

would suggest to the Premier that next year every possible effort should be made to finish Parliament some time before Christmas—I would say at least two, if not three, weeks before, even if it meant calling Parliament together a little earlier. Whether that is the remedy, I do not know; but I think we owe it to members to give them an opportunity to get into their constituencies some considerable time before the Christmas festivities take place, when I know their constituents would welcome them and be glad to see them. This Christmas season they will be deprived of the opportunity of attending these many functions, some of which have been outlined by the member for Vasse.

The PREMIER (in reply): I would always be anxious to finish the session as early as possible in December, as the Leader of the Opposition would know. I was impressed with what the member for Vasse had to say. As far as I could understand one part of his speech, he has somehow made himself a nephew of mine. I shall have to give more attention to this matter tomorrow and see what it means in law. What I am prepared to do for the hon. member in response to his appeal, which was very well put and impressed me considerably, is, on behalf of the Government, to offer him a live pair for the remainder of the session.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 1.45 a.m.  
(Wednesday).*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, 16th December, 1953.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 5.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS.

#### KINDERGARTENS.

*As to Application of Subsidy to Country Areas.*

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the £22,350 subsidy the Government proposes paying to the Kindergarten Union for 1954, and for each succeeding year, and because the union recently stated, when turning down an application from a country centre, that the

number of kindergartens it could affiliate is limited by finance, will he inform the House—

- (1) Is this sum to be spent wholly in the metropolitan and outer suburban areas?
- (2) Was it not intended that financial assistance be given through the Kindergarten Union to centres in country areas by way of subsidy per head of children attending?
- (3) Will he consider applying the subsidy to country kindergartens which are registered with the Education Department, which have a qualified director, and which are inspected by the Education Department superintendent?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) It was intended that financial assistance be given through the Kindergarten Union to centres in town or country which are affiliated with the Kindergarten Union.
- (3) The Minister does not finance particular kindergarten centres, but leaves the apportionment of the subsidy to the Kindergarten Union within the rules of that body approved by him.

#### HOSPITALS.

##### *(a) As to Regional Buildings and Location.*

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Will he outline what is proposed in a hospital designated as "regional"?
- (2) How does this proposal differ from that of a "first-class" hospital?
- (3) Who was responsible for the recommending of certain regional hospitals; what were these persons' qualifications; and when was the recommendation made?
- (4) Does the Government still adhere to the original proposals of the committee as to where these regional hospitals are to be established?
- (5) Is it proposed that further hospitals will be designated as "regionals"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

- (1) When fully developed, a "regional" hospital will provide specialist services not available in other country hospitals.
- (2) There is no definition of "first-class" hospital.
- (3) The Hospital Planning Committee comprising at the time—

Hon. A. H. Panton, M.L.A., Minister for Health.

Mr. A. J. Reid, Under Treasurer.

Mr. F. J. Huelin, Under Secretary for Health.

Dr. L. Henzell, representing the Commissioner of Public Health.

Dr. F. J. Clark, representing the British Medical Association.

Dr. R. Muecke, Medical Superintendent, Perth Hospital.

Mr. W. M. Powell, manager, Perth Hospital.

The recommendation was made in November, 1945.

(4) Yes.

(5) Not at present.

##### *(b) As to Midwifery Hospital, Narrogin.*

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) On what date did the Government of the day take over the control of the midwifery hospital at Narrogin, known as "Vailima"?

(2) On what date did the Government purchase or resume the land and buildings on which "Vailima" is erected?

(3) Who was responsible for recommending such purchase or resumption?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

- (1) 1st December, 1948.
- (2) September, 1953.
- (3) The member for the district and the then Minister for Health.

#### BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.
- 2, Firearms and Guns Act Amendment. Returned to the Assembly with amendments.
- 3, State Housing Act Amendment. Returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

#### BILL—ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No.1).

*Assembly's Message.*

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

#### BILL—ELECTRICITY ACT AMENDMENT.

*Assembly's Message.*

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to amendment No. 1 made by the Council, and had disagreed to No. 2.

#### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Town Planning and Development (Metropolitan Region Interim Development Powers).
- 2, Town Planning and Development Act Amendment. Received from the Assembly.

#### BILL—LAND AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

*In Committee.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Commencement:

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I understand that the Chief Secretary proposes to move several amendments.

The Chief Secretary: Yes.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We do not know what they are.

The Chief Secretary: I have only just received the copy.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then the Chief Secretary knows as much about them as we do. Since they have been introduced as a result of an arrangement between the Minister and myself, I suggest that progress be reported to enable copies to be supplied to me and to other members. This would facilitate the passage of the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I had hoped to avoid reporting progress. Though the list seems formidable, the amendments merely give effect to provisions in the South Australian Act, which the hon. member desired should be adopted by us. Mainly they deal with auditing. In the circumstances, I agree to report progress.

Progress reported.

#### **BILL—PERTH TOWN HALL AGREEMENT.**

##### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 10th December.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [5.49]: I had hoped that this Bill would afford me an opportunity to upset the whole agreement, but unfortunately it is designed simply to rectify some oversights that occurred when the agreement was drawn up between the Government and the Perth City Council. We have known for a long time that the Royal Perth Hospital has not been able to use the land because sections of it were not included in the plan and agreement as presented to the House in 1950.

All that this Bill does is to rectify that mistake and now the hospital will be able to use the whole of the piece on the opposite side of Wellington-st., with the exception of a truncated portion which would abut on to the railway line and the gates at Moore-st. For that reason, one must agree to the Bill, because this land is essential to the progress of the hospital, but I am not certain that this is all that is required, and I feel that before the business is finished we may see another Bill before us here. I am not certain that Moore-st. is included in the land which is handed over. I notice from the plan that Moore-st. is marked as a proposed closure but I understand it is being used at the moment and, looking through the original agreement—I did not have much time to devote to it—I was not convinced that Moore-st., even at this stage, belongs to the hospital.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It cannot, until it is closed by Act of Parliament.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Then surely it would have been better to resume Moore-st. and allow the public to use it until such time as the hospital required it, and then the planning could have been carried out in a proper manner. There are certain other aspects that are still due for criticism. Members will note that it is intended to take a piece of land 24 ft. wide in order to widen Wellington-st., as proposed in the plan put forward by Professor Stephenson. I think members will recall that earlier this year I said that if this proposed action was taken it would be necessary to build a tunnel underneath Wellington-st. from the hospital on one side to the nurses' quarters on the other.

I criticised the expenditure that would be involved, in view of the fact that neither this Government nor its predecessor was prepared to approach the Commonwealth Government with a view to taking over Macfarlane's factory and Vetter's garage. I now understand, on very good authority, that a tunnel from the hospital under Wellington-st. to the new nurses' home on the opposite side is already planned because the shaft of the lift to be erected in the second half of the Royal Perth Hospital is going to connect with that subway. Think of the colossal cost, in the planning of this hospital, of building a tunnel all that distance, and recall the fact that the chairman of the Perth Hospital Board, when I was on that board representing the honorary staff, was offered Macfarlane's property for £6,500, and refused it!

Hon. C. H. Simpson: How long ago was that?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Somewhere from 1945 to 1947. He was offered the garage for £6,500 and, as time went by, the price went up to £9,000, but he refused to buy, and then the Commonwealth stepped in and bought the land purely to erect a telephone point of some utility within that area. Surely there are other areas within the land bordered by Murray-st., Wellington-st., and Moore-st., that could be used for that purpose.

Following that, the Commonwealth Government went further and bought Vetter's garage at a price. I understand, of £60,000, as a going concern, garage and land. We are now faced with having to purchase both those areas again and possibly at an extremely high cost—a cost which would still be nothing compared with the cost of building and maintaining a tunnel from the Royal Perth Hospital under Wellington-st. to the new nurses' home, and it is still going to mean two nurses' homes; the one that now exists in Murray-st. and the new one on the other side of Wellington-st.

The result will be that those nurses who live in the Murray-st. portion may well have to wander backwards and forwards to the new building for lectures, and so on. The planning is plainly wicked. It is public money that we are spending, and I do not think it is too late at this stage to ask that a halt be called until we see where we are going. I do not think it is yet too late to take over the small cottage that is now used by the medical superintendent and extend into Macfarlane's property, and possibly Vetter's, and erect the nurses' home as a continuation block to the present structure.

If the electric station at the back of Macfarlane's garage cannot be moved, it should also be possible to make a cul-de-sac of Vetter's and Macfarlane's in Murray-st. and erect there the professional chambers. We would then have the medical centre in close proximity to the main hospital where the work and teaching in the medical school will eventually take place. There has been a completely obstinate point of view expressed by this board in regard to having anything done except the extension over Wellington-st.

It is about time we began to realise that this board is composed almost entirely of Government servants who are not in any way responsible—in so many words—to the public. I say definitely that no board of management of a hospital of that size which had upon it citizens representative of the community would act in this way and spend money with the total disregard that is now being exhibited. I have many times said in this House that a hospital commission is essential. Once such a commission was established there would be no need for this or any Government to have the idea that because it contributes a major portion of the money—the public now contribute a lot also—it should have total control over the expenditure. The only person on the hospital board at the moment, apart from Government servants, is a representative of the honorary staff.

We have reached the stage where the public should demand representation on the board, because if we cannot get even a reply as to whether the suggestions that have been made are in any way practicable, the only means by which we can protect ourselves is by asking that public-spirited citizens be appointed to the hospital board. I protested when this agreement first came up that we just had this quid pro quo, and gave one piece of free land to somebody else, no cost being attached either to the expansion of the hospital or the building of the Perth Town Hall, and therefore the sites of both were determined by the fact that there was no monetary cost attached to the purchase of those sites. I do not think that is the way to town plan our city.

I am still of the opinion that the proposed site for the Perth Town Hall is the wrong one. I do not think the area is large enough and, as agreed, the town hall will be in between the two main ingresses to the city. The traffic on either side of the building will prevent proper and adequate parking. All the large cities of the world—and Perth will grow into a large city—have realised that extensive areas are necessary for civic purposes. Something about the size of Wellington Square would not be too big because once a town hall is erected it will be found, as time goes on, that it will be essential for public offices to be built close by and requests will also be made for the establishment of an auditorium and other places of entertainment for the public near that centre.

A site such as Wellington Square, set out properly in gardens, with a plan for development 50 or 100 years ahead, would be infinitely preferable to putting our town hall into the small area of the Supreme Court gardens. In this agreement we cannot do anything about the proposal, as far as I can see, but the Bill does give me an opportunity once more to protest against the plan for the Royal Perth Hospital and the town hall, both of which, I think, are unsound. However, here is the agreement before us and all we can do is say, "We agree" because we are simply giving to the hospital the little bits that were left out when the original plan was drawn.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

# **BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [6.6] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to prevent misrepresentation or falsity in advertisements or trade descriptions. It is primarily designed to protect the wool industry of Australia, and the public. A number of conferences have been held by State Ministers over a period of years, for the purpose of trying to devise some uniform legislation to meet all requirements, but unfortunately, as the import regulations of the Commonwealth were different from what the State Ministers desired, no uniformity or finality could be reached until July of this year.

At a conference of State Ministers held in Sydney during July last, it was unanimously resolved that legislation be enacted

in each State to bring the appropriate Act in each State into line with the import regulations specified in statutory rules No. 54, which were gazetted on the 4th June, 1953, under the Commonwealth Commerce Trade Description Act regulations. The Bill we are now discussing stems from these draft uniform proposals.

Its main principles are that the trade descriptions applied to textile products which contain 95 per cent. or more by weight of wool shall include the words "pure wool." The trade description applied to textile products which contain less than 95 per cent. by weight of wool shall not include the words "pure wool."

The trade description applied to textile products which contain less than 95 per cent. but not less than 5 per cent. by weight of wool shall include a statement specifying the percentage by weight of wool which is contained in the products; and the other fibres contained in the products in order of dominance by weight. The trade descriptions applied to textile products which contain less than 5 per cent. by weight of wool shall state the fibres other than wool, in order of dominance by weight, followed by the words, "less than five per centum wool".

Finally, the trade description applied to textile products which contain no wool shall include a statement specifying the fibre contained in the products, or, if the products contain more than one fibre, the fibres in order of dominance by weight. These provisions are identical with the appropriate import regulations gazetted by the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Government has intimated that it is not possible for any authority to differentiate between the various classes of wool such as virgin wool, re-used wool or reprocessed wool contained in imported textile materials. I am told that C.S.I.R.O. officers are not able to detect the difference, so that it is not possible to determine whether a particular textile is, in fact, manufactured wholly or partly from shoddy wool.

The parent Act provides definitions of "re-used" and "reprocessed" wool fibre, woollen goods and wool. Because of the fact that if a prosecution were taken and scientific evidence were called, the evidence would not indicate to the court whether re-used or reprocessed wool was used, these definitions were found to be of no value and are repealed by the Bill.

The Bill provides that if a defendant who is charged with an offence against the Act proves that the textile products were manufactured or imported into the State before the operation of the Act or that he is holding the products not with a view to defrauding anybody, he cannot be convicted.

The measure will come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation. The Bill also gives power to make regu-

lations, firstly, to prescribe the form in which trade descriptions shall be applied to textiles; secondly, to require trade descriptions to contain particulars relating to the quality, purity and weight of the textile products and the materials of which they are composed; and thirdly, to exempt textile products or a specified class or classes of textile products from the operation of the Act.

I mentioned it was proposed to commence the Bill from a date to be proclaimed. This is to cover the possibility of any State rejecting the proposed uniform provisions. I believe this is not likely as all States were unanimous on the matter. Also, the proposals are not of a lightly considered nature. They have been the reasons for a number of conferences, reports from the Australian Wool Board, etc., for a number of years. However, should one or more of the other States reject the proposals and Western Australia approve of them, it is possible that the Bill would not be proclaimed, it not being desired to impose on the manufacturers of this State any obligations or requirements not of an Australia-wide nature. As I have said, such a situation is not anticipated.

In addition, it is proposed to keep a watch on the results of the legislation in order that any weaknesses that might ensue can be corrected, or any possible anomalies rectified. I understand the Farmers' Union is anxious to have these provisions incorporated in the Bill, and that the Australian Wool Board has long been pressing for their inclusion. Women's organisations, too, have been agitating for protection from false and misleading trade descriptions and advertisements. It may be that the provisions in the Bill will increase the cost of some articles. This would be preferable, however, to people being misled by incorrect descriptions and advertisements and paying more than an article was worth.

The Bill is designed to protect the Australian wool industry and the consuming public against falsity so far as textile products are concerned. If a person buys an article which is marked "pure wool," it is logical to suggest that the article should be made from pure wool and that the label should clearly indicate the fibres used in the manufacture. If a strong mixture of other fibres has been used, a person buying such articles should be made aware of it and should be given some indications of the fibres used. I am told that it is impossible for a layman to tell those fabrics made from pure wool and those made from wool and other fibres.

I think I have covered the main points of the Bill. Quite a number of the amendments are of a consequential

or machinery nature and require no explanation. I trust that members will accord the measure their support. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. K. Watson, debate adjourned till a later stage of the sitting.

## **BILL—RESERVES.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [6.13] in moving the second reading said: This Bill deals with reserves and undertakes to do the usual excising and vesting of land. The following are the particulars regarding the various reserves affected:—

Clause 2, Reserve No. A.20841 at Kendenup: In 1926, the Crown acquired ten adjoining lots at Kendenup for the purpose of a school site, the whole being renumbered as Plantagenet Location 5100. In 1931, the balance of the same section, comprising ten more lots, was acquired for the purposes of a schoolchildren's playground and public recreation, the land being renumbered as Plantagenet Location 5099. Action was taken in 1932 to revest both areas with a view to creating separate reserves, but through a misunderstanding both locations were made the subject of Reserve No. 20841 classified as of "A" class and set apart for the purpose of a schoolchildren's playground and public recreation. The Kendenup school is built on Location 5100 which it is necessary to excise from Reserve 20841 so that a separate reserve for a school site can be declared.

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

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST:** Clause 3, Reserve A.1665 at Mosman Park: This Class "A" reserve at present comprises a total area of 56 acres and is set apart for the purpose of recreation and vested in the Mosman Park Road Board. The Education Department requires a site for a primary and residential school for handicapped children which will offer living accommodation, supervision and suitable education to country children who, because of their physical disability, need specialised medical attention and education which they cannot receive in their home districts. The selected site is portion of Reserve A.1665, and the Mosman Park Road Board has no objection to the necessary amendment of the reserve to excise an area of about 10 acres 3 roods 34 perches as comprised in Mosman Park lots 40, 41, and the portion of lot 42 east of the prolongation southerly of the eastern boundary of lot 41.

Clause 4, Reserve No. A.7953 at Nan-son: This reserve of 55½ acres was set apart for recreation purposes, but the Upper

Chapman Road Board, in which the reserve is vested, desires to utilise portion of the reserve for a showground, and has requested that the purpose be amended accordingly. The board also holds a vesting order over the adjoining Reserve No. 6991 of 231 acres set apart for racecourse, showground, and recreation, which is not a classified reserve. It is proposed to alter the purpose of this reserve to recreation, racecourse and golf links.

Clause 5, Reserve A.10887, Perth Botanical Gardens: This reserve originally contained an area of about 7½ acres to which Perth lot No. 462 was allotted, but the reserve was not completely surveyed until recently. In 1921, the roadway along the south side of the Supreme Court buildings was closed, and the land therein was numbered as Perth lot No. 566, which was not surveyed. The new lot was added to Reserve A.10887, which is set apart for the purpose of botanical gardens, and which it is intended shall be vested in the City of Perth in trust for that purpose. To protect the access to the Supreme Court buildings, it is desired to excise from Reserve A.10887 the land comprised in the pathways on the south side of the buildings and connecting Barrack-st. and Terrace-rd. An adjustment of the proposed boundary between Reserve No. 10887 and the Supreme Court reserve No. 18392 has been accomplished by the survey of Perth lot 462 to comprise an area of 7 acres 1 rood 13 perches, which it is proposed shall be the future extent of Reserve 10887. Lot 556 is to be cancelled, and the portion thereof not included in lot 462, as resurveyed, will be added to the Supreme Court Reserve No. 18392.

Clause 6, Reserve No. A.22094 at Wokalup: This reserve comprising Wellington Location 4472, of 2269 acres 1 rood 14 perches, was set apart in 1939 for the purpose of a site for a mental hospital, but it is not considered suitable for that purpose. In 1950, the then Premier agreed to a proposal to make the land available to the Department of Agriculture for the purpose of a research station, but no action was taken to alter the purpose of the reserve. It is not considered necessary to classify, as of "A" class, any reserve for an agricultural research station, so it is proposed that the existing Class "A" reserve be cancelled, and that a fresh reserve for the Agricultural Research Station be declared in the ordinary manner. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, debate adjourned till a later stage of the sitting.

## **BILL—BULK HANDLING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. L. C. DIVER** (Central) [7.38]: This measure seeks to allow farmers who grow oats and barley and wish to deliver either of those grains in bulk to become shareholders in Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., thereby rendering themselves liable for the payment of what is known as a foundation toll. All money collected under that heading from wheat, barley, and oats will be used in renewing and extending existing inland facilities.

I want to point out that a considerable amount of additional expense could face Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. much sooner than many of those who should know appear to realise; for, with the finding of oil in our North-West, the Commonwealth Government may decide that a broad gauge railway line is a national necessity. Then Co-operative Bulk Handling would be in the position of having to find money and materials to resite and rebuild every bulk-handling facility on the Great Eastern railway between Grass Valley and Southern Cross. Owing to the fact that all existing sites would be required by our Railway Department—that is, if such an event should take place—Co-operative Bulk Handling would also have to provide further bulk storage at many more sidings in the southern districts for barley and oat growers who have not enjoyed those facilities up to date.

Let nobody be under the delusion that this measure will turn out to be as rosy as it appears. The Bill provides for a port toll to be levied against farmers who deliver either barley or oats in bulk. To my mind, that is well justified, as it would appear, looking at the southern areas, that in future those ports will be used mainly for exporting oats and barley, and the port charge will, to some extent, meet the expenditure that will take place at outports such as Bunbury and Albany—and I can visualise the day when even Esperance will enjoy bulk facilities. I mention those three ports in particular because I think that the future bias will be towards coarser grains, such as barley and oats. Geraldton is another outport, but more wheat is grown up there than coarse grains, and I think that will continue to be the position.

Discussing this Bill with Mr. Braine, I asked him two questions. One was as to how many votes a farmer would have who delivered wheat, oats and barley to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. Mr. Braine replied that he could have only one vote, since no shareholder is entitled to more. That is very important. As is apparent, even to those who live in the city, Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. was a project that was established through the efforts of the wheat industry, and wheatgrowers are the owners of that facility today. It is now proposed to allow the producers of barley and oats to become shareholders on even terms with wheatgrowers. The danger I

foresaw on first reading the Bill was that the day may come when the barley and oat industries will develop along such lines as to become even greater than our wheat industry. Consequently, we could have the spectacle of a facility created by the wheat industry later being controlled by the coarse-grain producers of this State. My father was associated with the inauguration of bulk handling in this State, and I, particularly as a wheatgrower, would be failing in my duty if I did not make every endeavour to satisfy myself that at no time would the control of the destinies of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. go out of the hands of the wheatgrowers.

The second point on which I questioned Mr. Braine was in regard to the position that could arise—maybe much sooner than we realise—if the Bill became law, and the barley and oatgrowers were entitled to enjoy the privileges of the existing facilities. As oats ripen and are harvested before wheat in most districts—particularly in the eastern and northern areas—a considerable quantity of our bulk storage could be taken up by oats and other coarse grains; and if there were a dearth of shipping to lift the oats, and if the wheat market were dull at the same period, we would probably find the wheat farmers would have to put their wheat into silos they would have to construct on their own properties. This would come about through being locked out of the bulk-handling facilities owing to their generosity in allowing the coarse-grain producers to use those facilities.

Mr. Braine assures me that, while my fears may have some grounds, the odds against them are, in his estimation, as long as one million to one. I respectfully disagree with Mr. Braine's ruling, but at the same time I sincerely hope he is right. For the sake of our great wheat industry, a large part of which I represent, I hope I shall never have cause to regret seeing this legislation pass here. The measure has been requested by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. The directorate of that company is composed of eight men, seven of whom are wheatgrowers. I trust that before making the request they did, they realised the position in which they might put the wheat industry. I support the second reading.

**HON. A. L. LOTON** (South) [7.50]: I must ask members to exercise some caution in regard to this piece of legislation. After the Minister introduced the Bill yesterday, I looked through his notes, which he kindly lent me, and I immediately asked him this question: As the oat and barleygrowers are going to make use of the facilities of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. in the handling of their grains, and are going to be called upon to pay a toll, would they automatically have a vote in the appointment of the directors of the company? I can say at this stage that in the ultimate,

the coarse-grained growers could assume control of the directorate by reason of their voting strength.

I know that many oatgrowers and barley-growers, are also wheatgrowers, but the principle is one man, one vote, irrespective of the amount of grain any one person delivers. With the increase in the number of small farming areas, the diversity of farming activities and the demand for coarser grains over the last few years, many of the larger wheatgrowers have varied their grain growing to the production of oats and barley.

I ask the Minister to look further into this matter to see whether what is proposed here will enable the coarse-grain growers eventually to obtain control of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. I do not think it was ever intended that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. should lose control. It found the finance for the original installation of bulk-grain facilities. It raised the toll, issued debentures, and did everything else necessary. The facilities now available to the coarse-grain growers were in the first place provided by the wheatgrowers, who are entitled to have the major say in the control of these facilities.

If the Minister will be good enough to report progress when members have spoken on the measure, so that he can look further into the matter with the directors of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., and, perhaps, obtain a Crown Law ruling on the point, I will be pleased, because I do not think that at this stage members should be asked to support or vote against a measure of such importance to our great wheat industry.

**HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM** (Central) [7.52]: I have not the fears that members who have just spoken seem to have about the control of the company. I point out that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. did not provide the original funds; the wheat pool did.

**Hon. L. C. Diver**: And Westralian Farmers Ltd.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: The Wheat Pool of Western Australia had some fractions over after it had distributed the final dividends, and that money, together with funds made available by Westralian Farmers Ltd., originally started Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. This is the most democratic form of control that I know of, because it does not matter how much wheat a man puts in, he is entitled to only one vote. Whether a farmer grows wheat, barley, oats, rye, sorghum, or anything else, he still only has one vote. After all, I look at the value of the cereals grown, and the most valuable of all is wheat. It is much more valuable than oats, and very much more valuable than barley, despite the fact that the drink that is so popular is made from barley. We cannot do without our loaf of bread.

Farmers are not going to produce grain for which there is not a ready market; and even today a slump in the value of oats and barley is causing some little concern. The value has not come back anywhere close to pre-war values, but the cost of production is so much greater today that the decline is quite substantial. It is true that probably a much greater yield of oats, and in some instances of barley, can be gained, compared with that of wheat, but I cannot imagine anything but wheat being the predominant harvest.

**Hon. A. L. Loton**: It is the number of men producing that will be the predominant factor.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: Yes; and I pointed out earlier that each man is entitled to only one vote. A man might have a big sheep run, and crop 100 acres of barley. I should think he would probably grow oats in preference to barley; but in any case he might market the crop, and he would then have the same voting strength as a man such as Mr. Smart, who produces a great deal.

