bottom of the trouble, I have now moved for a Select Committee. My motion covers not only the conditions obtaining at Barton's Mill, but it also deals with another matter that has, for years past, been the cause of much publicity. Many requests, both public and private, have been made to have the subject dealt with. I refer to the question of youthful delinquency. I have here a report published in "The West Australian" of the 24th June, 1937, regarding a deputation to the Minister controlling the Child Welfare Department—

The deputation was introduced by Mr. E. Needham, M.L.A., who stressed the need for the re-establishment of the psychological clinic, with a trained psychologist in charge. The State had suffered when the previous clinic had been discontinued during the depression. It was a "penny-wise and pound foolish policy."

Mrs. M. B. Vallance mentioned that, at present, there were only two probation officers in the metropolitan area. There was a Children's Court, but no women were on the Bench, and there was no Government institution to which boys and girls could be sent other than Fremantle gaol. Such a state of affairs needed immediate action. "We are, at present, handling our children as a surgeon would do a major operation with a kit of carpenter's tools," Mrs. Vallance concluded.

Dr. M. K. Moss, who, with Dr. R. G. Williams, represented the Western Australian branch of the British Medical Association, said that, as a visitor to the Claremont Hospital for the Insane, he had found that two children had been sent there because there was no other place for them to go. "To my horror," Dr. Moss said, "I found that they had been sent to this place after they had escaped from Seaforth for want of a better place . . ."

The report continues—

Dr. Williams also said that a full inquiry as to the best methods by a qualified commissioner should be undertaken.

The Rev. Dr. McMahon said that he wished to dissociate himself from the suggestion regarding Government institutions. It was doubtful whether these were for the best and, in other parts of the world which he had visited investigating child welfare, he had found that the best were not under Government control . . .

Mr. M. F. Darcy, representing the State School Teachers' Union, urged the reappointment of a psychological officer and clinic.

The Rev. K. D. Andrews-Baxter considered that the causes of juvenile delinquency should be examined.

Further on in the report Mrs. B. M. Rischbieth, a lady well known in this city, also had a word to say to the Minister, and his reply was—

The fact that there is a difference of opinion even among members of this deputation shows the difficulty of the problem. We will have to proceed carefully and, in fact, are proceeding carefully. But we are getting somewhere. Since the original scheme was submitted 12 months ago, we have done much work and given a great deal of time to the matter, and we are slowly and surely reaching the stage when definite proposals will be ready for the consideration of Cabinet. I hope that this day will not be far distant.

I am of the opinion that the Chief Secretary will not mind my telling the House that last Tuesday morning I had an interview with him about this motion. During the course of his very interesting talk with me about Barton's Mill, he asked me to remember that there was a war on, and that the department's activities and operations at Barton's Mill had been, as is reasonable to suppose, greatly hampered, retarded and interfered with because of the manpower problem. But this deputation to Mr. Hawke about youthful delinquency was in 1937, two years before the outbreak of war. Yet I understand, from advertisements in the Press, that a public meeting is to be held in this city to-night to deal, among other matters, with the question of youthful delinquency, and the failure of the Government adequately to cope with that very important matter.

To my surprise, months after I thought that some action should have been taken to clear the State's name from the dreadful statements that appeared in the Press about the conditions at Barton's Mill, and about which, so far as I know, no notice was taken, I received a letter dated the 9th February from the Geraldton Municipal Council asking me to take some action to bring before the Government the necessity of inducing it to do something in connection with juvenile delinquency. Both in Parliament and outside the question is frequently asked: What are members doing? There are many things with which we have nothing to do, and we have to tell the people so. The public complain about military allotments, pensions, acreage restrictions, the price of wheat and the price of wool, etc. What can a State member say to people making complaints of

that sort? He might say, "This is a matter over which the State Parliament has no control"; but he can also say, "But I will make representations to your Federal member." In matters of this sort, however, we have no such excuse. I am, therefore, bringing the subject before members in order that they may have an opportunity of expressing themselves. If any member is not interested, I am not going to castigate him. I can only do what I think is my duty as a member of the State Parliament. This may not have a very great effect on the Central Province. I have not been directly accused of poking my nose into something that has nothing to do with me. This is something which affects the honour of the State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have every right to bring it forward.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Thank you! I am not bringing this matter forward in a spirit of carping criticism. I repeat that I fully appreciate the difficulties that had to be overcome and the state of affairs that, so far as I can see, exists at Barton's Mill today. Yet I have the assurance of the gentleman who edits "The Daily News" and who wrote that editorial that he had a sworn declaration in his safe to the effect I have indicated, and it is my duty to try to get this matter inquired into. I am sorry to have to refer to utterances that have fallen from a magistrate, even though he be the magistrate of the Children's Court. It must be common knowledge that on numerous occasions he has complained of the conditions existing at Barton's Mill. Whether he is in a position to know the exact state of affairs prevailing there, I cannot say, but I understood that he had never visited Barton's Mill. Maybe it was not necessary for him to do so, but in my letter I urged him to pay a visit and find out something more about the place.

The Chief Secretary: He did go.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am glad to hear it. There is another piece of information I got from a reliable though not official source, and, knowing human nature as we do, it is not to be wondered at. Many of the difficulties encountered at Barton's Mill have come from a most unexpected quarter, namely, from the staff. It is only right that I should explain this. A number of men who had for years been living in and around Fremantle were suddenly called upon to move into the bush at Barton's Mill. I am not going to say that the department did not

endeavour to do its best for those men and their families, but it is only natural that they should feel a certain amount of reluctance to, and disapproval of, such a sudden change. Those who read the reference in "The West Australian" yesterday will realise that this action was forced on the department. I believe that 14 days' notice was given to vacate the Fremantle gaol, and so a hurried decision had to be made. It is only reasonable to believe that considerable inconvenience was experienced by the male members of the staff, their wives and families. Inquiry along those lines might shed some light on the matter with a view to redressing grievances that still exist.

Let me refer to one small matter that came under my notice. I believe that the department is anxious to meet the wishes and consider the comfort of its employees, but the school for the children of the staff is altogether too close to the compound. This, admittedly, is only a small matter, but we should try to put ourselves in the other fellow's place. It may be that the present school is merely a temporary building and that, when a permanent structure is erected, it will be located on a more suitable site. At any rate, the school should be placed as far as possible from the compound, bearing in mind that the children have to go through the bush to get to the school.

Since I have been a member of this House, I have not sought, and never will seek, the cover of Parliamentary privilege for saying something that I would not be prepared to say outside. Whatever the fate of my motion may be does not matter so long as members are given an opportunity to express an opinion whether they favour an inquiry or not. Are they in favour of ascertaining what has been done by the Minister controlling the Child Welfare Department since he stated, in 1937, that slowly but surely the department was making headway in this matter? As I have pointed out, here in 1943 we find that the people are still crying out about the conditions existing at Barton's Mill. I appreciate the difficulties and make allowance for any Government during the time of war but, as the newspaper report states, the deputation waited on the Minister in 1937, and the people of the State have a right to know exactly what has been done regarding child delinquency, what progress has been made since the deputation waited on the Minister and—probably this is the most important phase of all—what the de-

partment has in mind in connection with Barton's Mill.

Will members kindly bear in mind that this transfer was a quick decision? The department had 14 days in which to find new quarters for the prisoners at Fremantle. I have no intention of criticising the department. Everything considered, Barton's Mill may be the very best site available. Doubtless the Chief Secretary will deal with that aspect; he must be given credit for what has been done under very great difficulties. But is it not just possible that Barton's Mill is not the best site available? A hurried decision had to be made, and when an institution of this sort is being established, a long view has to be taken of all the circumstances. Perhaps a Select Committee might be able to determine whether the site at Barton's Mill is the best possible, all things being considered. I cannot talk about Barton's Mill without referring to child delinquency, and I cannot talk about child delinquency without referring to Barton's Mill, because the two things are inseparably associated in view of the repeated utterances by the magistrate of the Children's Court. This should be sufficient to convince members of the need for an inquiry. The magistrate of the Children's Court is a man who was specially appointed to that position by the present Government. If the excuse is that we have not the money, that will not hold good with me. Amongst the many important things we have to do there is nothing more important than the care of our young people. Was it Solomon who said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom?" Mr. Schroeder may or may not be a trained psychologist. I admire him for the leniency of his views, and for trying to lead the young into the way they should go, but I know that he has frequently said, when half a dozen juveniles have come before him, "I am sorry, boys, but I have to send you to Barton's Mill. I do not like sending you there, but I have no other alternative."

