

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 7th December, 1950.

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

QUESTIONS.

BUILDING SUPPLIES.

As to Prices.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Attorney General:

What is the price allowed for the follow-
ing building materials:—

- (1) 3in. x 2in. jarrah per hundred feet?
- (2) 6ft., 7ft. and 8ft. sheets of corru-
gated iron?
- (3) Asbestos sheeting (per square foot)?
- (4) 5ft. and 6ft. jarrah pickets?
- (5) 7ft. jarrah posts for picket fencing?
- (6) Bricks (per thousand)?
- (7) Weatherboards (per hundred super.
feet)?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

The answers to the questions are lengthy
and I propose to table the information.

- (1) 61s. 9d. per hundred super. feet.
 - (2) (a) Per sheet prices (26 gauge)—
6ft., 5s. 0½d.; 7ft., 5s. 11d.; 8ft., 6s. 8½d.
each.
 - (b) Per ton prices (26 gauge)—£50 5s.
 - (3) 3/16th inch—Local production,
3s. 2d. per square yard; imported, up to
7s. 6d. per square yard.
 - (4) Per hundred pickets—5ft., 53s. 9d.;
6ft., 64s. 3d.
 - (5) 61s. 9d. per hundred super. feet, or
5s. 6d. each for 5in. x 3in. x 7ft. post.
 - (6) Pressed bricks—State Brickworks
(run of kiln), £7 2s.; Cardup, £8 12s.
Wirecuts—Metropolitan (firsts), £6 15s.;
Whitemans, £7 8s.; other wirecuts, £8 6s.
Cement Bricks—Dunbrik, £6 3s. 3d.
All above prices per thousand at works.
 - (7) (a) Sawn weatherboard—35s. per
100 lineal feet.
 - (b) Dressed weatherboard—40s. per 100
lineal feet.
- Note.—Timber prices quoted above are
ex yard metropolitan area.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to State-wide Flat Rate.

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Minister for
Water Supply:

- (1) When will he provide a flat rate
charge for water under Government con-
trol, in accordance with a motion unani-
mously agreed to in the 1949 session?
- (2) Will he give the people of this State
a definite decision, yes or no, or state the
reason for the delay?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Due to the present transitory state of
water supply development involving large
works in the metropolitan area and under

the Comprehensive Water Supply Scheme, and also in the many new country town reticulations, it is not at present practicable to introduce a flat rate of water charge in Government water supply undertakings in Western Australia.

(2) Answered by (1).

PUBLIC SERVANTS AND TEACHERS.

As to Announcement of Reclassifications.

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier:

When is it anticipated that—

(a) the Public Service; and

(b) the teachers'

reclassifications will be announced?

The PREMIER replied:

(a) Before the end of this month.

(b) It is hoped, before the end of this month.

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

(a) As to Importing Supplies.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) What steps has the Government taken to secure supplies of superphosphate from other States or overseas?

(2) What quantities, if any, are available from sources outside the State, and at what cost?

(3) If supplies from sources outside the State are available does the Government intend to secure such supplies?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) None.

(2) None from Eastern States and New Zealand. Unknown quantities from overseas at approximately £18 per ton.

(3) This matter will be considered if users are prepared to pay the high cost.

(b) As to Tenders for Water-damaged Cornsacks.

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

(1) Is he aware that tenders are being called for 28,000 water-damaged cornsacks at present lying at Fremantle?

(2) Could some consideration be given to the conversion of those sacks for use as containers for fertiliser?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) No, I have not that knowledge but I will make inquiries and let the hon. member have answers to his questions.

SEWERAGE SYSTEM.

As to Removal of Treatment Plant.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he in a position to state the progress of work in connection with—

(a) the removal of the sewerage treatment plant between Graylands and Daglish?

(b) the removal of the vent pipe south of Floreat Park?

The MINISTER replied:

It is not proposed to remove the sewerage treatment plant between Graylands and Daglish or the vent pipe south of Floreat Park.

WHOLEMILK.

(a) As to Quantity Produced.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Will he inform the House how many gallons of wholemilk were produced during the months of July, August, September and October, 1949?

(2) Also for the months of July, August, September and October, 1950?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

(1) and (2) The figure for wholemilk produced is not available. The following is the total amount of wholemilk consumed, both country and metropolitan:—

1949—July, 664,765 gallons; August, 666,706 gallons; September, 662,003 gallons; October, 680,871 gallons.

1950—July, 771,276 gallons; August, 780,684 gallons; September, 756,582 gallons; October, not yet available.

(b) As to Loss of Bottles.

Mr. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In fixing the price of milk, where has the Milk Board made provision for the loss of bottles?

(2) Can a retailer charge more than the fixed price to cover any loss of bottles?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

(1) The normal losses, such as breakages, etc., are allowed in the margin permitted to treatment plants. This is for the inevitable losses which cannot be avoided.

(2) Where a householder or other person wilfully retains bottles, the retailer can make a charge against him for the bottles, but no extra charge can be made for the milk.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

As to Extension to Northam and Intermediate Districts.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it intended to extend the high tension electricity power line from the metropolitan area to Northam?

(2) Will transformers be installed at Mundaring or Sawyers Valley to supply electricity for the G.W.S. pumping station at Mundaring Weir?

(3) Is it intended to make electricity available to local residents of Mundaring, Stoneville, Parkerville and Glen Forrest for domestic and power purposes?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Electricity will in all cases be available in these districts where economically justified.

CIGARETTES.

As to Increase in Price.

Mr. YATES asked the Attorney General:

(1) A recent increase of one penny per packet of ten cigarettes increases the cost of a carton by 4s. 2d. Of this amount the wholesaler receives 3s. 8d. and the retailer 6d. Does the Prices Branch in this State agree that the sharing of the increase between wholesaler and retailer is a fair one?

(2) On what grounds was the increase granted?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

(1) Yes. The increase to the manufacturers' price is merely a partial recoupment of increased costs.

(2) The increases were granted following increased costs incurred by manufacturers mainly caused through devaluation of sterling/dollar currencies.

ROADS.

As to Transport of Doodlakine Gang.

Mr. CORNELL (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that there is a road gang at Doodlakine which every day proceeds to Trayning, 40 miles distant, in the department's time and returns to Doodlakine that evening?

(2) If that is so, will he take steps to have this Cook's tour discontinued?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) I will make the necessary inquiries and inform the hon. member of the reason for the practice.

SUMMER CONDITIONS.

As to Dress of an Hon. Member.

Mr. GRAHAM (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the rather warm weather, will he, for the edification of members, ask the member for West Perth to lay upon the Table of the House a specimen of his backless coat?

The PREMIER replied:

I suggest this is a matter which the the member for East Perth might take up personally with the member for West Perth.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FRANCHISE.

As to Defeat of Bill.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the action of a majority of the members of the Legislative Council in defeating a Bill recently sent to that House from this House, dealing with the liberalisation of the franchise of the Legislative Council, and which Bill contained a proposal set out in the Liberal Party platform, does the Premier, as Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, propose to take any action against the members of his party in the Council who voted against the Bill?

The PREMIER replied:

I do not know of any action I can take against members of Liberal Party in the Legislative Council.

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [2.25]: The Bill purports to amend the Inspection of Machinery Act in three or four different ways which, as the Minister rightly explained, are not amendments of major importance, although they are most desirable because of the advance which has been made in the development of Western Australia. The first proposed amendment is to delete from the parent Act the definition of the word "motor" in order to replace it with a more modern definition to cope with the advancement that has been made in power propulsion.

When the parent Act was introduced it was not foreseen that we would have all sorts of motor propulsion, because in those days steam was the principal generating factor for power. So it is essential, if we wish to provide for the inspection of the various types of machines that are now to be found in industry in the State, to have them made subject to the Inspection of Machinery Act. The definition will be fairly comprehensive so as to cover compressed air, gas, oil and hydraulic propulsion power, as well as steam. I think we would find that in some factories in Western Australia each and every one of these forms of propulsion is in existence. The definition is necessary and I do not think the Chamber could very well raise objection to it.

The second amendment is to remedy an error of judgment which occurred as far back as 1946 when the Parliament

of that day made some amendments to the Timber Industry Regulation Act. The definition of "timber holding" was then extended, and rightly so, having regard to the circumstances prevailing at that time, to cover all those places where timber was stacked, hewn or sawn, or where it was otherwise manufactured or fashioned. This gave the right to the inspector appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act to inspect those places within the metropolitan area for the purpose of safeguarding the health and lives of the employees. But unfortunately the amendment excluded an officer appointed under the Inspection of Machinery Act from inspecting the machinery in those works. Apparently it was believed in those days that the inspector appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act would have the authority—and no doubt he did have—to carry out these inspections. It is now appreciated that officers appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act had no mechanical knowledge or experience and were therefore scarcely qualified to perform the necessary duties.

I am given to understand that, notwithstanding this amendment, which excluded the officers appointed under the Inspection of Machinery Act from making such inspections, with the concurrence of the Forests Department it has been permitted, in view of the fact that the officers appointed under the Inspection of Machinery Act have the necessary knowledge and experience to inspect such machinery, and would therefore be in a better position to say whether it was in a proper condition for the safe working of a factory. We cannot complain about that provision. All the amendment now does is to give the inspector appointed under the Inspection of Machinery Act full authority to visit these factories and make the necessary inspections in the ordinary way, thus relieving the inspectors appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act from that responsibility. I expect, in fact, that the inspectors will act jointly.

I come now to the third amendment and am sorry to say that the Minister, when introducing the Bill, omitted to touch on a vital point, though it is obvious from the amendment that the omission was not intended. Seemingly, up till now, having regard to the administration under the Inspection of Machinery Act and the department which comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Mines, the State Mining Engineer has had power delegated to him and, in turn, has delegated his authority to a deputy chief inspector. It would appear from the provisions of the Bill that some illegality has existed, because this provision seeks to validate certain actions performed by the Chief Inspector of Machinery. It is obvious from the wording of this provision of the

Bill that it seeks to validate action that may have been taken by the Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery.

I believe the time has arrived when there should be appointed a chief inspector of machinery directly under the Act and independent of the jurisdiction of the State Mining Engineer. I know the State Mining Engineer well. He is an able and capable officer, a splendid administrator in his own class of work and, apart from being scientifically trained, he has had years of practical experience in the mining industry and is fully fitted to hold his position; but, unfortunately, he is not a mechanically trained man. In view of the vast expansion of industry in this State, in which a multiplicity of machines will from time to time be installed, I believe we should have a mechanically and technically trained man appointed inspector under the Inspection of Machinery Act. The delegation of authority from one officer to another does not work efficiently and I think trouble could arise where a deputy differed in opinion from his chief, because, if the chief were not possessed of practical or theoretical mechanical knowledge, the deputy might not be prepared to be as thorough in his supervision and decisions relating to unsafe machinery, if he found himself in conflict with his superior officer, as he otherwise would be. The superior officer might be perfectly conscientious but lacking the necessary technical knowledge and, if he had authority to override his deputy, difficulties could easily arise.