**Hon. H. L. Roche**: Most of the oat-growers are wheatgrowers.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: I do not know many that are not. The hon. member is too far south. He is where the sheep are. The alternating crops, if I might enlighten the hon. member, are wheat one year, and oats the next.

**Hon. L. A. Logan**: He is agreeing with you.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: It is the first time he has agreed with me for a long time. I am anxious to see the Bill passed. If at any time there is any unfairness, I would rely on the common sense of the members of this Chamber and of another place to rectify it. It is true, as Mr. Diver pointed out, that the simplest and cheapest form of handling wheat originated in Western Australia. The manner of handling it is assisted by our climate because we have very little rain in the summer. There is no place in the world where wheat is handled more cheaply than it is here, and there is no one more entitled to have control of this organisation than the people producing the grain. I support the second reading.

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [7.58]: I made some inquiries today in connection with the point raised by some members regarding the voting strength of oat and barley producers who would be contributing to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., and the information I received is this—

No, they would not have a vote. They will pay the tariff and use the facilities, but have no say as they will be in the organisation on a voluntary basis.



This information was secured from Co-Operative Bulk Handling Ltd., and it conflicts with Mr. Diver's information which was received from the same source.

Hon. A. L. Loton: It is a compulsory levy on those who make use of a voluntary organisation. Once you use the facility, you must make a payment.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: That will be the effect once the Bill passes. On the other question of wheat having to be stored on farms while barley and oats are stored in the bins, I am given to understand that the wheat-growers will get priority, although it cannot be guaranteed. That is the information given to me.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Mr. Braine told me they would come in on an equal footing.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: As one member has asked for a Crown Law ruling on the question of voting, I propose to defer the Committee stage for the time being.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### **BILL—ROAD CLOSURE.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

#### **BILL—AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Minister for the North-West in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 5 amended:

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of paragraph (a), after the word "Agriculture," the following words be inserted:—"or his deputy, the Chief Vermin Control Officer."

This will ensure that the Chief Vermin Control Officer will be the chairman of the Agriculture Protection Board. From what members had to say on the second reading, it appeared desirable that an amendment of this nature should be moved.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: During the second reading debate I was not at all satisfied with the clause; but on hearing the Minister's reply about this provision being necessary because of internal administration of the department, I support the amendment and the Bill.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I thank the Minister for moving this amendment. When he introduced the Bill he did not mention very much about this aspect, but after members spoke during the debate, the Minister, in reply, produced a file setting out departmental recommendations. When

it was tabled we found that this was mostly a machinery measure. I support the amendment.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I also raised an objection; but after seeing the Minister, I discovered the need for these provisions, and therefore I support the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I was not advised of the position when I moved the second reading of the Bill, and therefore I could not give members full information. The queries raised by various members brought the information to light and this amendment should further clarify the position.

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

Clauses 3 and 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

#### *Third Reading.*

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

#### **BILL—ABORIGINES WELFARE.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [8.10]: Two years ago yesterday I was privileged to be able to go to a Loan Council meeting in Canberra to represent this State. Upon my return, and after furnishing a report of the conference to the then Premier, Sir Ross McLarty, I added a minute stating that in my opinion there were six major matters which were peculiar to this State and which did not exist in other States, or existed only in a modified form. One of those six matters was our native problem and for the information of members the other five were—

Our gold industry;

The impact of migration on our developmental programme at that time;

Our potential for food development;

The problem of the North-West;

Our transport rehabilitation problem.

The most important, in my opinion, was our potential for food development. However, that is by the way. The only other State where conditions approximate our own is Queensland, but even there the conditions are very much different. Our native problem arises from the fact that although we as a State have roughly only one-fourteenth of the total population of the Commonwealth, we have 40 per cent. of the native population. That gives our problem a significance and a character that is rather different from those of the other States. So I contend that the claims of some that we should be guided by the practice obtaining in other States are not altogether warranted. The conditions in those States are so different and the methods adopted by them are not necessarily applicable in our own case.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Is the position in Queensland very different?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Conditions in Queensland are quite different. The natives are different and the avenues of employment are different. There are some features which we have in common, but I cannot agree that by and large the measures that they find necessary to employ should be adopted willy-nilly here. I think we are quite capable of dealing with our own problem in our own way because, generally speaking, all parties in the House agree on the major aspects of the native problem. That is rather important when we come to consider such a question as this. I think we all agree that there is need for progressively reviewing the legislation which applies to our native population; cutting away the dead wood and bringing the legislation up to date.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is what this Bill sets out to do.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: It is a question of method, and I will come to that aspect later. We all agree that we have a degree of responsibility towards the aboriginal and caste population and we sincerely desire to support a programme of uplift and ultimate emancipation. We agree that racial discrimination as such should be discouraged; we agree that natives should be granted full citizenship rights as and when they are prepared to accept concomitant responsibilities; we agree, too, that the associated amenities of education, vocational training, employment opportunities and housing, at present provided, should be enlarged as soon as Government revenue reasonably permits.

I think it is necessary to mention all those things because sometimes there is a feeling that because one may not agree on method, one is opposing in principle the objectives that we are jointly trying to aim at. Having found where we agree, we can then proceed to the methods of approaching that particular target; whether we should make great strides or pursue a cautious attitude. I think, and many others think, that the Bill now before the House is trying to go too far, too fast at one time. There will be the loss of protection to many of the caste natives who we think are still in need of that protection and care.

We believe that some of the privileges that this Bill desires to grant to those natives can be dangerous. The problem is probably not as acute in the city; but I can assure members, from my own knowledge and experience, that the passing of this measure could present very embarrassing situations in some of our country towns. That is why, later on, I am going to suggest that the Bill be withdrawn for the time being, and that an all-party committee, representing all parties in this

Parliament, should consider what legislation should be brought forward which may progressively proceed towards the objective which I think we jointly hold.

At this stage I would like to register an emphatic protest against our receiving such an important Bill at this stage of the sitting. This Bill has been in another place since the 10th November. Members there had 31 days in which to consider it. Admittedly they were not all sitting days, but members there had several weekend recesses, which are very valuable when considering a Bill such as this, since they enable members to absorb what they have heard, give the matter consideration, and probably ascertain their constituents' reactions in their own districts. We are denied that opportunity.

As Mr. Parker said, this Bill is a re-hash containing 76 clauses, 30-odd new clauses, and 32 repeals. We must also remember that every repeal had a reason, and every new clause had a reason. To bring the measure along at a time like this is not fair to members of this House, particularly when they are asked to decide what is after all a very important matter. To understand clearly what the Bill is attempting to do, I think it is necessary to go a little into the factual background.

When speaking to a similar Bill last year, I did give in a detailed form an account of the work the then Government had done, because I have always believed that in the application of any laws and regulations to our natives, administration is of importance; more important than legislation. I think that within the powers given to the administrator—which were fairly complete—he was able to use his discretion to a great extent, and the only limiting factor, as far as I can see, would not be the nature of the legislation itself but the amount of money the Government could spare to enable him to carry out his suggestions and schemes.

A considerable amount of work was done during the past six years. I would go so far as to say that in the past 60 years we could broadly divide the native problem into two phases—I am omitting the original phase which, as the Minister for the North-West said, was covered by administrative measures going back to 1860 and 1890. I am dealing with the 1905 Act, which was an attempt to establish a system of protection and care for our native population. That proceeded fairly well up to the time the McLarty-Watts Government took office in 1947. Then, largely due to the interest and activities of Sir Ross McDonald, a considerable programme of reform was entered upon. Mr. Parker was one of the Ministers for Native Affairs during the McLarty-Watts regime. He can appreciate the interest that was taken by that Government and the measures which it adopted to try to improve the lot of the natives.

The State was divided into a number of districts, each with a qualified officer acting as the protector. The amount of money spent on native administration was doubled over that period. The missions were encouraged to enlarge their activities to such an extent that there was 17½ times the amount spent on assistance to missions in 1952 that was spent in the year 1947, which was the year that Government first took office. It is ironical to think that after that fairly active programme of rehabilitation, we have arrived at the point where there is a general criticism of the measures that have been, and are being taken.

I suppose it is due to the fact that educational facilities were provided for some of the caste natives, and these enabled them to think for themselves. There was a gathering consciousness of their own place in the scheme of things, and I suppose a natural desire that they should attempt to lift themselves up in the social scale. That, I think, was the natural result of the additional educational facilities that were provided.

We have every sympathy with their desire to raise themselves in the social scale; but the attitude we have always taken to the obtaining of citizenship rights is that it should be something they should gain by their own merits when they are qualified to receive those rights, rather than something that should be foisted on them, when in many cases they do not themselves desire it. I think it should be held out as a reward for effort, and should not be made a responsibility that is thrust on them willy-nilly.

If this Bill becomes an Act it will divide the natives roughly into three classes. We will have the tribal natives, with whom we have very little to do, and some of whom we never see.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: And of whom there are very few.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I think there are about 6,000 altogether. Then we will have the full-blood natives, who will still be under the care of the administrator; and, lastly, the caste natives who would be given citizenship rights and removed from the administrator's care, protection, and consideration—which many of them still badly need—and automatically given all the responsibilities a white man has. There are many of us who think that those responsibilities can subject them to temptation.

On examining the Bill, may I say for a start that I am a little intrigued at the desperate attempt to change the word "native" into the word "aboriginal." I frankly cannot see the need for it. The word "aboriginal" will eventually be reduced to "abo."

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It is an aborigines Bill.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That is a term of inferiority, and I do not think it is fair to ask them to accept it. A weak suggestion was made in another place that in foreign countries, and particularly in Asia, the word "native" is a term that is very much disliked. Such people would not use it in any case, it not being their language. But as it applies to us, the word "native" means that we are native-born, and it is one of which we can be justly proud. It points to something that we have in common with these people whom we ultimately desire to assimilate into our way of life. I can see nothing wrong with the word "native," and I think it will still persist whether it is contained in the Act or not.

It has been pointed out by Mr. Parker that this Bill is quite inadequate to do those things it sets out to do. Some consideration should be given, if another Bill is brought down in lieu of this one, to retaining the name "native" which is quite an honourable one, and which has stood the test of time since measures of this description were first initiated.

One of the difficulties in implementing a measure such as this is the spread of the native population throughout the State. There is almost a complete and separate problem in every part of the State, but the major concentration of the caste native, to whom this Bill would apply—that is to say, to whom the granting of citizenship rights would apply—is in the South-West portion of the State, and it is in those areas that there is a good deal of reaction.

I think these people have rights that should be considered, before a Bill such as this is entitled to take a permanent place in our statute book. Some of the disabilities which I think should be corrected, are that natives with less than a quarter dark blood are entitled to citizenship rights from birth. I can appreciate that, as years have passed, this question of determining who is and who is not entitled to citizenship rights could present the same difficulty. On the other hand, I think that in actual practice it would not have caused very much trouble.

There are 21,000 natives in this State, or one-thirtieth of our total population, and the only ones who would be concerned in this would be the 6,000 odd who are caste natives, and only a small proportion of those. In actual practice, I should say difficulties like that could be resolved without the necessity at this stage of immediately passing a Bill; it could be borne in mind to be ironed out as the pros and cons of introducing a further measure are resolved. In any case any one of these people can make an application under the Native Citizenship Rights Act for such rights. If they were qualified, that would resolve the question without any trouble at all.

I know there is the difficulty of social adjustment; but no matter where one goes, it must be remembered that that is something that cannot be solved by Act of Parliament; it is something that can be solved only by educational processes. The principal solution lies with the natives themselves, because I think if they are prepared to make an effort to be citizens in the same way as white people are citizens; if they dress the same way and talk the same way; and if they share our manners and customs of life, there will be no difficulty in relation to the associations of the white and the black, as it concerns colour alone.

But I am afraid there is not that right approach on the part of natives. Some of them have developed an inferiority complex, and they are apt to imagine slights that do not exist. I would like to give an instance of this. According to a newspaper published in Mullewa, two natives girls were prosecuted for assaulting two white girls. The story was that these two parties had been in a local cafe having some soft drinks. The two white girls were chattering and laughing as girls will. When they went out to get into a car, the two native girls, imagining that the white girls were laughing at them, followed and assaulted them. That attitude of mind can best be overcome by a system of education for both whites and blacks.

Some of the attempts to change the Act seem to border almost on the absurd. When introducing the Bill, the Minister referred to Section 6F of the Act, which sets out the duties of the department, one of which is to protect natives against injustice, imposition, and fraud. Those words can hardly be improved upon. Whether a person is termed a welfare officer or a protector, it is only a distinction without a difference, and has no effect on the character of the duties which that person has to perform. Converting "natives" into "aborigines" is, I presume, consistent with the idea that this Act shall apply to full-bloods only and that caste natives will be taken out of that portion of the Act altogether.

The Bill seeks to delete "and to protect them against injustice, imposition and fraud" and to substitute "as the Minister in his discretion considers most fit to assist in their economic and social assimilation by the community of the State."

In one sense, that means very little, and in another, it means a great deal, because it gives the Minister power to do almost anything he likes so long as, in his opinion, it is for the social assimilation of the natives into the community. The original words could not have been improved on. I refer to the substitution of the word "aborigine" for "native."

One of the steps which has not been taken in implementing a measure such as this is to obtain the advice of the police regarding the effects which mass granting of citizenship rights would have. The police are charged with the duty of maintaining law and order. While no official report has been furnished to the Government other than the note in the commissioner's report of this year, I know from personal conversations that many senior police officers are very much concerned about the possibility of keeping law and order if caste natives are suddenly given the right to enter hotels and drink.

It has been said the Licensing Act will take care of that, but there are two difficulties. One was mentioned by Mr. Parker last night, where the Licensing Act defines a native as an "aboriginal native." If "native" is taken out of this Act, then the term "aborigine" will not be used except in its correct sense. On technical grounds, the court may question whether a man is a native or not. The term "native" has been deleted and "aborigine" substituted in every case.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: In the Licensing Act it is left to the magistrate to determine whether a man is a native or not.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Over the years, police officers acted as protectors of aborigines in some districts, and they did a very good job. It is true that occasionally they had to prosecute natives when, at the same time, they were acting as their protectors, but the police officers balanced those responsibilities in a manner which brought about good practical results. But since the police have been more or less divorced from the administration of the Native Administration Act, there has grown up a tendency for them to come into conflict with officers of the Department of Native Affairs.

There is a good deal of merit in the proposal to provide land for full-blood aborigines. That must be taken in conjunction with the fact that this State is charged with the responsibility of implementing the war service settlement scheme, where a returned soldier takes priority over the ordinary applicant. Generally speaking, full-blood natives, by and large, have not developed an acute sense of responsibility. If they are to be provided with holdings which must be acquired at great expense, and with costly machinery, then this proposal should be approached very gingerly. Only selected aborigines should be placed on such plots. In theory, this is a good idea, but in practice, and from my experience, I think there will be difficulties. The merits of each applicant must be weighed before he is entrusted with those responsibilities. Some natives can accept responsibility, but others fall down very badly.

I now turn to a phase of the native question which I very much dislike bringing forward in this House. I refer to the attitude of the Commissioner of Native Affairs, Mr. Middleton, towards the matter of publicity. His frequent excursions into the public arena, and his regrettable tendency to associate himself with pressure groups, have given many people besides myself the impression that Mr. Middleton is the stormy petrel in the present agitation for the introduction of hasty and perhaps ill-considered action in regard to the native question. It is not the function of a departmental officer to make statements on policy. That is the prerogative of his Minister or the Government. I would not go so far as to say that Mr. Middleton has criticised members of Parliament. I do not know. But there is no doubt that those who have consulted with him have been very vocal in their criticisms of this House and its members.

This tendency on the part of Mr. Middleton to over-statement is clearly shown in his latest report dated the 30th June, 1953. This is in striking contrast to his earlier reports, which are couched in the official style which we are accustomed to expect in official reports. Such reports are invariably factual and impersonal, and explanatory notes are usually furnished as a guide to the full understanding of the story.

In his 1953 report, however, Mr. Middleton becomes frankly propagandist. He is critical of the people generally and—by implication if not by direct accusation—places the blame on Governments for inadequate policies and on parliamentarians for lack of sympathy. I do not think his highly-coloured picture of “unremitting despotism” on the one hand, and “degrading submission” on the other is true in substance or in fact. Mr. Middleton says:—

This conception was handed down from generation to generation and this idea was given legal expression in the passing of legislation reflecting the attitude of mind held by legislators and electors of the day. “Aborigines” were classed as “natives” and this immediately connoted a state of “apartness.” It approved of their pauperisation on the one hand and on the other directed a form of control which bordered on unwarranted interference with personal liberty unparalleled in the legislative treatment of any other people of the Commonwealth or Pacific territories.

We may admire Mr. Middleton’s literary style, which is, however, better suited to the role of political propagandist than to that of a public servant whose main job is to inform and advise his Minister for the time being and leave publicity and policy matters to him. If we contrast Mr.

Middleton’s style and story with the report of the Police Commissioner dated the 30th June, 1953, we gain some idea of this. It reads—

There has been a decrease of charges relating to liquor, under the Native Administration Act, there being 73 persons charged this year against 97 in 1952. The fines have been a little heavier, but some of them have been extremely light in comparison with the offence. The white man who associates with native women is one who should be dealt with most severely. Drinking amongst natives has been and is very prevalent and quite a number of natives have been charged with receiving intoxicating liquor.

Of the charges mentioned above, 20 were against whites for supplying liquor to natives; and 47 were against natives for receiving liquor. Apart from the natives charged with receiving liquor, a great many were charged with drunkenness. These figures are included under Section 53 of the Police Act.

Special patrols have been made during the year to control, in some measure, the offences under this Act.

Drunkenness amongst natives is very prevalent, and the obtaining of liquor by them is made easier on account of the large money earned by some of them, for there always appears to be someone around willing to get them wine, for which the native usually pays well.

Native women are becoming a menace around the city. Not only has drinking amongst them increased, but many wander about the streets to a late hour, especially around the week-ends, and solicit for prostitution, or place themselves in such a position that they can be contacted by white men seeking them.

During the year, four white men were prosecuted for cohabiting with native women.

Although this offence has received a considerable amount of attention, the police have only been able to minimise it. Cars are used to pick up the native women and take them out of the city, to parks or reserves.

The native males appear to assist the women in the offence, and are sometimes a means of preventing the police from obtaining sufficient evidence.

The native generally appears to be growing in his disregard for the law, and, apart from the fact that he wants liquor and will have it without regard to being caught, he has found ways of getting money easily and without working.

Half caste natives, both around the city and in the farming districts, have been responsible for an increased amount of crime, and it has been found extremely difficult to obtain convictions in a number of cases owing to the protection afforded to them by the provisions of the Native Administration Act, relating to confessions.

While the justice of these provisions, in regard to primitive natives, is not doubted, their application to educated half-castes has no apparent justification.

There is food for thought in that submission by the Commissioner of Police. It is set down in factual language and is something that should be taken into account when considering this measure.

Returning to Mr. Middleton, he claims that the native problem should receive attention and consideration and, indeed, sympathetic action, but one feels that Mr. Middleton, however laudable his intentions might be, has been much too sweeping in his condemnation, even in regard to the past, and ignores the substantial efforts which the Government has made and with which he has been associated during the past six years. I claim that Mr. Middleton, instead of exercising his penchant for criticism in this regard, should be proud of what has actually been done, and should be the first to realise that the problem is difficult and complex, that we must proceed slowly and be satisfied that what has been done in the past is but an augury of what the Government intends to do in future having regard to its obligations in other directions.

I think that this desire to help is common and not only amongst members of the Government and members of Parliament but also amongst the mission people, who have done a magnificent work towards uplifting and caring for the natives, particularly the young. I am afraid that the views of some people that we could, by some magic means and by some Act of Parliament, effect a sudden change for the better would call for one of those miracles that we just cannot expect. I wish it were possible; I would certainly support it, because the solution of the problem would then be within our reach.

It will be recalled that when I spoke on similar legislation last year, I mentioned that a good deal of publicity had been given to articles in the newspaper under the heading, "Not Slaves, Not Citizens", and mentioned that the writer, who could quote George Bernard Shaw, John Stuart Mill and Shakespeare, had obviously attained a high degree of culture and that he was one who should have citizenship rights. That was in answer to an interjection by the present Minister for the North-West, but Mr. Lavery said that the writer was a very cultured woman. I said I did not know whether the writer was a he or a she.

On the following day I received a note stating that the writer of the articles was a Mrs. Stuart, who had worked in the Department of Native Affairs. I regarded the note so seriously that I handed it on to the then Premier, who instructed the Public Service Commissioner to conduct an inquiry. He did so, and I intend to read the report prepared by him.

The report reached Cabinet on the 19th February and for the time being was allowed to remain for the reason that we had just finished an election during which there had been absolutely no reaction in regard to native administration or native affairs as revealed by the few questions that had been asked. I thought that the people in the country at least imagined that the Government would be returned and were quite happy about the actual record of active work done by the Government and were not worrying about changing methods of administration. We knew, as will be revealed by the report, that the Commissioner of Native Affairs had been admonished by the Public Service Commissioner on the question of publicity, and on that note we decided at the time to allow the report to remain.

This is a confidential report, but I have the sanction of the Public Service Commissioner to release it, and I have also advised my leader, Sir Ross McLarty, that I intended to make it public, because I thought the revelations made in it were something that the House was entitled to know. On an important question like this, where we have to consider all factors, it is very necessary to know what is and what is not the truth. The report from the Public Service Commissioner to the Premier, which is marked "Confidential" and is dated the 19th February, 1953, reads—

It has taken me quite a long time to obtain authentic information concerning the anonymous note sent to you by the Hon. Mr. Simpson and, even now, I am not sure on some points associated with it.

I can only guess at the author of the note, which I think must have been addressed to Mr. Simpson by someone who has more than an ordinary knowledge of the Native Affairs Department and its internal records.

My inquiries confirm that the articles were written by Mrs. Stuart (full married name, Dulcie Eunice Stuart, nee Singh).

Mrs. Stuart arrived in Western Australia as an immigrant in 1938. She was then single and she came here as a student nurse. Apparently she completed her nursing training, was later married, and on 6th February, 1950, she was granted a certificate of exemption by the Immigration Department "subject to your compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth

regarding residence." I understand this to be a complete exemption subject only to good behaviour.

From a confidential source, I subsequently learnt that Mrs. Stuart was born in British Fiji. From her maiden name, it may not be incorrect to surmise that her parentage is an Indian father and Fijian mother, but the possibility of her mother having been an Australian aborigine cannot be disregarded altogether. I have been told that Mrs. Stuart has some facial resemblance to our aborigines and she claims to have aboriginal blood.

Mrs. Stuart is said to be a well-educated and cultured woman. She was employed on the wages staff of the Native Affairs Department as Officer in charge of the Boys' Home, 11 Carr-st., West Perth, during the period 1/2/52 to 13/10/52. She resigned on the last-mentioned date and was re-engaged later (from 14/11/52 to 15/1/53 when she again resigned) "in a special capacity subject only to the Commissioner of Native Affairs", and her employment was to have been treated as "strictly confidential".

The first article "Not Slaves, Not Citizens" appeared in the "West" on 11/10/52—i.e., two days before her resignation from the position at the Boys' Home. The second article appeared on 5/11/52 when she was a free agent. A third article was published on 26/1/53 (Australia Day) shortly after she had resigned for the second time.

Recently I visited with Mr. Brownlie the Kwinana Housing project and other housing areas, and accompanying us were Mr. deBurgh and Mr. Loh, both, as you know, being members of the editorial staff of the "West Australian."

This trip gave me an opportunity to bring up the native question, and in the course of our discussion, I gathered confirmation—not directly—that Mrs. Stuart was the author of the articles mentioned herein. Both flatly denied that the author was assisted by any other person—in fact, both asserted that no one other than the Mrs. Stuart could have written them with the feeling and inside knowledge which she had introduced into the articles, which were really a summary of talks which Messrs. DeBurgh and Loh had had with Mrs. Stuart at the "West Australian" office. Both were so impressed with Mrs. Stuart and her sincerity that the articles written by her had become a "must."

I later told Mr. de Burgh of what I had been able to learn of Mrs. Stuart's entry into Western Australia and my surmise as to her nationality. This,

I think, shook him a little on the question of her qualification to write as a "native", but he still relies on her aboriginal looks as good evidence of her own claim to be classed as a native.

I have had talks with Mr. Middleton, not only as concerned Mrs. Stuart's articles, but on other articles which have appeared in the Press and which have had a direct or indirect relationship to Government policy in respect of native administration. He has denied having been instrumental in any way in writing or assisting in the preparation of these articles.

I have the feeling, however, that he may have been a little indiscreet on occasions—not with any intention to use outside influences for the furtherance of his own objectives, which may sometimes differ from Government policy, but through a well meant desire to encourage organised bodies in their sympathetic approach to the problems associated with the welfare of natives.

Mr. Middleton now knows my strongly held views of his position and the position of all administrative officers in relation to publicity and matters of policy. He has been fully warned, and I hope will not allow himself to become suspect in the future.