There are boys and boys! Some of those who come before Mr. Schroeder at the Children's Court do not want any fatherly or grandfatherly advice. This is the sort of thing that happens. Going out in the bus one youthful delinquent took upon himself to represent the magistrate, and looking around with a fatherly and reproving eye said to the rest of them, "I do not like send-

ing you boys to Barton's Mill," and immediately loud laughter arose from the others. I cannot repeat a message that was sent by another youthful delinquent to Mr. Schroeder who had extended mercy to that boy, because indecent words were used. Some of us were accused a few months ago by my honourable friend on my left when he said, "I did not think there were so many sadistic members in the House."

Some of this psychology business makes me impatient. In the Parliamentary Library there is a book written by a master of arts of this city dealing with psychology. It may be impertinent on my part to criticise a master of arts, but I consider that book contains some of the greatest rot I have ever read. I do not say there is nothing in psychology. The headmaster of the High School at Geraldton has consistently talked to the children about the sub-conscious mind. I do not say there is not something in that thought, either, but I contend that the psychology stunt requires to be mixed up with a good deal of commonsense. I ask the Chief Secretary to believe me—if he does not, it does not matter—when I say I am not animated by any carping criticism in moving this motion. I want to do something for the boys and girls and the older men. This is a serious subject. I know of men in Geraldton who have led decent and honourable lives and have occupied positions of trust. They are men of between 40 and 50 years of age, but for some reason I cannot fathom they have fallen by the wayside. In the days when I was entrusted with hundreds of thousands of pounds of public money my one worry was to give a satisfactory account of it. We had a daily balance. There is nothing like discipline for people. I am afraid that the present lack of discipline will pile up a lot of trouble for us. We must have it. This sloppy stuff—I do not like the word—has to be mixed up a bit with sound commonsense.

We know there are men who have succumbed to temptation notwithstanding that they were occupying positions of trust. We read about such cases in the paper. People of that type should be put in a place like Barton's Mill rather than in a dungeon at Fremantle. All credit is due to the Chief Secretary and his department. We know that notice was given to the department to get out. I have already referred to that. Some people have greatness forced upon

them. In this case the Chief Secretary was forced to vacate. We have a Minister controlling the department, and an officer holding the position of Controller-General of Prisons. The officer in question is a very fine public servant, who has many years of good, faithful and efficient service to his credit. Owing to this regrettable war his services have been availed of in another position. Another officer was called in to act as Assistant Controller-General of Prisons. I believe he, too, is a very efficient officer. Would either of these officials claim to have a great knowledge of prison reform? The Controller-General, who occupied the position for some years, may have made a study of the question, but the other officer, although efficient in his own line, is only acting in his present position. I understand from a reliable source that that gentleman, as head of the Prisons Department, had a lot to do with the laying down of the foundations of Barton's Mill in consultation with the Ministerial head. All these things have to be considered and gone into. Witnesses could be called before the committee who would know something about these questions.

My idea in moving the motion is to open up the whole thing and get information as to what has been done in connection with child delinquency. I have been assured by persons that they would attend before the committee, and would be able to prove some astounding incidents. I say, without disparaging any member of this House, that there may be some who have made a private study of juvenile delinquency and prison reform, but I do not know of them. I thought at first of endeavouring to have some one appointed from the Eastern States, someone who is looked upon as an authority on these questions, but I do not know of anyone over there. I then thought that as a start we could open up the question by making inquiries locally per medium of a Select Committee. Somewhere about the time of the deputation in 1937 I was travelling to Perth by train in company with a Roman Catholic priest and a stipendiary magistrate. The subject of child delinquency cropped up. I asked my fellow-travellers, both of whom had had considerable experience in dealing with children, if they could give me any reason for the sudden wave of youthful delinquency that was then sweeping over the State. The magistrate was a Scot and refused to talk. The priest was

Irish and freely gave his opinion. I do not say there was anything in the opinion but I will pass it on.

In this Chamber we have as Chief Secretary a gentleman who is Ministerial head of both the Education and the Gaols Departments. The explanation given by the priest for the wave of youthful delinquency was that our education system was all too incomplete, that it did not provide for the religious instruction of the children, whereas the schools conducted by the Roman Catholic Church made such provision. I wonder whether there is anything in that statement. I know that provision is made for religious instruction in Government schools. Provision is made for many things there, but are those things availed of? The Chief Secretary may say, "That is not our affair." Ministers of religion have the right of access to schools and the right to teach the children of their denominations the principles of the particular faith concerned. If they do not avail themselves of that opportunity the department may say that is not its fault. That is all right so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. I repeat what Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The Church of England teaches the children their duty towards God and their duty towards their neighbour. The former begins, "My duty towards God is to believe in Him and to fear Him." I know we are continually crowding the curriculum and that teachers ask, "How much more matter must we put into it?" We have large classes which teachers cannot hope to deal with. It must be generally agreed that when we have children of tender years and impressionable natures we should do all we can to teach them not only to read and write and do a little arithmetic, but assist them to lay the foundations for their character which will stand them in good stead throughout their lives.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—COAL MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [2.59]: I support the Bill and hope to be able to give good sound reasons for so doing. Members may think that nothing I can say will cause

them to change their minds, but I may be able quite logically to prove that they have made up their minds on wrong premises. I find that many mis-statements have been made and I think that when I correct some members, they will discover reasons for supporting this measure. Let us appreciate exactly what the Bill means. Some members have said they are inclined to support the principle of pensions for all workers, but that they take exception to piecemeal legislation. I want members to note that this is a special industry. There is no other industry operating in such special circumstances. The coalmines were given away in 1896 or 1897. Companies were formed then for the definite purpose of exploiting our national wealth. Note that point: They were formed to exploit our national wealth. To do it they are exploiting also our manhood. There is no doubt about that. We cannot get away from those two points. They take what Nature has given us and exploit it. They were given leases for 21 years on certain conditions. One of those conditions was that they should pay 6d. per acre per year. That is a very small amount. It is a mere pittance not worth mentioning.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Pay to whom?

Hon. T. MOORE: To the Crown. That is the way in which we are selling our birthright. We are also getting 3d. per ton for our national wealth, coal. Those are the two things the company had to do. They had to pay 6d. per acre, which is a mere bagatelle, and 3d. per ton for the first ten years. Mark that: For the first ten years! Mining companies were formed to carry out the exploitation of our natural resources.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Are the shareholders making big dividends?

Hon. T. MOORE: I hope the hon. member will allow me to state my case. He can take part in the debate himself later. There are a lot of Opposition members in this Chamber and they should give those few who represent the Government a chance to make speeches. I have said what the companies were allowed to do. It was a very fine gift. We have done similar things for other companies in days gone by in order to get this country opened up. That was the idea behind it: To open up the country, and with that in view we offered companies very fine conditions. Let us see what happened in connection with the operations of these companies. They opened up the mines on the understanding that at the end of ten years they

were to be charged not 3d. but 6d. per ton. They have never been charged 6d. and they have been operating for 40 years. During that time they have been charged 3d. per ton. Was not that fairly handsome for the companies? They have never been asked to pay more than 3d. Therefore the natural wealth of this country that was considered worth 6d. a ton when the mines were opened up has been given away for over 30 years for 3d. a ton, which is very cheap. I will be told that the reason is that if they had paid the 6d. they would have passed it on to the railways and hence on to the general public. They would have got out of it, anyway!

By and large, I want hon. members to realise we have given this coal away to these companies over the years at 3d. a ton and they have made handsome profits. I do not care what anybody says about what the shareholders have got. I know some of them and I know that they have lived as wealthy men for years. I will not name them. I have some friends amongst them and they are very fine people against whom I have nothing to say. There was a member of this House whom we all respected very much and who was one of the great men in the Collie coalmining industry in the past. He was very dear to us all. I find no fault in that regard. But let us see what happened. Is it not a fair thing, seeing that this country has done so much for the companies, that they should do something for the men they exploited? That is the point I want to make. This industry was started and our young manhood was taken and put in the mines, into a groove. It was erroneously stated by some members that these men do not want to get out of the groove; that because conditions are so good, they want to remain. I have been in and around the coalmines, although I was never below ground because I would not go there to work.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You do not know what you missed!