A chief inspector of machinery should be appointed under the Inspection of Machinery Act, subject to the control of the Minister for Mines, and in the appointment of such an officer care should be exercised not to create any authority overriding existing Acts, such as the Mines Regulation Act. If we did that, we would have a chief inspector of machinery possessed of statutory authority to do his work in an efficient manner and to enforce his commands with regard to the unsafe condition of any machine, or the safety of the men working in its vicinity. A chief inspector of machinery should not be appointed with power to interfere with the Mines Regulation Act, because, under that legislation, a specific type of work requires knowledge that can be gained only by practical experience and the officers operating under that Act having the requisite knowledge. On the other hand, we should, as I say, appoint a chief inspector of machinery under the Inspection of Machinery Act, so long as it is not done in such a way as to give him authority to interfere with the administration of other Acts. We cannot afford to appoint to such positions men lacking the detailed and technical knowledge necessary. Although it cannot be done this session,

I hope the Minister for Mines will give consideration to my proposal, and appoint an officer such as I have mentioned.

The third amendment is also to get over the difficulty of charging fees for the inspection of machinery. As was pointed out by the Minister, the old theory of working a factory was to have one engine with a counter shaft on which pulley wheels were attached with belts from the pulley wheels driving a multiplicity of machines. In those days that was the only idea for the working of a factory where a number of machines were necessary to bring about efficient production. But in these modern times there has been a great change in industry and instead of having this obsolete method of driving machines, newer methods have been evolved.

In the old days, if something went wrong with one machine it meant that the factory had almost to cease production so that repairs could be undertaken. That led to a great number of individuals remained idle. Nowadays the men can be kept employed because each particular section has its own propulsion from either an electric motor, one driven by gas, or by hydraulic means. Each unit is separate so far as its driving power is concerned and when anything is faulty with a machine that is the only one that stops in the factory. Therefore, that particular amendment is essential.

I first thought that an injustice was being done in this particular provision in the Bill because it seemed as though the captains of industry were looking for a cheap assessment of fees for machinery inspection. Only recently this Government was kind enough to increase all charges under the Inspection of Machinery Act, particularly upon those individuals who give a great deal of their time to study and qualify for enginedrivers, train drivers and boiler attendants' certificates. In this particular amendment no reduction in the fees for those examinations is to be made. However, there is some justification for what the Minister is doing. If each and every machine within a factory today had to be inspected and a fee charged for each unit separately, it would run into a fairly colossal fee annually on some of these bigger factories. What the amendment proposes to do is to take the aggregate horsepower and assess the inspection fees on that basis.

I believe in what the Minister said, that this is a sort of compensation for the introduction of modern machinery. If a company or an individual is prepared to invest money in industry to develop this country at least we should not penalise such people, but should do our best to encourage them. I am given to understand, although I deny it, that efficiency is one of the greatest factors in deflation. I deny that but it is put forward by some of our alleged statesmen mostly by way of Press

statements. But, I agree with the amendment in the Bill and members would be well advised to give favourable consideration to it.

They are practically all the proposed amendments. I do not want to delay the Bill and I can find little or no fault with it. However, I ask the Minister to give consideration to the proposal to appoint a chief inspector of machinery independent of the State Mining Engineer. I support the second reading.

MR. OLIVER (Boulder) [2.45]: I support the Bill mainly because it is too late in the session to do anything about altering it. The Minister has been good enough to discuss it with the member for Murchison and myself, and has agreed that at some future date the requirements of the people who will work under the measure will be met by a further amendment.

As the member for Murchison said, what is required is a chief inspector of machinery to be appointed with statutory authority to carry out the Act. The main objection is that at present the State Mining Engineer holds that position, but I would not like to see any interference with the authority of the State Mining Engineer in regard to the inspection of machinery in the mining industry. He and his deputy should have full authority to inspect machinery on mines in conjunction with a person who has authority under the Inspection of Machinery Act. I take it that any future amendment to this parent Act will safeguard that provision. Then there will be no interference with the authority of the State Mining Engineer to inspect and safeguard machinery on mines. I support the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING (Hon. G. P. Wild—Dale—in reply) [2.47]: I entirely agree with the contentions raised by the members for Murchison and Boulder that there should be a chief inspector of machinery. I shall accordingly advise the Minister for Mines in another place of the wishes of the two members, and mine, with a view to having the department consider the position. If thought fit an amendment can be brought down during the next session of Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Hill in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 6:

Mr. MARSHALL: I refer the Minister to paragraph (d) of this clause. I want to know if he has any information as to whether prosecutions have taken place because of actions performed by the

deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery, which have been illegal or outside the law. This paragraph is definitely to validate something.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I am afraid I have not the information. I do not know of any prosecution that has been launched, but the member for Murchison is correct in saying that I overlooked that point when I introduced the measure last evening. I will make some inquiries for the hon. member and advise him in due course.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 and 7, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Council's Amendments.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Hill in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 4, Page 2—Delete all words after the word "by" in line 7 down to and including the word "six" in line 24, and substitute the following:—

(a) Inserting after the word "premises" where first occurring in line 5 of the definition of "shared accommodation" the words "including premises leased with a right or license to the use of other premises or conveniences in the same building or used in connection with the enjoyment of the premises";

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the Council's amendment be agreed to.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I have no objection to this amendment, but I hope, with future amendments, the Minister will state his reason for agreeing or disagreeing in accordance with the particular amendment he is dealing with and give members some idea why the Government is so agreeing or disagreeing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Amendment No. 1 is designed to take the place of what is known as Clause 4. The intention of that clause is quite suitable to both sides of the House. If members will recall, that fault in the parent Act has led to a good deal of trouble in that a well-known judge has interpreted it one way, whereas the magistrates have interpreted it in another way. We want to obviate that difference of opinion which has been shown in the past. The matter was referred to the Crown Law Department's officers and they were requested to put the point as briefly as possible but to maintain the intention

of the original clause, and this amendment is the result. On perusal of the amendment, members will find that the original sense has been preserved and that the proposed new clause is easier to understand.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 4, page 2—Insert a paragraph to stand as paragraph (b) as follows:—

(b) Adding a further definition after definition of "rates" as follows:—

"relative of an owner or part owner" shall mean any person who bears to him any of the following relationships, namely, spouse, son, daughter, mother, father, brother or sister.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is to add a further definition after the definition of "rates" as is set out in the amendment on the notice paper. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

I cannot see that the Committee would be justified in giving special legal recognition to a person for no better reason than that the father, uncle or grandfather had owned the house, and was anxious that one or other of his relatives should move into it. I do not know who would check up on these relationships, which, in itself, would be a fairly difficult job. In the case of particular ownership I do not know who is to anticipate the consent or otherwise of the particular owner or owners. Had there been any question of relative hardship involved I would not have minded, but it is purely a matter of relationship and under present conditions that point should not count for very much.

Mr. YATES: I am not quite clear on this particular amendment. I take it, if it is passed, it will give the same right of tenancy to each of the relatives proposed in the amendment.

Mr. Graham: Not by this amendment but by another one.

Mr. YATES: If an individual has the tenancy of a home and that person is a married man with several children, and if for some reason he leaves the home in possession of his family, they can be evicted as trespassers under a different Act.

The Chief Secretary: That is news to me.

Mr. YATES: That is quite definite. The information was given to me by a high official of the State Housing Commission this morning.

The Attorney General: It was not given by the Crown Law Department and I think your information is incorrect.

Mr. YATES: As the Attorney General has assured me on that point I have no objection to the amendment.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 5—Insert after the word "apply" in line 27 the letter "a" in brackets thus "(a)."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This amendment comes under the ban I shall advance regarding amendment No. 4 and I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 5—After the figures "1939" in line 33 insert the following paragraphs:—

(b) in respect of premises, a lease or tenancy whereof is entered into after the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and fifty; or

(c) in respect of premises the lessee whereof is the Crown or any Crown instrumentality.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am hopeful that the amendment which includes one that was moved by the member for East Perth when the measure was dealt with in this Chamber, can be amended at a later stage, and in the circumstances I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You will see the figures "1939" appear in the amendment and that reference of course, should be to "1949."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 6—Insert a paragraph to stand as paragraph (a) as follows:—

(a) inserting a paragraph (iia) as follows:—

(iia) Where the charges for cleaning the premises are payable by the lessor and the standard rent is inclusive of such charge, the standard rent shall be increased by the amount of any increase of cleaning charges since the thirty-first day of August, One thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This amendment deals with the increase in rates and I have no objection to the proposal, which I regard as fair. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 6, page 3—In paragraph (a) insert after the word "of" in line one, the words "any increase of State."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This deals with the increase of tax. As the clause stood, the rates might have been Commonwealth, State or municipal rates or taxes. To make it clear, the word "State" is to be inserted. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 7. Clause 6, page 3—In paragraph (b) insert after the word "landlord" in line 9 the words "of premises, being premises other than a dwelling house."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The implication here is that the proposal in the clause will take effect as regards business premises. When the matter was dealt with in this Chamber, it was considered that both houses and business premises should be covered. This is a matter that can go for consideration by the conference managers. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 8. Clause 6, page 3—In paragraph (b) delete the word "twenty-five" in line 12 and substitute the word "thirty-five."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The principle dealt with here is as important as any covered by the Bill. It refers to the right accorded landlords to increase rentals up to 25 per cent. Another place desires to make use of the clause as the basis for considering a 35 per cent. increase for business premises. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 9. Clause 6, page 3—In paragraph (b) insert after the word "by" in line 14 the words "the lessor and."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This amendment represents the redrafting of the provision in the Bill and has been drawn up by the Crown Law Department. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 10. Clause 6, page 3—In paragraph (b) delete the words "as if the premises had first been leased after the thirty-first day of August, 1939" in lines 21 to 23.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The same position applies to this amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 11. Clause 6, page 3—Insert after paragraph (b) paragraphs (iib) and (iic) as follows:—

(iib) as from the date of the commencement of the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act Amendment Act, 1950, the rent of all premises, being dwelling houses or premises used or occupied for the purposes of residence then let and first leased prior to the 1st day of January, 1948, shall be increased by twenty-five per centum of the amount of the standard rent of such premises, provided, however, that in respect of premises first let as aforesaid but for which an increase on the standard rent has been made prior to the commencement of this Act by order of the Court or otherwise, the increase of rent provided for in this section shall be inclusive of and not additional to the increase already made: Provided that the lessor may at his discretion forego the whole or any part of such increase.

(iic) any lessor or lessee who is dissatisfied with the percentage increase fixed by paragraph (iib) of this section may at any time make an application to the Court for a variation of such percentage increase and the Court shall have jurisdiction to hear the application and to fix such other percentage increase, being not less than ten per centum and not more than fifty per centum of the standard rent, as the Court thinks fit; or alternatively the Court, at its discretion, may determine the fair rent of the premises.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The matter referred to in this amendment was debated freely in this Chamber and there is no point in elaborating it. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 12. Clause 6, page 3—Delete the letter in brackets "(e)" in line 35 and substitute the letter in brackets "(c)."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This amendment is for the purpose of correcting a drafting error. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 13. Clause 7, page 4—Insert a new paragraph to stand as paragraph (a) as follows:—

(a) The sum which the Court considers to represent the fair capital value of the premises. In com-

puting this value, the Court shall not necessarily be bound by any evidence as to the market price of the premises or of comparable land.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Here again it is a matter of correcting a drafting error. The amendment submitted to us is couched in more appropriate language. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: As far as I can understand the position, this amendment is not for the purpose of correcting any mistake in drafting.