My own feelings of Mr. Middleton are that he is a very earnest officer, somewhat of an idealist and a little inclined, at times, to haste when a more cautious approach to his objective would be better. This last-mentioned trait still needs to be curbed, as it can easily lead to intolerance and general misunderstanding.

Those articles, I contend, were not written as we have been led to believe, by an Australian native, and that makes all the difference in the world as to the effect they should have on public opinion. If, as has been claimed here, Mrs. Stuart is a cultured Indian lady, having lived there during a time when India was inspired by national aspirations, it can be well understood that as a cultured individual she would be capable of writing the articles.

The Minister for the North-West: Did not you say she was a Fijian?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I know her and she is a half-caste aboriginal.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Her father was a native of India, and she was educated there. I do not blame "The West Australian." I believe that the paper was entirely sincere, but members will all recall that it was the publication of those articles that led to a spate of correspondence in the Press, and any person who regarded himself as decent and anxious to help would have thought, "This is a

typical average native who only wants an opportunity to get education in order to be the same as we are, and why are we not doing more about it? Why is legislation not being passed to give them greater opportunities?"

The man in the country was very sceptical and he did not believe that, but my point is that Mr. Middleton, as head of his department, and having his finger on the pulse and reactions of the whole State in regard to what was happening in this sphere, must have known who was the author of those articles; and I contend it was his duty to advise his Minister who wrote them, because the Minister definitely did not know and I am certain that the editors of the paper did not know. I maintain that Mr. Middleton was to be condemned for not reporting this matter, even if he only suspected who was the author.

The Minister for the North-West: But you told us that the editors discussed it with the writer.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: The writer of the articles went to the office of the paper and talked it over. Nothing was said about it here, but I am fairly sure that there was no conversation with the head of the Native Affairs Department and the editor of "The West Australian" on a matter which everybody knew had excited such widespread public interest. I am concerned with the truth of the matter, and that is what I am trying to establish here. When this question was discussed with the Premier, we had just emerged from an election and were no longer in power, and we felt that the admonition given by the Public Service Commissioner to the Commissioner of Native Affairs would be a sufficient lesson.

But we find that since then there have been more of these articles, more excursions into publicity, either with or without the Minister's knowledge. I do not know, because that is his affair; but I am trying to point out that if we permitted the head of every department, no matter how enthusiastic he might be, to publish his own views on departmental matters, irrespective of what his Minister thought, we would produce a state of chaos in our administration; and because of the effect on the public service generally, I think this doubtful action on the part of Mr. Middleton should receive consideration by this House.

It has been said on more than one occasion that a Minister in the Upper House—I was the Minister referred to—was unsympathetic towards the native problem and the natives generally, but I assure members that that is not true. I have been more or less closely associated with natives for upwards of 40 years. I came into intimate contact with Kaffirs in South Africa; and in England, during the war, I had

charge of a unit in which were a lot of Chinese coolies, and at another time a lot of Indians. I got on well with them, and learned to understand them as human beings. During the past 25 years I have come into intimate contact with the natives in my own district. I know their good qualities and their defects and I believe those I have met are a fair cross-section of the natives of Western Australia.

I believe that this Bill, if passed, will land us in trouble and will create instead of solving problems. That is why I repeat that the Government should appoint a select committee representing both Houses and all political parties, to confer on this question and frame a Bill devoid of political colour. If members say that this measure is not political, I would remind them that despite the vote of acceptance of this measure in another place, many amendments were proposed; and, as far as I know, only one was accepted. Many more would have been put forward if the Opposition in another place had had any encouragement to believe that amendments moved might be accepted.

The Minister for the North-West: There were only two on the notice paper.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Some were rejected. Others were put forward in the Committee stage and were not accepted.

Hon. C. W. D Barker: There was one on the notice paper.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I oppose this Bill with the reservation that I think steps should be taken to see that a new Bill is brought down—not a hotch-potch like this—for next session; and if that is done, we will be able to give it consideration.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [9.5]: In opposing the second reading of this Bill, I wish to remind members that as long ago as 1950, when speaking to the Address-in-reply, I appealed for action to be taken to deal with this question which I then described as a growing social problem that would become of major importance in the Great Southern areas unless something were done about it. I have never believed that this question could be cured or disposed of over-night, or that by a stroke of the pen we could succeed in overcoming all its difficulties and complexities.

We are now asked to believe that by this legislation we are going to hand out a new deal to these people—I think that was the term used when the measure was introduced in another place—and that the natives and whites concerned are going to have an entirely different approach, and that the whole trouble will be overcome by the passing of this measure which is a sort of shandy-gaff re-hash of the old legislation. It contains 38 amendments to and 31 deletions from the existing Act, and we are asked to believe that



this new deal is going to create a new set of circumstances entirely for those concerned.

It is not only the coloured people who are affected but also the white residents in country districts where the coloured portion of the population lives, and their interests must be considered. It is rather amusing to be asked to believe that this legislation will effect such a transformation. I will quote from a *Narrogin* newspaper dated the 30th July—

It is a dismal admission for me to make, I know, but the one piece of legislation which most effectively deprives aborigines from exercising their basic civic rights and imposes on them a heavy burden of administration, discrimination and restriction is that which purports to be the welfare measure enacted for their benefit; that is, the Native Administration Act. Whatever the intention may have been when this Act was first passed in 1905, its effect on the aborigines of today, and particularly those of the south is calamitous. Almost universally it is regarded as being an intolerable undemocratic restriction of the personal liberty of a section of our community. We who are charged with the unpleasant duty of administering it, regard it as repugnant to basic humanitarian and welfare principles, practically devoid of any common ground with the people we are trying to help and creative of more misunderstanding, dissatisfaction and abuse than any other piece of similar legislation known to the free world today. Because these prohibitive and restrictive clauses are written into our Welfare Act, aboriginal natives naturally enough blame and criticise officers of the department for action taken under the provisions of the Act by the police and other authorities.

That was a statement made by Mr. Middleton when addressing a public meeting in *Narrogin* and it gives a fair indication of what the present Commissioner of Native Affairs thinks of the legislation that we are now trying to prune, add to, and generally reshuffle in order to give this so-called new deal to the coloured people. I repeat that this is not a new deal for the coloured people nor what is wanted for the country people who share this problem with the coloured section of the community.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: What is required is a new pack of cards.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The previous speaker made reference to the activities of the present Commissioner of Native Affairs and I think the quotation I have given will at least to some extent confirm the view expressed by Mr. Simpson,

that we are in a rather unhappy position in connection with this department. If there is no political direction of it, and the political direction and propaganda and Press publicity are to be conducted by the chief administrative officer of that department, then I am not surprised that we are facing an unfortunate period in the administration of native affairs in this State.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What is the date of that newspaper?

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The 30th July, 1953. I am not blaming the present Government entirely.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Thank you!

The Chief Secretary: That is a change.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: No, I think the Government can preen itself a bit there, because I know of nothing else of the blame for which I would absolve it. There is a further quotation from the same source, with reference to the coloured people—

They must be given a point of commencement and that point is the immediate removal of this worthless legislation which bars their pathway to opportunity and eventual assimilation. Without this basic requirement, neither they nor we who are their official sponsors, can readily progress. The remedy and the means of effecting it, lie in the hands of the electors of this State.

I suggest that this departmental officer is stretching his privilege rather too far when he refers publicly to the legislation with the administration of which he is charged, and at the same time as a public servant calls on the electors of the State, in effect, to take the action which apparently he desires in order to achieve such alterations as he, the administrative officer, thinks fit. If we were foolish enough to pass this measure, its chief effect would be to accelerate the degradation of the adolescent and younger portion of the native population, at all events in the areas with which I am familiar.

I have said before—I am convinced it is correct—that our greatest difficulty arises when these people reach the age of adolescence; and as they grow older in their environment, they arrive at a pretty hopeless stage, about which very little can be done. There are among them odd ones that can be helped, and I think we must concentrate firstly on education and, to a limited extent, on housing for the worth-while subjects; and, above all—while I have in the past had some doubts, but not sufficient to oppose the idea—I suggest that we should have at least 10 establishments such as *Alvan House* and *McDonald House*.

Another proposal in the Bill before us that I do not like is that which gives the impression that we are going to solve this

problem on the cheap. I assure members it will not be solved by merely passing a piece of legislation which will create chaos and transfer the problems associated with it on to the backs of the people in the country. For a number of years the Treasurers of this State will have to be prepared to find a great deal more money than has yet been spent to operate the Native Affairs Department or other departments associated with improving and raising the standards of the half-caste population.

Hon. L. A. Logan: McDonald House and Alvan House will not be within the confines of this Bill.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Whether it is or not, I am satisfied that we have to try to educate the native children and adolescents as much as possible and remove them from their old environments so that they may lose their hereditary instincts that go back for thousands of years. Native children at present reach a certain stage at school, and often show a great deal of promise, and then they leave and go back to their parents in the bush.

For a long time I thought that if we concentrated on the establishment of farms for natives and managed by natives it would be the wisest course for us to follow. I am satisfied now, however, that it would be better if we brought the younger natives into the larger cities where there are more educational opportunities and better prospects of assimilation and where they would be away from this so-called prejudice that we hear so much about, particularly from the Native Affairs Department.

If we think—as apparently the Minister responsible for introducing this Bill thinks, if he has given any consideration to it—that we can solve this problem overnight we will be sadly disillusioned. If the people of the State can feel confident that we are well on the way to overcoming this problem within 50 years they can rest well content. I cannot see any prospect of accomplishing that goal under two or three generations. As I said before on previous occasions, when I was taken to task, we will not do it by giving these unfortunates the right to “politics and plonk,” and the Bill does not do much else.

In his latest report the Commissioner of Police emphasised the growing disregard for the law among many of the half-castes in this State. If we could place the responsibility for that where it rightly belongs I believe that we would find that it is largely the result of the policy followed by the Native Affairs Department and its officers. There seems to be a growing feeling among the half-castes that the hand of every man is against them, and that is not to be wondered at when the officers of the Native Affairs Department apparently take no responsibility for their actions.

If a question of health or cleanliness in the native camps arises, those officers disclaim responsibility and say it is a matter for the Health Department. If natives are disorderly, especially at country dances and other entertainments, those officers claim that that is not their responsibility, but that of the Police Department. If the native schoolchildren are not clean according to the minimum health standards, they say that that is not their responsibility but that of the Education Department.

These men call themselves welfare officers. I do not say that they themselves are responsible for the neglect of natives, but they seem to be divested of any responsibility beyond that of aping Daddy Xmas. As a result of some experience in this matter, it would appear to me that whenever these officers visit the country districts the natives are told that the road board, the policeman, or the farmers are all against them. Can anyone wonder at their reaction? I notice, in the Commissioner's report, that he mentions there is an anti-social attitude growing up among the natives in the southern part of the State, and I do not wonder at it.

Before we can make much progress with the native problem, the Minister might exercise some greater control over the activities of this Department. We do not want paid servants of the department acting the part of what we might call “agents provocateur” by going around the country and creating any more ill-feeling or dissatisfaction than that which already exists. We know and admit that these unfortunate people have been neglected. To give members an idea of the growing pressure of this problem I would point out that the neglected half-caste population in the South-West division of the State has risen from 1,000 in 1904 to 7,000 today.

It would seem that the Commissioner of Native Affairs can see no virtue in anyone who does not entirely agree with his approach to this subject. Any person who is critical, or who has ideas to assist these people that run contrary to those held by the Commissioner, is biased and greatly conscious of the colour bar. To confirm what I have said, I will quote a few extracts from the report made by the Commissioner of Native Affairs this year. The first one reads as follows:—

The great obstacle to their development, uplift and eventual assimilation is colour prejudice. This is something which is outlawed in other countries but which, in Australia, is entirely beyond the scope of administrative or Government control. It can be eliminated only by a self-purging on the part of those who entertain it.

Ignorance and prejudice have in the past completely nullified all efforts to improve the lot of the natives by

providing better administration, education and training facilities in this State.

That is a lot of rubbish. What has been done to assist missions and to educate young natives in this State is proof to the contrary. Continuing—

Defective policies, for which administrators were not responsible, resulted in the passage of defective legislation, the nature and effect of which is restrictive, protective, punitive and discriminatory. It is beyond human capacity for an administrator to function effectively under such legislation which is not understood by himself or by the people under the jurisdiction of his department.

If that is true, why any officer is prepared to carry on under those circumstances makes one wonder. Continuing to quote—

The nett result of all this is that in Western Australia aborigines and their descendants have now reached a point beyond which without the guidance and assistance of a competent welfare authority, they cannot readily progress. Their general standard of existence is at a level below that accepted as a normal, civilised living standard, and they represent a sub-economic group living cheek by jowl with members of a prosperous white community.

By a stroke of the pen overnight we are going to raise thousands of natives to the white man's standard!

I am surprised at the Government introducing a Bill such as this at this late stage in the session. I will read another extract of the report for the information of members. I hope it does not bore them, but I want the House to appreciate that it is not just ignorance and prejudice on the part of white people, but the approach made by the Department of Native Affairs, as illustrated in this report, which has accentuated the problem. Not only what has been said in this report, but also the statements made in other publications has proved to be one of the greatest obstacles against a realistic approach being taken to this problem, and any attempt that might be made to solve it. This extract from the report reads—

It is the duty of the department to align its administration with such policy and legislation, irrespective of any personal views and opinions its expert officers may hold.

There does not seem to be much evidence of that. Continuing—

Experience over the past five years has proved conclusively that where the recommendations of the department conflict with political self-interest, they are frequently shelved or set aside.

Again I maintain, that apart from politics and all the rest thrown in, it is the political head of that department who is responsible to Parliament and who is entitled to make statements such as that on behalf of the Native Affairs Department. Continuing—

At least one educated native has, as a writer, already made the white community in Western Australia keenly aware of the cruel injustice of prejudice.

Presumably that is the one to whom Mr. Simpson referred. Continuing the extract—

There are others who, to my knowledge, will soon be equally capable of dealing with the intemperate statements which from time to time appear on the lunatic fringe of daily Press correspondence.

To my mind it is extraordinary how anyone holding a responsible Government position can expect to engender confidence and win the support of the people whose assistance he will need—if he is to make a success of his department—by publishing a report such as this. One portion of the report dealing with the Murchison reads as follows:—

In this territory even those who claim to be pro-aborigine submit that an aborigine "must be kept in his place". Police officers contribute strongly to this latter policy in almost all instances . . . . To fight against discrimination and prejudice in the Murchison is to fight the entire recognised social system of the white community.

Again they are the poor martyrs of the Native Affairs Department. I wonder why they put up with it. After reading this quotation I will not bore members any longer with any further extracts. It reads—

This inadequacy in living conditions, coupled with the restrictive and outmoded provisions of our existing legislation, which amongst other things, makes it an offence for a native to do something which is no offence if done by a white man, only tends to create amongst the hybrids of the South an anti-social attitude, the consequences of which succeeding generations may live to regret.

Although I have not had any experience of it, I would not be surprised if an anti-social attitude among the natives does exist. If it does, I think we can hold the Native Affairs Department responsible for its growth in recent years. If the House will reject this measure, and if the Ministers representing the Government in this place are prepared to take heed of some of the statements made and some of the criticism directed, not only to the legislation but to the administration of this de-

partment, then rather than our regarding the time devoted to this Bill as time lost, it can be regarded as time very well spent.

Among other things, apart from the matters I have referred to, it might also be brought home to the officers of the department that misrepresenting Western Australia and its administration in any publications and lampooning the people of this State is not part of their job. In that regard, I would like to quote from a publication, "People", of the 7th October, 1953, which contains an article on "The Champion of the Aborigines". This article states—

Despite widespread opposition, Stanley Middleton is slowly improving the status of Australian aborigines.

This article is compiled from information of so personal a character that I have no doubt in my own mind as to the source of the information it contains. The article continues—

Middleton has, in a comparatively brief period, broken down a great deal of the prejudice against aborigines and has put an end to some of the worst forms of native exploitation. In doing so he has aroused the antipathy of a large section of the white community. The most vociferous opposition to his work has come from politicians and pastoralists, the State's biggest employers of native labour.

Not content with attacking Middleton for his public activities, those who feel themselves most wronged by his reforms have subjected him to vicious personal assaults.

I have never heard about that.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Terrible tripe, isn't it!

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Yes. But I think that some members of the Government should have these things brought to their notice. Some of the stuff that appears in this publication is not fair to the people of Western Australia. The article says—

The ferocity of the outcry against Middleton's attempts to free the aborigines from medieval oppression has shown that a West Australian author was not expressing a purely personal opinion when he advocated total subjugation of the aboriginal population. He seriously recommended castration as a means of ensuring the future docility of the race. "Castration", he wrote, "has a wonderful and soothing effect on all creatures of wild blood—is like lancing a boil or tumor. It seems to quieten and cow them once and for ever".

Rumour has it that this method of turning troublesome aboriginal employees into tractable servants was actually practised for a brief period by some pastoralists.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Who wrote that?

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: That appears in "People" and the information is so personal that it must have come from a source very close to Mr. Middleton.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That was taking place in the North-West when I was there in 1906.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I do not believe it.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Neither do I.

Hon. L. Craig: It is a base mis-statement.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The article continues—

One station owner suggested to Middleton that aboriginal women should be sterilised so that white men could have sexual relations with them without fear of their conceiving. Middleton later told the Western Australian Parliament that he would not tolerate social debasement of the aborigines or inhuman sweating of native labour.

I do not know when he told us!

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That paper always has wonderful articles in it.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Yes; but people in responsible positions should be careful of the information they give.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You could not lay that at the commissioner's door, surely!

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I wonder where it would come from, otherwise?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I do not know.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I think there should be an inquiry into the truth of those statements.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I wonder if it is worth while! I have read that because I wanted to confirm, to the limited degree I was able to, what Mr. Simpson said, and to draw the attention of members and the Minister's attention to the position that seems to obtain in this department.

I do not know Mr. Middleton. I met him once for a brief period when he was first appointed; but many people who know him seem to have the highest regard for the gentleman. As I do not know him, I am prepared to accept their opinion; but I think he is possibly an idealist who has let his idealism run away with him. I think that we may have reached the stage where there has been perhaps a lack of strong political control in the department, and his egoism or idealism has led him into the error that it is part of his job to take on himself the responsibility of the political head.

I notice in this article another mis-statement. There is a reference to Alvan House, Mt. Lawley; and I hope it is a mistake. It says that since the establishment of that home, 30 aboriginal girls have been trained there. Two days ago, I asked a question on this subject, and I was told

that 13 girls had gone through the institution. I would not like to think that the information given to this House was incorrect.

The Minister for the North-West: There is a difference in the dates.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: There would be. The date of this paper is the 7th October, 1953, and it states that 30 girls had gone through the institution. When I asked a question two days ago I was told the number was 13. There is a difference in the dates, but that does not help the Minister.

The Minister for the North-West: The statement may have been given much earlier.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I think the commissioner, with all his enthusiasm, has developed a sensitiveness that it would be well for him to overcome. Apparently, at some time or other, he was at Katanning, and I want to read something from this article that will amuse members. It is as follows:—

Country society, however, makes no attempt to conceal its antipathy toward him. Middleton and his officers are subjected to pointed ostracism in country towns. At Katanning recently a country editor, introducing Middleton to a friend in his club, said, "This is Stan Middleton, Commissioner for Native Affairs, but don't hold that against me."

I know that country editor quite well. He has often introduced me in those terms, and I have heard him introduce others in the same way. But no one seemed to think that he was being ostracised, or that there was any antipathy towards him because that gentleman, in his own rather inimitable way, took that means of introducing him to someone else.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is a phrase frequently used by people who want to be facetious.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: There are two other references I wish to make before I conclude; but first I want to make it clear that I have no hostility towards coloured people. I am very concerned with the problem, and I am possibly more concerned with it because of the difficulties I see piling up for the white population in country districts than I am concerned with it merely as it affects the half-caste population. This will be a tragic social problem in 20 years unless we can do something that will be really beneficial and will lead us to the goal of assimilation. It cannot be solved by just passing an Act of Parliament. It is a job towards the solution of which we have to contribute all we can.

I do not think there is a possible chance of reaching a solution by merely passing legislation that will place the burden on

the shoulders of the country people. As I see it, the major requirement is education, and homes will be necessary. There are not a great number of the adult natives, however, who can justify their being supplied with homes, and the development of the Alvan House and the McDonald House idea is a job for the Treasurer of this State.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is a bit expensive.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: It will cost a lot of money. We are spending £180,000 per year on this department, but that will have to be multiplied at least three-fold. The problem cannot be solved by those in charge satisfying their own consciences and creating an atmosphere of martyrdom around themselves, condemning all and sundry who cannot immediately see eye to eye with them.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I understand that it costs £12 per week for each girl at Alvan House.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: It might cost that figure, but we have to face it. I subscribe to the idea of Alvan House because I cannot think of a better one. If there is a better one that will cost less, let us have it; but if there is not, and the cost is £12 per week, let us push on with it, because we must do something to stop the problem getting out of hand; and out of hand it will get if it is allowed to drift along in the present way. Not everyone who is associated or has been associated with the natives of Western Australia is carried away by a sentimental approach to the problem. Admittedly these people have been neglected. But I would suggest in all seriousness that, as regards their material position, the half-castes in the southern areas are in a better position physically and economically than were their forebears when the white men first came to this State.

They led nothing but a nomadic existence with no idea of housing. They merely lived in wurleys and miamias, and moved from place to place. They had no idea of tilling the ground. If all reports are correct, he was rarely well fed. His position today is nothing like we would desire to see it, but I submit it is a considerable improvement on what it was then. When we talk of curing this position by merely conferring citizenship rights, I would like to read what Mr. A. O. Neville, a former Commissioner of Native Affairs, had to say in April, 1953. These remarks were reported in "The West Australian"—

As one of the proponents of the assimilation policy I believe that caution is advisable in approaching so great a change. We never believed that it could be introduced in a day; it was recognised as a long-range objective. Like many others I am with the coloured people in desiring to en-

sure their progress, but let it be orderly and not such as will bring them into further dispute. It must raise the standard of all, not just a few of the most promising, though none judged worthy by the highest standards of good conduct and efficiency should be denied the fruits of his ability.

The tempo of this progress can be speeded up in proportion to our desire to have it so. Social discrimination will continue as long as the native people remain far below the accepted standards in education, way of life and conduct. Eliminate these bars and colour distinctions will count but little. To declare every native a citizen now will be of no positive help; it will simply bring about a position such as exists in the Union of South Africa and elsewhere, and be the antithesis of true assimilation.

Mr. Neville is not without some knowledge of the subject. I have never met him, but I presume he is one of those who will be accused of prejudice. Apparently "The West Australian"—despite the publicity it gave to an article headed "Not Slaves; Not Citizens"—was broad-minded enough to publish other people's opinions, and on the 28th April we find this statement by Mr. Neville—

Education, be it academic, technical, or agricultural including pastoral, at our standards is the pass-key to the new way of life for the native people. Anything less must keep them in subservience and lifelong discord with us. There is much to be done, and I fear a good deal of money to be spent.

We have to face these things as they are, and not as we would wish them to be. If we are to get the Government of the day—any strictures I have to pass on Governmental or political action in this connection are not necessarily directed to the present Government alone—to make a realistic approach to the matter, the Treasurer will have to recognise the problem as it is. In addition, Parliament and the people must realise that if we are to overcome it, and stop it from becoming a festering sore and something worse in later years, much money will have to be spent, and a move made in the direction of educating the children at Alvan House and the missions, and trying to qualify them for a position in the life of the white community.

I am opposing the Bill, not because I am prejudiced; not because I do not think something should be done soon for the natives; but because I think it is merely a sham and a mockery and will get us nowhere if we pass it. In addition, it will make the position of the half-castes worse than it is today.

**HON. C. W. D. BARKER (North) [9.50]:** I support the Bill. I have followed its passage since it was first introduced in another place. It is pleasing to hear all those who have spoken on it say it is time that something was done about the problem, but I am surprised that no one has yet come forward with any suggestions to solve the problem in a practical way. No one has suggested what should be done to the Bill.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker:** You cannot do anything to it.

**Hon. C. W. D. BARKER:** I think we can. I was interested yesterday and today to hear various members speak on the Bill, and before I continue further I would like to read a small passage from the Declaration of Human Rights which we should keep in our minds during this debate.

**Hon. L. A. Logan:** I gave you that last night.

**Hon. C. W. D. BARKER:** Yes; the hon. member did quote the articles, and so did my good friend Mr. Hearn. He said we should abide by them, and I think we should. I shall read now articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Declaration of Human Rights—

1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

We, as a nation, put our signature to this document, and I think it is only fair to bear it in mind during the debate on the Bill, because here we are dealing with human beings—not real estate. The solution of the problem is in our hands. Politics should not enter into it. We in this House realise we have a difficult problem before us. I think the solution of it lies in the Bill. I have listened to those who

have spoken, and I think every member will admit that there are two sides to every argument.