Hon. T. MOORE: I know what I missed; that is why I would not go. I know what has happened. I know that in days gone by men like myself went underground and after working there for a certain number of years were unable to work above ground. That is the point to be remembered. These men cannot work in the sunlight and heat and must remain in the industry. The same exploitation has taken place in relation to

the goldmining industry, but at present I am dealing with coalmining. The cream of our young manhood in the South-West—this is known to Mr. Mann, Mr. Tuckey and Mr. Craig—went to the mines and remained there for years. If it is fair to give a company the right to exploit our national heritage, it is only fair to ask the company to look after the men who do the work. These men reach the age when they are no longer able to work.

Is there any member in this House who would quibble over the claim I make? I do not think it possible for any one with any humane strain, with any of the milk of human kindness, to say that the coalminers should be denied the right to a pension when they reach the age of 60 years. What happens to men at that age? Every member has met men of 60. From 45 onwards men become slower at the work and there are plenty of others available. When the time comes the older man is thrown on the scrap heap; he is finished! The companies have made profits over the years and have distributed the money to the shareholders, but workers are scrapped at the age of 60. What happens is that these men go back on the State, on the Child Welfare Department. That is where they go.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: How many?

Hon. T. MOORE: The hon. member is starting to butt in again. He cannot keep quiet! He cannot allow a statement to be made that might ruin his case, so he starts to butt in. In the years during which the industry has been in existence in this country great numbers of men have been put out of the industry. The hon. member does not know about it because he always works with his coat on! Of course he butts in; he has done very well! What I have said is a statement of fact. These are the men we want to pension, instead of asking the taxpayers of this State to take them over, and put them under the Child Welfare Department together with their wives. That is what happens. I know numbers of them. I have met them. I was there at the time. I have been through the industry since, and I know that is what happens to men at 60. Dr. Hislop knows that before a man can obtain an invalid pension he has to be permanently and totally incapacitated. So from the age of 60 to 65 these men are on the scrap heap and must battle along with the aid of the Child Welfare Department and, in many in-

stances, with the help of their friends. That is the life of the miner as compared with the life of the professional man, who always waxes fat.

Hon. G. B. Wood: It is easy to see you are not a professional man!

Hon. T. MOORE: That is the state of affairs in the coalmining industry. It has been asked why this industry should be singled out. Can anyone tell me why it should not be singled out? In a sense it is one more link with the Civil Service, the railways and the tramways. Eighty-five per cent. of the coal that these men are hewing is hewn for the Government. It is only the fact that 15 per cent. is not hewn for the Government that makes these men not Government workers. If they were Government workers they would all be under a superannuation scheme today. That is a point I want noted: That 15 per cent. debars them from getting superannuation as Government employees.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Does that apply to farmers, too?

Hon. T. MOORE: It is a pity it does not apply to solicitors; we know what section they belong to. It has often been referred to, but I will not mention it today. The coalminers have an outstanding claim to pensions and should be given consideration instead of being scrapped when they are 60 years of age, as has been their lot in the past. I know what I am talking about. When a man has reached 60—except in a few instances—he has been dumped. Quite a lot of these men go out between the ages of 60 and 65—worried to death in their declining years. My honourable friend laughs, but it is not a joke; it is an absolute reality. I think Dr. Hislop will know that to be a fact. If the worry of unemployment and of being on the scrapheap at 60 does not shorten a man's life, I know of nothing that does.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: That does not apply only to the coalminers.

Hon. T. MOORE: They are the men we are trying to look after. Dr. Hislop would lead us to believe that coalmining is a healthy occupation. He did say x-ray examination showed that while coalminers were not troubled with silicosis as were goldminers, they do have coal spots on the lungs. In spite of that, he said he was going to vote against the Bill! I hope he changes his mind, as he will do if he has anything like the humanitarian outlook of the man who

preceded him and whom he said he hoped to follow. I refer to Dr. Saw. If Dr. Saw were here I know from my experience of him in the past that in connection with this measure he would be on the humane side. There is not the slightest doubt about that. Has Dr. Hislop observed men coming out of the mine? Has he been there when the men came off shift? I do not think he has.

I have seen men come out of the mine with dust and perspiration all over their faces, looking like niggers. Does anybody mean to tell me that when men come out of the mine in that condition some of the coal does not get down to their lungs? The doctor has a knowledge of the various diseases he mentioned yesterday. Does he think, in view of his knowledge, that there is a healthy atmosphere in the mines? If he does, I do not; but I am positive he does not think so. I do not believe it should be left to the Child Welfare Department to carry these men. The industry that used the men should carry them over their declining years. Having dealt with those aspects of the situation, I wish now to deal with some of the arguments which have been advanced to cloud the issue. Sir Hal Colebatch was the first to move. Of course, he is very ingenious in debate and when he cannot make out a good case he smothers up the position in a lot of verbiage. He adjourned the debate from week to week and could not get any points with which to bolster up his case.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: The Chief Secretary adjourned the debate; I did not.

Hon. T. MOORE: The hon. member moved the adjournment of the debate from one Tuesday till the following Tuesday. He cannot get away from that. He took a whole week in an endeavour to get some facts.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: You have had a fortnight.

Hon. T. MOORE: What did Sir Hal elicit? He came back to the House, and did he deal with the measure? Of course he did not—except from one standpoint only when he referred to working conditions of certain men in the mines and to their wages. All he did was to quote a mass of figures that had already been mentioned in another place weeks before. He attempted to make out because certain men received certain wages over certain periods, at the end of their time in the mines they could retire in affluence, having made ample provision for

their old age. The whole thing was quite easy—according to the superficial reasoning of our "Knight from Northam"! He clouded the issue with a mass of verbiage! What did he endeavour to prove? The question of wages should not enter into the matter at all.

If Sir Hal were to take a 10-year period and pay attention to the time off that the men experience from time to time, he would have a different tale to tell. Every member who knows anything about the industry is aware that during a 10-year period quite a lot of time is lost by the men through no fault of their own. Dr. Hislop is aware of the position because he receives patients regularly from the industrial community, and Mr. Mann told us during the debate yesterday that last year there were 251 serious accidents at Collie. Did Sir Hal Colebatch think of that when he offered us his comments on the Bill? Did he appreciate the position of men who meet with serious accidents having to go on half pay? Of course he did not take that into consideration at all. When a man is on half-time pay, his household accounts start getting behind. The position is even worse when a man is sick because he does not get any pay then at all.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: But that applies to everyone!

Hon. T. MOORE: Does Dr. Hislop think that by putting over that stupid stuff he is going to improve the position? When men who meet with serious accidents, in consequence of which they are put on half pay, return to work, they find that their bills for stores drawn from the butcher, the grocer and the baker are in arrears and have to be met out of their normal earnings. How can men retire in affluence in the light of such experiences? They have no possible chance of doing so. The only thing they have to look forward to is the old-age pension when they reach 65 years. That is all that the Collie miners have ahead of them under existing conditions. Then Sir Hal Colebatch dealt in his fruitful manner by the use of a lot of words, with the fact that the men work certain hours. He, to his own satisfaction, endeavoured to prove that they work only 5½ hours. He did not tell the House, and perhaps he does not know, that the miners at Collie have to walk two miles or so before they can start their work. Sir Hal does not

walk a mile when he proceeds to Parliament House but takes a tram.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Sometimes it is not possible to get a tram.

Hon. T. MOORE: The hon. member never walks when he can get a tram, motor car or bus. Let us see what is the position of the miners at Collie. Some of them we are told have to walk two miles to get to their work.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Why?

Hon. T. MOORE: If Mr. Parker had read the report that was referred to yesterday, he would know that the reason is that there are no conveyances. We have read the statement by Mr. Mighell who said he had investigated the position and was endeavouring to make arrangements for the provision of conveyances to enable the men to get to work. Mr. Parker did not know that; in fact, he knows nothing.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Quite so.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member should address the Chair.