The Chief Secretary: No, I made a mistake there.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Its purpose is to insert a new paragraph in the clause, the effect of which is that the court will have the right to take into consideration an additional factor in determining the fair rent to be charged for the particular property under review. I have no objection to this amendment, because I think it will be necessary for the court to consider the fair capital value of a dwelling house, or whatever the premises might be, in order to determine the fair rent. The amendment is more important than the Minister indicated.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This amendment represents a mistake in the original drafting of the Bill, because the provision should have been inserted when the Bill was first submitted. It provides that in computing the capital value, the magistrate is not bound by any particular sale. A man might purchase premises at any price, because he fancies them, and this provision is so worded as to ensure that the magistrate shall not be bound by the actual purchase price.

Mr. FOX: I am not satisfied with this provision. We know that values are skyrocketing at present. I would prefer to see the value in 1942 or some other year taken as the fair capital value. We know the custom that exists in which an owner of premises gets a valuator to value a house. It is valued at two or three times the price that would have been obtained in 1939 or 1940, and the court assesses the value of the premises on the value of the valuator engaged by the owner. Another loophole for the owner is that he can screw a few more shillings a week out of the tenant, telling the tenant that if he is not prepared to enter into a lease he will be put out and another tenant will be found. That is another avenue for exploitation of people.

The Attorney General: That has already been decided upon, and does not affect this amendment.

Mr. FOX: I am drawing attention to the avenues open for the exploitation of tenants. I would like to see some year taken on which the capital values should be fixed.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want further information on this amendment. If it is of any importance, I feel that the Minister should have considered it and included the provision in the Bill. In recent days the price of buildings has increased materially in actual value and it would be almost obligatory on a court to take into consideration that actual value, which runs into several thousand pounds now as against a few hundred pounds earlier. While it might be said to be fair that the enhanced price, due to inflation, which has to be paid for a house, should be passed on to the tenant, I would point out if that is done and if the charges for Commonwealth-State rental homes are any guide, rents in this State will increase materially in regard to new premises or premises of recent construction. The provisions existing when the Bill was introduced were reasonable enough, since the Court has jurisdiction to increase rents now and could cover anomalies that have been referred to. If we insert this provision, the court will have no jurisdiction other than to consider present-day values of homes.

Mr. STYANTS: The amendment is an improvement. It provides that where, for example, a house costs £1,000 to construct pre-war, a fair capital value today could be said to be what it would cost to replace that house. The proposal is that the court shall be given authority to fix a rent upon the capital expenditure which it considers would be involved in replacing the house. It might be found that a house that cost £1,000 before the war would cost only £2,000 to replace today; but its market value, particularly with vacant possession, might be £3,500.

The Attorney General: That might have been paid.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes. This provision gives the court the right not to take into consideration the additional £1,500 paid for the house for vacant possession.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I agree with the member for Kalgoorlie that this is an improvement but I am under the impression it will cause anomalies. While paragraph (d) remains in the clause there will be a sort of contradiction.

Mr. Graham: It is proposed to delete that paragraph in the next amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I could believe what the member for Kalgoorlie believes I would be satisfied. There is provision already in the parent Act for the court to consider depreciation, and that is added to the rent. The landlord, therefore, is gradually recouping himself the capital cost over a period of years by being able to figure in his rent depreciation, or the amount of capital which would ultimately be involved in replacing the building.

The Minister for Education: Is that in Section 11 of the parent Act?

Mr. MARSHALL: If the court could say that the replacement value of a building had increased by £1,000 the tenant would have to pay a fair rent, based on that figure, less depreciation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am not happy about the amendment. While it provides that in computing the value the court shall not necessarily be bound by any evidence, there is nothing to say that it shall not, in 99 cases out of 100, follow such a line. What is meant by "fair capital value"? I think at present it is the average market price as indicated by comparable sales in the area and, if that is so, it will result in substantial increases in rents. As soon as the persons concerned obtained the Commonwealth-State homes in Cottesloe, to which I referred, they were able to go to either the Commonwealth Bank or the Perth Building Society and raise loans representing 70 per cent. of the valuation of the homes, which gave them sufficient cash to pay off the homes and still have in hand £200 or £300. They were then able to re-sell those homes at a profit of anything from £1,000 to £1,500, and that is what has in fact happened. The fair capital value of those houses would be a figure substantially in excess of the sum for which the houses were sold to the tenants by the State Housing Commission, because the Commonwealth Bank or the Perth Building Society would not make a valuation that exceeded the fair capital value.

The Attorney General: There is nothing in the clause to prevent the court taking any capital value.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is plenty to suggest that the court will take the high figure. The words "shall not necessarily be bound" are worth nothing.

The Attorney General: What if we struck out the whole clause?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then there would be no suggestion that the court had to take into consideration the fair capital value.

The Attorney General: It could still do so.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but I do not think the amendment improves the Bill and it could easily be of disadvantage, as to me it suggests that the legislature desires that some other criterion should be used and that the court may use the present market price though it need not necessarily do so.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The clause sets down the bases which the court shall take into consideration in determining a fair rent. No doubt the court would have regard to other factors in addition to those enumerated in the clause. Doubtless it would consider what it thought would be the capital value of premises in respect of which it was assessing a fair

rent. In my view it would be safer to insert a provision to tie up any reference in connection with the fair capital value of premises. I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of proposed new paragraph (a) the word "necessarily" be struck out.

Mr. FOX: We should bind the court as to the manner in which the valuation may be arrived at.

The Attorney General: We cannot alter that now.

Mr. FOX: I propose to move that all words after the word "premises" in line 3 of proposed new paragraph (a) be struck out, with a view to inserting the words "shall be the sum computed by the Fair Rents Court or by an assessor nominated by it." If a tenant wishes to go to the court it costs him £7 or £8 a day for a solicitor and a valuation costs him £4 or £5. There is also the fact that he must lose wages while attending the court.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: To give the member for South Fremantle an opportunity to move his amendment, I ask leave to withdraw mine.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. FOX: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 all the words after the word "premises" be struck out.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I would like to know first of all what the member for South Fremantle proposes to insert if these words are struck out. As far as I understand, his amendment could be rather damaging.

Mr. FOX: I have sent my amendment up to the Chairman, but the words, in effect, that I propose to insert in lieu of those struck out are as follows:—"The value shall be the sum to be determined by the fair rents inspector or by an assessor nominated by him." That would be preferable to both sides, as it would avoid their submitting valuations to the court with consequent expense to the tenant.

Mr. W. Hegney: Would not the appointment of an assessor impose a charge upon the Crown?

Mr. FOX: Well, we can bring down another validating Bill to obviate that. However, I do not know that it would impose a charge upon the Crown.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the member for South Fremantle that if his amendment is passed it will prevent the member for Northam from moving his amendment subsequently. The hon. member should move only to delete all the words after the word "premises" down to and including the word "any."

Mr. FOX: That would be suitable to me, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Better still, Mr. Chairman, might it not be a more suitable course of action for the member for South Fremantle to move his suggested amendment after mine has been disposed of?

The CHAIRMAN: He could not do that.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The point I am trying to make is that he may not need to go back. The member for South Fremantle could move, after the word "land," as a new paragraph to the amendment, for the insertion of the words he desires, which would achieve his object. That would allow us to proceed in a smoother way.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for South Fremantle agree to that course?

Mr. FOX: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member now ask leave to withdraw his amendment?

Mr. FOX: I ask leave of the Committee to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 after the word "not" the word "necessarily" be struck out.

Mr. HOAR: I would like to be clear on this amendment. It seems to me that by striking out the word "necessarily" the court would then not be bound by any evidence as to the market price of the premises, and would be able to raise or lower the value of the said premises as it desired.

The Minister for Education: It means that it need not do so unless it wishes.

Mr. HOAR: If it is not to be bound to a certain course of action, there will be no restrictions on it.

The Minister for Education: There are none now.

The Attorney General: The court would not be bound by it.

Mr. HOAR: Does not the Committee think it ought to be bound by it?

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. FOX: I move—

That the amendment be amended by adding at the end the following words:—"but shall be a sum computed by the fair rents inspector appointed under this Act or by an assessor nominated by him."

The CHAIRMAN: That is not what the member for South Fremantle sent up to me.

Mr. FOX: The amendment I sent up to you, Mr. Chairman, has been withdrawn, and I am submitting a new one. The only difference between the two lies in the words "by a fair rents inspector appointed under this Act."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not accept the proposed amendment. If it is carried it will place on the shoulders of two excellent though extremely busy officers very much more work. I agree that the Fair Rents Officer would have the right to nominate someone else, who would normally be his assistant. But Mr. Norman is an equally busy man and would seldom be available, in which case we would have to look further afield in order to get a valuer who is the least busy. Who is to say that the man finally nominated is going to be a better valuer than is envisaged in the amendment as it stands?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Who is envisaged under the amendment?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Either the Fair Rents Officer, Mr. Stewart, his deputy, Mr. Norman, or someone else unnamed who may be good, bad or indifferent.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am in sympathy with the intentions of the member for South Fremantle. The proposal in another place is to add to the criteria which are to be taken into consideration on the fair capital value of the premises. It is an additional criterion upon which the decision will be made, and when this question was being argued initially I think it was stressed that there was desire for some uniformity. Who is to decide the fair capital value? Who is to do it for each court? Will each court engage an officer for the purpose and, if so, what officer? And who will pay him? Are we to allow one court to arrive at its idea of a fair capital value and permit another court to arrive at some other capital value? If that is so, we are going to have different rents all over the place and a different basis, because this is to be the main basis for fixing rents. In arriving at a fair rent the first thing to be taken into consideration will be a fair capital value. Who is to determine that?

The Minister for Education: Heaven knows!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is the point, and because of that, if we include this in the criteria we are setting up, we cannot estimate and have no idea what it will be. Should we, as a deliberative assembly, do anything like that? As the clause stood previously I think there were considerations as to what ought to be taken into consideration in fixing a fair rent, but in making this provision we are going to be in serious trouble. It will not help the position at all. The clause as it stood before represented a fair basis. This amendment will make it very unstable and very difficult to administer. If we are going to leave it to each court to say what a fair capital value is, we are looking for trouble.

Mr. Griffith: Was not there a suggestion that a valuer be attached to the court at some stage?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Where is that in the Bill?

Mr. Griffith: It is not in the Bill.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then it does not mean anything. We should know what fair capital value is before we put it in as no two persons will arrive at the same conclusion if asked to determine this matter. We should appoint some officer who will be responsible for arriving at the figure, and then we will have uniformity otherwise the position would be chaotic.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is absolutely impossible to get a fair capital value. It just cannot be done. Who is going to judge whether it is a fair capital value? Half-a-dozen judges would give half-a-dozen different opinions. We could get the best valuation from a good man who knows his job, but another man equally fairminded would probably differ. We cannot rely upon getting a fair capital value.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The particular sentence to which the member for South Fremantle has moved to add his amendment deals with the question of computing the value. By seeking to add his amendment to that sentence it seems to me that the hon. member has used wording which is not very applicable, as the sentence deals with the question of computing value. The amendment of the member for South Fremantle deals with the determination of the value. I think it would be much clearer if the hon. member were to use a new sentence altogether and not tack it on to the sentence under review, which deals with a separate and specific matter. I think the fair capital value should be determined by an inspector appointed under the Act or by some person nominated by him. The fair capital valuations would then be fair and reasonable throughout the State. I suggest to the member for South Fremantle that he might give consideration to altering his amendment along these lines. The following might be acceptable to him: "A fair capital value shall be determined by an inspector appointed under this Act or by some person nominated by him."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think even the amendment suggested by the member for Northam might cause some confusion. I suggest that perhaps he would prefer to object to this: If it were objected to and the managers were notified of the Committee's wishes the whole clause could be amended. It could be a matter for negotiation, and I think that would be the simplest way.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Committee is going to do that it will be necessary to vote against the whole of Amendment No 13.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I do not think anything will be gained by agreeing to the amendment of another place.