In the Bill, we are dealing with original Australians. How many of us know anything about these people? Last night Mr. Logan asked who could say how long they had been here, and whether they were the first people in Australia. I do not think they were. The actual original Australians were the people that the aborigines found when they came here. A large section of the people in Western Australia, and in other parts of Australia, too, wrongly claim to know all about the aborigines. I claim that this section is dangerous and detrimental to the uplift of these people.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: What is your authority for that statement?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If we are to believe the anthropologists, and such-like, we must subscribe to those ideas.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: You have just decried the opinions of those people.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I do not think so. They claim to know all about the aborigines, but I say they are the main section who are holding the aborigines back. They do not even know their own limitations. I do not say that that applies to members of the House, but it may in many cases. The destiny of the aborigines lies in our hands. The Department of Native Affairs does not make laws.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: It is having a shot at it.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It carries out the policy that we lay down for it to implement. Legislation is the tool we place in the hands of the department; and if that tool is defective, it follows, as a natural consequence, that the department's administration must be defective. If we give it the right tools to work with, I claim that its officers will be efficient enough to handle them so as to give us a good return for our money; but if we do not give them the right legislation, we cannot expect a proper return for our money. The people I have referred to who claim to know all about natives, accept the works of scientists such as veterinarians and agriculturists, but scoff at the works of anthropologists and ethnologists. From the anthropologists we learn that there are three main divisions of human beings.

First of all there is the Caucasian, as represented by the Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean peoples; next the mongoloids, represented by the Chinese, Japanese, Malays, American Indians and many of the people of the Pacific Islands; and, finally, the negroid people of Africa, the Papuans, and the Melanesians. The aboriginal is neither negroid nor mongoloid; there is plenty of evidence to prove that. He has none of the physical character-

istics of either. His bone structure, hair, skin, and features differ entirely from those of the negro.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No one has queried this.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Dr. Hislop will bear me out in this. Here we are getting down to a scientific basis in order to learn something about these people, and their origin.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You are putting up a cock-shy and knocking it down again.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: No, I claim these people are caucasians.

Hon. L. Craig: Everyone knows that.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Remnants of their migration can be traced from the plains of Southern India across the Malay Peninsula to Australia.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What has this to do with the Bill?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If they are caucasians and we also are caucasians, is it not a fact that we are dealing with our blood relations? That is the point I am trying to make.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Does it matter under human rights?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Your imagination is running away with you.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: No, I am stating facts. These people are our blood relations. Let us start with that fact. I have travelled the world as the commander of a ship, and in other ways; and in every country that I have been in where there have been white and coloured populations, there have been half-castes; and, contrary to what anyone says, a marked colour prejudice. I have asked myself why there should be this colour prejudice. I have travelled throughout the British Commonwealth as a commander of a ship and in other ways.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What ship?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The "Salamoa" belonging to the North American Co. The ship was taken over as an auxiliary, and I was transferred to another which I took to Canada. It was used as an auxiliary. I stayed in Canada for the greater part of the war, and then I was on L.S.T.'s for the rest of the war.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What navy?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The Australian Navy. In countries I visited where there were coloured and white people, I always found half-castes. There was also colour prejudice. That same colour prejudice is present in this House and elsewhere in the State. We consider we are white people and in so doing we feel a sense of superiority. That is bred in us.

I have asked myself if this is a sense of guilt or shame. After all, who is responsible for the half-caste? I leave that question to be answered by anyone in the House. The white population is respon-

sible. The intention of the Bill has either been misunderstood or deliberately misrepresented by some members. It is the intention to remove dead wood from existing legislation to try and make it workable; it is an attempt to place in the hands of the department a tool with which to carry out a job. It is also intended to be the means to fulfil the promise made to aborigines that we would give them a chance to uplift themselves and a chance to be assimilated into the community.

Tonight the familiar red herring of access to liquor was drawn across the trail. That aspect should not affect this piece of legislation at all. The Bill is concerned with native welfare, not the right to drink. The right to drink should be discussed on a different level and in a consideration of the appropriate Act; namely, the Licensing Act. Members have quoted tonight from the Licensing Act and I shall not repeat the quotations. The first clause in the Bill seeks to alter the term "native" to "aborigine." There is a good reason for that. The term "native" is offensive.

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

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It does not mean the old man of the village who has spent years there. It means, in this country, a blackfellow, a "boong," or "gin." By calling them aborigines, an attempt is made to give these people a pride in their race. It is something to look forward to and something to uplift them. Everyone will agree that the word "native" is offensive.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I am a native of Western Australia.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I can tell the hon. member that—and he will not be alarmed—but when we describe a coloured person as a native, we mean that he is a blackfellow. I respect the views of previous speakers. I am pleased to know that they realise that something must be done on this subject. There are two sides to every question.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You said we did not understand that.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I did not say that. If I did I would be right in the hon. member's case. Mr. Parker would like the Bill to be defeated because of the definitions clause. He treats it as a hashed-up affair because of that clause.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Tell us what it means.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It means that descendants of aborigines will be citizens of Australia.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Are they not citizens immediately they are born?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: They are not. I would call them slaves.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Are not slaves citizens?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: They are not, because they have no civic rights as we have. That is a poor argument coming from a man of the ability of the hon. member. The only thing Mr. Parker has against the Bill is that it will, as he says, leave these people out on the limb overnight. I say it will confer citizenship rights on them. I can find nothing in the Bill which will indicate that these people will be left helpless after they are granted citizenship rights. Furthermore, I have the assurance of the Treasurer and the Minister that if this Bill becomes law, these people will continue to receive help, and the missions will also receive the same help as they are now receiving. That assistance will be rendered during the time of the rehabilitation of aborigines into our way of life.

Perhaps if Mr. Parker and I were to get together we could make the Bill workable. I would propose an amendment to this effect, "Notwithstanding the provisions of this or any other Act, the Minister may on the advice of the commissioner, provide financial and welfare assistance to the descendants of aborigines in any circumstance as may be deemed by him to be necessary and desirable."

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You now want to put a similar provision back into the Act.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Citizenship rights can be conferred on these people, and during their rehabilitation the Minister can be empowered to give financial or social assistance.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You cannot push them out and pull them back again.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: No one wants to do that. To say that the granting of citizenship rights to them is going to cause chaos overnight, is entirely wrong. It will, on the contrary, give these people something to look up to. It is going to be the beginning of their emancipation.

Reference was made by Mr. Roche to the problems in his electorate. I believe they are serious. In 1914, there were only 1,000 half-castes in the State; but today there are 7,000. If the problem is half as bad as members would have us believe, is it not logical to conclude that today is the time to do something about the problem, rather than leave it for another ten years when it will be even greater? As the number of half-castes increases, so will the problems. It is of little use to say "This legislation will do no good, so let us throw it out of the window." Anyone can do that. This measure requires statesmen-like handling; it cannot be handled by politicians.

I hope there are one or two in this House who can help me! I shall be pleased if Mr. Parker will confer with me on the amendment I propose. I see the hon. member shaking his head. He does not



want anything done for these people. We will not do anything for them by throwing this legislation out. A start must be made somewhere. It will not create chaos overnight as has been suggested. In New South Wales, South Australia and, recently, in the Northern Territory, the coloured people were given the right to vote. Has anyone heard of chaos or riots in those States? Has anyone heard of murders or brawls through natives being allowed to drink like ordinary citizens?

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: They have a vote.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: They have the right to drink and vote. They can do both.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I challenge that statement.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It is our duty to give these people a chance. Let us remember that we are dealing with human beings and not with real estate. This is a fact that every member should bear in mind. If we do not take action to deal with this problem, it will become worse and worse.

Hon. A. L. Loton: What about South Africa?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Yes, there is trouble in Africa, but if we take action to deal with this problem, we may avoid the troubles that are occurring with the native peoples in other countries. Those countries allowed the problem to drift and drift, but if we take it in hand now, we shall be able to avoid their unfortunate experiences. The time to deal with the question is here and now. It is of no use describing this measure by all sorts of names—as some members have done—names that I cannot remember for the moment.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I said it would be entirely useless.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: We have meted out rotten and abominable treatment to the coloured people and is it any wonder that they have developed a sense of inferiority. To my mind, there is not the slightest wonder at all. We have not fostered good relations with them; we have kept them out of our society and out of our reach, and until we awaken to the fact that we must recognise their presence and absorb them into our community, we shall not have too much to look forward to. Mention has been made of the great work being done by the missions. I have a high regard for their work, but for us to think that we can hand over this problem to them would be quite wrong. It would be too much like the action of the ostrich burying its head in the sand and would not get us anywhere. I believe that the missions would be the first to admit that they have as much on their hands as they can cope with. What with shortages of staff, shortages of buildings, and short-

ages of money, everything is against them. Missionaries, too, are few and far between; they do not grow on trees. A missionary is a man who is prepared to endure hardships, live in lonely places and sacrifice all worldly goods in order to help his fellow men. The missions are handling only about 2,000 natives, including children, which represents about 8 per cent. of the whole of the natives in the State. We cannot leave the problem to the missions. They have enough to handle. The rest are the responsibility of the white people of the State, and we must do something about it. We cannot wipe our hands of this trouble and let it fester in our midst.

I claim that members have nothing to fear from passing the Bill. On the other hand, I consider that it would be taking a step in the right direction.

Hon. L. C. Diver: It would be unworkable.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The natives would have a lot to fear from it.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If the Bill becomes law, the full-bloods will still be under the control and direction of the department.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Only the full-bloods.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: By giving these people citizenship rights, we could look after them just as we looked after our servicemen when they returned from the wars. We provided for them a period of rehabilitation. Why cannot we do the same thing for these people? Whose fault is it that they are where they are today? It is our fault. We should give them a period of rehabilitation, and it would be our duty during that period to look after them financially, economically, socially and in every other way.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: Are not we doing something now?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: We are not doing much. Is the hon. member proud of the coloured people in his district?

Hon. L. C. Diver: Some of those people handle £40 a week.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: How many of them do so and for how long? Not too many. They might handle a fair sum of money for a few weeks during shearing time, but I could not imagine the hon. member or anyone else paying one of those workers £40 a week.

Hon. L. C. Diver: They are paid it for shearing.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: But shearing is seasonal work that extends over only a part of the year.

Hon. L. C. Diver: How about crutching time?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Citizenship rights would mean a lot to these people, but it would not represent the be-all and

end-all for them. Far more important would be the social and religious instruction, and the provision of homes for them to live in. In that way we could do much to uplift them. Give them the citizenship rights and they will have something to aspire to and look forward to.

Dealing with the subject of drink, I have seen half-castes who worked shoulder by shoulder with white men all day. All belonged to the same union and did the same sort of work, and the whites accepted the coloured men as mates. But at night the natives were not allowed to go into the hotel with the whites; and what is a hotel but a working man's club? If the coloured people had the right to go into the hotels with their mates and take a drink as and when they wished, they would not drink half as much as they do now.

At present when a native wants a drink, he has to get somebody to buy it for him. Generally he gets a bottle of wine, because it is easier to carry than a bottle of beer. It is generally the cheapest of wines, two or three drinks of which would knock anybody. If these people could take a reasonable drink now and when they desired, there would be no more drunkenness amongst them than amongst the whites. Of the cases involving charges of drunkenness, etc., quoted to us tonight, the greater proportion would be for receiving liquor. You, Mr. President, and I do not get into trouble if someone buys us a drink or brings a bottle of liquor to us, so why should they?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Giving them the right to liquor and the power to vote are the only things in this Bill.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: What is the hon. member afraid of?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What else is there?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The hon. member is evidently afraid of what would happen if they got the vote.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Then why bring it up? What difference would it make if they got the vote?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: This Bill is a subterfuge for that and that only.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The hon. member is trying to pretend that this piece of legislation has a political flavour.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I am not trying to pretend; it has.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: This is the time to put into the hands of the department a piece of legislation that will be workable, not a piece of political propaganda. Members should appreciate that this problem is our problem. We cannot wipe our hands of it and give it over to the missions. As I have stated, they could not handle it and they would be the first

to admit that. We must realise that we have a responsibility to these people.

Another provision in the Bill relates to permits. The old idea of issuing a permit appeals to me as bordering on slavery. Before a man could be given work, he had to take out a permit. This system was resented by employer and employee alike. No-one was pleased with the arrangement, and it is the intention of the Bill to wipe out that system entirely. One member stated that if the Bill became law, lepers would be at liberty to travel backwards and forwards without let or hindrance.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Caste people could.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I do not think they could do any harm because, amongst the 240 or 250 people in the leprosarium, there might be one or two half-castes. All said and done, in these modern times leprosy is not the dread disease it once was. Much has been learnt about it during late years, and there are certainly diseases more to be dreaded than leprosy. I do not think members need entertain any fear on that account.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in trying to work under the conditions laid down by the Act. Quite recently a boat crew wished to put into Port Hedland, but was not permitted to do so because amongst those on board were some natives from the northern side of the leper line. The provision that an aborigine is not permitted to be in the vicinity of a creek where luggers, etc. put in, is quite out of date and there is no longer any necessity for it. As the Minister stated when moving the second reading, if that provision were put into effect, it would debar all the coloured people from entering practically every town on the coast. I should say that they would be actually debarred from entering every town on the coast. For instance, no person of this race would be permitted to stay in Broome.

This Bill is a genuine attempt to chop the dead wood out of the Act and give these people of flesh and blood a chance to uplift themselves. In the North there are several full-bloods whose lot during the last six or seven years has been greatly improved, but I would be one of the last to try to uplift the full-bloods on the stations. They are living 10,000 years behind the times, right back in the stone age, and are not ready for the treatment proposed to be meted out to caste natives. However, I consider that we should set to work with the children of the full-bloods because, if we do not attempt to save them, there will not be any full-bloods left in the North in the course of a few years, due to our treatment of them.

In this State, the Minister told us there are very few children compared with full-blood adults, and we should certainly do something for those few; but for the older full-bloods living on the stations, I do not

think we can do more than leave them where they are and give them the best treatment possible in the circumstances. In the case of the half-castes, however, we have a problem that must be given attention. I think every member realises that something must be done for them. Then why not get together and try to do something? Let the Bill be taken into Committee and try to frame it so that we can uplift these people.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Then you admit that the Bill is no good.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If the hon. member considers it to be no good, I appeal to him not to assist in throwing it out of the window. Let it be taken into Committee and discussed further. I am prepared to move my amendment if the Minister will accept it and discuss it with the hon. member. With his knowledge, he could be helpful.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I could never convince you.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The hon. member has convinced me many times. I admire and respect him, and now I am asking him to stand by me and not hastily throw this legislation out. I repeat that we should take it into Committee and see what we can do with it there. I support the second reading.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [11.0]: I think it advisable first to state what the Bill proposes to do. In effect, it proposes to make all natives who are not full-bloods white people, or to give them all the rights of white people.

I wish to dissociate myself from some of the rather intemperate statements of the previous speaker, although I admire his earnestness. I think all who have studied the Bill and given thought to the question are trying to do what is right in dealing with the problem of the coloured people of this State. We must accept the fact that members are in earnest and have no ulterior motive. I do not believe the Bill has any political implications, but that the Government feels itself obliged to tackle this problem, which is becoming more serious as years go by; and it must be given credit for wanting to do the right thing by the coloured people.

I feel that the present commissioner of Native Affairs has been foolishly intemperate in his statements. One might almost say he has been impertinent in his public statements. No one doubts his earnestness, but his folly in publicly making statements about the Act which it is his duty to administer is obvious. If he objects to the obligations imposed upon him by the Act or the powers that have been given him, he should complain to the Minister and not complain publicly.

It is as well to study the background of the aborigines of this country a little. I do not agree with the proposal to change

the name from "native" to "aborigine". I am proud to be called a native of Australia, because it means only that one was born here, whereas "aborigine" means "from the beginning", and indicates that the person so designated is one of the original inhabitants of this country. The accepted meaning is that a person born in a country is a native of the country.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: It avoids ambiguity.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The word "aborigine" might be used politically or officially, but I think "native" will continue to be the accepted term. The aborigines or original natives of Australia throughout the centuries have shown no sign of culture or of a desire to lift themselves out of a nomadic state. There are no traces of their having attempted ever to build structures of any permanence. They live in mia-mias and when those become contaminated they say the ground is sick and move on. It may be claimed that they have some culture, in their drawings, but those are all primitive. The background of these natives is primitive.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Their drawings have something on the modern French art.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The hon. member may prefer native art, but I prefer the French variety—not that I know much about either! My family has been associated with natives in the North for 50 or 60 years, and we have found them, in their unspoiled state, to be a lovable, friendly and trusting people. If treated kindly and very firmly, with great kindness but with strictness and justice, they are a lovable people.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: How much kindness did they get?

Hon. L. CRAIG: A tremendous lot, as the report from Mr. Rhatigan, a former officer of the department shows.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: What do you call kindness?

Hon. L. CRAIG: It depends on what one means by the term. All the official reports indicate that natives in the North have, on the whole, been treated with great kindness.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Only in later years.

Hon. L. CRAIG: How would the hon. member know?

Hon. G. Bennetts: I was up there.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Was the hon. member up there 100 years ago? I will not discuss the matter with him. Today we have a station which is almost run by natives, and a few half-castes who have not left the property; and we could not find better people.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is true. Many have improved their condition.

Hon. L. CRAIG: When mixed with the whites they become contaminated.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: How right you are!

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is admitted; but in their background they are a most primitive people. In the early days one would bring gins in and train them for domestic work. They would be neat and clean while at the homestead; but when they went back to the camps, they would take off their clothes, and roll in the dust, and rub mud in their hair because that was their nature, and they liked it. If we accept these things, we will understand the difficulties that will be encountered in granting these people citizenship rights.

Only last year we had two half-caste girls on the station and one could not find nicer or cleaner people. At night they used to put on silk stockings, and they spoke good English and were well educated. They went away and found their mates, and today they are living out in the mulga with their hair matted with grease and mud, having gone back to the native state. That is part of the make-up of these people, but it can be bred out of them.

In that portion of the State from Geraldton southwards, there are about 3,000 of these people who are not of full-blood. We will call them half-castes; though, in fact, they are quadroons, octoroons, and so on. The problem is not insoluble now, so long as we do not wait until there are 30,000 of them to be dealt with.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is the point I was trying to make.

Hon. L. CRAIG: There is a problem in the North, but it is nothing compared with that in the South; because in the North these people, generally speaking, are well treated. The real problem lies in the area from Geraldton south; and if members accept that, the difficulty does not become so great, although it remains a serious one.

People in the Great Southern towns complain that, if the Bill is passed, there will be riots and drunken orgies, and that it will not be safe for women to walk out after dark. I do not deny that danger; but if one lets any child loose in a sweet shop, it will gorge itself but will not continue to do so after it becomes sick. There will be a problem when the supposed added freedom is granted to people who are not used to it. All the Bill seeks, in effect, is to give natives the right to enter hotels and, as Mr. Parker said, the right to vote. I do not think there are any implications about the right to vote. The negroes in America have the right to vote, but in the South none of them exercise it.

Hon. H. L. Roche: They are not game to.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is so. Let us pass over the problem of voting, as it is not important. I am trying to get down to the real problem facing the Government whose responsibility it is. I think

members living in the agricultural areas of the State will agree that the real problem is in those districts where natives are living in camps that are a disgrace to humanity. As Mr. Rhatigan, who has been an officer of the Department of Native Affairs, says, it is not legislation the natives want but the provision of material amenities. He is right. No legislation will make any difference to the natives unless we can raise them to a better condition of life. I am not so concerned with the present generation of natives, although we will have problems there, but the police have not said they will be unable to handle the situation.

Last year the present Minister for the North-West introduced a private Bill imposing similar obligations on the previous Government—the obligation of granting citizenship rights to all natives of whatever blood; and now the present Government gladly accepts the responsibility, with two and a half years of office still to run, and wishes to grant citizenship rights to these people.

I have not yet heard that the police would be unable to handle the situation, and I am not so worried about the adult natives, because the real problem has to do with the children. Unless we can remove them from their present environment we will have an ever-increasing population of half-castes, native in their sentiments, habits, and way of life. We must free the native children from their present environment. I may be wrong, but I think we must accept the responsibility involved for the sake of those children.

What are we doing today with the young children? We are saying to them, "You come to our State schools in the country, and you must come cleanly washed and with clean clothes; otherwise you will be sent home." I am told on good authority that native children are attending the schools well-washed and with clean clothes.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They are too.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I have not heard one member of Parliament who represents those districts where there are large numbers of natives deny that the half-caste children are a credit to their mothers.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: I dispute that statement in its entirety, because I have evidence to the contrary.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Mr. Simpson is the first one I have heard say that. I will admit that there are children who are a disgrace to their parents; but, generally speaking, considering the conditions under which their mothers have to wash their clothes and keep them clean, they are a credit to the parents. Let us accept that. We treat those native children who attend the State schools as equals. We sit them down beside our own sons and daughters. Our children call them by their christian

names, and they call the white children by their christian names. We treat them in the same way as we would any white child. Therefore, we have accepted them from the age of six years to 14 years. But what do we do with them when they turn 14? We say, "Get to hell out of it, and get back to your camp, because you are niggers." Is that untrue?

Hon. H. L. Roche: Yes.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not think it is. If we do not say that to them, we treat them in a way that implies it.

Hon. L. C. Diver: I do not agree with that.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It is of their own choosing.

Hon. L. CRAIG: After they turn 14, we do not treat them in the same way as we did when they were attending school.

Hon. L. C. Diver: I have seen many families given the opportunity of being treated well, but they did not take it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Apparently because the parents did not understand. I admit that there are many like that; there are exceptions to every rule. Nevertheless, we are not blaming the children for the sins or remissness of their parents. It is of no use continuing with that policy, because in another ten years those children, in turn, will be the parents of more children, and they will have no chance of changing their ways. Therefore, we have to face up to this problem of handling these 3,000 half-caste citizens.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Seven thousand.

Hon. L. CRAIG: There are 3,000 south of Geraldton.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Seven thousand.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The official figures are 3,000. I cannot place my hands on these figures now, but the Minister for the North-West confirms that figure. We can call it 4,000 if we like, but the official figures show that there are just under 3,000 half-caste natives south of Geraldton. The main thing is that that is a number we can handle. When the half-caste population exceeds 20,000 it becomes a national responsibility.

I have asked men who have been associated with natives in all parts of the State—both in the north and the south—if they are opposed to the principles in the Bill. I have placed before them the problem associated with the native children and asked them what they would do if they were charged with the responsibility of looking after them. There is not one who did not say, "I believe we have to do it now;" and, in my opinion, we have to do it now before it becomes a real problem.

I do not think the granting of citizenship rights to the caste population is going to be an insuperable obstacle. I

do not think for a moment that that will make any difference to them socially. I do not think white people will accept them any more readily than they did before. I believe, too, that it will lessen the drunkenness that is so prevalent among the natives. In the wine-growing districts everyone who plants an acre of vines is automatically granted a gallon licence to sell wine.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: A bottle licence.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No, a gallon licence.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No, they can sell it by the bottle.

Hon. L. CRAIG: To my knowledge, a maker of wine has the right to sell it by the gallon.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Only on his own place.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I know that natives today are getting all the wine they care to drink, but they are not getting good wine. They are obtaining wine at the highest price that cannot be sold to anyone else. Because it is illegal for them to drink it, they do not drink by the glass, but by the bottle.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Pure plonk!

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes; plonk which is bad enough to drive any sensible member in this House crazy. Therefore, I believe that the Bill will not lead to any increase in drinking among natives; I think it will be lessened. Is there no obligation on an hotelkeeper or a licensee to take steps to quell a riot that might take place in his bar?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It does not take place in his bar.

Hon. L. CRAIG: But natives will have the right to go into a hotel bar if citizenship rights are granted to them. Is there no obligation on the part of a hotel licensee to ensure that no riots take place in his bar? Are we to relieve him of all responsibility? He has to take such action if a riot occurs among white people on his premises. Are there no riots in bars? I think the dangers that would result, if this Bill is passed, are exaggerated. I believe, too, that the natives, after perhaps a riotous beginning, will learn to go into a hotel bar and drink a glass of beer instead of copious glasses of wine.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And take it home to their camps.

Hon. L. CRAIG: They take liquor home to their camps now. There is no shortage of liquor among natives today, so there will be no difference in that respect if they are granted citizenship rights. I believe that if they are given this freedom it will have some moral effect on them if they are told that they must accept the obligations that go with such freedom.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It will give them something to live up to.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It will have a bad effect on some of them, and, no doubt, a few will be hard to handle. However, all in all, I believe the Bill will be for the good of the community and the natives themselves. Now is the time to tackle the problem and not at some future date. If the Bill becomes an Act, it will not have the effect that some people think. In fact, it will have very little effect at all. However, if it is followed up by material benefit; if strictness is exercised by the Native Affairs Department—

Hon. L. A. Logan: First of all, they will have to be housed.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I know they will. I know that, on the recommendation of the State Housing Commission, accommodation will be provided for selected natives, who will be supervised. I think we can gradually encourage them to live under conditions the same as those under which white people live. There are half-castes who are living in houses on stations in the north, who have modern facilities such as baths and electric refrigerators, and they keep their places spotlessly clean.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is more than they do at York.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is because they have not been under the strict supervision that is exercised on the stations in the north.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You have trained them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes. I believe that if we tackle the problem now we can do something for them. Every year we leave it, it will become greater.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They will react to kindness.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Here is a Government that is willing to accept whatever responsibility is thrown upon it to administer an Act which is set out here in this Bill. I for one am willing to grant the Government the opportunity to accept that responsibility. I support the second reading.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [11.25]: I am pleased about one point that has arisen from this debate, and that is that every member who has spoken, irrespective of whether he is for or against the Bill, has indicated that he has given it sufficient thought to talk authoritatively on the subject, and in every case there is a realisation that this is a very important and urgent matter. Published statements that have appeared in the Press over a period of months have been repeated by members who have spoken for and against the Bill.