Hon. T. MOORE: The trouble is, Mr. President, that members will not keep quiet.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is a reflection on the Chair.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. T. MOORE: These men who have to walk upwards of two miles to work, probably do now as they did in former years—take up their picks and shovels on entering the mines and carry them to the coal seam a mile underground. They do their shift in the mines and then, when they are finished, they have to walk a mile or more uphill to the mouth of the pit. Probably not many members of this House have ever seen the floor of a coalmine, which is not at all like that of a goldmine. The floor of a coalmine is not flat; it is pitted with holes, most of which are full of stagnant water. I am not overstating the position at all. The men have to walk uphill at a grade of something like one in eight.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Tripping over trolley sleepers as they go.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, tripping over everything that can be left on the floor of a coalmine. Sir Hal Colebatch does not think that is anything at all to take into consideration. His speech showed how little he knows about the conditions under which these men work. If, as has been suggested, we appointed a Select Committee to go into matters relating to working conditions in our industries, perhaps some members would be

then more inclined to do the fair thing in the interests of industrialists generally. Sir Hal Colebatch also told the House something about the alleged prevention by the miners of the introduction of labour-saving machinery in the coalmines at Collie. He made the statement as one of fact, and he endeavoured to lead members to believe—I hope he will change his mind when he hears the facts—that the coalminers had really adopted that line of action. Let me deal with that phase. I have here statements showing what really took place. I will read the first which is as follows:—

The union was notified by the Minister for Labour and the Amalgamated Collieries that it was the intention of the company to introduce a mechanical loader into the mines. The union sent the company's letter on to the Minister for Mines and in their reference to it said, "that they considered same as a danger and a menace to health and industrial peace."

I ask members to remember that—a menace to health and industrial peace. That is the important point. To continue—

The Minister for Mines, on the 16th March, 1942, informed the union that his officers were of the opinion that the loader was not a danger as suggested. A public trial was given on the surface of the Proprietary Mine and it proved abortive. Two more trials were given to the contraption and the management of the company declared the loader "black"—not the union.

That is what happened. Here is a letter from Mr. Shannon, the General Secretary of the Coalminers Industrial Union of W.A., Collie, addressed to the Minister for Mines—

I have been instructed by my union to inform you that we strongly protest against installation of coal loading machines in the mines at Collie as we consider they are dangerous and a menace to health and industrial peace.

That shows that that phase was always before them—the desire to have healthy conditions in the mines. Mr. Shannon continued—

As you are probably aware there were 564 accidents in the mines in Collie during the year 1941, two of which were fatal, and there have been two more fatal accidents this year. So you will see that with the installation of further mechanical devices we think the accident rate would go up and we must place the health and safety of our members before profits.

Let us follow this matter up, and be fair about it. The Minister for Mines in his reply to Mr. Shannon, under date the 16th March, 1942, wrote—

I would acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 17th ult., and would advise that I have since arranged that the matter of coal loading

machines might be discussed by the technical officers of this department. I have since been informed that these officers are of the opinion that the loader is not dangerous and will not adversely affect the health of the miners.

The Minister for Mines accepted the position that the company had made out. What took place? An arrangement was made to give the mechanical loader a trial, and as I have already indicated, it proved abortive. I have a declaration by a Collie miner named Hugh Thomas, which was sworn before a justice of the peace, setting out what happened.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It was not sworn before a solicitor.

Hon. T. MOORE: I wish all these humbugs were put out of the House—at least one of them! The statement by Mr. Hugh Thomas is as follows:—

The Collie Miners' Union did not declare black the coal loading machine that Amalgamated Collieries brought to the Proprietary mine. We did protest to the Minister for Mines, Mr. A. H. Panton, that in our opinion the introduction of these machines would be detrimental to the health and safety of our members. On being given the assurance by the Minister for Mines that his technical officers were of the opinion that the loading machine was not dangerous and would not adversely affect the health of our members, this union decided to send two members of the executive down the Proprietary mine to witness on behalf of the union the coal loading machine in action. As a result of the demonstration it was proven that the machine was useless as a coal-getter and the Amalgamated Collieries voluntarily scrapped the machine. I hereby declare that the Collie Miners' Union had nothing to do with the non-operation of these coal-loading machines in Collie.

That sworn document is a statement of fact. There is nothing supposititious about it, as was indicated in the remarks of our friend, the "Knight from Northam." The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson), was also a witness of the trials, and he assures me that the position is as set out in the statement I have read. The plant has been lying idle ever since. Why is that so? Possibly it is that machinery that is suitable for conditions at Newcastle or Wonthaggi may not suit those obtaining at Collie. Possibly that is the explanation, but certainly it had nothing to do with the men from the standpoint that Sir Hal Colebatch would have members believe. Perhaps on further consideration, now that he has the facts placed before him, Sir Hal may feel inclined to admit that he was wrong, and to vote for the Bill. At any rate, I hope that will be

the position for, if he relied on the statements he made for the formulation of the decision regarding his attitude, I claim I have shown that he was definitely wrong, so he should be prepared to do the fair thing and at least agree to the second reading of the Bill. I hate to criticise a member who is not present and I regret that Mr. Bolton is not here at the moment, because I intend to tell the House exactly what I consider was his attitude—I think he appealed to prejudice.

Hon. C. B. Williams: He had statements made to him and he did not know much about them.

Hon. T. MOORE: I hold that Mr. Bolton appealed to prejudice because in the course of his remarks he mentioned that some munition plants were held up owing to the shortage of coal. Members know that many shortages exist in this country today, besides coal. That fact has nothing to do with the Bill. Then why was it mentioned? It is not logical. It is an appeal to prejudice—not to reason at all. From that aspect, therefore, the points the hon. member made are lost. As a rule Mr. Craig is pretty logical. I regret that he is not here today. He told the House that the reason why the Victorian Government passed its Act was that it wanted to give a sop to the Labour Party, which was supporting it. Mr. Craig is a very busy man, and is short of help on his farm, and therefore cannot have much time for reading. Otherwise he might have known that the Victorian Act was passed after the Labour Party had moved a motion of want of confidence in the Victorian Government.

I do not remember all the names that political parties in Victoria call themselves—U.A.P., National Party, National-Liberal Party, and so forth. To me they represent the same old horse whose name is Anti-Labour. It was the capitalistic class that supported the Victorian Government in putting the Act through. Thus Mr. Craig's case breaks down. The hon. member also made a point that it would be wrong to interfere with the preference shareholders—very, very wrong! I have shown the House that this country has been very good to those shareholders. It has filled their pockets all these years. Even if the Government had gone on and raised the charge to 6d. per ton, it would have been merely a case of paying it out of other pockets. The rate has remained

at 3d. a ton all those years, and no doubt the preference shareholders have got the 3d. to which the State is unquestionably entitled.

Another member raised the question of how Collie coal serves our power houses. However, our Electricity Department, which represents all divisions, greatly to its credit has stated, as I have been informed on the best authority, that the cost of current for use exclusively in industry compares very favourably with the charges levied in the Eastern States. I have the figures here, but will not quote them now; they are available to any member who wishes to see them. They compare favourably with the figures of Victoria, which has a great open cut in the fine Wonthaggi belt, and also with the figures for New South Wales, taking everything into account. Thus it is through the work of the Collie miners that we have all these undertakings comparing favourably with corresponding works in the Eastern States. Are not these Collie men entitled to some consideration, seeing that this is the chain of proof demonstrating what they have done for Western Australia? I fail to understand how members can possibly say that they believe in men who have worked being looked after, and yet oppose the Bill. Mr. Mann has instanced a number of private concerns which have superannuation schemes for their employees. That system should obtain more widely. No one can deny that the Collie companies would do wrong in exploiting the natural coal wealth of Western Australia by the work of our men and eventually sacking them without any provision for their declining years.