The Attorney General: I say object to it.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: When the Bill was drafted and considered by this Committee, paragraph (d)—

The Attorney General: We are not dealing with paragraph (d) now.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I know that, but we are dealing with the proposition to add another factor which should be taken into account by the court to determine a fair rent.

The Attorney General: I suggested that we object to it.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Attorney General can do what he likes afterwards, but I would like to express my view. The words "capital value" are used and this is entirely different from capital cost. In the case of a house which had a capital cost of £1,000 and evidence was adduced to show that today, if it were sold on the open market the capital value would be £3,000, the court would work on this basis to fix the rent and would apply certain interest rates as return on capital. That would be the basis. If paragraph (d) were left in and no regard taken of the amendment from another place the court would then have as a basis for fixing rent in a particular case the rents which were paid in the same locality for a comparable type of house. If paragraph (d) were left in and the Council's amendment not agreed to we would have a clearer picture than we would by having any reference to capital value, particularly in these days of abnormal values. I am not in any doubt as to what the court would do if these words were left in, as capital value is entirely different from capital cost.

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment as amended, not agreed to.

No. 14. Clause 7, Page 4—Delete paragraph (d).

No. 15. Clause 7, Page 4—Insert after the word "made" in line 24 the words "or authorised to be made."

No. 16. Clause 7, Page 4—Insert after the word "lessor" in line 24 the words "or by the Court."

No. 17. Clause 7, Page 4, Paragraph (g)—Insert after figures in brackets "(ii)" the figures in brackets "(iia)."

No. 18. Clause 7, Page 4, Paragraph (g)—Delete the word "and" in line 26.

No. 19. Clause 7, Page 4, Paragraph (g)—Insert after the figures in brackets "(iia)" the figures in brackets and word "(iib) or (iic)."

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

No. 20. Clause 9, Page 5—Add after the word "lodgings" in line one the words "or any premises in respect of which

leave or license is granted to any person (other than a boarder) for use or occupation for the purpose of residence."

No. 21. Clause 10, proposed New Section 12D—Insert before the word "Where" in line 32 the words "A lessor or lessee of any premises may at any time and from time to time make application to the Court for a determination of a fair rent of such premises: Provided that."

No. 22. Clause 10, proposed New Section 12F—Insert before the word "land" in line 22 the word "State."

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were agreed to.

No. 23. Clause 11, Paragraph (a)—Insert after the figure in brackets "(2)" the following words:—"and re-enacting the following subsection in lieu thereof:—

(2) The provisions of this section shall not apply in respect of premises being premises which are shared accommodation within the meaning of this Act."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This would have the effect of excluding flats from the provisions of the Act and would result in many more people having to look for homes. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 24. Clause 11—Delete paragraph (c).

No. 25. Clause 11—Insert a new paragraph (d) as follows:—

(d) The provisions of this section shall not apply as between the principal lessor and his lessee in respect of premises where such lessee has sublet the same either wholly or in part to sub-lessees or lodgers or has granted leave or license to any person to use the same either wholly or in part.

No. 26. Clause 12, Page 6—Delete the words "being a dwelling house" in line 41.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

No. 27. Clause 12, Page 7—Delete the word "State" in line 4 and substitute the word "Commonwealth."

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendment was agreed to.

No. 28. Clause 12, Page 7—Insert after the word "occupation" in line 5, the words "or for the occupation of a relative who is married and who has resided in the Commonwealth for a period of not less than two years."

No. 29. Clause 12, Page 7—Delete the words "if a lease of the premises is still subsisting" in lines 7 and 8.

No. 30. Clause 12, Page 7—Delete the words "to terminate the lease and" in lines 8 and 9.

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

No. 31. Clause 12, Page 7—Insert after the word "up" in line 9 the words "possession of."

On motion by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendment was agreed to.

No. 32. Clause 12, page 7—Delete the word "three" in line 10 and substitute the words "not exceeding six."

No. 33. Clause 12, Page 7—Delete all words after the word "notice" in line 11 down to and including the word "paid" in line 20, and substitute the words "and such notice shall at its expiration determine the rightful occupation of the lessee notwithstanding the Common Law condition requiring the notice to quit to expire on a periodical day of the tenancy. Provided, however, that if the lessor has owned or part owned or shall own or part own the premises for a longer period than six months the period of such notice shall be reduced by one month for each completed period of six months' ownership. Provided further that the minimum period of notice under this section shall be three months."

No. 34. Clause 12—Delete Subsection (2).

No. 35. Clause 12—Delete Subsection (3).

No. 36. Clause 12—Delete Subsection (4).

No. 37. Clause 12—Delete Subsection (5).

No. 38. Clause 12—Insert a Subsection after subsection (5) to stand as Subsection (6) as follows:—

(6) At any time after the expiration of the notice to quit the lessor may apply to the Court for an order for recovery of possession of the premises and for the ejectment of the lessee and any other person if any therefrom and for mesne profits under the provisions of the Local Courts Act, 1904-1930, applicable to the recovery of possession of land from persons holding land without right, title or license.

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

No. 39. Clause 13, Proposed new Section 15B—Delete the word "may" in line 29 and substitute the word "shall."

On motion by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendment was agreed to.

No. 40. Clause 13—Add a further section after Section 15B to stand as Section 15C, as follows:—

15C. It shall be the obligation of the lessee to permit the lessor to enter and inspect the leased premises

not more than once in any month upon not less than 48 hours' notice given by the lessor to the lessee provided that such notice is for an inspection to be made between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. and failure to comply with this provision shall give the lessor ground to issue to the lessee notice to quit. Provided, however that this section shall not affect any written contract between the parties.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The Englishman's home, even if it be only rented, is supposed to be his castle, and I do not think that the lessor should have the right to enter the leased premises once a month.

The Attorney General: If the agreement were properly drawn up in writing, that would be provided for.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: It might be included in written agreements.

The Minister for Education: Usually it is.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: How many of these leasing agreements are written?

The Minister for Education: Very few.

The Attorney General: That is so.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Hardly any would be written. This provision would enable landlords so to harass their tenants, especially the wives; as to drive them either to drink or insanity and sooner or later, clean out of the house I oppose the Council's amendment.

Mr. GRAHAM: The owner should have the right to inspect his premises occasionally. In pre-war days a lease invariably contained a clause permitting entry. A weekly tenant who refused an owner admittance would get a week's notice. I know of a woman who owns a house in North Perth, and she has had an order issued on her by the City Council requiring her to do certain work inside the house within 30 days. The tenant refuses to allow that woman admission to find out what work has to be done, and she refuses to allow a contractor in or a workman. Of course the owner can do nothing. These are not ordinary leases or tenancies, but statutory leases.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I think the court can give an owner the right to inspect his premises.

The Minister for Education: It is questionable.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: It has been done, I think.

Mr. GRAHAM: I doubt that. I went to the Crown Law Department, the Legal Service Bureau and several other public authorities, including the rent inspector, and in every case the advice was the same,

that nothing could be done about it. Bearing in mind the contention of the member for Northam that a persistent landlord could harass the tenant to the point of distraction, I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of proposed new Section 15C the word "month" be struck out and the word "year" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment, as amended, agreed to.

No. 41. Clause 17—In paragraph (d) delete the semi-colon after the word "embarkation" in line 31.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 42. Clause 17—Delete the words "who returns" in line 32, and substitute the words "a person on his return."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is an attempt to improve the wording of the clause. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM: I hope the Committee will not accept the Minister's proposition. Paragraph (d) might mean anything at all. Because of an announced decision in the Press this morning by the Prime Minister, it has a totally different application from what was intended when it was inserted in the Bill. I thought the Minister was going to move to disagree with these amendments for the purpose of having the clause submitted to conference so that something approaching sanity could be inserted in place of the present wording.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 43. Clause 17—Delete the words "and is held in a camp or establishment prior to discharge" in lines 33 and 34.

No. 44. Clause 17—Insert after the word "force" in line 36 the words "during his period of service and."

No. 45. Clause 17—Delete the word "such" in line 37.

On motions by the Chief Secretary, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

No. 46. Clause 17, page 12—Insert after the word "shall" in line 20 the words "notify the State Housing Commission and the State Housing Commission shall thereupon make available to such protected person, in priority to all other applicants, a workers' home or a dwelling house, which is owned or controlled by the State Housing Commission for rental purposes, and until such house has been so made available to the protected person the Court shall."

Point of Order.

The Minister for Education: Before the Committee deals with this amendment, I would ask your ruling, Sir. Is this amendment of the Legislative Council, which contemplates that the Government through the Housing Commission shall immediately and in priority to all other claimants, make available a worker's home or other dwelling-house apparently at the cost of the Government, permissible? I would like to know the procedure in regard to an amendment such as this.

The Chairman: The amendment may or may not be constitutional. It is not for me to decide whether the Legislative Council has done something constitutional or otherwise. It is quite in order for this Chamber to disagree on the ground that what has been done is unconstitutional.

Committee Resumed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On the ground that what is sought is outside the powers of the Legislative Council, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 47. Clause 17, page 12—Add after the word "interests" in line 25 the words "or that the acts or omissions of the protected person are such as to render him undeserving of relief under this section."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: For the same reasons that I gave a moment ago, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM: I feel confident that the Minister has moved opposite to what he intends. This is a stock phrase that is inserted in Bills to provide protection for certain people.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 48. New clause—Insert a new clause after Clause 4 to stand as Clause 5, as follows:—

5. Section four of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by inserting after the word "section" in line two of subsection (1) the words "and subject to the provisions of section 4A";

(b) by inserting before the word "the" in line one of subsection (3) the words "subject to section 18M of this Act."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 49: New clause—Insert a new clause after Clause 6 to stand as Clause 7, as follows:—

7. Section ten of the principal Act is repealed and re-enacted as follows:—

10. In any proceedings under this Act the Court may make such order as to costs as is thought fit.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Mr. Graham, the Minister for Housing and the Chief Secretary drew up reasons for not agreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—SWAN LANDS REVESTMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—SEEDS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 6, Subclause (2)—Delete the words "for the purpose of their being cleaned or graded" in lines 11 and 12, and substitute "who is in business as a seeds grader and/or cleaner who may purchase seeds for such purpose of grading and/or cleaning to bring seeds to the prescribed standard to comply with this Act."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This amendment simply makes the clause more specific.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 22, page 9—Add after the word "Act" in line 41, the words "shall be sufficient."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

BILL—LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of four amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 4, Insert after the word "form" in line 22, the words "supported by a certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner in private practice stating that it would be in the best interests of such person."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is very hard to follow these amendments when messages are rushed up from another place and dealt with forthwith. Is this the clause dealing with the placing of voluntary boarders under the age of 21 years in a mental institution?

The Minister for Health: Yes.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 7, paragraph (a): Delete the word "completely" in line 14 and substitute the word "thoroughly."

No. 3. Clause 7, paragraph (b): Insert a comma after the word "thereof" in line 23.

No. 4. Clause 7, paragraph (b): Delete the word "may" in line 23.