Some of those statements have been ill-advised; some most helpful. However, I believe that the majority of those statements have only given this problem unhappy and unsatisfactory publicity. If people, for the first time, have become

aware of our native problem in this state, that probably is all to the good, but that is as far as any benefit goes. Very little useful and constructive criticism has resulted from such statements. They have all been made along the lines of vilifying the Commissioner of Native Affairs or his officers, and very few suggestions of a constructive nature have been put forward in an effort to solve the problem.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Some did offer a solution to the problem.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Opinions expressed in this House have differed widely. I am sorry if the hon. member thinks, in all sincerity, that he has the solution to the whole problem, because other members do not think that. If in 50 years' time we can say that we are approaching a solution to this problem, we will be doing a good job. Other countries who have so-called colour problems have had them for 100, 150, and 200 years and they are still not solved. In those countries the feeling is more savage, more bitter, and more beastly than ever before. Press statements would lead us to believe that all of this bitterness has been brought about by communistic elements.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is not right.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It is right. If the hon. member who stated that is not right has investigated the matter he must know that South Africa's problem today—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I thought you said every country.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I did say every country where they have the colour problem. The trouble that is caused between the coloured people and the whites in those countries is almost entirely due to communistic influences. America, for instance, is in a peculiar position. It has two groups of so-called natives. One is the native Red Indians and the other is the descendants of the imported African negroes. The Red Indian in America today is generally accepted by all the white population, but the negro has met with savage and bitter opposition right down through the years. Any riots that occur in America invariably involve negroes, but not Red Indians. I think it is probably the peaceful and gentle nature of our Australian aborigines that has brought about the treatment that they receive from the whites in this country.

In stories and in drama, the American aboriginal has been literally glorified. Historical names, like those of Pocahontas, Geronimo and Pontiac conjure up something in our minds of stateliness and dignity. The American aborigines have proved themselves a warlike people. They were fighters, and they fought for their rights. They worked and they became recognised as a people with rights. Whole

nations of Indians have received citizenship rights en masse, and have lived up to them.

But let us look at the picture in Australia. From the earliest days our natives have been decimated. They have been treated in a most beastly fashion; they have been treated worse than animals, and slaughtered. The very names we confer on them ridicule them—King Billy, Jacky, Persil! How can people treated in that way try to uplift themselves? Yet they have proved themselves—as Mr. Craig said—a gentle, affectionate and peaceful people. Nomadic, yes; irresponsible, yes. But they were contented and happy until the white people came into their country and changed all that completely, and changed it for the worse.

Much has been said about making a start on our so-called problem. I really resent that, because I believe a wonderful start has been made in this country during the short time that Australia has been a nation and has really come into contact with the native population. There has been an incredibly wonderful start in trying to meet the problem. Admittedly, in the beginning the treatment was shocking.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The problems of the white people in those days were great.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Admittedly, the whites had problems. They did not know what they were coming to. This is a hard country, but they made a way for themselves. A start has been made on this problem to such an extent that a man of native blood found it possible to work his way from the bottom, with no strings pulled, until he has become an educator in the State, teaching white children in a State school, accepted and actually loved by them. I submit that that is a good start, and that our legislation and treatment of the natives gives very wide scope for natives with ability to find their way to the top.

In Kalgoorlie, there is this man of native blood who is teaching in one of our State schools and bringing children up to a very high standard. I cannot admit that when such a thing is possible our legislation is as bitterly oppressive as some members have, in exaggerated terms, tried to tell us it is.

Reference has been made to citizenship rights giving natives an opportunity to drink and cast votes. They are directions in which natives could be exploited. They derive no benefit therefrom. The right to vote does not advance them at all. Members have made mis-statements on these matters. I think that probably they are ill-advised. A member opposite said that in New South Wales, South Australia,

and Queensland natives could vote and drink. That is wrong. In Queensland, the actual position is—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I never mentioned Queensland.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The actual fact is that in Queensland a native has no right to vote. I do not know what is the position with regard to drinking.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I never mentioned Queensland.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Very well. I do not want to upset the hon. member. I am going through all the States to put him right about the ones concerning which he was wrong. In New South Wales they may vote, but are not supplied with liquor. In South Australia they may vote, but only in very special circumstances may they obtain liquor.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is wrong.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am prepared to put more faith in the notes and figures I have than in the hon. member's unsupported statements. In Victoria there has been complete freedom for them since 1880. But in that time there have been few or no benefits. In Victoria the whole population of natives—castes and full-bloods—numbers 1,200; so the problem does not exist there. In New Zealand, the Maoris are not exactly a true native race; they are migrant Polynesians. They have a special franchise. With regard to liquor, at one time restrictions were completely removed, but in 1948 it was found necessary to reimpose and add to them within a very short space of time.

I could give further information concerning other countries, such as Canada and so forth. Of them all the same story can be told. All the way through, where so-called citizenship rights have been granted in a hurry, too early, no real benefit has been derived; and from time to time there are court cases dealing with offences committed by natives—admittedly offences that would not be regarded as offences if committed by white men. Our fear is that if citizenship rights are conferred on these people, they will become their own worst enemies.

The people to whom I pay more attention than to any others are the missionaries. I must admit that nearly all my information has been obtained from missions, and nearly all my contact with natives has been through them. I have great faith in their method of meeting this problem. I believe missionaries are the only ones who are on the right track. The answer to this problem is not to grant the natives rights *holus bolus*, and immediately insist on their accepting responsibilities which their background will not enable them to live up to. It is not possible in 100 years to wipe out the influence of a background extending over 10,000 years. Isolated people have been

able to make their way to the top; but for others to do so will be a long, slow—but sure—battle. If the matter is viewed in that way, I believe something can be done.

Again I say that the safest and surest way to achieve our objective is per medium of missions. We have talked about giving our native people technical and academic education, but I think we have left out the most important phase; and that is spiritual education. The two must go hand in hand. I say without fear of contradiction that the greatest results that have been achieved have been obtained by people who have had that very important training, which is given through the missions. My suggestion is that far more money should be made available to missions than is the case today, and that efforts should be directed towards making missionary life a much more encouraging calling than it is today. I know missions that are desperately in need, not only of money but of real assistance. Contrary to statements that have been made by others, I want to stress that I have always received the closest co-operation and most sympathetic treatment from the officers of the Native Affairs Department.

I must admit that I have always received generous treatment from them. I feel very sorely about one mission with which I am familiar because I believe that of them all, this one is suffering the greatest handicaps. Last year I brought information to the House about these people trying to run a mission for natives, some of them wild and bush natives, at times to the number of 200. The mission people had to cart their drinking water, let alone their washing water, 40 miles from the Trans-line and buy it from the Government at a shocking price.

The Minister for the North-West: Did not they have to buy it from the previous Government?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

The Minister for the North-West: You mentioned this Government.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I meant the Government of the day. It was a shocking and disgraceful price. Admittedly, when the matter was brought to the notice of the Minister, a very generous reduction was made. However, a position arose whereby the same mission was handicapped in other ways. Whereas other missions in the State might receive free transport for parcels and gifts, these people had to pay for everything that went to the mission whether gifts or the necessities of life. The Government, through the departmental officers, made available a drilling rig to bore for water. There is no natural water on the site.

The Minister for the North-West: The mission people were told that before they went there.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, that is the very point; but nothing has been done to assist them. This was the site of a native mission previously. Members will recall why it was abandoned. The site was recommended as the most likely one for the mission to take up. All the buildings now on the site, including huts and bush sheds, have been erected by the missionaries themselves. The finance for the work has come from the United States of America and Canada. Ninety per cent. of the staffing has been supplied from those countries, as well as certified nurses and educationists, and those people are still searching for water.

The superintendent would not complain, because he considered that the Government had done a good thing by lending the drilling rig, but it was in bad condition. Belts were worn, the wire rope was frayed and bolts were missing, and the machine had to be overhauled completely before it could be put into operation. In order to assist, we obtained a wire rope from one of the mines. However, the plant was held up and then, through shortage of manpower, did too little work. It is now to be sent to the Mt. Margaret Mission.

A mission such as this deserves more practical assistance. Surely we could send practical men out to search for water! Cundelee, which means White Rocks, is an ancient tribal ground of the natives and they will go there whether there is a mission or not.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Where is it situated?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Fifty miles north of Zanthus. The mission people have done everything possible for the juveniles, who are carried to a certain standard. If they are near to a town or farming district, an endeavour is made to find work for them with Christian people. At the mission I have attended the marriages of native couples. I repeat that this mission is doing a marvellous work, but it is still handicapped. We must help these people with buildings and finance and make the place more attractive. If this were done, they could cope with more natives.

A previous speaker touched on a point that has worried us considerably. When the schooling of the native children is finished, they are at a dead end, and the mission authorities feel hopeless and frustrated. There are two boys at Cundelee who are exceptional lads and Mr. Stewart, the superintendent, is anxious to secure apprenticeships for them on the mines. It is not due precisely to prejudice that he has been unsuccessful, but it is difficult to get anyone sufficiently interested to help.

I suggest that the Government should be prepared to help in such cases. The Government is the largest single employer



of labour in the State. In other countries, native people have a peculiar liking for jobs such as guards, porters and conductors whereas we employ white people to do work of that sort. Opportunity should be found for some of them in the railway workshops. Could not the Government undertake to train in the Government workshops some young fellows who have proved themselves worthwhile? We have State farms all over the country. Why not try to give a lead to other people by employing the young fellows on those farms? We are not attempting anything in this direction. What has been done has been done by other people.

The Minister for the North-West: What was the purpose of the mission when it went to Cundeelee?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: To uplift the natives.

The Minister for the North-West: At the Government expense or was it to be a mission of mercy?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: This is an undenominational mission engaged in similar work in other parts of Australia and all over the South Pacific. The greater portion of the funds is derived from donations from America and Canada, irrespective of the part of the world in which operations are being carried on. Not knowing our native welfare laws, these people set up a mission near Madura Pass, just this side of the border. However, the natives, in their natural migration, do not go as far as that; they do not pass the Trans-line.

The mission authorities were acting illegally by setting up a mission without permission, but they acted in ignorance. Advice was sought from the department, and an alternative suggestion was made that a mission should be started where the natives would naturally go and where there had been a mission before, namely, in the Cundeelee area. These people went to a bald hill, and all that was left of the original station was the bare ground; not a building remained. All the buildings now there have been erected by the efforts of the missionaries themselves. Nothing has been contributed by the Government apart from the issue of food and blankets. Recently an officer of the department stationed at Kalgoorlie went to Cundeelee to investigate some reports that had reached him—I was responsible for having them publicised—and on his return, he said he was shocked at the hardships those people were undergoing. To get back more to the actual Bill—

Hon. A. L. Loton: That will be a treat!

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am sorry that I have been led a little away from the Bill, but I feel strongly on the subject.

The Minister for the North-West: The hon. member said that none of us had contributed anything to the debate.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I said there had been nothing constructive. The majority of mission people are not happy about easy access to citizenship rights for their people. They will lose control of them, and they know it. It is our belief that the only way whereby genuine and full advancement can be made is by evolution and not revolution. The Bill seeks to do overnight what we know cannot be done inside of the next 50 years.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would you like to wait 50 years before we start?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I have not suggested that. I say we have made a good start. We are proud of the start; you are the ones that are not. You are the ones who have said nothing has been done.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Whom do you mean by "we"?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: All of us. We are all part of the State, the Government and the Commonwealth.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Whom do you mean by "you"?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Did I say "you"?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Yes, you said, "You are the ones who have done nothing."

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the hon. member quotes words, he should quote the ones I have used and not put words into my mouth. I said, "You are the ones who said we have done nothing." I say that we have done a good job, and now is the time to extend it. If in 50 years from now we can say we have started to do the job, we will really have done something.

The Chief Secretary: We will not see it.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: My people have lived to a good old age. Much of what I could say now would only be repetition. What has been said has indicated that members feel deeply on this matter, but I say to them, "Do not hurry with the present legislation. It is not the answer to the problem." What we need is something bigger and wider, and members should take the time to think it out. A non-party or all-party measure should be introduced. This Bill should be drafted as the result of information from the Police Department, from the missions and all other organisations interested in the matter. Finally I stress again that members must not fall into the error of considering only the educational side where it pertains to technical and academic matters. I believe the most important of all is the spiritual aspect.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [11.54]: When introducing the Bill the Minister said—

The measure is designed to help to overcome a social problem of widespread public interest. It is a non-

political subject and should be considered unselfishly, without prejudice and in the light of the human beings it concerns.

I think that each and every member is trying to consider the Bill in that light, but when looking at it I am reminded of something I read in the paper some years ago which was attributed to Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, as follows:—

While we must not be visionary, we must have vision.

I believe that in forming our judgment on the Bill, we should regard it not as a visionary measure but as something real in connection with the good it can do. The whole Bill is centred around the definition of the word "aborigine." Personally I would prefer to see the old appellation of "native" stand, but it is not a matter of vital importance. I would prefer to be called a native rather than an aborigine. The latter can be shortened into a term of some contempt, whereas the former cannot be shortened.

There is one peculiar feature about the Bill; namely, it draws a distinct colour line. It takes notice of colour only, forgetting all the time that it is what is under the skin that counts. That is one of the weaknesses of the Bill. I have known quite a number of coloured and black people, and I have found that the colour of their skin has had no effect on their character. The object of the Bill is to help solve the native problem, and those framing it consider that the colour line bar is sufficient solution.

Last night the Minister drew our attention to Section 6 of the parent Act. Sub-section (3) of that section is of vital importance. If I remember rightly, the Minister said this had been in operation for about 60 years—since about 1880. The section provides for the custody, maintenance and education of the children of natives. If full effect had been given to that section since its inception, we would not be faced with this problem today. The Minister also said there were 3,700 children, and that they represented 46 per cent. of the coloured population. That is a wonderful foundation on which to work, even if we discard everything else. Mr. Craig spoke excellently on the subject of the children.

Irrespective of what our judgment is on any other part of the Bill, I think the fundamental principle we must adhere to is not just the granting of citizenship rights but to assimilate these people and get them received in our midst. For that purpose we must rely entirely on the education and maintenance we give to the children—and, by maintenance, I mean preventing the children from getting back into native camps. The ultimate objective is social equality, which may take 50 or 100 years.

Some leading anthropologists say it will take up to 200 years; but, after all, we have had the problem for at least 100 or 125 years, so the solution should not be so far ahead if we tackle the question in the right manner.

Colour prejudice is the main stumbling block in any endeavour towards assimilation and social equality; and when that is combined with ignorance, and bad living conditions and habits, there seems little chance of success. But if we can reach a stage where these people are living under good conditions, there will be every chance of attaining the ultimate aim.

One of the greatest difficulties is that we are apt to judge the many by the few. Publicity is always given to the misdeeds of the few, and it affects considerably all of those who, although they are well behaved, are at present called natives. I believe that all those who would be affected by the Bill could be dealt with successfully, if granted citizenship rights, provided they were living under reasonable conditions of housing and so on. When I refer to full citizenship rights, I do not care whether that includes voting or not, as that is a minor detail. Some members might not agree with me there, but I am convinced that the whole question comes back to how we receive these people.

On the other hand, there are many natives living on the verge of towns in buildings discarded by whites, or in ramshackle camps, and they are the greatest cause of any trouble that exists at present. Many of them desire complete citizenship rights without any thought of the responsibility which that would involve. Many desire—I know this will bring an interjection—citizenship rights simply because they want freedom to buy drink.

Much has been said of what liquor does to natives, and in this regard I will refer to what was stated by Mr. A. O. Neville who for 25 years, until five or six years ago, was Commissioner of Native Affairs. He said that liquor was sheer poison to the natives; that its effects on them were disastrous; and that it was responsible for most of their crimes. Mr. Barker said something about the crimes of aborigines and stated that, of the total, 508 involved drunkenness and 320 odd the receiving of liquor. When we consider that out of the total number of native crimes reported by the police, 870 odd were caused by drunkenness and receiving or supplying liquor, it will be seen that if we remove that number of offences from the total of 1,327 the native population of this State is quite law-abiding. However, we must not forget that the effect of drink on natives is disastrous.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Do not forget we prohibit them from going into hotels.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: It is disastrous, particularly in the camps. Some speakers have said that if the natives had the right to enter hotels and buy drink, the bad effects might not be so evident. I do not know how many members here have viewed the aftermath of what can be called a bombo party in a native camp—that is when they get on to pinky, and a keg of the stuff is consumed. I have seen it, and I say that the orgy is not confined to the adults. Every man, woman and child in the camp has a go at it. If eventually we could provide for them to have a drink at a hotel without taking any away with them, I believe we could obviate a lot of the trouble that now occurs.

On the other hand, there is the question of hygiene and, having been a member of a road board, I know of an incident in my district about six years ago when there was an influx of 25 or 30 coloured people who engaged in potato digging. Special ground, and a shed and conveniences, were set aside for them. A lot of little things happened, but I wish to deal only with the first real trouble that occurred and that had to do with a complaint by the Public Works Department, which was responsible for all irrigation and stock water in the area. Instead of using the conveniences provided for them, these people preferred to go a couple of hundred yards to the bushes along the creek, and it was weeks and weeks before we could have them withdrawn from the district.

That sort of thing and similar complaints build up a feeling that takes a lot of breaking down, and incidents of that sort occur in many places where there are native camps today. That brings me back to the point that we must house these people properly because, if they are left in filthy and insanitary camps, there will continue to be trouble. I noticed that there was talk of building ten houses at Katanning; but we should erect 100 in the various areas south of Perth, and even that would only alleviate the position. Why cannot we get down to bedrock and attempt to lift these people up slowly?

I do not know whether members have read a book which I have here, called "Australia's Coloured Minority," by Neville. It has been in the Parliamentary Library since the 1st March, 1948, and I believe it would do members the world of good if they read it. I have not had the opportunity of reading it thoroughly, but I will quote a short extract from the introduction which is by A. P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, president of the Association for the Protection of Natives Races and vice-chairman of the Aborigines Welfare Board of New South Wales. If the article quoted by Mr. Roche is correct, he was the man

who forwarded a recommendation on behalf of the present Commissioner of Native Affairs in this State. He states—

The solution of the "half-caste" problem, however, lies not with boards and commissioners, but with ourselves. While we hold the mixed-bloods at arm's length, few of them will rise in the social and economic scale; they will be hangers-on and parasites. The circle is a vicious one. Let us break it. This means enforcing through the same channels as in the case of our own white folk, decent housing, cleanliness, regular school attendance in our schools (as at Alice Springs, for example), orderly behaviour and voting. At the same time, it means opening to them the door of opportunity through higher education, through training for professions (teaching, nursing, and others), through membership of trade unions (wherever this is barred), and in recreation and church-life.

My suggestion is to try another circle, this one not "vicious," but centred on the conviction that, apart from individual variations, all human beings, irrespective of skin-pigmentation and ancestry, are born with like potentialities for living worthily, intelligently and happily. Whether they realise this goal or not, depends on the community into which they are born. In the case of the "half-castes" it depends on us. Are they to be a lower caste or to live the ordinary life of Australian citizens? Citizens in law they are in some parts of the continent, but not in social relationships; and without the latter, the former is but an empty vessel—a tinkling cymbal.

I think that is a good description of the position today. In other words, citizenship rights alone are not enough. In endeavouring to grant citizenship rights, as we are doing under this Bill, are we doing the right thing? Should we not start a little lower down and complete their education, improve their general position and get them into a condition where they are completely ready to accept the full responsibilities of citizenship, and at the same time take every opportunity to achieve the ultimate object of social equality and assimilation? I believe it is something we cannot do quickly. We cannot cast 5,000 or 7,000 people out and say, "Tomorrow you are citizens." Many will be able to accept that status, but many will not. Those who cannot are the ones who will break down the whole scheme. For that reason, and very reluctantly, I must oppose the second reading.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [12.14 a.m.]: I wish I knew how to vote on this measure. Before I came into the

House today, and even before this Bill was introduced, the idea of giving citizenship rights ad lib. to such a large number of coloured folk filled me with a sense of alarm. As I listen to speakers, I am swayed one way and then another; one will convince me on one angle and one will convince me on another. I was most impressed with Mr. Craig's speech because he has a wide experience of natives, and if no one had spoken after him I would have been tempted to vote for the measure.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: It is the opposite to what he said last year.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There are certain aspects that still worry me. Mr. Craig said that this measure would affect, south of Geraldton, only some 3,000 half-castes. Mr. Parker said the Bill would have nothing to do with half-castes and would give citizenship rights only to full-bloods.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: No, he said the opposite of that.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That is what I thought he tried to impress upon us.

The Minister for the North-West: That is not right.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It becomes clear in the Bill that it will be necessary for the half-caste to make application, or for someone to do so on his behalf, and that is the sort of thing that tears me from one side to the other. If the problem is only one of dealing with 3,000 people, it will be worth while, as Mr. Craig said, to make a start, rather than wait until there are probably three or four times that number to deal with.

The Minister for the North-West: Almost 50 per cent. of them are children.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Putting off the evil day will not help us much. I said last year, when this problem was discussed, that it was a question of what we did with the children after they left school. This Bill contains one good provision: it will remove the restriction on employment. I have never been able to see any reason why a half-caste boy or girl should not be able to come to the city and be trained as a house-boy or house-girl. It has been most difficult in the past for people to obtain the services of some of these half-caste boys and girls; even in the country it has not been easy. Therefore, the tearing away of the restrictions on employment is a move in the right direction.

If I remember rightly, I mentioned before that in America certain jobs are allocated to the negro, and it is only when a negro comes into contact with what is known as poor white trash, that any real difficulty in the employment of the negro takes place. There are certain occupations in our own sphere of life that could be set aside for these people. For instance, one job they could do very well would be that of conductors on long-distance trains. I should think they would make just as good conductors as the happy, smiling

American negroes, and there are various occupations into which they could fit themselves.

But there is another side of the story that worries me. If we give these people citizenship rights and we have no concerted plan for the children when they leave school, we shall be achieving very little. I have a feeling that coincidental with the granting of citizenship rights there should be a complete teaming up of the various sections of the community that are required to assist. For instance, I would like to ensure that the State Housing Commission would say—even if the southern portion of the State is divided into zones—"We are in a position to provide accommodation for these half-castes"; that the police in those districts, on a date to be proclaimed, would take charge of them; that the local authorities would be in a position to build houses for them; and that officers would be sent out to educate the natives to look after their houses in a satisfactory manner. The whole set-up should be handled by a concerted effort.

If something of that nature could be done, I would have no objection to the measure, but it is asking a little too much to request a member to vote for something in the Bill without any concerted plan which can be put into operation on a date to be proclaimed. If we repealed one section of the Act it would take away the right of the proper authority to care for the hygiene of the half-caste. If members will study the measure they will find that if Section 17 of the Native Administration Act is discarded, there will be no control over any outbreak of disease. If natives continued to live in poor surroundings, even although they possessed citizenship rights, and nobody had any right to examine them, they could easily become the starting point of contagion.

The Minister for the North-West: Does not the Health Act cover that?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not think there is any power under the Health Act whereby we can say to a citizen, "You must submit yourself for examination." The only power of compulsion is exercised in the treatment of tuberculosis. Under the Bill we would have no power to force a native to submit himself for examination except in a case of suspected venereal disease, and even then we have no right to examine a person suffering from venereal disease unless some other person makes the complaint. Therefore, it would be very dangerous to repeal this section unless we added another which granted the right to retain that power.

It is also proposed to repeal Section 13 of the Act. That section reads—

The Minister may cause any native to be removed to and kept within the boundaries of a reserve, district, institution or hospital to another reserve, district, institution or hospital and kept therein.

If we repeal that section that power goes as well. It is quite obvious that these people are not yet of the state of mind whereby they can exercise care to preserve the health of the community. I very much doubt the wisdom of repealing these sections. However, how are we to leave the sections in the Act if we are to grant the natives citizenship rights?

The Minister for the North-West: Have you any knowledge that these people are less healthy than any other section of the community?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: They are much more susceptible to contracting conjunctivitis and other eye diseases, and they have a tendency to spread them.

The Minister for the North-West: In the south?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, in the south. Around Mullewa many cases of trachoma, conjunctivitis, and so on are reported and they constitute some danger to the rest of the community. I have reached the stage where I do not know how to vote on the Bill. I would like to grant these people citizenship rights, but I would also like to see the whole State organised so that, on a date to be proclaimed, the various authorities could say, "We can take this area over".

I would like to see the police authorities in a position to say, "Yes, we have welfare officers who can go into their homes to give them guidance as to how to run them. Yes, we can take the children and ensure that they are given some chance of employment." We should set up an organisation such as that so that, on a date to be proclaimed, a complete team could go into a district to organise the whole position. If that were done, I would immediately vote for the Bill. However, I do not know how we can do it.