I ask the House not to be led away by all the catch cries raised against the Bill. The measure contains various provisions which can easily be altered. The House is in charge of the Bill, and members can move amendments. I hope they will be reasonable and not throw the Bill out on the second reading. Let them stand up for the principle that a man should be looked after by industry after giving his whole life to it. Many arguments were put up as to what the Collie miners produced. Let it be remembered that a great deal of the work in Victoria and New South Wales is done by machinery. That is acknowledged. Now let me compare Collie with Newcastle. I have here a departmental report bearing on the subject. It says that in the past three

years the average production per man at Newcastle was 575 tons; and that figure was reached with the aid of much labour-saving machinery working upon big, beautiful coal seams. In Collie our men have during the same period produced an average of 756 tons per man—half as much again as the Newcastle figure. Therefore it cannot be contended that the Collie miners are not doing a wonderful job, and I do hope the House will realise their right to pensions.

To whom have we given pensions in the past? To men like judges, who are on large salaries for years. Judges have something put away for a rainy day. I have been asked the reason why judges were picked out for a start to receive pensions? Was the idea to keep them above suspicion? There must have been some motive. I see no special reason why only the highest-paid of public servants should receive pensions. This House has stood by the judges of Western Australia. Some families in this State have waxed fat ever since the great old days—the good old families! Again, there are the other highly-paid public servants who have been granted pensions. Just a couple of years ago Sir Hal Colebatch spoke pleadingly for the old men who had not received pensions under the Pensions Act of 1871. Do members recall the strong appeal he made for them two years ago? The hon. member made a special plea to give pensions to these old men who had done so much for Western Australia. However, Sir Hal wanted pensions for only half-a-dozen men. He now has an opportunity to carry his mind back to those humane ideas he uttered two years ago. I appeal for men 60 years of age who have nothing whatever to look forward to, unless it be a few years of misery.

If the question is asked, "Since we cannot all get pensions, why should a section get them?" my reply is, "Why should we adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude?" The Collie companies, which have had the services of the miners for many years, are in a position to meet the expense of pensions for them. I appeal to members to show themselves logical, and not prejudiced. Let the second reading be carried, and then, if members think certain features should be deleted from the measure, let them be removed. I observe that Mr. Bolton has just entered the Chamber. In the hon. member's remarks I noted something that showed he appealed to preju-

dice and not to reason. He made the point that some munition workers were held up today because of shortage of coal. What has that to do with the subject of the Bill? Was the hon. member appealing to reason or to prejudice when he mentioned munitions?

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South): I shall deal with the Bill purely and simply as relating to coalmining. Members who have criticised the Bill adversely spoke as if they knew nothing whatever about the subject. Otherwise they would not have made statements such as those, for example, that came from Mr. Bolton. I suggest that that hon. member, when he speaks in future, should be sure that he understands something of the subject under debate. To think that any member should rise here, or in any other House of Parliament, or in any other place, and say that a man of 60 years working underground is as good as a man of 40! I am sorry to have to inform the hon. member that there is something wrong with him. Dr. Hislop put the touch on that. The average life of the goldminer is only about 54 or 56 years. The miner from the moment he enters the mine is chancing his life like a soldier on the battlefield, though he is not being shot at by an enemy but by the refuse of the stuff he is producing for his employer.

Though a man of 60 in Mr. Bolton's factory may be just as good as a man of 40 in working a machine, there are no men 60 years of age working machines underground in Kalgoorlie. Indeed very few men of those years are employed in the goldmines there at all. If at Collie miners are working when from 65 to 70 years of age, the companies there must be extremely loyal to them. I know of one or two men working in the Kalgoorlie mines who are between 66 and 70 years of age, but they are preparing explosives and fuses on the surface for the miners underground. They are certainly not pushing trucks. I know little about coalmining, but I do know all about goldmining. The work of the coalminer is much more arduous, because he has to lie on his stomach in a confined space in order to do his work—which is not the case with the goldminer. Mr. Bolton quoted tonnage figures, but he did not quote the real facts of tonnage. If a coalminer has to walk a mile or half-a-mile, obviously the tonnage must come down. The same thing,

in fact, applies to goldmining. If a goldminer can get to his stope within five minutes of leaving the cage, he will produce more than the miner who has to take three-quarters of an hour to get to the stope.

Hon. T. Moore: On Mr. Bolton's farm the men do more when they are working nearer home.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am not bothering much about farming, because pension schemes should, I agree, be made applicable to all. We are in a state of war and we have heard much about the new order that is to come when the war is ended. Why, then, should members oppose this scheme? I do not intend to indulge in sob-stuff; I am not given to that, but we must remember that 400 or 500 of our young coalminers have gone to the war to fight for the new order. Surely members will not sit back and oppose a pension scheme for them. It may be said that the goldminers are envious of this proposed scheme. They are not. I look forward to the time when every person will be brought under some scheme of superannuation. We would have had such a scheme in operation had it not been for our Federal politicians, who turned it down some three or four years ago.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Mr. Menzies resigned from the Government on that account. We have had State Governments of all complexions that have said that schemes of this nature would impoverish the State, in that workers from the Eastern States would be encouraged to come here. In 1910 or 1911, the goldminers fought for a somewhat similar scheme and it was passed by the Legislative Council. I believe Sir Hal Colebatch was a member of the House at that time. Sir John Kirwan was also a member at the time, as was the late Hon. Jabez Dodd. The miners fought against the scheme; they considered they ought not to be obliged to contribute to it, but that the employers should find the money, as they got the profits. In the end, we agreed to a scheme somewhat similar to the one now under consideration. Under it the miners contribute one-third, the mineowners one-third and the Government one-third. The scheme was put into operation in 1913. Before then, the goldminers were working under conditions worse than those obtaining at Collie. The average life of a miner then was about 51 years and at that time

no provision was made for men who fell sick or for their dependants, except perhaps charity concerts. Sometimes a man's mates carried him. Those conditions proved costly to the employer, because three men out of six were not earning 2s. per day, let alone 13s. 4d., which was the then daily rate for miners. We got the scheme through the House. I was young then and I speak for myself, because most of the other men have passed away. Some of the men, the then heads of the union, were sacrificed for fighting for this scheme of industrial insurance. But it turned out that they were right. The scheme has not done everything for the miners, but it has achieved something.

Hon. T. Moore: It has been helpful.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It has been a Godsend to some of the men.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The incapacitated miners now receive £2 5s. per week, with an allowance for children, although the total payment is limited to £3 10s. per week. Still, that is something. I understand that the fund stands at £500,000, although I am open to correction in making that statement. After all, what has it cost the Government? Notwithstanding that the Government has contributed and still contributes one-third of the payments to the fund, if the scheme had not been brought into operation the Government would have had to care for the derelicts from the mines and their children. State aid in those days was not as much as it is today. It must be borne in mind also that the miners make their contribution to the railways and the tramways and to the electricity and gas departments, but it is no use entering into those details.

Why should members complain that this is a sectional scheme? I was not concerned when the Police Force secured its superannuation fund. A similar measure to operate in favour of members of Parliament was certainly sectional, but it was passed by this House. It may be contended that the Government was not going to contribute to that particular scheme, but one member, who unfortunately is not now with us, considered that the Government would have to do so, and he was right. He said the Government would have to contribute to all schemes of superannuation in some of their stages, otherwise the schemes would become insolvent. Is it fair to the people of Western Australia not to endorse a scheme of this kind? We will get Federal schemes in their turn; they will come as surely as the

sun rises, but only as a result of the efforts of the people after this war. Dr. Hislop drew attention to one or two points which the Chief Secretary said were covered in the definitions. Objection is taken to the inclusion in the scheme of workmen's inspectors. A workmen's inspector is a miner, taken out of the mine and given the job. Like a member of Parliament, he is subject to election. Suppose a man is taken out of the mine for that job at 53 years of age, or 50 or 40, he may hold the position for seven or eight years and then be dismissed. Surely he should then have the right to secure work in the industry of which he is a member. The trade union secretary is also a miner, taken temporarily from the mine to fill that position, which he will hold as long as the members allow or as long as his popularity and good work stick to him. The same thing applies to the cheek-weigher.

We have in the goldmining industry today two or three members of Parliament who are contributing to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. One was a union official. Another was a workmen's inspector. The union secretary holds his position from year to year, while the workmen's inspectors hold theirs for two-year periods. Surely those men should have the right to contribute to the funds of the scheme, especially as they were doing so before appointment to their positions. I myself am not worrying about the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, as I know my health will not permit of my returning to the goldmining industry, but if I did go back to it I would have to contribute to the fund. Dr. Hislop said that the secretary of the Enginedrivers' Union and the secretary of other unions should not come under this fund. In my opinion the secretary of the Enginedrivers' Union will automatically come under the scheme, that is, if it applies to surface men. The only union secretary that could come under this scheme would be the secretary of the Collie Miners' Union, because there are not enough members in other unions at Collie to pay a full-time secretary.