On motions by the Minister for Health, the foregoing amendments were agreed to.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1950-1951.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Mines, £270,820:

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING (Hon. G. P. Wild—Dale) [5.40]: I am pleased to have the opportunity of introducing these Estimates for two reasons, firstly, because I was connected with the industry for some time prior to the last war and, secondly, because I realise, and shall continue to do so, that mining is one of the basic industries of Western Australia. If it had not been for gold I very much doubt whether Western Australia would have developed to the extent it has done or, at least, would have been carrying its existing population.

Whilst at the moment we rejoice because the wool and wheat industries are enjoying such great prosperity I say, without fear of contradiction, that over the years gold has been instrumental in bringing the State's economy back to an even keel and I refer particularly to the depression years. I feel, too, that we may again see such conditions recur and, if

they do, I am sure that gold will be the means of bringing stability back to this State.

The total expenditure for 1950-51 is estimated at £270,820 as against actual expenditure for 1949-50, of £208,362. Revenue for 1949-50 was £78,369, while this year it is expected to be £77,800. The calendar year, 1949, recorded a gold production of 648,425.62 fine oz. valued at £A7,962,808. This was less than the previous year's production by 16,560.17 fine oz., but was £A805,899 more in value due to the rise in the price of gold in September, 1949.

During the first nine months of 1950 the yield was 447,020 fine oz., which is 36,828 fine oz. less than for the similar period of 1949. The decreased yield has resulted mainly on account of labour shortages and the added difficulty, with new mines, of obtaining the necessary plant, equipment and supplies to enable full-scale operations to commence. This decrease yield has been largely brought about by the paucity of labour and with, of course, the great shortages we are suffering throughout Australia in regard to machinery requirements. Several new properties that were expected to be in production by now have been delayed in their operations because of the two causes I have mentioned. One of those companies, the Great Western Consolidated, operating in the vicinity of Southern Cross, has had great difficulty in getting its equipment and also labour and I understand it is now about 12 months behind in its scheduled programme.

Several new properties will be in production we hope in the not too distant future. These include the Nevada goldmines and also the Anglo-Australian Industries, which I understand are doing exploratory work at the moment on a lead mine at Northampton, a goldmine at Horseshoe, Peak Hill, a silver lead mine at Braeside, near Marble Bar, and a tin mine at Moolyella.

Cartage subsidies on ores treated at State batteries were continued, as also was prospecting assistance of 30s. per week in the Eastern Goldfields and 40s. in the North-West. The loan of tools, the supply of explosives and the issue of rail passes were also continued, while mobile drills and compressor units were available for hire at nominal rentals.

The department continued to assist financially for development and plant purchase such mines as on inspection warranted helping, and some of the larger loans were—

	£
Meekatharra Sands Treatment N.L. (gold)	17,000
H. B. Dorrington, Marble Bar (gold)	1,900
Gabalong Asbestos Co. Pty. Ltd. (lead)	4,670

Mr. Rodoreda: What asbestos company was that?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The Gabalong Asbestos Co. Pty. Ltd.

	£
Hernesnaini & Pty. Northampton (lead)	3,145
Holben & Pty., Onslow (lead)	2,500
Leevers and Horn, Roebourne (lead)	3,200

A great innovation during the last twelve months has been the introduction of aluminium therapy. Anyone who has been connected with goldmining over the years knows the dreadful toll that dust has taken of our miners in years gone by. One of those men was the late Mr. D. J. Leahy, who, in his early days worked hard in the days when they had dry boring. Later, there came the day when all those working on rock drills had the benefit of water to allay the dust but even so, as any man who has worked underground knows, there is always dust about and if one continues to work in the mines he knows there is only one end and that is that one finishes up suffering from miner's phthisis. Therefore, I hope with the introduction of aluminium therapy it will be a stepping-stone towards saving the lives of miners who continue to work in the mines.

Several mines have already installed change houses for the use of aluminium therapy and when more materials become available all the change houses on the mines will be fitted up for the treatment. The department has not yet been able to secure an additional doctor for the therapy, but the Commonwealth and State Departments of Public Health are trying hard to make satisfactory arrangements in this regard by training a medical man who has come in under the immigration scheme.

There is a big demand for minerals and activity has been increased. Broken Hill Pty. has not, as yet, commenced production at Cockatoo Island. The company's third ship has now been launched and it is expected that production of iron-ore in large tonnages should follow. The Australian Blue Asbestos Co., in the Hamersley Ranges is making every effort to increase output. This company has had difficulty in retaining labour, but I understand that three or four weeks ago one of its executives went to America with a view to bringing back some miners. With the arrival of those miners it is expected that its output will be considerably built up in the immediate future.

The lead deposits near Onslow, Braeside and Northampton are being developed and a large company has become interested at both Northampton and Braeside. A valuable lead and silver lead production is already taking place, the export from the State for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1950, being worth £163,975.

The manganese deposits at Horseshoe are being worked, and for the same 12 months manganese to the value of £50,400 was produced for Australian consumption. Other minerals produced in quantity were bentonite—that is, clays; silver; iron from Wundowie and Koolyanobbing; glauconite—a water softener; glass sand; gypsum—for plaster manufacture; and pyrites—for sulphuric acid. I think the latter is another great stepping-stone in mining in Western Australia. With the great demand for super., this large deposit of pyrites we have at Norseman should be put, in the not too distant future, to great use.

Hon. E. Nulsen: That has about the highest percentage in Australia for the production of sulphuric acid.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I cannot tell the hon. member that because I am not very conversant with it, but it is very suitable for the production of super. The annual output of coal continues to increase and in 1949 a record tonnage of 750,000 tons was produced. All producers have received assistance from the Government, particularly in regard to mechanisation. The Western Collieries now has its walking drag-line operating and I understand it came into production this week on an open-cut in the Collie-Burn area.

The Government diamond drill has completed three holes with successful results. One of these has already proved that the deposits in Collie are very extensive. Operations on the diamond drilling at Collie have been suspended until January, but some contractors are arriving from Mannahill, in South Australia, in the middle of January. Contracts have been let and the Mines Department is looking forward not only to deep drilling but drilling to prove the faults that have been found. I refer particularly to the one forward of the Wyvern. They will drill to test this fault and others to see if they cannot pick up the seam so as to continue producing from those mines.

Operations have been suspended until January when drilling will re-commence under a new contractor, the arrangement with the old contractor having been terminated after the third hole. In order to provide for the State's increasing need for coal, the Government is encouraging the opening up of additional deep coal measures and the mechanising of existing ones.

Insofar as oil is concerned, the North-West Cape area has been very closely examined by the Ampol Company, supported by State and Commonwealth geological experts. The company is now taking action to raise the necessary additional capital for deep drilling purposes. It hopes to be able to deep drill next year. This company has fully honoured its obligations under the Petroleum Act, and has made a most thorough and painstaking examination of its areas. It is to be hoped from

every aspect that success follows its operations and that Western Australia will produce oil.

The Schools of Mines at Kalgoorlie and Norseman are functioning well, and the department has expended considerable moneys in improving the plant and equipment so that tuition may be possible in regard to modern plant and methods. A great variety of chemical work is still being carried out at these laboratories and the fuel technology and industrial chemistry divisions are expanding.

Considerable research work is being carried out in regard to Collie coal. Quite recently the Mines Department was able to arrange with the Electricity Commission and the Railway Department to have exhaustive tests undertaken with some of this coal being produced from the Co-operative East. Some prefer to call it siderite but I prefer to say it is from Co-operative East. Already one of the engines at the East Perth power station has been using this coal from Co-operative East and as far as I understand it cannot be faulted. In addition to that, some of this coal is being used in the engines of the W.A.G.R.

Mr. Styants: It has a very high clinker content.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I believe it has, but from conversations I have had with the Fuel Technologist and others I understand that by adaptation this coal can be used. I hope in the interests of this State that these tests will be successful. The department's Geological Survey Branch is conducting a geological survey of the metropolitan area in regard to industrial deposits of clays, limestones, building stone, moulding sands, etc., and is supervising the deep drilling campaign in the Collie coal basin. There are 12 inspectors of machinery, and machinery inspections now embrace the whole of the State. The continued industrial expansion has greatly increased the inspection work of this branch.

In 1949, State Batteries treated 41,171 tons of ore as against 40,634 tons in 1948. The department is endeavouring to maintain all its batteries so that all prospectors, despite their location, can obtain periodical crushing facilities. The department recently purchased the well-known Howlett's Battery at Marvel Loch, which had ceased operations. This battery is now available as a State Battery and has already attracted prospectors to the district. Although operating costs have risen, the department's battery charges have not been increased, as a measure of assistance to the industry.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.52]: It has been some time since we had an opportunity of discussing the Mining Estimates—I think it is about the first time in three years. Two years ago we foolishly forfeited our rights in order that

the Government could close that particular session of Parliament. Last session we were denied the privilege by the action of the Government itself. I appreciate what the Minister representing the Minister for Mines has said in regard to the Estimates, and I would like to take this opportunity of protesting against the fact that this important portfolio should be held by a Minister in another place. We cannot expect the Minister representing the Minister for Mines to do justice to a debate of this kind, nor can we expect him to answer fully those particular matters which are of vital interest to us. It is not possible for him to have at his fingertips information which a Minister should have. I would appeal to the Premier that having regard to the fact that the Minister representing the Minister for Mines has had some knowledge of goldmining at least—

Mr. Fox: Very extensive knowledge.

Mr. MARSHALL: —that portfolio should be handed over to the Minister in this Chamber so that he may become fully acquainted with the administration of the department. Besides I feel that in him there would be a greater ministerial inspiration than is the order of the day at the present moment. I want to say quite frankly that although I regard the Mines Department and its officers as being a department equal to any in efficiency and enthusiasm, I do not think it can be expected of departmental officers to take the initiative. It is Government policy and ministerial direction which inspire the officers to set about doing that which the Government in my opinion should long since have had under way. I will make some reference to these matters in a few moments.

My first observation is that I feel as though the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie is very easy-going and very complacent in regard to the price of gold. I think there is an obligation on that particular chamber to take very drastic action in order to loosen the hands of the Commonwealth Government as to where and when goldmining companies shall sell their product. It has been stated in this House frequently and is constantly referred to in the Press, that there is only one legitimate avenue through which gold can be sold, and that if we depart from that avenue we would be trading on the blackmarket. That is not so. There is no such thing as a blackmarket; it is a free and open market. In order to frighten producers they are told that it is a very limited market. I say it is not even limited and nobody can say at this juncture how much gold can be sold on the open market. The fact that 33 central reserve banks throughout the world can have a monopoly of the market of gold at their own price is a wretched deception. This is done ostensibly for the international banking organisation in order to

retain for one particular country a complete monopoly of gold, and while our currency is linked with gold, either direct or through sterling, the nation that controls gold controls the destiny of every other country—hence its desire to prevent any other nation from getting a sufficient quantity of gold into its particular strong-room. They are aware that if this happens that country is independent of the international Jew; and that is what they do not want to happen.

It is remarkable that South Africa can find it convenient to sell a quantity of its gold. It defied argument that under the Breton Woods Agreement it was not within the prerogative of a Government, outside the 33 central reserve banks which have a complete monopoly and control through the Central Reserve Bank Board of America, to sell gold. They fix the price and they buy the gold at their own price and do so for the reason I have already mentioned. They have a monopoly of that on which all currency is based and rests upon. No matter which nation it is, if it links its currency with gold it is subject to dictation from America. I do not suppose I can elaborate upon the wrongdoings of the Breton Woods Agreement on these Estimates.