I am not concerned one bit about the native who drinks alcohol. Many members who have referred to drinking by natives forget that these unfortunate people drink the worst type of alcohol. I would like to see how some members in this House would behave after they had drunk a bottle of the worst type of wine or the cheapest form of liquor that can be produced in this State.

The Minister for the North-West: They are exploited.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, the alcohol often contains methylated spirits.

The Minister for the North-West: Yes.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We must realise that the safety of the white man's health today in relation to alcohol is not due to his drinking less. He is drinking far more but he is consuming a far purer sort of alcohol. If we refer back to the days of Hogarth's Gin Lane it will be found that it was not the alcohol that was causing the disastrous effects on drinkers, but the impurities in the alcohol. If we said to a native, "You can have the same high

grade alcohol that is available to the white man", I do not think it would be long before he could drink alcohol and behave in much the same way as any other trained person should behave.

However, while we expect him to drink only the most impure form of alcohol, which in some instances contains a considerable quantity of aldehyde, he must be expected to behave in a poor manner. After saying all that, I would add that, if the Minister can tell me how to vote on the Bill I shall be delighted, because I do not know. If the Minister can assure me that an organisation such as I have suggested is feasible, then I will be willing to vote for a measure such as this.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [12.27 a.m.]: I did not intend to speak on the measure, but after hearing other members I now propose to add a little to the debate. Mr. Craig asked me if I had ever been to the North and become acquainted with natives. I think I have had more association with aborigines for many more years than has any other member of this House. I can remember when I first went to the Goldfields 57 years ago. At that time there were only a few natives who were living in their natural state. There were also very few white women among the population on the Goldfields. Later, to the disgust of the community generally, small children with a touch of white began to appear.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Who touched them?

[The Deputy President took the Chair].

Hon. G. BENNETTS: The fact that we have half-caste people in our midst today is purely the fault of the white people, and it is up to us to do something for them. In my opinion, the Bill seems to be a little far-fetched. However, I will vote for it. I have heard two good suggestions in the House tonight, one of which came from Mr. Simpson and I understand he proposes to submit an amendment during the Committee stage.

I have here a report by the Queensland Native Affairs Department. Any member who cares to peruse it is welcome to do so. In my opinion if we made a complete study of this report and then endeavoured to improve the conditions of natives in this State along similar lines, we would be doing something more practicable than what is proposed in the Bill. Dr. Hislop very soundly suggested that we should provide houses for the natives and then educate them to look after them in a proper manner and also give their children adequate care. One of the first things we have to do is to educate the native children.

Let us educate these people in the right way. Today we find our missions are doing a really good job. In my area there is a mission run by the Church of Christ.

It has three dozen children, which is the limit it can take, and it can only hold them up to the age of 16. About 12 months ago a doctor at Norseman got one of the girls out of the institution to take charge of a house while the woman went into hospital to be confined. This girl did the job just as well as any white woman would have done. A little later these people went away on holiday and took her with them as nurse and, I am informed that she did a very good job. I think it was Mr. Roche who made reference to a certain operation that is carried out on the natives in the North-West. When I was in that area there were three natives who were at the age when the operation is performed.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They were not castrated?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: A certain part of their anatomy was removed; the hon. member can gather his own information from that.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It was not the appendix!

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Those natives were never treated fairly. If they did not do what they were told to do they would have the stockwhip applied to them.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: This is 1953.

Hon. A. L. Loton: What has that to do with the Bill?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: We have to get right back to find out how these people originated. Girls were kept on those stations for certain purposes and that is how we have the half-caste today. We must bring these people up in the same way as we do the whites; we must educate them in our way of life. The only way to do it is to get the children when they are very young and put them into missions and homes, and train them, and educate them to become good and proper citizens.

I heard members mention that these people do not know how to handle money. I find from the report from Queensland that there are 9,450 full-bloods and 6,875 half-bloods in that State. I am not going to talk about the island race but the ordinary native. In Queensland there are two different classes. The report states—

The remainder, viz., 4,993 full-bloods, 3,869 half-bloods, are located on country reserves and camps in country towns and on cattle stations where they are employed. It can be accepted that the recorded population figures for Government settlement and church missions are correct and accurate. In the absence of a recent census of full-bloods and half-bloods located on country reserves, an estimated population only can be recorded but it can be taken that these figures are reasonably accurate.

The war years showed to what extent aboriginal labour could be used on the home front. With the war years gone, the same spirit of determination for betterment and self-support animates the Queensland native. The extent to which these 20,000 people now contribute to their own maintenance is indicated by the figures shown.

The gross earnings by aborigines over the year totalled £354,637. That will show members the amount of money these people are capable of earning. There are also a number of aborigine teachers, clerks and trainee nurses employed mainly in native administration. The number of men employed in essential industries in Queensland is 4,500. The teachers, clerks and trainee nurses, etc., comprise 1,110. Every aborigine comes under the worker's compensation coverage. So, we find that Queensland has gone a long way in its treatment of the natives. The report continues—

When an aboriginal is employed in a calling covered by an award from the provisions of which he is not specifically excluded, full award rates shall be paid.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do they join unions?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: It does not say so here, but that is what we are aiming at. The report sets out a scale of wages that the husband and wife are permitted to earn when they work on a station. The report is a comprehensive one though I do not propose to read much more from it, because I can see that members have made up their minds to defeat the Bill, no matter what happens and what we may say. The report continues—

The balance, £510,781, 18s. 5d., represents the savings of aborigines from their earnings. A separate account for each individual is kept by the Director of Native Affairs and the current Commonwealth Savings Bank rate of interest is credited annually to each account.

Each aborigine has his own account. Two copies are kept, one by the department and one by the man himself. If an aborigine requires to set himself up in business and needs the necessary plant, he is allowed to draw the money to permit him to do so. They have hospitals, public welfare clinics and everything else set up in a manner equal to those for the whites. We should do something along the lines suggested by Dr. Hilslop; we should provide these people with houses and get somebody to educate them and show them how to live as we do. We know that they live in most unhygienic conditions.

We also have to do something for the young full-bloods because some of them in my electorate are pretty well educated.

When they leave school or come out of the missions, they are thrown out on the streets. No one will employ them therefore they either go back to the bush or mix with bad company. One member said that young half-caste girls were being picked up by white men in motorcars. I saw that happen in the streets here one night when a pretty young girl, nearly white, was compelled by two men about 40 years of age to get into a car. These people have been compelled to do these things because of their fear of the whites. Unless we can lift them up to our standard this type of degradation will exist.

One member referred to the colour position in South Africa. In my opinion, that has been an old sore for many years. Up to about 50 years ago the Kaffirs were used in the mines as slave labourers. They were whipped to compel them to work in the mines; therefore it is no wonder today that they, through the communist element, are causing all this trouble. I know a half-caste who was a soldier in the army here. He was in the 9th Division with my son and he went through the Battle of Alamein and then on to Borneo. By educating these people and making them good citizens, they could be brought on to an equal footing with whites. I support the Bill.

**HON. F. R. H. LAVERY** (West) [12.45 a.m.]: I have made deep research into this question and intended speaking on many points. As most of them have already been dealt with by other speakers, I shall speak only on the basic principles of the Bill. Many speakers referred to matters not related to this Bill at all. Some of the problems which were discussed will be more acute in the next five to 10 years; therefore any legislation now introduced will overcome difficulties later.

Of the speeches I heard in this and another place, I think that made by Mr. Craig best summarised the fundamentals of this Bill. The Government is attempting to place on the statute book a type of legislation which would do something for the advancement of the coloured people in the State. Of course, any measure taken will cost a certain amount of money, and unless the Government intends to make provision for that expenditure, any legislation passed will be of little use.

At the outset, I would like to give an instance of the mental capacity of native children. As members know, I have two sons who are school-teaching, one of them in the country where native children are attending his school. The children of one family living on the outskirts of a farm where their white father worked, attend school, clean and well-dressed. The mother lives under the most shocking conditions, yet she is able to send her children to school in the same condition as white children.

Up to the fifth standard those children were equal to the white children attending school. My son told me that the problem is to usefully employ those children after the age of 14. I have no doubt that the adults of the coloured race in this State can well look after themselves, because in the last 20 to 25 years they have seen at least one war; they have seen the progress made in buildings, in the production of food, and they have seen the improvements in working conditions. I am not so much concerned about whether they will be protected by this Bill. What I am concerned about is that now is the time to start on the children that are already in the schools. It is my hope that we can do something to bring those children up to the standard by which we live.

I wonder whether we have much to be proud of, especially in view of the fact that we are all interdependent, the one on the other. Our own children are receiving a different type of education from that which was given in 1938-39, and I want something of the same sort of provision to be made for coloured children. When they reach the age of 14 or 15, I wish to see them enabled to proceed to the junior standard at least so that some avenue of employment may be opened up for them. Those are the natives about whom I am chiefly concerned.

If we attend to the children who are now in the range of 10 to 14 years, they will, in the next eight or 10 years, be able to fend for themselves. I am satisfied that the Government has an obligation to ensure that those between the ages of 14 and 18 who have already been given a start in our way of life, shall not be thrown on their own resources without any outlook for the future, thus being compelled to undertake minor types of work in the country such as a few weeks at root picking or a few weeks helping at farm work, and then left to live the nomadic life of their forebears.

The Bill contains some very good points, but I think that certain portions of it could be improved in Committee. Therefore I appeal to members to make this attempt to help the coloured people by placing the Bill on the statute book. If, in the course of the next few years, some provision is not operating as we should like, we shall be able to amend the Act, just as we bring in amending legislation for the benefit of the white people. There are 100 Bills that have been passed or still have to be passed this session, all of which are designed for the benefit of the white population, and but one Bill has been introduced for the benefit of the natives. Whether we call them natives or aborigines is immaterial. They are our brethren and we should, as Christians and legislators, appreciate our obligation to do something for the children now in the missions and schools.

There will be quite a lot of final details to consider, but I am satisfied that the present is the time for the Government to show a sense of responsibility for the coloured people. We of the white community have a responsibility, and so have the people who accept what we are prepared to offer them. If they accept it, then they must abide by our laws.

Much has been said about the risk of the coloured people indulging in excessive drinking, but I think that will prove to be merely a passing phase. While we have only 5,000 or 6,000 coloured people to assist, it is a minor problem, but if we allow it to drift, it will become a major problem. I hope that the Bill will be taken into Committee and that some definite move will be made to help these people because, I repeat, now is the time to do so.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

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

##### *Assembly's Message.*

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to amendment No. 2 made by the Council, and had disagreed to amendment No. 1.

#### **BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.**

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

#### **BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Assembly's Message.*

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

#### **BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.**

Returned from the Assembly with an amendment.

#### **BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Second Reading—Defeated.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [12.57 a.m.] in moving the second reading said: I intend to set an example of brevity which I hope will prove to be contagious and which, for the remainder of the session, will not be lost upon members. The sole proposal in this Bill is to delete the proviso to paragraph (c) of Subsection (1) of Section 100 of the principal Act.

Section 100 specifies the hours governing the sale of all types of motor spirit, motor oil and motor accessories. The section states that premises selling these commodities shall remain open only between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. on

five days a week, unless one of these days is a public holiday. On the sixth week day, which is usually Saturday, sales may be made between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m., unless the day is a public holiday.

This proviso, which was inserted in 1946, was the text of an amendment moved in another place by the then Leader of the Opposition, who suggested it was necessary to assist a person that wanted to travel during the week-end. The mover of the amendment submitted that the provision in the Act, which is still there, allowing the sale to a motorist of motor spirit, oil or accessories, in an emergency, was not adequate to meet certain circumstances. This is in the proviso to Subsection (2) of Section 100 of the Act.

Members will agree that the first proviso—the one the Bill seeks to repeal—has the effect of enabling garages to be kept open day or night throughout the entire week. The premises must close on Sundays and public holidays, except when the holiday falls on a Monday, when they may open from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. Whenever Christmas Day falls on a Monday, the premises may open from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Boxing Day.

In 1946 a proviso was inserted allowing the opening of the premises for the purpose only of selling motor spirit, oil or accessories to any person who satisfied the storekeeper, or his representative, that the sale was necessary to permit continuance of a journey which commenced at least 20 miles from the premises, or to start a journey of not less than 10 miles. I understand that a person was prosecuted last year for trading on a Sunday, but, on appeal to the Supreme Court, the magistrate's finding was reversed.

The Automobile Chamber of Commerce is anxious to obtain some modification of trading hours and some more reasonable regulation than that which obtains at present. I understand it was not suggested that all Sunday trading should be eliminated. The chamber would be happy to have this proviso deleted and the other proviso retained so that anyone in a reasonable emergency could obtain supplies of petrol. It was considered that the convenience of the motoring public would not be impaired by the amendment.

The Automobile Chamber of Commerce and the Garage Proprietors' Association have asked that the loophole in the Act be closed, in order that all service stations shall observe the legitimate trading hours set out in the Act, and make sales only in cases of emergency as provided for in the second proviso to which I have referred, and which these bodies consider would adequately meet all situations.

Members know what is entailed in the Bill. If they examine the Act, they will find that it sets out to do a certain thing; but, because of a proviso, which has caused much trouble to garage proprietors, it



does something else. The amendment is to allow the Act to do what it was intended it should do. Some members may say that there will not be sufficient provision in the Act, when the Bill passes, to deal with a case of emergency; but I draw attention to the fact that for many years this provision did operate, and I never heard anyone complain during that period that he could not obtain petrol when he absolutely needed it.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Was that during the years of petrol rationing?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is so long ago, I forget.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Is it convenient to forget?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; because the hon. member knows as well as I do what operated at that time. Whether or not it was during the period of petrol rationing does not matter. When the Act operated without this proviso, no one experienced any difficulty. I was here when the discussion on the proviso took place. For some little time after that, ordinary conditions operated, but then someone found a loophole, and first one garage and then another started to open. For the last few years the position has been most marked. I cannot understand why the ordinary motorist must want, in connection with this trade, something that does not operate in any other. In the drink traffic we impose limits.

Hon. H. Hearn: Two bottles on Sunday!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not care about that. Take foodstuffs, which are more necessary in the home than petrol. Shops retailing such goods are not allowed to open from midday Saturday until Monday.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not quite right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are certain foods—delicatessen stuff—that can be purchased on Sundays.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Foodstuffs.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, perishable foods. The housewife has to purchase all other foods before 1 o'clock on Saturday at the latest. It is far more important to get these things than to get petrol. It is only on exceptional occasions that a person is not able to purchase petrol before 1 o'clock on Saturday. If it is necessary for him to purchase it after that time, he can do so in accordance with the emergency provision in the Act. There is no use having an Act which sets out to do a certain thing and then ruining it by a little proviso. I hope members will agree to delete the proviso in the Act. When I look at the Bill, it seems such a little thing to ask members to agree to. I stress that members should look at the Act to see what we are asking them to do.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We know it as well as you do, and we are determined it shall be there, too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I suggest to the hon. member that if we set out to do a certain thing in an Act, we should not ruin it by a few words in a proviso. I hope members will not prejudge the Bill, as they have some others.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We will give it consideration.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope it is the right type of consideration. We are asking that the garage proprietor be placed in exactly the same position as 99 per cent. of all other traders. Can any member produce an argument to show why the garage proprietor should have different conditions from those of the average trader?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: If you sit down, we will tell you why.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I suggest to members that before they cast a vote on the Bill they give their reasons for so doing, as we are always prepared to listen to their reasons.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: At this hour?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If members do not like the full text of the Bill, we ask them not to indulge in destructive criticism only but to offer something constructive.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: That was tried unsuccessfully in another place.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know anything about another place; I am only concerned with what happens here. Whether members in another place do everything right or everything wrong, I do not want their actions to influence the hon. member. I want him to do the right thing here, and the right thing to do is to give consideration to the Bill. If what is proposed in the Bill is not satisfactory to him, and he thinks he can improve it, I would like to hear his suggestions so that consideration can be given to them. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [1.8 a.m.]: The eloquent speech of the Leader of the House has, in this case, fallen on stony ground. We do not want ourselves or the Government to be unpopular, so we ask members to reject the Bill. I can remember when the amendment mentioned by the Chief Secretary was introduced in 1946. It came before us when petrol rationing and other wartime controls existed. At the time, not too many cars were on the road. There was very little debate on the measure in this House, but we did ask the then Minister for Local Government, Hon. H. Gray, whether the after-hours needs of the travelling motorist would be protected, and he assured us they would. We allowed the Bill to pass, and

then there was a spate of criticism through the Press, and we were, characteristically, denounced as a somnolent House which did not care about the people's convenience or interest.

Since that time conditions have changed, and that has necessitated the extra service. Petrol rationing was abolished and there are now roughly twice the number of vehicles on the road. The latest figures I have show 131,588 motor-vehicles for Western Australia, and the Royal Automobile Club membership is about 47,000. Of that number, many are men in the low-income bracket, wage-earners who have bought cars second-hand or on time payment. Many such people have a flair for mechanics and do their vehicles up and look forward to a little motoring at the week-end. Generally they have not much ready cash, and would not buy a large quantity of petrol on a Saturday.

When motoring on Sunday such a man might easily find that he required to drive an extra 50 miles or so, and in that case it is a great convenience if he is able to purchase a little extra petrol. There are only a few service stations in the city which run a round-the-clock petrol service, and they are the ones which have private hire cars and must have employees there to attend the vehicles. It costs them nothing extra to provide petrol for the general public.

At present, any service station can adhere to its regular service, and cannot be compelled to open on Sunday. If some desire to open, that is part of their business, and it is a rule of free trade the world over. I hope the House will reject the measure which I think would make this Chamber and the Government unpopular. I believe we should preserve for the travelling motorist the amenities that he now enjoys. I think most members already know what their attitude towards the measure is, and I hope they will vote against it.

**HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM** (Central) [1.15 a.m.]: It is all very well for Ministers to desire to close service stations on Sundays, as they have no worries and can always keep their petrol tanks filled; but they may not always be in that position. I have had the experience of not being able to purchase petrol at the week-end in the country, and have had to borrow from other motorists who took the petrol out of their own vehicles; and I maintain that one should not be forced into doing that sort of thing. At present, no service station is required to remain open on Sunday.

**Hon. G. Bennetts**: The careful motorist keeps a tin of petrol in the back of his car.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: I suggest that if the hon. member drove his car from here to Kalgoorlie and was unable

to purchase petrol on the way, he might find himself in difficulties. In South Australia the other day I noticed that people there are now permitted to sell cigarettes, butter, and other articles in the evening, and that is an indication of the present-day trend. The Government recently put on special trains to take people into the country, and that requires the employment of staff on Sunday.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT**: I must ask the hon. member to keep to the Bill.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM**: The travelling public find it convenient to purchase petrol when they require it and I do not think we should impose any unnecessary restrictions on the community. I know of an instance recently where, in an emergency, a woman in Nedlands was unable to buy petrol on a Sunday and we walked all over that suburb in an endeavour to get it for her. Eventually it was obtained from the Yellow Cab Co. It is all very well for the Minister to say that if necessity arises the motorist can get petrol from a service station, but it is not as easy as that. As Mr. Simpson said, members probably know already how they intend to deal with this measure and I shall certainly vote against it.

**HON. F. R. H. LAVERY** (West) [1.18 a.m.]: It has amazed me that when dealing with every measure brought before this House in the last two or three weeks Sir Charles Latham has said that he does not want any more restrictions. The restriction now sought is a commonsense one. From having worked in the trade prior to entering this House, I know many garage proprietors and they approached me—

**Hon. H. Hearn**: They approached all of us.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY**: I am not interested in anyone else's experiences. They approached me personally to see whether the Government I support would be prepared to bring down a measure of this kind because, when they approached the previous administration, it refused to do so.

Let me tell members a story. When we had rationing, there was plenty of black-market petrol about, and I know of places round Cottesloe where 50 or 60 drums of petrol, belonging to big business houses around Perth, were buried in the ground. I know something about this, because I was the laddie who had to fill the drums up.

**Hon. Sir Charles Latham**: That has nothing to do with this.

**Hon. L. A. Logan**: That was when we had restrictions.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY**: The position arose where the company which was responsible for keeping down the price of petrol from June, 1938, to the commence-

ment of the war was approached three times by the other oil companies in an effort to have the price of petrol increased. On each occasion this company, the Commonwealth Oil Refineries Ltd., refused. I was employed by the company for 14 years; and it suffered a humiliation when this one-brand service proposal was put into practice. Members need not say that I am not speaking to the Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You are anticipating things.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Overnight C.O.R. in this State was practically thrown out of business because of the one-brand service-station proposal.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What a terrible thing!

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The morning after the announcement, 12 or 14 drivers were called into the yard and told of the position. When we went round the garages in the metropolitan area all but 16 of the proprietors said that they did not want our petrol because they had turned to Shell, Vacuum or Caltex. As a result, C.O.R. got to work and that company is the founder of the 24-hour garage service as we know it today; I refer particularly to the Crystal service station on the Esplanade.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Then we must support it.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That was about the only station that was left to C.O.R. Throughout the war it was possible to get petrol from Yellow Cabs garage 24 hours a day. Because of the loophole in the Act, Scott's garage, in Wellington-st. took on the business also. As a result, the Factories and Shops Department prosecuted Scott's garage but lost the case.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Fortunately.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Here is the position in this State.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We know it.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not think the hon. member knows what I am about to say. The major oil companies in this State control the garages. There are very few privately-owned garages—I refer, of course, to the metropolitan area only. In such cases the proprietors are only leasing the garages. Gibb's garage, in South Perth, is run by a person named Gibb, who was the president of the Garage Proprietors' Association which is now known as the Automobile Chamber of Commerce. His garage is never open after hours.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We will not compel him to open if the Bill is defeated.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The genuine garage proprietors, who carried on business under most atrocious conditions during rationing—

Hon. L. A. Logan: Your Labour Government imposed them.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: —gave a service to the people of this State and now, because the oil companies are building service stations in all the residential areas of the State, we are attempting to deprive them of protection. Many of these genuine people have been in the game for 15 and 20 years while some of these get-rich type of chaps are attempting to deprive them of business. The oil companies do not care two hoots whether the garages are open or closed. They can put in new lessees who will ensure that their petrol is sold.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You are putting up a very weak case.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That is the hon. member's opinion. With two exceptions, there are no garages open at all hours on the Perth-Fremantle-rd. At one time there were five garages which carried on this type of trading but they found that it did not pay.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That is all right.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: There is a new garage near the Brighton Hotel and that remains open at all hours, but when it first started operations it did not take more than £2 during a Saturday afternoon or evening.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: It was giving a service to the public.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The proprietor was trying to establish himself but since then the garage has changed hands.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: We are not concerned with the capitalist but the public.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The hon. member is not concerned with the small businessman, but only with the big businessman. The small businessman can go broke and the hon. member does not care. Let me put the other side of the question.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We have not heard this side yet.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not intend, in this instance, to refer to the businessman, because he uses a fair quantity of petrol. Every motorist should be able to obtain all the petrol he wants while the garage is open under normal trading hours. The average motorist would not use more than one tank of petrol a week.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Members of Parliament appear to be using a lot.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: They can be classed as businessmen. If a man knows that he has to buy his petrol before 1 p.m. on Saturday he will buy it the same as he did when rationing was in force.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Suppose he does not know about it?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Do not let us go back to the days when we were delivering petrol at 2, 3 and 4 o'clock in

the morning. We used to do that at Vetter's garage and at the garage at the West Perth subway.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You were getting overtime.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The oil companies were glad when the early closing provision came into force because they did not have to pay their drivers overtime. But that does not suit the companies now, because they have their own garages; and instead of having 500-gallon storage tanks in the ground, there are 1,000, 2,000 and 5,000-gallon tanks. Therefore, they are filling those tanks for their own personal convenience. Before the war garage proprietors had to carry on and had to pay spot cash for 300, 400 and 500-gallon lots of petrol. They had to suffer all the inconveniences that existed in those days, and yet they gave the public the best service that could be given.

Let us come back to the present. When the oil companies announced that they were going to make one-brand petrol service stations, the public were told that if they gave their patronage to these garages, they would receive extra service in the way of having their wind-screens wiped and their oil checked, etc. I am sure members are not considering the public whatsoever.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Are you opposing or supporting the Bill?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am supporting it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You are convincing me that you are not.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: It was a different story when the hon. member wanted my assistance on the margarine Bill. I have studied the position, and many garage proprietors visualise that they will have to go out of business if they have to compete against those who keep their service stations open night and day. Members often refer to rising wages. These people cannot afford to pay their staff overtime rates to keep their garages open at any time of the day or night. Are they not entitled to at least one day off a week?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: They can have every day off if they like. Are we not entitled to have one night off a week?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I would like to give an answer to the hon. member's question.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I would point out to the hon. member through you, Sir, that if we had passed many of the Bills that are now before us through their second reading stage earlier in the session we would not be sitting so late at night. I have heard members who have been here for 25 years or more say that this is a House of review, but individually I have

also heard them say to each other, "This Bill or that Bill is going out". That was one of the reasons why I rose to join this debate. When legislation is introduced into this House at least it should be discussed and considered and members should not make up their minds weeks before as to how they will vote. I intend to vote for the Bill, despite what other members may do.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [1.33 a.m.]: I want to thank Mr. Simpson for being so concerned about what will happen to the Government and how unpopular it will be if this Bill becomes an Act. It is quite refreshing to learn that the hon. member has so much consideration for the Government.