I appeal to the reasonableness of members to support the Bill, which, if necessary, may be amended in Committee. The scheme is really only a nucleus of national insurance. When national insurance is established, all people, including farmers, will benefit from it. I do not like the red herring that has been drawn across the trail by some members who have spoken about the farmers. The time will come, as I said, when every

person will come under a scheme of national insurance, and the farmers, as well as the goldminers and coalminers, will benefit. Some goldminers have been forced to leave their homes and have lost everything.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Farmers have had to leave their holdings and have lost everything.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The miners had to pay cash for such assets as they held. In the case of the farmer, he has received assistance from the State in some instances to the extent of £10,000. How many miners have received £100 or £200? Admittedly, a few have obtained workers' homes in Kalgoorlie, but what about the 300 miners who had to leave Lancefield? They did not receive anything from the Government. The farmer, if he has a good yield, does reap some advantage.

Hon. H. L. Roche: He does not get it.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: If that is so, it is owing to his own folly.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You stick to mining!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I intend to do so. At present I am giving advice to members who will interject. Records in existence show the value of the assistance that has been granted to farmers, but no assistance has been given to our miners. As I said, properties have been vacated in Kalgoorlie because the menfolk have gone to the war. However, I do not wish to be sidetracked by pitting the miner against the farmer or the city worker. Let us deal with this Bill on its merits. Are we in favour of superannuation for the coalminers or are we not? That is the position. I am not getting heated about the matter. I ask members not to say that a man 60 years of age can work as effectively as a man only 40 years of age. I am 53 years of age and know that I could not keep up with a man only 40 years of age. I recommend members not to be parochial. Many years ago we passed the Mine Workers' Relief Act, and the House was then more Tory than it is today.

Hon. T. Moore: Question!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The question is answered because at least the House then passed that measure.

Hon. T. Moore: There were good men in the House then.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I support the second reading. I trust that this measure will be passed as an instalment of the new order.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East): I wish to refer to a few points in this Bill that do not seem to have been touched on. We should consider them before we reach a final decision. From the tone of the debate, it seems that the second reading will be passed, and therefore I would like members who have suggested the making of amendments to consider them carefully, because an amendment might vitally affect some other portion of the Bill. Therefore, before we go into Committee, members should carefully prepare their amendments, rather than attempt to frame them in Committee on the floor of the House. I can see quite a lot of trouble arising if we attempt to do that.

When we discuss coalmining in Australia and matters connected with it, we must bear in mind the fact that there is much public feeling with regard to the industry. There are some very significant trends in the industry in Australia and I think they should be mentioned. For example, the industry in the Eastern States is at present causing much comment, owing to the attitude of the men engaged in it. That is affecting the public mind. There is another aspect, namely, the export of coal from Australia. For quite a number of years that has been seriously declining. The export trade from the Eastern States was considerable. We come now to Collie. The first question asked is, "What is wrong with Collie?" It has been pointed out by speakers that Collie has a good record in regard to continuity of work. On the other hand, critics have said that that continuity has been secured by a complacency in regard to making adjustments of prices and conditions. Some years ago a Royal Commissioner was appointed to go into the question of the price of Collie coal and he was definite in his statement that this State was paying far too much for the coal it was using on its railways and at the power station.

These are facts, because after all the effect of an uneconomic basis for coal production is reflected in every industry in the country, because it increases the prices of the commodities sold to the man getting his living from the country and decreases the return he receives for the product he markets outside the State. That point, therefore, must be taken into consideration in dealing with a question concerning coal. Some figures have been given in connection with the output and I intend to refer to

them because one aspect has not been stressed. I will refer to it later. The Press report issued yesterday by the Coal Commissioner was particularly well-timed. It contained some interesting information which has a material bearing on this Bill. If that Press report said anything, and Mr. Mann's remarks to a large extent supported it, it stressed the fact that there was inefficiency and bad management at Collie.

Hon. W. J. Mann: I did not say that.

Hon. T. Moore: That was Sir Hal Colebatch.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It was in the report of the Coal Commissioner. He did not say directly, but by inference, that there was inefficiency and bad management at Collie, and he and Mr. Mann particularly stressed the question of ventilation. It appears to me that the position at Collie is remarkably similar to that which obtained on the goldfields immediately after the conclusion of the last war. Members may recall that a special Royal Commissioner was brought to Western Australia to go into the question of the gold-mining industry. He made a report—which was a pretty scathing one—as a result of which improved working conditions and financial results were eventually achieved. It appears to me that the same forces have been at work at Collie. There is not the slightest doubt that the prosperity—and there has been great prosperity in the past—and progress of the industry have to a large extent been retarded because of complacency and the monopoly existing there. As I said, both Mr. Mann and the Commissioner stressed the all-important point of ventilation. Quite a lot of work had to be done on the goldmines to get improved ventilation. The results achieved there were reflected directly in the health of the men employed in the industry. From the management's point of view they were reflected directly in the output of the men because any miner will admit that it is impossible to work efficiently in bad air. When a man gets into one of these "hot ends," as they are called, he finds it difficult to work.

A few years ago members were privileged to go to Collie and see the work done in the mines, and I remember one member remarking, "We know that there is a lot of comment about the men not working, but these chaps are working hard enough." So they were! Unless sound healthy conditions are to obtain in a mine the health of the men cannot be preserved, nor can they give

as good an output as when working under ordinary conditions. As Mr. Mann and the Commissioner pointed out, if the ventilation is defective, the humidity becomes extremely high and both of these conditions reflect on the ventilation officers. Mr. Mann would have been justified in saying that, as a result of the medical statement, a strong indictment had been made against the ventilation officer of the Collie coalmines. I was interested in the medical evidence submitted in connection with this Bill. We have the statement of Dr. Hislop who told the House that he is definitely interested and concerned in the incidence of pulmonary troubles and the effect of what we call industrial diseases. He said he could not state that, as a result of the information made available to him, there was anything that could be described as an industrial disease directly attributable to the Collie mines. He said that there was certainly not the same trouble there as was experienced on our gold mines so far as silicosis is concerned. Because of the medical evidence produced, Mr. Mann was not able to substantiate that either.

As I have said, that there has been considerable trouble is due to bad ventilation, and men are worked out before their time. What I am trying to lead up to is this: If the medical evidence had been to the effect that there was an industrial injury sustained by the men working in the coalmining industry, then quite obviously the right course of action for us to take would be to amend the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act in order to see that these men received the compensation for injuries sustained in the course of their employment. If any industrial disease could be ascribed to coalmining, that is the correct course of action. This measure is a Bill for pensions and not one to deal with industrial disabilities.

Another point raised by Mr. Mann should be answered because it has been referred to by other members, and that deals with the question of civil servants under the 1871 Pensions Act. That has not been viewed in the correct perspective. The 1871 Act was devised in order that the men who were employed in the Public Service of Western Australia should have the same benefits that civil servants enjoyed in other parts of the British Empire. Among those benefits was that of a pension. The idea was that a Gov-

ernment servant should have his future assured—and many of them were receiving very low salaries—by receiving a pension when his working days were over. The idea also at that time—and it has been carried on since—was that a man's whole activities and interests should be kept for the Government service rather than that he should be free to exploit opportunities outside his work.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He got no overtime, either.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is so. In the Railway Department the salaries enjoyed were much lower than the wages the running staff received, so much so that when men on the running staff were advised to go on to the salaried staff where the opportunities for promotion were much wider, they refused because they said, "We prefer to get the good money we are now receiving rather than go on to the rates paid to the salaried staff even though their opportunities are so much better." Their conditions have altered materially since then. The passing of the Public Service Act in 1904 was because the salaried officers of the Public Service were increasing to a large extent. Because of the size of this State we need a much larger proportion of civil servants than do the more highly populated States. Therefore the passing of the 1904 Act became necessary because the Government could see it would be confronted with a bill that it could not meet. I am making these points clear because it appears to me that to bring in these arguments in support of a pensions scheme for Collie is rather going outside the scope of this particular Bill. The superannuation scheme introduced for the benefit of the Government servants apparently is capable of indefinite expansion and it might have been used in drawing up this scheme for the men at Collie. I think it would have been quite competent simply to have allowed these men to come in under that arrangement.