Mr. Oliver: Are you in favour of the Breton Woods Agreement?

Mr. MARSHALL: I most certainly am not, and I do not think it will be very long before we will find that the Breton Woods Agreement will be like other international organisations. People will wake up to the grip that the international financiers are getting throughout the world.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to remind the hon. member that the Breton Woods Agreement has nothing to do with this.

Mr. MARSHALL: It most definitely has. It controls the sale of gold, and it is the reason and excuse that the Commonwealth Government gives for refusing to permit the gold producers of Western Australia to sell their gold on the open market. If the Commonwealth took control of your product, Mr. Chairman, and you received only one-half of the world price for it, you would not be sitting so peacefully in that Chair. I can imagine what my friends of the Country Party would say if their products were worth £30 in the open market and the Commonwealth insisted on their being sold at half the price.

Mr. Nalder: That is happening now.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, the farmers have a stabilisation fund.

Mr. Ackland: And we provide our own stabilisation fund.

Mr. MARSHALL: The goldmining industry has no such fund. I noticed an announcement in the Press quite recently

that some countries have been able to buy small quantities of gold. I assume that they purchased it in the open market and that it came from Russia. There is little doubt as to its origin, because Russia is not bound by the Breton Woods Agreement and can place its gold where it likes, and so command the highest possible price for it. I took up this question with the Prime Minister and unquestionably the reply I received was framed by Professor Copland.

If the gold-producers are not prepared to put up a fight and avail themselves of the assistance of State members—I do not know whether they seek help from Commonwealth representatives—to get justice, we need not concern ourselves. The time is rapidly approaching, however, when the goldmining industry will be hard-pressed to make ends meet, more particularly the smaller mines, owing to the increase in the costs of production. Then, when costs almost equal the price obtainable for the gold, the industry will have to seek further assistance from the Government to tide it over its difficulties, whereas, as a matter of fact, it should be receiving an additional £10 or £12 an ounce for gold at this moment.

The fact that the production of gold has declined causes me no astonishment. Apparently the department is receiving no ministerial inspiration. Where I was Minister for Mines, I set down a programme providing for geological surveys in the auriferous belt, to be followed by deep boring, not only for the purpose of discovering new deposits, which is essential if the life of the industry is to be prolonged, but also for the purpose of obtaining an assessment of the value of known deposits not in commission. If an inquirer goes to the Mines Department, he can obtain information to the effect that we have tantalite in one place, tin in another and iron, gold and manganese somewhere else; but we have not a proper assessment of the value of those deposits. Prospectors have scratched them, found them unprofitable, and have abandoned them, but the chances are that some of those deposits are of immense value. Yet nothing is done. When an investor makes inquiries at the department, he is told of the existence of these deposits, but if he asks about their extent or value, no information can be given.

I set out to get a geological survey and, wherever thought desirable, to have deep boring operations carried on for gold or any other mineral that might be of value. Thus it would have been possible to ascertain the extent and value of the deposits and payable deposits might be located. As a result of scientific investigation, various other minerals are becoming most important and are increasing greatly in value. But nothing is being done along those lines. Whether the in-

dustry be producing coal, gold, silver-lead, tin, iron, tantalite or anything else, if it is to thrive the department must be active and enthusiastic. This is a matter to which the Premier might well give attention.

If gold continues to be of international value, all possible efforts should be exerted to discover new mines and prove their value. As nothing is being done thus to provide for the future, we must inevitably reach a stage where the whole industry will drop out of existence. The Minister should take steps to get his officers to infuse new life into the industry. Base metals are at present more valuable than gold and some of them are bringing colossal prices, whereas, years ago, it was impossible to work the deposits profitably. Many of the minerals to be found in this State are urgently needed in Australia to provide for the manufacturing of various articles.

If the goldmining industry is to survive, the Government should offer greater incentives to men to go out prospecting. At the moment there are very few prospectors in the field. Prospecting is not attractive to the younger generation; in fact, they do not take to it at all kindly. Admittedly, it entails a hard life and much sacrifice, but I think more men would undertake prospecting if they were given reasonable encouragement.

One way in which encouragement could be given would be by increasing the Government allowance and removing the means test, if not totally, at least to some degree. Some men are so built that they cannot do work other than prospecting. Perhaps they are men who are physically handicapped as a result of war injuries or on account of old age, but they are capable of going out prospecting. In such an avocation, they can take their own time and work in their own way. When these men apply for financial assistance from the Mines Department to supplement their pension, the means test is applied, and so they hesitate to go out. If the 30s. assistance were granted in addition to the pension, men would be prepared to go out prospecting.

The Minister has not told us whether more portable drills have been provided to make the life of the prospector a little easier. I believe that the six portable drills made available some years ago are in commission in the auriferous belt, but some should be provided for prospectors in order to make their work a little easier. The days when alluvial gold could be picked up on the surface have gone, but, when a man can use a small portable drill to sink a hole instead of having to provide a shaft 5 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in., a tremendous saving of effort results from the use of these machines.

When Labour was in office, efforts were made to get portable compressors that could be hired to syndicates and pros-

pectors so that they might be able more expeditiously to develop any promising prospects. I do not know that the present Government has obtained even one of those compressors. The previous Government intended to buy several, and was negotiating for their purchase. I believe that one was obtained, and I dare say it is operating somewhere.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is quite true that the Government gives a great deal of assistance to prospectors in the way of prospecting equipment. The next feature, concerning prospectors, that I wish to refer to is that of the State batteries. The new Superintendent of State Batteries is well known to me. He is a highly qualified man, technically, and he has a lot of initiative. I am confident that he will do a good job. His qualifications warrant his holding a much higher position in the department and, no doubt, he will seek promotion as time rolls on. In the meantime I am hopeful that he will do much to improve the conditions of the State batteries.

I have heard severe comments from a number of individuals in regard to what is known as the gravity stamp process which is used by the State batteries. I say, as one who has had a long experience in the treatment of ores that, having regard to the conditions under which the State batteries operate, it is not practicable to use any other method. It is all very well to look at the up-to-date processes used by modern companies. There is a reason for such companies using those processes, but I do not want to go into the details this evening because of the late hour and the stage of the session.

I want to tell those who criticise the gravity stamp mills, controlled by the department, that they are not fully informed of the difference in the conditions applying to the modern companies, which operate on a specific type, quantity and value of ore, and those pertaining to the State batteries, which have a multiplicity of ores to treat. There is no other process that I know of that can treat the many kinds of ores which come to the State batteries.

Mr. Oliver: It is all free-milling ore.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not. When we take the all-slime process we must have a specific cycle. By that means we can get an efficient extraction. But if we take free milling ore and add the slightest degree of copper or any other base metal that is objectionable to cyanidation we spoil the lye. The State batteries have to treat this sort of ore at times. Wiluna is heavily laden with antimony. Another thing is that the all-cyanidation process is a continuous one, and must be kept going. Once the process is stopped the cost to restart is particularly heavy. Every vat and agitator has to be cleaned out

and tarred for the next lot of ore. One prospector may have about five tons of ore of a certain class, another man 50 tons and another 100 tons. The battery may run for one month or two months. That cannot be done with the all-cyanidation process. I have had a lot of experience of this, and know the difficulties.

I suggest that where it is practicable there should be a combination; that is to say, that as well as the gravity stamps and the table for the purpose of treating prospectors' ore for gold, we should have an additional small plant such as one with vanner or wilfery tables in order that prospectors who get on to base metals such as tantalite or tin could put through a parcel of a ton so as to get some idea of the value of the ore. That would not be much of an engineering problem. It is a simple process, but it would, without doubt, give the prospectors a chance to try out the ores which contain tantalite and other heavy types of metal.

I had such a scheme in mind when I was Minister for Mines, and proposed to do something along those lines, but seemingly with the change of Government nothing has been done. When a prospector goes out the only thing he can look for, if he proposes to treat what he finds, is gold. If he finds a deposit of anything else he cannot give it a trial because there is no process available to him. The Government should do something in this regard.

The Superintendent of State Batteries is well versed in the necessary process and I am confident he would make a good job of carrying it out. Taking it by and large, I think we could, without any fear of being over-extravagant, erect a plant in a central position capable of treating most of our sulphide ores. This would encourage prospectors or syndicates to have a go at some of the sulphide deposits which carry values and which, because of the difficulty of treating them with a gravity stamp mill, have been abandoned. I had most of those deposits examined many years ago by the present Superintendent of State Batteries, who was then Inspector of Mines at Cue. His report was not favourable as the water in many instances had risen above the workings and he could not assess the extent or value of the deposits, but I think the Government should unwater or diamond drill the deposits in order to get a complete assessment of their values. The Mines Department has been working out a plan for the erection of such a battery but no progress has been made with the installation of that treatment plant anywhere, so far as I know.

It is essential that if the Government is to encourage prospectors to go out it should spend money in providing equipment of this kind. I do not know whether the department has in hand at present

any geological survey of the auriferous country in this State, but at one time there were two or three geologists in the field and they used to give fortnightly reports to the Press. Those reports were of great value to prospectors, who were also able to consult personally the geologists if they happened to be in a district where the prospectors were working. I have seen no such reports for a number of years and do not know whether the geologists are still engaged in their survey. If they are still on that work their reports should be published for the information and advice of prospectors.

The Minister mentioned new deposits that will possibly come into production in the near future, but none of them are newly-discovered. Some may recently have been equipped with modern plant but they were actually discovered years ago by the oldtime prospectors. I do not think that in recent years we have discovered any new deposits that have produced worthwhile results. A man with a mechanical turn of mind, in Meekatharra, invented a small blower apparatus with which it is possible to treat lode matter or dirt. When I saw it demonstrated it seemed to me to be a wonderful proposition as it would be of great assistance to the prospector, enabling him to loam much faster than by the old process of panning with a dish. The blower treats the dirt much faster and all that is left is a mere handful of residue in which any gold present is trapped.

The process would save the prospector carting a great deal of water and would make his progress in loaming ever so much quicker. Loaming is essential today as there are no surface indications of the gold left, but it involves an enormous amount of work if done by the dish method. The Under Secretary is conversant with this process, and I suggest to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines that he should inquire from the Under Secretary as to whether anything has been done to ensure the manufacture of these machines for prospectors. The mining companies are having a bad time, owing to the shortage of labour and the inefficiency of the labour available, all of which add considerably to costs and to the worries of management. That is, unfortunately, unavoidable.

The international horizon, I am sorry to say, does not look bright, and if it is necessary to call up men who would otherwise be going into the industry we will certainly not be able to afford any relief in that direction. I hope the international horizon will brighten, for the sake of this industry and of the welfare of our people generally. I am disappointed at the delay experienced in a number of instances in the installation of the aluminium therapy treatment plant by companies. No-one can speak more feelingly on the subject of

silicosis than I can as I have seen thousands of comparatively young men contract the disease and die.

The Bill authorising the aluminium therapy treatment in this State was brought down by me four years ago, and yet some of the mines have failed so far to instal the necessary equipment. I feel that there should be no delay in the installation of this apparatus, the authorities on which have proved that it can delay the progress of the disease and prevent the malady being contracted by those who are so far free from silicosis. I understand that the MacIntyre research organisation authorised the installation of its apparatus a considerable time ago but as yet not all the mines have taken action to instal the equipment. For their own good such companies should delay no longer in this matter. It is my sincere hope that before we again have opportunity of discussing this Vote many of the matters which have been mentioned as requiring attention will have been attended to.