Hon. H. Hearn: He is a very charitable man.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Government is not afraid of how unpopular it will become for what it has done. That is beside the point. It wants to ensure that justice is meted out and it intends to make an attempt to do so. I am surprised at Sir Charles putting forward the argument that he did. He said, "Why should not motorists be able to get petrol on Sundays?" Does he intend to throw all businesses open for trading on Sundays because it will be more convenient for the people? Is that his train of thought? Hotels are not open on Sundays.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Yes, they are; and who opened them?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did not; the hon. member did. Why should not I be able to go into a hotel on any Sunday and obtain a drink?

Hon. H. L. Roche: You are a member of Cabinet; why not introduce legislation to that effect?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Would I not be just as entitled to ask for that as to expect service stations to open on Sundays?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Obtain your full citizenship rights.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why should this type of business receive more consideration than any other business?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What about picture shows? Sunday picture shows have increased by about 500 per cent.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It would suit the hon. member to have these places open on a Sunday.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What are you kicking up a fuss about?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Can the Chief Secretary tell me if any garage proprietor would be compelled to open on a Sunday?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If one garage opened on a Sunday, then other garages would be compelled to open. Other business establishments are closed on a Sunday, so we are doing nothing new by introducing this Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Why not prevent workers from erecting buildings on a Sunday?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member could introduce a Bill to prevent them from so doing if he so desires. All I am asking the hon. member is why should garage proprietors receive more consideration than is given to 99 per cent. of other business establishments. I have not heard one good point raised by Sir Charles or Mr. Simpson to show why the Bill should be thrown out.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: We have not heard one good reason why the Bill should be passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have been trying to tell the hon. member why; and if I have been unsuccessful, I am sorry. I can see no reason why more consideration should be given to this particular industry than is given to any other. If we introduced a Bill to open butchers' shops or any other shop on a Sunday, would members support that?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: How frequently does a person buy petrol? A petrol tank has a definite capacity. The majority of people, particularly those who go for a drive on Sunday would not fill their petrol tank once a week, let alone on a Sunday.

Hon. L. A. Logan: What about members from the country?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I will leave it to country members to answer that. However, whether he be from the city or the country, the average person does not fill his tank more than once a week. I fill my petrol tank on a Friday.

Hon. H. L. Roche: What do you keep a car for?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do a lot of travelling over the week-end. I happen to hold a portfolio which occasions my hearing many appeals and I like to make personal inspections. I have never yet had to fill my tank on a Sunday after filling it on the Friday.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You are only one. Very often I have had to fill my tank on a Sunday after filling it on a Friday.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Minister for the North-West travels from the city to Carnarvon and he fills his petrol tank only once a week.

Hon. H. L. Roche: What sort of car has he?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What does it matter? If an emergency arises and a motorist is forced to obtain petrol, provision is made in the Bill for such an occasion.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Petrol is not available at every garage in an emergency. It is an entirely different state of affairs in the country.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is easier to obtain petrol in the country on a Sunday than it is in the metropolitan area, because in the majority of places in the country the proprietors live on the premises.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Of course they do not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They do, and the hon. member knows it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You tell me one in York that does.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know York.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Tell me one in Northam.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know Northam. In all the other parts of the State in which I have been I would be surprised if there were not at least one place where the garage proprietor lived on the premises. I have been north and south in the State; and members know that to be true, just as they know that the average person would not fill his tank once a week. Why must it be filled on Sunday? I am not going to delay the House any longer. The Government feels there is justification for this measure.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: You have kept an election promise and I admire you for it.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Members should desist from interjecting and permit the Chief Secretary to continue with his speech.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope members will support the second reading of the Bill. If they desire a provision to be inserted at the Committee stage, to enable us to get away from the 24-hour service; and put forward reasonable suggestions I would be quite glad to consider them. I would be only too willing to listen to any argument on restricted trading.

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

Ayes	.....	8
Noes	.....	17

Majority against ..... 9

#### Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. R. J. Boylen

(Teller.)

## Noes.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. O. H. Henning	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. Hearn
Hon. L. A. Logan	

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

# **BILL—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.**

## *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [1.47 a.m.] in moving the second reading said: I am hopeful that this Bill will be received by most members with some degree of pleasure. A little while ago the Government appointed a committee to investigate the question of the adequacy of parliamentary emoluments. On this committee were the Chief Justice, the President of the Arbitration Court and the Public Service Commissioner. The recommendations of the committee were that increases of £135 a year should be given to North-West members, and £85 a year to members representing other areas. Other annual increases recommended were £250 for the Premier; £150 for Ministers; £100 for the Speaker and the President; and £50 for the Chairmen of Committees. The committee also proposed increases ranging up to £350 a year for Government employees whose salaries are fixed by statute or by Executive Council.

As members know only too well, the sole increase in parliamentary salaries since 1947, apart from basic wage adjustment, has been £40. Since 1947 the basic wage has risen by 130.2 per cent., while members, increases, inclusive of basic wage adjustments, have amounted to 93.09 per cent. The Government did not consider that the committee's recommendations were satisfactory. In discussing them it was felt there must be some more reasonable method to ensure that the private member of Parliament would be able to receive an increase, no matter under what heading, in connection with his parliamentary work and duties, which would enable him to carry out those duties without involving himself in loss or in any way depriving his dependants.

Cabinet, in discussions on this matter, considered the angle that every person employed by the Government, whether a wages or a salaried man, is entitled to claim the reimbursement when, as a result of the duties which the Government calls upon him to perform, he has to meet out-of-pocket expenses such as might be incurred in travelling, living away from home, and in a number of other directions. Therefore Cabinet finally came to the conclusion that the basis upon which the

problem should be approached was that members of Parliament, who inevitably have to incur considerable unavoidable out-of-pocket expenses from time to time, should be given some recompense for them.

If the principle is good enough to apply to the salaried employees of the Government, and if it is good enough to apply to wages employees, surely it is a fair and reasonable principle to apply to members of Parliament. There is a difference, it is true, in that the Government cannot direct members to go anywhere to do work for the Government in the same way that the Government can direct a salaried officer or a wages employee.

Nevertheless, a member of Parliament has to travel not only within his own electorate but also over various parts of the State. In addition, if he desires to fit himself to be a more effective member of Parliament and to do better things for the State, it might be desirable that he travel at least in the other States of the Commonwealth. Is it a fair proposition that a member of Parliament who traverses his own district to serve the needs of his electors, who traverses the State to better inform his mind of the State's development and its future possibilities, or who travels interstate to learn lessons which can be applied to this State, should receive no recompense of any kind?

If members pondered that question on the basis of merit they would come to the conclusion that members of Parliament are entitled to recompense for expenses incurred, which are unavoidable. There are members of Parliament today, as there have been in the past, who would have informed their minds to a greater extent on the State's resources and on the State's possibilities of future development if they could have afforded to travel for those purposes.

We all know the number of public undertakings in this State which have been commenced during the past few years. If members of Parliament had been able to visit the localities and investigate the circumstances, those undertakings might have progressed more rapidly and cheaply. Why should a member of Parliament be compelled, through financial considerations, to confine his interest to his electorate? Is that the type of member we would encourage in this State, a member who cannot move outside his own electorate because of financial limitations?

It may be said that not every member depends on his parliamentary income. It may be argued that many members in both Houses have other sources of income, some of which are far greater than their parliamentary salary. Those members are able to travel in the State and to other States. Therefore, the points I raised do not affect them. If the present position

continues, there will be two classes of members: one, because of fortuitous circumstances, able to travel within the State, interstate and overseas; and the other restricted to their own electorate. The former would have the opportunity of being better informed than the latter, no matter how long either might remain in Parliament.

The Government is justified in bringing forward this measure not only to ensure that all members of Parliament may be given the opportunity to become more effective and learn more at first hand about this State, but also to give them the means to use those opportunities. In due course, some members of Parliament become Ministers of the Crown. The more opportunities we can give to members to study and understand this State and other States, the better fitted will they be to accept ministerial responsibilities. When those members became Ministers, they would return to the State a thousand-fold whatever amount might be expended by them under the proposed measure during the years they were private members.

The Bill lays down that members of Parliament who are Ministers of the Crown will not be eligible to draw the reimbursement expenses which are provided in the schedule to the Bill. The reason is that Ministers are entitled to draw expenses which they incur in pursuance of their duties. Another portion of the Bill stipulates that the Treasurer shall, on the application of a member for reimbursement at the maximum rate, or less, as the case may be, cause the reimbursement to be made to the member at the rate applied for by him in such manner and at such time or times as the Crown determines.

If this Bill becomes law, some members, because of their substantial income, apart from parliamentary salaries, will not desire to draw any of the expenses provided for. Because of affluent circumstances, a member may be able to meet whatever expenses he incurs in performing his duties, and he may not desire to apply for the expenses set out in the schedule. Then he would not receive the expenses at all. On the other hand, there may be some members who could, out of their income additional to their parliamentary allowance, finance part of their expenses in making themselves more effective as members and would not wish to draw the full amount. Some of them might feel satisfied and content in their minds if they drew 75, 50 or 33 per cent., whatever the proportion might be; and so provision is made in the Bill for discretion to be exercised by the member in that direction.

Where a member does not in a full calendar year apply for the expenses that would be due in that year, he will forfeit his claim to the expenses that otherwise would have been available to him. In

other words, members will not be permitted to accumulate the amounts over a period of years. If a member does not apply, say, in the year 1954, the expenses to which he would have been otherwise entitled would disappear automatically. A member could not remain in Parliament for three years without claiming expenses year by year, and at the end of that time, or at the end of five years or ten years, retire or be defeated and then claim back expenses over the period whatever it might be.

The schedule to the Bill sets out the amount that would be payable in respect of the different groups of electorates and provinces within the State. The amounts set out are the maximum that may be claimed in any one calendar year. Members on reading the schedule will see that for the Metropolitan, Suburban and West provinces the maximum amount is £200 a year. That amount applies also to Assembly electorates in the metropolitan area. For the North Province, the maximum amount per year is £400, and for the Legislative Assembly districts in the North-West and also the Murchison district, the maximum is £400. For the North-East and South-East Provinces, and for the Assembly electorates of Eyre, Merredin, Yilgarn and Roe, the maximum per annum is £350. Members representing provinces and districts not mentioned in the groups to which I have referred will be entitled to a maximum of £300 in any one year.

It is felt that by specifying a reasonable maximum for each group of districts and provinces, and leaving to the members concerned the discretion of applying for the full amount or for some lesser sum, the situation will be met. It would be pertinent to ask how members of the Government arrived at the amounts set out in the schedule. Broadly, those figures were arrived at because they coincided with the amounts previously allowed and still allowed to members of the State Parliament by the Commonwealth Taxation Department. I am informed that the proposed reimbursements will not be taxable; but, if the Bill becomes law, the full parliamentary salary will become taxable. It will be seen clearly that the amount set out in these schedules will not be absolutely a net gain to members because those who take them will then be taxable on £200, £300 or £400 of their salaries which they are not now taxable on.

I ask all members to judge the proposals upon their merits and upon the urgent and vital need that exists to enable members of Parliament, especially those who have no other source of income than their parliamentary salary, to travel Western Australia to see what has happened in this State over the years in the past, and to study the development that has taken place. They should be able to confer with people in various parts of the State; to look into

the possibilities of the future; and generally to increase their practical knowledge very greatly over what it is today and over what it will ever be unless something is done to make it financially possible, and therefore physically possible, for members to whom I have specially referred to do the things they should be able to do because they are legislators.

They should be in a position to do this because they are public representatives and because of that, whether it be the development in Western Australia or matters in general, members of Parliament, who are not only members for their respective districts but members for the State of Western Australia as a whole, will be able to extend their knowledge. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. L. C. DIVER** (Central) [1.57 a.m.]: The first question that we as members of Parliament have to decide is whether members are entitled to reimbursement for expenses. My answer is, "Yes; certainly members are entitled to reimbursement" for the reasons which I shall set out, especially as the expenses have reached such a high proportion of the salary. That is more evident in the case of a country member.

The ratio of expenses to salary would be in the vicinity of £2 of each £5 for a country member. This sum would include depreciation on a light motorcar, and in estimating that depreciation the cost of the car would be included. The expenses also include cost of tyres, fuel and oil, and running repairs. For these items a country member would be very fortunate if he got out at less than £300 a year.

Then there are other expenses, such as the cost of living away from home, donations, and out of pocket expenses. These would amount to not less than £250 a year, or a total of £550 for the two items. In my own mind, I am fully convinced that no matter who represented a country constituency, he would not be able to get through with expenses of less than £550 a year if he was to do justice to his electors and to himself.

Having satisfied myself on the principle involved, the next question is: Are we as members of Parliament entitled to grant ourselves these reimbursements? Other members will say that each member may apply to the Treasury for reimbursement of expenses and the Treasury shall grant the claim. That is the sort of phraseology that would be used, and to my mind it represents a cunning and subtle use of words to the end that an awkward situation might be avoided.

I have decided that the present time is not opportune to pass this measure. I shall give my reasons for reaching that conclusion. During the present session we

have had before us measures proposing to deal with the continuance of such legislation as rents and tenancies and price-control, both of which had the one aim, namely, to restrict the increase in costs at the other fellow's expense so that the country's economy might be kept on an even keel.

Yet, with an air of mock modesty, the Government has sponsored a Bill of this nature which, if passed, will permit members of Parliament to extract from the Treasury a sum of money somewhat in excess of £25,000 per annum over and above what the taxpayer now has to find for members' salaries. It is suggested that this money will be made available from a Treasury which the present Government, when it assumed office last March, alleged to be bankrupt. I should like to know whether the present financial position is real or only apparent, or whether the present position could be better described by the old quotation, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

I shall give further reasons why members should oppose the Bill, by reading a few brief extracts from the annual report of the Tariff Board for the year ended the 30th June, 1953. At page 4, paragraph 6 contains the following:—

The continued increases in costs and the development of what is known as the cost-price spiral have created subsidiary spirals, each of which is in the same direction as, and adds to the impetus and volume of, the main one. There is, for example, our basic wage system, which is largely responsible for the current spiral of prices, wages, costs and prices again. Another movement is created when rising prices increase costs of Government and require increased charges for services, or alternatively require higher taxation, which sooner or later finds its way into prices. A similar pattern is seen when higher prices affect capital expenditure in industry, increase trading risks and call for higher profits which again increase prices. These subsidiary spirals are numerous and must be arrested individually or collectively before the present adverse movement can be brought under control.

At page 8, part of paragraph 31 reads—

The adjustments necessary to strengthen our internal economy automatically strengthen defences against aggressive imports, and these adjustments can be made at present without recourse to heroic measures. A relatively small reduction in all the elements in the prices of commodities is all that is needed to reverse current tendencies and to create a stable basis for further effort. A greater return in work value for wages, a more cautious



ous view of investments in expansions and new proposals, a prudent elimination of questionable overheads, a concentrated effort by management and reduced profit targets—all of these in combination would arrest, if not reverse, the current trend, increase the effectiveness of the existing tariff and expand the field for profitable export trade. When capacity for self-help is exhausted, it will probably be found that the general level of the existing tariff is adequate.

The Tariff Board, whose duty it is to watch and tabulate all factors that affect the economic life of Australia, is a body whose conclusions all responsible people must respect. Consequently these quotations show clearly and definitely what is required in these days of instability. All that is needed is for each one of us to make a little sacrifice, and none could do that better than we members of the Legislative Council.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Not all of us.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Let one and all of us set an example to those people whom we address with so much lip service telling them what sacrifices they ought to make. Let us show the public in general that we members of Parliament are prepared to demonstrate that example is better than precept.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Who wrote this out?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Who does the hon. member think? Let us show that we are willing to forgo something which according to equity and justice is our entitlement. For these reasons I oppose the Bill at the present time, and I hope members will note that I say at the present time; for I think that now is the time when we should act, although, as I have stated, we are justly entitled to what is proposed here. We should give our economy a chance to settle down. As the article said, let there be no heroic act, but just the common, decent thing. Let us set the community an example. I appeal to members, when the division is taken, to support me.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [2.11 a.m.]: First of all, I congratulate the Leader of the House on the comprehensive statement he made when introducing the measure. On several past occasions—when similar measures have been introduced—there seemed to be an attitude of shyness towards these things. Members were unwilling to speak in favour of a motion for which nearly all of them voted. There should be no false pride or modesty about this. I believe that if we are doing our job properly the amount of living expenses and allowances that we get is not sufficient. Those members like the previous speaker, with a supplementary income, can take a different view; but even so, I note that the hon. member said that, although he will vote against the Bill, if the

majority think that the increase is justified he, being a democrat, will accept the majority view.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I would distribute my share amongst the pensioners, who should have it.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I appreciate the sincerity of the hon. member in expressing his views, and I ask him to credit me with similar sincerity. I have always regarded the parliamentary salary to be partly expenses and partly living allowance. If members judge it from that angle they will find that the expense to which a member is subject is such that his living allowance is not much. Most country members run a substantial car costing between £1,000 and £1,100, which has to be replaced at the end of five years. This means an amount of £4 a week depreciation. If the member does considerable running, as most country members do, his running expenses will be anything from £5 to £8 a week. Then he is subject to many calls on his purse.

A member is expected to travel in his constituency, and one knows that to stay at hotels today is much more expensive than it was years ago. Then there are election expenses which most members have to meet periodically. His expenses amount to a considerable proportion of his parliamentary allowance. My assessment would be roughly 60 per cent. living allowance and 40 per cent. expenses allowance. These are substantially the proportions that are allowed to Federal members representing country constituencies. One Federal member in this State gets £1,750 a year parliamentary salary or allowance, and a further £1,150 for expenses. I can never understand the justice of a Federal private member getting £2,900 a year when the Premier of this State receives only £2,500. I would say that a private member in the Federal sphere would not carry anywhere near the responsibility that the Premier has to bear. The Minister did say that if a country member were paid a grant of £300 a year, and he previously had £300 deductible from his total amount for taxation purposes, it was not a net gain. Let us assume that a member pays 5s. in the £ income tax. If he got the sum of £300 off his assessment he would save £75 in tax. If he has to pay that £75 in tax and he gets £300 in additional allowances, obviously he is in pocket to the extent of £225.

Hon. G. Bennetts: He loses the £50, too.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: He builds up his assessment if he accepts this as cash, but, of course, the amount would vary according to the rate of assessment. The principle to be established here is this, that the labourer is worthy of his hire. If we are going to attract into Parliament the right type of man who will be energetic and do justice to the job—

Hon. H. L. Roche: You want to improve on the present type.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: If we limit the allowance we will not attract the right type of man, because the man who will do well in the parliamentary sphere might easily be a person who would earn much more income from an outside source. I myself had to sacrifice my business to come here. After being elected I had no other means of income, and I find now that, although I have been relieved of election expenses—and I have had ministerial office—I am little if any better off than when I first entered Parliament.

As a matter of fact, I would be better off if I had not come here at all. Parliamentary allowances, taking into account the heavy expenses of a member, are by no means on the generous side. It has been said that because of the pegging of the basic wage—I say this is not correct because Mr. Justice Jackson in the tail of his judgment said that for this occasion only he would disregard the quarterly adjustment—and as our allowance is a living allowance and an expense allowance, both of which have been subject to increased costs, but only one of which was adjusted by the basic wage, we are actually behind in these adjustments. So that does not really apply. If we are to retain in the Parliamentary sphere people who are willing to work and do the job as it should be done, and if we are to attract the right types—apart from men who have other incomes—the allowance must be made adequate to the job. I support the Bill.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [2.21 a.m.]: I do not intend to cast a silent vote but will express my intention to oppose the Bill. I do not think it quite proper, in the existing circumstances, that we should approve of an increase in our allowance or salary. Since the present Government took office early this year it has been short of money, though I do not hold it alone responsible for this proposed increase. Apparently we are now prepared to mulct the Treasury in another £20,000 odd to increase our allowance far beyond what the tribunal appointed some years ago has recommended. There might have been a case had the proposed increase conformed to what the tribunal recommended, but I cannot feel that at the present stage we can justify the extent of the proposed allowance.

I have mentioned a couple of times this session the necessity for the community to stabilise conditions and especially costs, which I think will be the biggest factor in our economy in the next few years. I therefore cannot feel justified in supporting this measure or accepting the proposed increase. I could make as good use of the extra money as could anyone else at present; but I feel that, as we are trying to stabilise conditions and have welcomed

the pegging of wages by the suspension of the quarterly basic wage adjustment, we should not add to the cost of running the State to the extent proposed in the measure.

I know that the Treasurer moved an amendment in another place, making it unnecessary for members who felt they should not take the increase, to accept it, and I think there will be others who, like me, might be concerned at the effect it will have on certain individuals. Those of us who feel that way are justified in expressing opposition to the measure, secure in the knowledge that we do not have to accept the increase. As far as I am concerned, I think the Treasury are the right people to retain this money.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [2.25 a.m.]: I feel that we should be objective in our approach to this measure. For many years democracy worked well and members of Parliament were unpaid and I believe that during that period the best element in various countries was willing to do the job in an honorary capacity. Nowadays, however, under our present political system, we have among us men representing huge numbers of people and many such could not afford to do the work in an honorary capacity. Never at any time has the financial reward of members been assessed as a salary and in the past it has been more in the nature of an honorarium. With the rapid depreciation in value of the Australian £ and the rise in basic wage adjustments, we have reached a stage where some would regard the payment as a salary commensurate with the job done, but it should be remembered that the payment is a gross income, from which each of us could work out his net return. I do not know how the member who has no other source of income can do his work effectively and make ends meet.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: He cannot do it on the salary alone.

Hon. H. HEARN: No; as time goes by such a member must become poorer as he grows older. I believe the public will assess us at practically our own valuation. Members of Parliament who depend on their salaries are today not making nearly as much as are some of the down-trodden workers about whom we hear such a lot from time to time and in their case this measure will be a step in the right direction. My own belief is that we could do with half the present number of members and double their salaries and in that way we would attract a better class of person into the political life of the State. If a member has financial worries, that must detract from his efficiency. This measure is long overdue. If some of us deducted our taxation, expenses and the donations we give from our salaries, we would find that we could not exist on what was left. I support the measure.

**HON. G. BENNETTS** (South-East) [2.30 a.m.]: I do not think any member in this House travels more than I do, and my only income is my parliamentary salary. I travel from Kalgoorlie to Perth and back again every week and I also visit different parts of my province.

Hon. A. R. Jones: How do you travel?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: By train.

Hon. A. R. Jones: That is paid for.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: There are 2,400 square miles in my territory, and I must have a motorcar to cover that area.

Hon. H. L. Roche: There is hardly any-one in it.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I must have a motorcar to travel around my province. When I come to Perth I am compelled to live in a hotel, and I have big expenses to meet as well. Different people ask me for donations; and if any member likes to look at my banking account for the past 12 months, he will see that I have not made anything out of my parliamentary salary. In fact, to balance my budget, I had to cut out two trips to certain parts of my district. As members know, I am not a spendthrift.

During his speech, Mr. Simpson said that we will lose £75 per annum because we will not be able to claim taxation deductions; and, in addition, Goldfields members will lose an allowance of £50. In other words, out of the £350 increase, we will lose £125. In addition, we have election expenses and, as people want us to do a job, I do not think they would complain about these expense allowances. Many people will say that others are suffering hardships while we are voting ourselves an increase. We all know that pensioners are suffering, but we are trying to do everything we can for them. The stabilisation of the basic wage will also have an effect on certain people. However, I have no hesitation in supporting the measure.

**HON. H. K. WATSON** (Metropolitan) [2.32 a.m.]: My own personal view is that this Bill is as untimely as it is unjustified. If it were being introduced at the end of 1954 or 1955, my approach to it might be different. But let us look at the circumstances as they are today; within the last month all the citizens of Western Australia have been deprived of the quarterly adjustment of the basic wage. Previously they received those increases and every member of Parliament received them as well. Now all the citizens of Western Australia, with the exception of the privileged class—the 80 members of Parliament—are to be deprived of their quarterly increase. But the 80 members of Parliament say, "Although we were deprived of our quarterly increase in the basic wage we will reimburse ourselves by

from £200 to £400 per annum" by what is delightfully described as expenses.

The Minister for the North-West: Only 70 members of Parliament; the other ten are Ministers and they are not affected.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: That is so. It seems to me that in 1953 the cost of living, except for the increases which have been allowed for in our salary, is not much greater than it was last year. I cannot see any reason why, at this stage, we should decide to increase the allowance of members by any amount, whether it be called a salary increase or expenses. Personally I feel it is unjustified and unwarranted.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It may be to some members who have other incomes.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am dealing with the principle; never mind about incomes. Let us go a step further. In the past, when there has been an adjustment of members' salaries, it has been customary to refer the matter to a committee. It has not been referred to the Arbitration Court but to an umpire or independent body and it has been the custom to abide by the decision of that independent body. But in this instance, although reference was made to the independent body, that body did not give a decision which apparently some members thought it would; in effect, we are saying, "We will go to the independent committee and we will accept its recommendation if it suits us."