I want to make my position clear. I have always supported the idea of superannuation for the whole community. I regard it, as does Mr. Williams, as a matter for great regret that the Commonwealth Government abandoned its national insurance scheme some years ago. Had that been proceeded with, many of our present troubles would not exist. There is no reason, if the State wishes to extend the pensions scheme, why

it should not include not only the Colliery miners but all other sections of the community. They could contribute to it on similar lines to what applies in the Government service. I now want to make a few references to the question of the coalminers and their output. Some deductions have been made in regard to that. Some figures were put in from the Coal Commissioner's report and it is from those figures that I have derived the ones I am about to give now. Incidentally they are confirmed by the Department of Mines report, which contains the following particulars:—

Year.	Tons per man per annum.	Tons per man per day. 300 days per annum.
1939	741	2.47
1940	756	2.52
1941	715	2.38
1942	704	2.34

The figures have declined from a total tonnage of 756 to 704 tons per annum, and from 2.52 to 2.34 tons per man per day.

Hon. T. Moore: The men were putting in an open cut and not hewing coal. They are opening up a new mine and are on the pay sheet.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The main deduction to be made from that is that a number of the younger men have joined up. There has been a difference too because there has been an increase in the number of men. The number employed was 752 in 1939, 713 in 1940, 778 in 1941 and 825 in 1942.

Hon. W. J. Mann: But they are not the same type of men who are now employed.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the point I wish to make. The strong vigorous miners have enlisted. The need for making certain deductions has not been mentioned, and I am trying to bring out that point. We have diluted labour in the mines, and naturally we must expect a reduction in the output per man per day and per annum. These things should be considered when dealing with the question of the output at Colliery.

Coming now to the question of high wages, there seems to be a lot of misconception. I believe in paying high wages. It is not the amount of money a man gets that counts; it is the amount of money he earns. In other words, the unit cost of production has to be considered, and if, as a result of sound management, the cost per unit decreases, it is obviously sound policy to pay higher wages in order to increase production. Therefore, when we criticise the payment of

high wages, we have to consider the output being obtained for those wages.

There is one clause in the Bill that I do not like. Clause 5 begins—

(1) Subject to this section no person shall take into or retain in his employment as a mineworker any person who is of or above the age of sixty years, and no person of or above the age of sixty shall accept or continue in employment as a mineworker.

This would have the effect of introducing, by Act of Parliament, a principle that appears to me to be very unsound. We have always argued that if a man wanted to work, he should have the opportunity to do so. I have always regarded this as an essential matter in the sound administration of any State. Consequently, when I see a principle being introduced to prohibit a man from working on his attaining the age of 60 years, I do not like it. I gathered from the remarks of the Chief Secretary, when he was moving the second reading of the Bill, that this provision was inserted on account of the health of the miners, but I have shown that this does not altogether come within the scope of this Bill. I do not like the idea, and cannot see any reason why we should prohibit a man from working after he reaches the age of 60. So long as he cares to work and a mining company is prepared to employ him, we should not prohibit him from working, especially under pain of a penalty.

Clause 10 also appears to be objectionable. Subclause (2) provides—

Except as provided in this section no person who is eligible for a pension under Subsection (1) of this section (in this section hereinafter referred to as a "dependant") shall be entitled to a pension under this Act as well as compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-41.

Why should a man be denied workers' compensation simply because he becomes entitled to a pension? A worker is paid compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act because he has been injured in the course of his employment, and it should not matter whether he goes on to a pension or accepts outside work. He is paid compensation for the injury and is entitled to the pension. I cannot see the justification for that provision. Perhaps the Chief Secretary will be able to explain the justification for it in the course of his reply. When a man has been injured in the course of his employment, he is entitled to every penny of

compensation awarded him whether he is on a pension or not.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You contend that he should receive both?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Certainly; they are two different things.

The Chief Secretary: While a man is receiving compensation, he is still an employee. The pension applies when he ceases to be an employee.

Hon. H. SEDDON: A man who loses a hand is entitled to a lump sum payment.

The Chief Secretary: This provision would not apply to him.

Hon. H. SEDDON: But seemingly it would. If a man was awarded £750 under the Workers' Compensation Act, as under the Miner's Phthisis Act, he might be drawing it at so much per week. Yet that payment would prevent his receiving a pension under this measure. The man might be able to get work outside the industry.

Hon. C. R. Cornish: The same would apply to a war injury.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. Clause 13 states—

Any amount which a mineworker or his dependants has or have received, or upon application is or are entitled to receive from any invalid, widows, old-age or war pension, or as endowment under the Commonwealth Child Endowment Act, 1941, or, in the case of a permanently incapacitated mineworker under sixty years of age, from earnings derived or which might be derived from available employment of the nature referred to in Subsection (2) of Section 7 of this Act in respect of any period for which a pension is payable under this Act, shall be deducted from the amount payable to him or them, as the case may be, as a pension under this Act.

Members are aware that when a man is granted an old-age pension, if he earns more than a certain amount, his pension is cut accordingly. Under the Invalid and Old Age Pensions Act, the money paid under this legislation would be regarded as income.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It would be saving the Commonwealth money.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is what I am leading to. We shall be saving the Commonwealth money at the expense of this fund. I take exception to the way the clause is framed because it is not correctly expressing the position to put it in this way. Under the Invalid and Old Age Pensions Act the pensioner at 65 receives 25s. a week. Under this scheme he is to receive a pension of £2 a week. Under the Invalid and Old Age Pensions Act, the pensioner is allowed to have an

income of 12s. 6d. a week without its affecting his old-age pension. Thus he is able to draw £1 17s. 6d. a week. If he earns anything over and above 12s. 6d. a week, the difference is deducted from his old-age pension. If under this legislation we pay him £2 a week, we shall simply be cutting out any pension that he may draw from the Commonwealth Government, and will be relieving the Commonwealth Government of the payment of 25s. a week. Take the case of a man and his wife who between them would receive old-age pensions amounting to £2 10s. a week and would be allowed to have a joint income of 25s. a week without their pensions being affected—that is a total of £3 15s. a week. Under this scheme a married man with a wife would receive £3 a week, and by paying it we would be relieving the Commonwealth Government of the payment of the two pensions of £2 10s. a week. That is not sound. It may be that this pension scheme is intended to bridge the gap between the ages of 60 and 65, and from that angle I can see justification for it. Under this scheme the pension fund will be drawn upon for the full amount, whereas the Commonwealth should be bearing the amount of the old-age pension.

Consider what is happening on the goldfields. The men on the Mine Workers' Relief Fund at Kalgoorlie are not receiving the full amount due to them. They have been cut down, and are asking that where they are qualified to receive the old-age pension their fund should be placed on the same footing as that of the miners in New South Wales. The New South Wales fund is exempt and the pension paid to the miner there is not affected.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Is the New South Wales fund exempted by the Commonwealth Government?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes.

Hon. T. Moore: Why?

Hon. H. SEDDON: It is contended that that is a sick benefit fund and the discrimination is made accordingly. Yet it is not admitted that ours is a sick fund, although our men cannot get on the Mine Workers' Relief Fund until they are injured in the course of their work.

The Chief Secretary: That point has been looked into.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The State Government is taking it up with the Federal Government at the present time. I cannot see

why this measure should provide for relieving the Commonwealth Government of its responsibility, and something will have to be done if we are going to give the men the full benefit of the pensions under this scheme. We should obtain some recognition from the Commonwealth so that these pensions will not be affected when the recipients come to draw the old-age pension.

Reference has been made to the position of the shareholders, but I do not think it has been made quite clear, although it was ventilated a few years ago. Regarding the Amalgamated Collieries, there are ordinary shareholders and preference shareholders, and it is argued that the dividends received by the preference shareholders will suffer because of the method by which the contributions are to be distributed between the mining companies and the Government. The ordinary shares in Amalgamated Collieries are restricted in number and restricted also in the number of the persons who may hold them. Only a very few people hold the ordinary shares, and while through the years the company has made handsome profits, the preference shareholders have been restricted to dividends of eight per cent.