Progress reported till a later stage of the sitting.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 2 to 4, 7, 8, 11, 13 to 19, 23 to 26, 28 to 30, 32 to 38, 42 to 46 and 48, and had disagreed to the Assembly's further amendment to amendment No. 40 and insisted on its original amendment now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Assembly continues to disagree to the amendments made by the Council.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Council be requested to grant a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and that the managers for the Assembly be the Minister for Housing, Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, Mr. Graham and the mover.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1950-1951.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting; Mr. Hill in the Chair.

Vote—Mines. £270,820. (partly considered):

MR. OLIVER (Boulder) [7.54]: I feel that I should take the opportunity, while discussing the Estimates for the Mines Department, to sound a note of warning as to what can happen in the mining industry. If the industry is not facing a serious crisis at the moment, it will be shortly. What has occurred in the State Arbitration Court today must embarrass the goldmining industry and will considerably affect its economic structure for the next 12 months. I suggest to the Treasurer that even at this stage some approach should be made to the Commonwealth Government to see if assistance can be given to the mining industry to cushion some of the recent effects on the industry. There can be no question but that it will adversely affect gold production.

There is an item in the Estimates for the mobile laboratory. The expenditure on that account for the past year was £1,403 while the estimate for the next year is £1,750. That item should not be reduced. The Vote in 1945-1950 was £2,000 and I suggest that it should have been more this year because the services of the mobile laboratory have been most limited. There are always complaints by groups of miners in the outer areas of the State about the lack of facilities for x-ray examination. These men often go for as long as two or three years between examinations and many of them finish up working on what are termed "provisional tickets". That leaves the worker unsecured under the Workers' Compensation Act and the Mine Workers' Relief Act in respect to compensation. Instead of limiting the expenditure on that particular service, it should be increased, because the present service is inadequate.

It is true that some progress has been made in the application of aluminium therapy in the prevention of silicosis, but one of the greatest difficulties facing the system is the lack of administration. Up to date, it has been impossible to secure the services of a doctor to supervise the scheme and to my knowledge no satisfactory arrangements have been made in that regard. Obviously the system will not be a success until we can secure satisfactory administration. While some progress has been made, it is really only in the experimental stage and we cannot measure the results until we have secured the services of a competent doctor.

I would not care to clash with my friend from Murchison on the question of the treatment of ores. I know that he has had a long experience but I suggest to him, with all due respect that the present system adopted by the State Batteries Department for crushing ore is elementary. It is probably one of the first systems we have ever known and I must disagree with him when he says that it handles all sorts of problems associated with ore. The department cannot

handle all problems. If there are any metallurgical problems associated with ores put into the batteries to crush, no gold is forthcoming because it is caught in the sand and remains there. That is why the prospectors are not encouraged to take their ores to the State Batteries. If the prospectors cannot find free milling ore, it is no use mining anything else.

It may be possible that the present Superintendent of State Batteries, who is a competent man, may develop some system of sulphide treatment. If he does not, then there is a limited life to the present State batteries system. It may be that they can develop some form of mobile crushing plant that can go to the prospectors' ore dumps and crush the stone on the job, which would be of considerable assistance in testing new areas and shows. That point could be investigated. I was interested in the remarks of the member for Moore when he was discussing agriculture and mentioned the price of imported super. If the farmers are willing to pay £6 and £8 per ton more for that super. than for the local product, it leaves a high margin to pay for the recovery of sulphur from the smoke stacks on the mines. I do not think it is beyond the reach of practical economics to recover that sulphur and it would make quite a contribution to the economy of the agricultural industry.

Mr. Perkins: Have you any idea of the percentage of sulphur that could be extracted from the smoke stack?

MR. OLIVER: I have heard an estimate that there could be about 150 tons of sulphur.

Mr. Perkins: Would there be any injurious element in it?

MR. OLIVER: I am informed that there is a large percentage of sulphuric acid in it.

Mr. Perkins: What would be the percentage of true sulphur extracted?

MR. OLIVER: Almost the lot. I am informed that it is possible to trap almost the whole of it provided that a special plant is installed. The member for Murchison covered most of the ground concerning mining, but I would ask the Treasurer to take particular notice of my opening remarks and to keep an eye on the mining industry, because I am very fearful that within the next 12 months it will be faced with a crisis that could easily lessen the production of gold by half if it is not assisted. There is no doubt that events to date will have great repercussions on the industry. The sale price of gold is fixed at £15 10s. an ounce and, whilst the increase in price has been of considerable assistance to the industry, whatever benefit was enjoyed from it 12 months ago has been gradually decreased

and the mines will probably be at a greater disadvantage next year than they were two years ago.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking, £322,200; Other Hydraulic Undertakings chargeable to Revenue, £241,810; State Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £115,578; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, £350,600—agreed to.

Vote—Railway, £8,065,616:

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [8.3]: I would like to say a word or two on the Estimates of the Railway Department although I do not propose to keep the Committee for any length of time. Cash receipts and payments for the Railway Department for the year ended the 30th June, 1951, are estimated as follows:—

Revenue	.....	£6,700,000
Expenditure	.....	8,342,700
Deficiency	.....	1,642,700
Interest	.....	700,000
Loss to Treasury	.....	£2,342,700

That, of course, will be affected quite considerably by the recent increases in the basic wage, which could not be taken into consideration at the time these Estimates were prepared.

The estimated revenue for 1950/51 is £6,700,000 as against the actual for 1949-50 of £6,371,770. A general increase of 7½ per cent. in charges operated from the 1st August, 1949, and this, combined with additional traffic, was responsible for increased earnings of £1,210,552 in 1949-50, over the previous year.

Heavy water haulage was necessary throughout the year, the peak reaching more than 2,600,000 gallons per week—nearly 11,700 tons net—while during June, 1950—the middle of the wet season—the quantity was only slightly less than a million gallons per week. The inroads which water haulage made into the department's resources were enormous as the above figures will indicate, and it will be appreciated that had the crews and locomotive power so engaged been available for ordinary traffic the railway figures would have been better and the necessity for supplementary road haulage of wheat and super-phosphate considerably reduced.

Hon. E. Nulsen: How many locomotives have you carting water at present?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I cannot give the exact figure, but there are large numbers of them carting water in the southern and northern areas.

Mr. Styants: I think the number is about 60.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I was about to say 60 or 70, but I was not sure. However, despite the number of

locomotives engaged on the haulage of water, the paying ton mileage for the year—426,358,732—was the highest recorded in the history of the department, being 11 million greater than the previous best in 1948 and 33 million more than in 1949.

This improved performance is due to a number of factors. The substitution of road passenger services for some country passenger services enabled locomotive power to be diverted to goods traffic; the average haul was longer, truck turn-round better and the improving maintenance position enabled better service to be secured from the available engine power. The locomotive position is still, however, the cause of much concern and will continue to be so until additional engines are available. Meanwhile, costly repairs must proceed. During the year 35 "PM" locomotives were received and 34 of these are in service, the remaining engine being held up for parts to replace those damaged in transit from overseas. Delivery of the light line "W" class locomotives, of which 60 are on order, is expected to commence shortly, which shows that the over-all locomotive position should be better during the current year. For these reasons a greater performance than last year is budgeted for.

Considerable quantities of wheat and super, were transported by road last year which would have gone by rail had the railways been able to handle them. With the bounteous harvest promised there will obviously be plenty of traffic available to the railways, but at this juncture a note of warning must be sounded concerning water supplies. Present indications are that this summer will be the most critical yet to confront the State unless heavy summer thunderstorms are received to fill the dams. Water haulage over very long distances confronts the department in the near future, and it may be that not only will some services have to be discontinued and replaced temporarily by road services but also a reduction may have to be made on busier lines.

New departmental road services covering 693 route miles were introduced during the last year and 128,103 more passengers were carried. Passenger-freight buses were also introduced, in November, 1949, and five were operating at the 30th June, 1950. This type of vehicle provides seating accommodation for 20 passengers and storage space for three tons of goods, mails, etc., and for routes where both passenger and goods traffic are light, this vehicle is particularly suited.

The estimate for the year is £8,342,700 compared with last year's actual expenditure of £8,065,616; an increase of £277,084. Last year's spending was £286,616 in excess of the estimate, due to increases in basic wage, improved award conditions and increased cost of material. Provision is made for current depreciation, and for this purpose an amount of £487,000 has been included in the Railway Esti-

mates. The amount provided for depreciation will be treated as a loan repayment to the Treasury, by which means the capital will be kept in consonance with the value of railway assets. The necessity will still exist for some deferred maintenance on assets, such as track formations and ballast, which are never replaced in toto but are maintained up to the standard necessary so long as they are required for carrying the track. The condition of the formation on our railways has deteriorated during the last 20 or more years due to lack of maintenance, and to the extent that more than normal maintenance is required to be carried out in order to overtake the leeway, so will deferred maintenance funds be made available. For this year, the amount required is estimated at £148,000. Some painting work is also included in this amount.

Insofar as the Traffic Branch is concerned, the actual expenditure last year was £4,455,342, and the estimate for 1950-51 is £4,755,000. This branch is the revenue earner and, of course, the heaviest spender, with the result that variations in wage rates and award conditions are emphasised. In addition, allowance has been made for the cost of handling the additional traffic expected, and an amount of £50,000 for intermediate repair depots has been included. This refers to the carrying out of certain repairs to rolling-stock at selected depots instead of at Midland Junction Workshops. Last year's actual expenditure for the mechanical branch was £1,004,149, and the estimate for 1950-51 is £1,180,000. This section is affected by higher prices for materials being secured overseas, and basic wage increases. In addition, some of the tradesmen who were engaged last year on loan work, which is now completed, will be turned over to maintenance during the current year.

At this point I would like to mention that some criticism has been levelled against the role of the workshops at Midland Junction in the rehabilitation of the railway system, it being stated that they are now only a repair depot. It is true that much maintenance work is being done there, but it is equally true that much maintenance work must be done. The condition of the railway rollingstock is such that a large proportion of it is over age, in a poor state of repair and overdue for scrapping, but it must be kept moving until replacements can be effected. It is asked why Midland Junction cannot undertake some of the new construction work, but it has not the capacity to devote both to maintenance, on the scale required at present, and to additional new work to any degree.

Obviously, maintenance must suffer if the amount of new work is to be increased; we would then have the spectacle of maintenance snowballing again as it did

in years gone by, and an even greater strain would be placed upon the system. The present work of patching up must continue, but as soon as new engines and trucks are available the old equipment can be scrapped, which will reduce maintenance to reasonable proportions. Then it will be possible for future requirements to be manufactured at Midland Junction. In view of the urgency, every avenue for securing equipment is being explored. The manufacturing capacity of this country will be used to the utmost possible extent, but any deficiency must be made good by importation from overseas. This is not relished by anyone, but speed in securing new equipment is the essence of the contract facing the Commission at present.