What if the ordinary unions of employees or unions of employers took the same attitude before the Arbitration Court? As some members said last night, we agree to arbitration so long as arbitration gives us what we want. In this particular instance we find that the committee recommended some increase which was very much lower than is proposed under this measure. Whatever the position may be in 12 months' or two years' time, I think that for the ensuing year at any rate we should not accept these allowances. I propose to vote against the Bill; but if it is carried, I do not propose for the ensuing year at any rate, to draw upon the expenses allowed.

**HON. L. A. LOGAN** (Midland) [2.37 a.m.]: Perhaps it might be a good idea at this stage to give some practical figures to members who do not rely upon parliamentary salaries for a living and ask them how they would like to live on those salaries alone. My car costs me £450 a year. I am not exaggerating when I say that, because I have done 35,500 miles in 34 months which, at 9d. a mile is £450 per annum. I have allowed, as a living away-from-home allowance, £300 a year; that is less than £1 a day and I do not think any member could do it for that. I have a wife and family to keep and I allow them £11 a week, which is £572 a year or a grand total of £1,322.

On top of that, I have to give donations, pay election expenses, replacements for my motorcar, taxation, superannuation and party funds. Now I ask members who are not living on their parliamentary salary alone, whether they have the right to get up and refuse to give us these increases?

Hon. L. C. Diver: It is a question of principle.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is not.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Those members do not have to collect the allowances if they do not want to.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is a question of realities.

Hon. L. C. Diver: You deny it to other people.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have not denied it to anybody. As for the independent body referred to by Mr. Watson, it has had nothing to do with the drafting of the Bill. If the measure had been drafted by that body, I would have accepted it. I have to deal with the Bill now before the House and that is what I am doing. Mr. Watson also said it was untimely. Eighteen months ago, at a party meeting, when the question of an increase in salaries was under discussion, I rose to my feet and said it was not an opportune time for any increase in salaries to be made, and I was the only member at that meeting who was relying on my salary for a living. If I made that statement then I should make it now, but I realise that the further I go the more I cannot afford to eat into my existing capital. Some members have said that if the salaries of parliamentarians were increased we would get a better class of candidate. That is a reflection on present members, and I take exception to that statement.

Hon. A. L. Loton: If the hon. member wants to take exception to any remark he should mention it at the time.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Who is making this speech, the hon. member or I?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Logan.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. Therefore, on reflection, members must realise that we cannot go on in the way we are doing at present. As for the basic wage being pegged, I think Mr. Watson and other members will realise that it is open to any union to apply to the Arbitration Court for an increase in margins, which has been granted. Many unions, even today, are approaching the Arbitration Court for such increases and are obtaining them. Only the other day, the carpenters' union was granted two increases in its margins.

Hon. L. C. Diver: The tribunal court would not allow this.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have nothing to do with that tribunal. I have to deal with the Bill now before me and not something in retrospect. We have to be reasonable about this measure, and face reality. On

the figures I have presented to the House, I cannot see how it is possible for any member to ask those who are depending on their parliamentary salaries for a living to refuse reimbursement of expenses.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South) [2.44 a.m.]: After hearing Mr. Logan say that I was not willing to support this measure, I could not let pass the opportunity to make some reply. As Mr. Watson said, a tribunal was set up to make recommendations in regard to the salaries of parliamentarians and, because it did not offer sufficient compensation to certain members, the principle of arbitration was thrown overboard by the Government taking upon itself the introduction of a Bill for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by members of Parliament which would make the proposition more attractive to members. Over past years, the salaries of members were subject to a rise or fall by periodical adjustments being made, and that system operated quite successfully.

When the last quarterly adjustment to the basic wage was considered, and the Arbitration Court ruled that there was to be no increase in that quarter, the Government then decided that it would go outside its own tribunal and increase the salaries of members by a reimbursement of their expenses. However, if we study the schedule to the Bill, we find that under item 3 the member for Roe, in particular, will be reimbursed to the extent of £350, and yet that is only part of a province which comes under item 4, the member for which is to be reimbursed to the extent of £300. That seems to be rather unfair.

A member for a province which embraces five Assembly electorates is to receive only £300 by way of reimbursement, and yet an Assembly member who represents only one electorate in it is to receive £350. Admittedly the Government apparently took into consideration that the electorate of Roe extends from Bruce Rock to Ravensthorpe. I suppose the same differentiation will apply to Council members who represent the same province that is represented by Sir Charles Latham. Although those members cover at least three times the area of any Assembly member, they are to receive £50 less for reimbursement of expenses. For those reasons I oppose the Bill.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [2.47 a.m.]: When introducing the measure, the Chief Secretary explained the Bill as clearly as any Bill could be explained. I now have a clear conception of the position and what I am voting for. Regardless of whether the salary of an individual member is sufficient for his needs, the question is one for him to decide. Even if the salary is insufficient, there is never a dearth of members or prospective members. We always find that plenty of

people offer their services at the polls. I offered my services at a certain salary, and I intend to continue my term on that salary.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You are not living on it.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am merely telling the House what I am going to do. I am not trying to influence anybody else. I am only pointing out why I intend to vote in a certain way. On many occasions we have heard that the Treasury is short of funds and that money cannot be made available for this or that, yet I take it that the sum required to cover the proposed reimbursement of members' expenses would be in the vicinity of £25,000 a year. I would not have a clear conscience if I voted in favour of the Bill. I voted against the continuance of control over rents and tenancies. I expressed the opinion that I did not believe that we, through an Act, should compel the Arbitration Court to make quarterly adjustments. As far as I am concerned, conscience is merely a small thing that one worries about after one has taken certain action, and I am sure that if I voted for this Bill it would worry me. After all, we must be subject to our consciences. My conscience tells me to vote against the Bill, and I intend to do so.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [2.50 a.m.]: I am not going to let this Bill go through without expressing my opinions and the reasons I have for holding those opinions. Together with other members I feel this is an inopportune time to bring a Bill such as this before the House. It seems that those of us who are speaking against the Bill are making enemies of those voting for it. There have been quite a few personal interjections.

I feel, from my own experience, that the amount asked for is quite legitimate and is earned by the present member of Parliament. I travel a lot with Mr. Logan. I know his life fairly well, and what he told the House tonight is quite correct. I really believe that. In the last 12 months, I have not travelled as much as before; but I know what my own expenses have been in previous years. Accordingly the amount asked for is not unjustified. That however, is not the question I am debating.

As other members have said, the Government, in every appeal it has made has asked the people and the public generally to try to stabilise the economy of the country at the present time. It has been mentioned that the basic wage quarterly adjustments have been stopped. I have been trying to find a speech in "Hansard" that was made by the Premier—I think two months ago—when he appealed to every business man to try to keep prices stable. Indeed, he rather accused some of them of being dishonest in the way they conducted their busi-

nesses. The context of his speech was that as the Arbitration Court has disallowed the quarterly adjustments the Government must appeal to the business people to keep prices steady and stable.

When the Premier can get up and ask the country to do that and request members of Parliament to support his ideals, I cannot for the life of me see how he justifies his actions in asking us to pass a Bill such as this a couple of months later. Under the superannuation Bill the employees of the Government received 10s. a week rise in their superannuation payments. On the same day the Premier introduced a Bill whereby members of Parliament would receive from £4 a week to £8 a week extra. How the Premier can tie those two points together and feel in his mind that he is doing a good job, I just do not know. When he came into power, he claimed that the Treasury was empty and that for the next 12 months the State was going to be in a ruinous position financially. Within months we find a measure such as this being introduced.

With others taking a similar stand, I feel that we should at least play a small part in meeting the obligation which we believe we owe to the economy and stability of the State; although we do grant that the parliamentary salary is not sufficient for those who rely upon it for a livelihood. Mention has been made tonight about certain expenses that are claimable. I know perfectly well that a member who does his job properly has nothing left out of his salary. Mention has not been made of the case of the member who might be beaten at the poll in perhaps one or two years' time, and who might go back on the labour market to find another job. In assessing a member's salary, I think those matters should be taken into consideration.

I would not be averse to supporting a straight-out rise in parliamentary salaries; if the Premier put it up in what I would consider a clean and honest way, I would support the measure. The Premier had the audacity to say that a member in another place was very wrong in stating that this was a dishonest measure. I do not know whether the Premier was right in saying that, because I am inclined to support that member. It would have been better to go to the public and say, "We are going to raise our salaries by £200, £300 or £400" rather than camouflage the matter as the Premier has done.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What about the taxation aspect?

Hon. A. R. JONES: I do not quite know what the hon. member is referring to. I would say that members such as Mr. Craig and Mr. Hearn—men who pay the maximum possible—would not receive very much. They would, of course, receive some

extra from this, because if they paid the maximum taxation of 14s. in the £ they would still have a 6s. increase in the £.

Hon. H. Hearn: We eliminated the principle of taxation allowance.

Hon. A. R. JONES: We are not worried about the taxation aspect; it does not come into the picture at all. It is purely and simply a matter of principle. Had the measure provided for payment to commence after the end of the financial year, after we had got over the terrific struggle the Premier contemplated, I think it would have been better, particularly if, as I have said before, he had gone to the people and told them exactly by what amount he was going to raise the salaries of members of Parliament. I would have given that method every support.

I do not intend to accept the money this year. Not that I would not be able to spend it, because if we received £10,000 or £20,000 a year it would still not be enough. No man is ever satisfied with the amount of money he has. I can assure members that I have not got too much money. I have been working on overdrafts ever since the Taxation Department asked me to find a considerable sum of money two or three years ago. So it is not because I have too much money that I propose to take the action I have outlined.

I see in front of me a newspaper with large headlines, stating, "Hegney Forecasts New Year Price Rises". That is not consistent with the remarks of the Premier when he introduced this Bill in another place. Mr. Hegney and the Premier apparently voted for the increases provided for in this Bill. I have not heard anything to the contrary. Yet today Mr. Hegney forecasts price rises as being inevitable. We offer no encouragement to the contrary by example by piling this sort of expenditure on to the Treasury! With those remarks, I join with other members in voting against the second reading.

*[The President resumed the Chair.]*

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON (South) [3.1 a.m.]: One question asked by a member was this: "What right have members who have other sources of income to express an opinion on this Bill?" I say that all members have a right to express their opinions on a measure of this nature. This Bill deals with the expenses which members have to meet in covering their constituencies. I agree that the expenses are heavy, but I would remind members that they entered politics knowing full well all the duties expected of them.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: If the hon. member did not, others did. The remuneration was known; but we find on being elected to Parliament that when the first opportunity arises a cry is made

for an increase. This measure is ill-conceived in view of the fact that the Arbitration Court recently pegged the basic wage. For that reason alone I do not feel justified in accepting the amount proposed under the Bill. Therefore, I do not propose to accept it, although my expenses in travelling throughout my constituency will exceed the proposed increase. Before we rush into such legislation, as the Premier has done in this case, we should give more consideration to the State as a whole. If the position improves in 12 months' time we could introduce the Bill then. Today is not the time to ask for increases. I therefore oppose the measure.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [3.5 a.m.]: I have seen a few of these rises in my political life in the State. When I entered Parliament the salary was £300 a year, but Parliament decided it was not sufficient and increased it to £400. Subsequently it was raised to £600 a year. But we did not have the same opportunity then, as we would have under this measure of using our discretion. If we do not like to claim the allowance we can leave it in the Treasury. That would satisfy my conscience. I accept the figures given by members, and I know that some have great difficulty in finding the money to meet their expenses throughout the year. I would indeed be guilty of selfishness, not having the same financial commitments as other members, if I prevented them from getting the increases. I agree with members that the court has pegged the basic wage. We hope that will bring about a stabilisation in values. I do not think the allowance will be drawn by many members of this House, judging by the speeches. Therefore I support the second reading.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [3.7 a.m.]: I support the Bill. After listening to other members I feel the occasion should not pass without my making some remarks. Mr. Logan has put the position very clearly from a private member's point of view. He gave details of his commitments in carrying out his duties while at the same time having to keep his home.

This Bill deals with the allowances of members. It has suited some to say, whether rightly or wrongly, that it is really a matter of salary. Whether it is or not does not really matter. It is all income. The Bill shows the increases as travelling allowances. From my own experience over the past 15 years, I doubt whether the increases would cover the travelling and living-away-from-home expenses. One has only to travel to Kalgoorlie and stay for two or three days to find out what the expenses are. There is little difference whether one travels by

train or car. In one car a return trip to Kalgoorlie costs £10, whereas in a smaller car it might amount to £5.

When looking at the salary received, consideration must be given to the services rendered by a member to the constituency he represents. It was said that a better class of member would be enticed to stand for Parliament if the remuneration were higher, but I do not think that statement is a fair one. We are as good as anybody else. After all, the people whom we represent were the ones who put us here to look after their interests. I think they would like us to receive the remuneration which is in keeping with the position we hold.

Are we not entitled to as much pay as a senator receives? Are we not doing as good a job as a senator does? Why should there be any differentiation between the salaries paid to Senators and to members of State Parliaments? It does not matter whether a man is elected to the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly, he serves the electors to the best of his ability and is entitled to adequate remuneration.

I have known the time when members who represent certain interests would have been very pleased indeed to support a Bill of this nature. I refer to the time when the farmers were getting 10 bad seasons to one good season and were living on advances from the I.A.B. Today they are in a very different position, and can afford to say that they will not accept the reimbursement of expenses. This may apply in the first year, but we can bet our sweet lives that they will claim it in the second year.

If a member considers that he is entitled to receive this recoup of expenses, he should support the Bill, irrespective of whether he is fortunate enough to be in possession of other means. He should adopt the view that there are many private members who are giving full-time service to the electors and are finding it difficult to do so on the present salary. If a member represents a constituency like mine, extending as it does to Kalgoorlie and Wiluna and down to Wurgarga, near to Mt. Magnet, his expenses are very heavy. Some of us endeavoured to get permission to travel by plane, but that mode of transport is too expensive. The Government has granted us one plane trip a year provided no other transport is available at the time.

I consider that there is only one thing for members of this House to do and that is to support the Bill. It would be practically impossible for more than a very few to do the job properly without the aid of a car to travel around and enable them to see the people they represent. I would have no hesitation whatever in

accepting this reimbursement of expenses and would be quite prepared to justify my action in supporting the Bill. It is a step in the right direction and one that should have been taken long ago.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Do you think you are the only one who requires it?

Hon. W. R. HALL: I believe the hon. member could do with the money, and although he may not accept it this year, we shall watch with interest to see what happens in 1954 and 1955. There may be some members who do not desire to accept the reimbursements; but they should not, by their votes, deprive those who are entitled to it, who are giving good service to the people, and who feel that they can accept it with a clear conscience.

One speaker told us that at the time we were elected, we knew full well what allowances we would receive. When I was elected 15 years ago the allowance was £600, but conditions have changed greatly since then. If a salary of £600 was justified 15 years ago, an amount of £1,800 would not be disproportionate now. I consider that the Premier has approached this matter in the right way. Of course, in the opinion of some members, the time is never opportune to do anything, but if some precedent were not established, the world would not go round.

In another place the measure was supported by a majority of the members of the Liberal Party and the Country Party because they realised that members are entitled to this money. When the tribunal considered members' salaries, a sum was suggested which I believe amounted practically to an insult, and I have wondered whether some of the evidence tendered to the tribunal received the consideration it deserved. As to the sum recommended by the tribunal, so small was it that I would have felt inclined in the circumstances to forgo it.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Do you think that the tribunal should be abolished?

Hon. W. R. HALL: The hon. member might be a better judge of that than I am, but I am prepared to say that the recommendation of the tribunal was not in keeping with what I considered was a fair thing.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Well, should it be abolished?

Hon. W. R. HALL: Simply because one does not agree with the decision of the tribunal, there is no reason to denounce it. I merely say that in my opinion the recommendation was not in keeping with what in the circumstances should have been recommended for members by way of travelling allowances. I support the second reading.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [3.20 a.m.]: Simply, honestly, and with a clear conscience I support the Bill. One member gave some figures which were

surprisingly close to figures which were supplied to me by an accountant. I allow £400 a year for my electorate. This represents 31,000 miles of travelling in 30 months. I allowed £250 for running expenses and my costs are different from those of other members, because I am purchasing a car, a further £250 a year. Most members come here knowing what their salary will be and what they will have to live on. That is partly true; but when most of us first came here, the salary was much different from what it is now compared with present living costs. When I entered the House I received £950 a year. I have a gold pass, and I was told that it would be of wonderful assistance to me in covering my electorate, but in my first six months I found that to cover the electorate as I should, I needed a car, and I had to purchase one from scratch. I am still purchasing it; and if I am not returned at the next election, I will still be purchasing it even then. Knowing that I earn my present money, and will earn the extra amount, I support the Bill.

**HON. L. CRAIG** (South-West [3.21 a.m.]): The attitude taken by Sir Charles Latham is the right one, namely, that there are some members who need the extra money, and a few who do not. Mr. Jones has been kind enough to include me amongst the latter.

**Hon. H. Hearn:** I thought you were the only one.

**Hon. L. CRAIG:** Those who do not need it, need not draw it. The right thing to do is not to deny it to those people who want it and earn it, simply because others feel that they either do not earn it or do not need it. Those people, without telling anyone, can decline to draw the money.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [3.22 a.m.]: I thank members for their candid criticism, although it was not always correct. Some members have said the time for this is not opportune. I have heard that phrase not once, but on a number of occasions over the 25 years I have been in Parliament.

**Hon. L. Craig:** Like in connection with the building of a new Parliament House.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY:** Yes. Some members made comparisons with the increase in the pensions rate. The old saying still applies, that comparisons are odious. The circumstances in the two cases are entirely different. Some members said that the Premier was giving this. Well, this has been decided on by the Government, and on behalf of the Government I make no apology to any member for the Bill. One member said that we would not accept the decision of the tribunal. I say we did the right thing

in not accepting the recommendations of that committee, and any member who examines the recommendations will agree with me. The theme of the committee was: "To him that hath shall be given."

This tribunal recommended £250 more for the Premier; £150 for Ministers; £100 for the Speaker and the President; £50 for the Chairman of Committees and £85 for a member of Parliament. Where is the comparison? A civil servant, who is getting a long way more than a member of Parliament is to receive from £250 to £300 extra. The Government was justified in not accepting the recommendation of the committee. The Government is dealing with this matter because it feels that it is something that is long overdue. Members have for many years been suffering a disability with respect to the amount of money they have received for the services they have rendered.

I believe the method adopted, of making it an allowance, is preferable to providing for an increase in salary. This is the system adopted in the Federal sphere and it is now taken up here for the first time. I think it is a good one. I feel that even now the increases given are not over generous. We did not have a tribunal to indicate to us what the figures should be, in making a comparison between a seat and a province, so we took the decision of the only body which could really give one as a result of its investigations over a long period—the Taxation Department.

**Hon. A. L. Loton:** The Council members are allowed the same amount. They are classed as country members.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY:** We have taken the Commonwealth figures, and they are the ones in the Bill. The Taxation Department did not make any difference in the Federal sphere.

**Hon. A. L. Loton:** You have made a difference.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY:** In certain seats. The figures we have taken are based on those used by the Taxation Department.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	19
Noes	....	....	....	7
Majority for				12

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. J. Cunningham
Hon. H. Hearn	(Teller.)



Noes.

Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. H. L. Roche	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Schedule:

Hon. A. R. JONES: I move—

The CHAIRMAN: It will have to be a request.

Hon. A. R. JONES: My intention is to move for a decrease, in most cases.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You can only request.

Hon. A. R. JONES: It is my intention to request that the reimbursement for the Metropolitan, Suburban and West Province members be decreased by £100, and that the North Province figure be reduced from £400 to £300, and that the Gascoyne, Kimberley, Murchison, Pilbara and other country provinces and electorates should go to the same figure of £300. I do not think that suburban members could possibly spend £200 in travelling expenses—

The CHAIRMAN: I think we had better have quite clear what is intended.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I intend to move that the Metropolitan, Suburban and West Province figure be reduced from £200 to £100 and—

The CHAIRMAN: The amendments will have to be put one at a time.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Could the hon. member list the amounts so that we may know what he proposes?

The CHAIRMAN: That would be the right thing, to put them in order.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He must move first to strike out the £200.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Item 1 the figure "£200" be struck out, and "£100" be inserted in lieu.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment as I think the amounts contained in the Bill are reasonable.

Amendment put and negatived.

The CHAIRMAN: Does Mr. Jones desire to go on with the rest of his amendments?

Hon. A. R. JONES: As members have already indicated their desires, no useful purpose would be served in moving any of my other amendments.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

*Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and passed.

# **BILL—PARLIAMENTARY SUPER-ANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [3.44 a.m.] in moving the second reading said: As members are aware, the trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund recently submitted certain recommendations to members of the fund. Subsequently, a meeting of members decided to refer the recommendations of the trustees to a committee. That committee arrived at certain conclusions and placed them before the administrative officer of the fund and asked him to comment on them. Before any finality could be reached between the committee and that officer the end of the session was so close as to make it impracticable for the matter to be proceeded with further during the present calendar year.

This situation was reported to another meeting of members of both Houses when it was agreed that no attempt should be made during the present session to alter the set-up of the superannuation fund in any radical way, but that members should content themselves by recommending to the Government that it bring down a Bill to provide for increases in some of the existing pension rates.

This measure follows that recommendation. Under it there will be an increase from £5 per week to £6 per week for pensioners who were members for a period of more than 14 years but who contributed to the fund for less than 14 years and for more than seven years. That pension rate operates, as members know, for a period of 10 years. Under the existing Act the pension, for the succeeding period of 10 years, is reduced to £2 10s. per week. The Bill provides for that figure to be increased to £3 per week.

Pensioners under the scheme who were members of Parliament and contributors for a period exceeding 14 years now receive £6 a week, which will be increased to £7 a week for the first ten years and for the succeeding ten-year period, where the present pension is £3 a week, there will be an increase of 10s. per week, bringing the amount up to £3 10s. a week. Those are the proposals contained in the Bill.

Widows, who are in receipt of pensions under the scheme, will come in for an automatic increase if they are within any of the groups I mentioned, because their pensions are assessed on a percentage rate of what the husband was drawing at his death, and also on the percentage rate in the second following period.

I think it advisable to give the house some figures in respect of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund. To the 1st July this year the total amount paid into the fund by members was £23,956. The total amount paid out to the same date was £11,756. It will be seen therefore, that the contributions of members have to date been more than sufficient to meet the outgoings; in fact, the contributions are practically double the payments made from the fund. In addition to the £23,956 contributed by members, the Government has contributed £8,320.

It will be seen that the State has not yet been called upon to pay anything out in pensions, although it has contributed to the fund. That money could be regarded as being part of the substantial credit now existing. As members generally will be aware, it is intended, prior to the next session of Parliament, to go much more closely into the existing set-up to see whether it would be reasonable to make major alterations along a number of lines that have been suggested, with a view to introducing during the next session more comprehensive amendments to the Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. A. L. LOTON** (South) [3.47 a.m.]: There are one or two questions I want to ask the Chief Secretary. Firstly, how many persons will be affected by the additional payments proposed? Secondly, the Chief Secretary said that the Government had made certain contributions to the scheme. Is that shown in the Treasury as a book entry, can it be drawn upon at some future time, or does it mean that the increased pensions will be paid out of members' contributions?

**HON. L. CRAIG** (South-West) [3.48 a.m.]: I want to make one suggestion. The Government proposes to review the scheme next year, and I hope some provision will be made for lump sum payments to those members who do not want pensions when they retire from Parliament. There might be the odd member to whom a pension would not be of much value whereas the lump sum payment would enable him to buy a house or a business. A pension of £6 or £7 a week, in such a case, would be useless. The lump sum payment could be calculated actuarially and would be the equivalent of, say, £7 a week for so many years. I hope the Chief Secretary will make representations along those lines and that some provision will be made for a lump sum payment should a member desire it.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [3.49 a.m.]: At the moment I am not in a position to answer Mr. Loton's queries. However, I

do not intend to take the Bill into the Committee stage now, but will do so later in the afternoon. I hope I will then have the information which Mr. Loton has requested. To Mr. Craig I would point out that the contributors to the original pensions scheme can still obtain lump sum payments.

**Hon. L. Craig**: I was only asking that a review be made of the conditions of the fund in order that lump sum payments may be made to those members who desire them.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY**: Under the original pensions fund, members, at their own option, could receive a lump sum payment, but I am afraid that under this one 99 per cent. of the members would accept a lump sum payment in preference to weekly amounts.

**Hon. L. Craig**: That was the original provision.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY**: I admit that; but the position was altered when the present superannuation fund came into existence. Although I will send the hon. member's suggestion on for consideration, I cannot hold out any hope that it will be approved. One might as well say that all members should receive their benefits in lump sums.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith**: The committee that inquired into the state of this fund recommended that lump sums be made along the lines suggested by Mr. Craig.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY**: That might be so, but I do not know whether approval would be granted to enable wholesale lump sum payments to be made to members. However, lump sum payments, in special cases, may be approved. I assure the hon. member that his suggestion will be sent forward for consideration.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.30 p.m. today.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 3.52 a.m.  
(Thursday.)*