Hon. T. Moore: Did you say "restricted."

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes.

Hon. T. Moore: What do the ordinary shareholders get?

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Ordinary shareholders have received as much as 15 per cent.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The ordinary shareholders are quite different. In the articles of association of Amalgamated Collieries Limited there is a peculiar provision. I gathered from Mr. Craig yesterday by way of interjection that he had been a preference shareholder and that he has never seen a balance sheet.

Hon. W. J. Mann: He is not alone in that; neither has anyone else!

Hon. H. SEDDON: No, and the preference shareholders have no voice in the management, either. That is rather important. The contention is that they sacrificed any rights they had under the Companies Act because they were given eight per cent. preference for their shares. But if a thorough investigation were made I think it would be discovered that the greater part of the capital of Amalgamated Collieries was found by the preference shareholders. They carried the baby, and they were restricted in their

returns. The other fellow got the cream, and I think that until recently he was on a very good wicket. By this measure the Government is going to penalise those preference shareholders. That is where the Bill appears to me to be unfair. To penalise the ordinary shareholders would have a good effect, because it would force them to do what they should have done years ago, namely, get down to their job and see if they could put their management on to a more efficient basis, because there is plenty of room for it according to what has been put before the public by Mr. Mighell.

Hon. L. Craig: Mr. Mighell seems quite satisfied.

Hon. H. SEDDON: No. As far as ventilation is concerned, he said there was room for a good deal of improvement. As a result of the information given to us, there is direct evidence of inefficiency in management. I am with the hon. member in saying that it is not fair to take it out of the hides of the preference shareholders. Under those conditions I am inclined to support those members who are preparing to amend the Bill in Committee, because it requires a good deal of amendment. I reiterate my suggestion that before the Bill goes into Committee those members should prepare their amendments, because one part of this Bill cannot be amended without affecting another part and to amend it is going to be a difficult job. I think we might be given a little time to have the amendments placed on the notice paper so that we can go straight ahead in Committee.

Hon. L. Craig: Many are consequential.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes; but instead of our trying to amend the Bill in Committee from all sorts of angles, it appears to me that amendments placed on the notice paper should be such as are related one to the other, and that a scheme should be evolved that would be worth consideration so far as the men are concerned. Incidentally, nobody has raised a very important point in regard to output. I refer to the output per man at the face. They are the men who are producing the coal. The output of men employed in the industry as a whole is given, but many are not directly connected with the winning of the coal and the fairest comparison with regard to efficiency of production is to consider the efficiency of production of the men at the face.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It would be still more in the miners' favour, I think.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It is. Comparing their output with that of miners in other parts of the world I was agreeably surprised when I saw the figures.

Hon. L. Craig: Mining is much easier here than it is in other countries.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Let us hear the figures.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I was pleased to see the figure relating to the output per man at Collie as compared with the figures in other parts of the world. It is not at all to the detriment of the Collie miners. From that angle the men getting the coal have put up a good performance.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have you the figures?

Hon. H. SEDDON: No, I have not got them here. I support the second reading of the Bill with a view to its being amended in Committee, and would like the Chief Secretary to reply to the points I have raised because I believe they will materially affect the form in which the Bill is finally passed.

On motion by Hon. H. S. W. Parker, debate adjourned.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to the amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. H. Seddon in the Chair; Hon. G. B. Wood in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2—Delete the word "such" in line 14.

No. 2. Clause 2—Delete the words "as comprises the whole of the land in one or more titles" in lines 14 and 15.

No. 3. Clause 2—Delete the words "comprises the whole of the land in one or more titles and" in lines 18 and 19.

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is:—

The objective sought by the amendments contained in Legislative Council Message No. 47 can be better obtained by an amendment to Section 4 of the Act, and in order to provide the opportunity for obtaining that, this House disagrees with the Legislative Council's amendments Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

HON. G. B. WOOD: I move—

That the amendments be insisted on.

In case members have forgotten what happened I will briefly state the history of this matter. Section 59 provides that any property which is totally enclosed with a rabbit-proof fence is exempt from local vermin rates and it was sought to add an amendment in the original Bill that when only part of a property was enclosed the part of the property so enclosed should be exempt from vermin rates. The Minister concerned in another place would not agree to that and had inserted the words, "provided the enclosed part of the property is comprised in one or more titles." That is how the Bill came to this House. The amendment agreed to by this House deleted the words, "one or more titles." The Bill went back to another place and the Minister would not agree to the deletion. There was a conference with the Crown Solicitor and it was decided that the best way out of the difficulty would be to amend not Section 59 but Section 4 which deals with the definition of "holding." The only way to ensure that is by a conference and the only way to secure a conference is to insist on the amendments.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments insisted on.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—PUBLIC AUTHORITIES (RETIREMENT OF MEMBERS).

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER [4.43] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to clarify and define the position which has arisen by reason of the postponement of certain road board and municipal elections. Dealing first with the road boards, all the elections of the 127 boards were postponed under National Security Regulations for one year from April, 1942, to April, 1943. The Public Authorities (Postponement of Elections) Act passed during this session gave the Minister authority to seek the Governor's approval to further postponements, but stipulated that 30 days' public notice of any such intention should be published and, in the event of a majority of the members of any road board or 10 per cent. of the electors of any district petitioning for an election, such election must be held.

Following the publication of the prescribed notice in November last, 12 road boards signified their desire to hold their elections in April, 1943. These 12 boards were therefore omitted from the Order which postponed until April, 1944, the annual elections of the 115 other boards, which should have been held in April, 1942, and April, 1943. As previously mentioned, all road board annual elections due to have been held in April, 1942, were postponed until 1943; therefore the 12 boards which have resolved to hold their elections this year must, unless the law is altered, hold two elections on the same day—namely, the postponed annual election of 1942 and the annual election of 1943.

Numerous inquiries have been received by the Department from road boards regarding the position and, as some uncertainty exists as to when the terms of office will expire of the members elected in April next, it has been decided to submit the present Bill which embodies the same principle as contained in the Legislative Council (Postponement of Elections) Act, 1942, and provides that in April, 1943, there shall only be one election for the 12 boards which have decided to hold elections—namely, that which should ordinarily have been held in April, 1942; that the members so elected shall hold office for three years from April, 1943, and that the members who would ordinarily have retired in 1943 and 1944 shall have the terms of their office extended by one year—namely, until 1944 and 1945. Under the Road Districts Act, generally speaking, one-third of the members of any district retire annually and this desirable method will be preserved with the passing of the present Bill.

Referring to the 21 municipal councils, the general position is much the same as for road boards except that the elections are held on the fourth Saturday in November in each year. All municipal elections due to have been held in November, 1942, were postponed under National Security Regulations until the 30th January, 1943. Following the procedure prescribed in the Public Authorities (Postponement of Elections) Act, the Minister for Local Government published his intention of seeking the Governor's approval to a further extension to November, 1943.

A majority of the members of four councils—Albany, Midland Junction, Northam

and Narrogin—objected to their elections being postponed and the 1942 elections of these four were held on the 30th January, 1943. A petition was received, signed by more than 10 per cent. of the electors of one other municipality, objecting to the further postponement of their 1942 election and this particular election is to be held on the 1st May next. This extended time was necessary to enable the rolls—containing about 5,000 electors' names—to be prepared. This Bill, if approved, will preserve the system of rotation in regard to all municipal and road board elections. As it will be necessary for road boards holding elections in April to publicly call for nominations not later than the middle of next month, it is desirable that this Bill be given urgent approval by the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 2nd March.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 24th February, 1943.

	PAGE
Motion: (urgency), as to superphosphate supplies'....	2533
Questions: Firewood and coal, as to supplies	2552
Beer, State hotel prices	2552
Forests Department—(a) as to cutting rights	2552
(b) as to defence orders	2553
School bus services, as to insurance against accidents	2553
National Security Act, as to lighting restrictions	2553
North Fremantle Properties and Wheat Storage	2553
Select Committee, extension of time	2553
Motion: Farmers and pastoralists' debts, as to mortgage interest	2554
Bill: Business Names, Council's amendments	2561

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