Last year's actual expenditure on civil engineering was £1,293,818, and the estimate for this year is £1,248,700, a decrease of £45,118. At the beginning of the last financial year, there were 200 vacancies in the normal gang strength, but with the availability of New Australian labour, this leeway has been overtaken. The department is faced, however, with a shortage of sleepers, and all avenues for securing sleepers are being explored, but there is no practical available alternative to timber. The expenditure last year on deferred maintenance and regeneration of rollingstock was £622,243, but, as I mentioned earlier, this work will now be financed from loan except for deferred maintenance on track formations, ballast and some painting, for which £148,000 has been provided.

Depreciation shown in last year's Estimates was £535,000, but as the deliberations of the inter-departmental committee on the writing-down of railway capital were in progress it was decided not to provide any amount until their deliberations had been concluded. It is expected that £487,000 will be required for this item this year, but, as I said, it will be utilised as a loan repayment. The other items included last year, but not this year, are long service leave and special maintenance, which have now been merged with the expenditure of the branches concerned, and replacement of workshop machinery, which will now be financed from loan.

Housing for staff constitutes one of the biggest problems confronting the department because the existing staff is inadequately housed, and new staff urgently required for the implementation of plans for restoring the service are difficult to recruit without housing being available for them. During the year, 19 houses were completed, and at the 30th June, 1950, 40 houses were in the course of construction. Contracts have been let for eight, and orders lodged for material for a further 54 houses. At Red Hill seven Nissen huts were erected and converted to dwellings as a commencement of a programme for workshops employees and British migrant

tradesmen. For 1950-51 fifty houses have been included in the list of works, in addition to 155 prefabricated homes.

The first of the new three-unit diesel electric trains known as the "Wildflower" class was issued to traffic in August, 1949, and the others followed at regular intervals. These vehicles are proving valuable additions to the department's equipment and providing services that are appreciated by country people. Information concerning "PM" and "W" class locomotives has already been given, but it will be of interest to record briefly the department's other activities concerning locomotive power. Tenders have been called and accepted for 48 Diesel electric main line locomotives and 18 diesel shunting and branch line locomotives. The former will be utilised in dry areas, particularly in the Eastern and Northern districts, where a long haul of coal from Collie is involved and water supplies often present difficulties, as they have done in recent years.

It will be appreciated that in such circumstances a large amount of effort is expended—to express it colloquially—"donkeying" to keep certain trains operating. The change-over to diesel will release trucks and power now devoted to coal and water haulage for other essential—and more remunerative—work. In addition, the diesel type locomotive has a greater availability than a steam locomotive by reason of the shed work, i.e., washouts, etc., being considerably less.

British manufacturing capacity has also been reserved for 20 additional steam locomotives for goods haulage on light lines, but these proposals have yet to be finalised. It will be seen from the foregoing that much is being done to improve the locomotive power position.

As many of the present stock of coaches are over age and beyond economic repair, approval has been given to a programme for the construction of 107 cars for country services. Requirements for suburban services are also receiving attention, but proposals have not yet been finalised. The wagon stock position is also being attacked vigorously, the need for which is emphasised by the fact that about half of it is obsolete and over age. In order to ensure greater wagon availability and to reduce the costly repairs necessary to keep these vehicles running, a large programme of wagon replacements has been approved by the Government, including the purchase of more than 4,000 trucks equal to 4,610 four-wheel vehicles. Of these, tenders have been let in Australia for 2,950, and tenders are being called in Australia and overseas for the balance.

It is considered the new wagons will eliminate the necessity for the costly supplementary road haulage provided in recent years, meet the normal traffic increase during the next year or so, and ensure the maximum vehicle movement

without the delays consequent upon the five-day week. These estimations are on the basis of foreseeable requirements up to the middle of 1951, and deliveries are expected to commence about the end of the current financial year.

A further feature worthy of mention is the standardisation of design. At present there are 71 different styles of small wagons, which have been added to the stock over many years and which have the disadvantages of higher initial cost, the necessity for a multiplicity of spare parts and higher maintenance cost. For the future, then, it is proposed to adhere as far as possible to two standard underframes, 18 feet for all four-wheel and 42 feet for all bogie goods vehicles. With this standardisation, parts will be interchangeable, and any type of body desired can be fitted to the underframes. This, it is apparent, will facilitate both construction and future maintenance.

As to centralised traffic control, material is on order for this work and, to avoid further inroads into local resources, manpower and building materials, inquiries are being made with a view to securing the housing required for the plant, etc. from overseas. Coal is being hauled from Collie to Kalgoorlie, and action is being taken to increase the carrying capacity of the Narrogin-Meredin via Kondinin railway to enable the maximum use of haulage power to be secured. A contract has also been let for earthworks associated with the remodelling of the Collie yard, a work that is long overdue and will be vitally necessary if transport is not to be the bottleneck in the plans for increased coal production.

Materials generally are not easy. Steel supplies on the Australian market are extremely difficult, which necessitates importation even at higher cost. Sleeper supplies, as already mentioned, are causing much concern.

The 30th June, 1950, marked the completion of the first year's administration by the Railways Commission, and although it may be thought that progress has been slow, it has nevertheless been sure. Twelve months hence should reveal even greater achievements, despite difficulties of manpower and materials, with the department bidding fair for its rightful place in supplying transport needs of the community.

At this stage a note of warning must be sounded concerning the spiralling of costs. From the figures quoted earlier, it will be seen that a large gap has to be bridged between income and expenditure, which I suggest has been increased by more recent happenings, and although there was a pleasing increase in earnings last year it is obviously not possible to overtake costs under present conditions unless charges are adjusted.

With the recent increases in the Commonwealth basic wage of £1 per week the Government must be prepared to face large increases in expenditure for wages and material, whilst improved award conditions appear likely to add further to the department's expenditure. The question the Government must answer is: To what extent are the increased costs to be passed on to rail users and to what extent can the Treasury justifiably share the burden?

The problem is not an easy one, but the facts must be faced. Members might be inclined to ask for greater efficiency from the department in order to offset some of these costs, but the position is that already creditable performances have been put up with the worn-out tools with which railwaymen have been expected to work. The wonder is that they have done so much when so poorly equipped.

Given good rollingstock, equipment and the incentive of working for an establishment that has an even chance of paying its way, railwaymen as a whole will respond. They, as much as anybody else, desire a railway system of which they can be justifiably proud and, if we give them that, we shall not find them wanting in efficiency.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [8.28]: I do not intend to occupy a great deal of time on these Estimates because I dealt with them at some length on the general debate. When I spoke on the financial position of the railways, particularly in regard to what I considered to be the unscientific manner in which the rates for various commodities hauled by the railways are fixed, I stated that I was compelled to use certain figures for 1948-49, because the annual report of the Railways Commission was not available. As regards the haulage of super., I had the information, which had been supplied during the session by the Premier and the Minister in answer to my questions. The Minister was good enough to supply me with a typewritten copy of the Commissioner's report and on checking the figures I find that, while there is a variation of three or four per cent., the position is substantially the same as for the year 1948-49. What I mean is that we still find that 17 per cent of the total tonnage being hauled of a particular class of goods is producing 40½ per cent. of the railway revenue. That 17 per cent. comprises wool, imported timber, oil in private tankers, "C" class goods, first and second class goods and all other goods which are payable in this particular class.

So we find that the class of goods I have mentioned, and which comprises roughly 17 per cent. of the total tonnage hauled by the railways, is producing over 40 per cent. of the revenue; while at the other end of the scale 34½ per cent. of the total tonnage of the railways is producing only 17.3 per cent. of the revenue. The

commodities that come under that heading are wheat, hay, chaff, grains, special grains other than wheat, pyrites and fertilisers. I say now, as I did on the general debate on the Estimates, that the time is overdue for a complete overhaul of the freight rates applying to commodities in this State.

We hear much about the shortage of rollingstock, and I have been a bit concerned to find that over the last 12 months the actual investment of the railways has increased by £2,221,000, and much of that has gone overseas for the purchase of equipment. A considerable number of vehicles have been added to the list of rollingstock. For many years we had heard that there was an acute shortage of goods vehicles and particularly of that type of truck known as the "Gc" with a 10-ton load capacity. When in Kalgoorlie last March, I was very surprised to discover that a number of those vehicles were going to the Goldfields Firewood Company, having been sold by the Railway Department. By way of question addressed to the Minister, I found that the Railway Department had disposed of 50 of these vehicles to that company, claiming that they were obsolete and of no further use to the Government railways. For each of those trucks a sum of £110 was received.

The department was not able to give me any idea of the present-day cost of replacing the trucks. I want to say—and my opinion is backed by men whose job it is to examine and service these vehicles from one year's end to the other—that there was very little wrong with the trucks that were sold by the Government to the Goldfields Firewood Company. When it is known that the work for which those trucks was sold is of a much heavier type than that to which they would have been put had they remained in the Government service, it is clear that there was some other reason for their sale to the company. I know that the company is a heavy debtor of this Government. I think it owes the Government something like £130,000 or has been guaranteed for that sum: I am not sure which it is. But the type of work to which the trucks will be put is much more arduous than that to which they would have been put had they been retained by the Government railways.

They are almost always overloaded on the firewood company's line because the company can please itself what weight it places in them. They have a 10-ton carrying capacity. Because the Government handled that wood for the firewood company at certain stages and had a knowledge that they were frequently overloaded, the department from time to time checked the weight being put in the trucks and in some instances found that they were overloaded to the extent of anything from one to two tons. The road they have to run over is considerably

more uneven and rougher than the Government lines. Therefore it is difficult for me to believe that the company would purchase trucks for the purpose of transporting wood on its line if those trucks were obsolete and had seen their period of usefulness on Government lines.

I had a look at those trucks and was of the opinion that, with the maintenance usually required from time to time, they would have given years of service on the Government lines. We have read in the papers of timber milling companies being unable to get products down to the metropolitan area because of the shortage of rollingstock and we have read of wheat being held up in the country for a similar reason, yet the Railway Department disposed of 50 of these trucks to the firewood company, allegedly because they were obsolete and had wooden underframes. Such underframes have lasted for 40 years on this type of vehicle. Some are 40 years old and are still in use. There has been a tendency quite recently to adopt the use of steel-framed trucks. That may have advantages; but the contention that because the "Gc" truck has a wooden underframe it is obsolete and of no further use is difficult for me to understand.

I am concerned about the Midland Junction Workshops because I believe that it is substantially only a maintenance works now. So far as I can understand, there is very little new work being undertaken. I do not think that any locomotives have been manufactured there for the last two years. We are depending entirely on imported engines. During the pre-war period it was possible to maintain rollingstock at the Midland Junction Workshops and build from 10 to 14 locomotives per year in addition.

The Minister for Education: A lot were not maintained too well.

Mr. STYANTS: I could deal with the question of the maintenance of locomotives. We often heard the bedtime story that the railways were in a particularly run-down condition in 1947 when this Government took office, but the fact remains that for the succeeding twelve months they hauled an all-time record so far as freight is concerned since the inauguration of the railways in this State in 1881. They also ran a record number of miles. If the locomotives and rollingstock were in such a run-down condition would any impartial observer say that it would be possible for them to create those all-time records? Pre-war the workshops were able to build from 12 to 14 locomotives a year and do all the repair work. Now it seems that they have abandoned the new work and simply do maintenance work.

One of the most disturbing stories is that Midland Junction is not being used to its full capacity. Whether that is right

or is just gossip could only be determined by a thorough investigation. It is of no use those Railway Commissioners who are recent arrivals in the State, or the Royal Commission on Railways, making a fuss and saying that the system is not up to date. We know that. I suppose that our railways have never been up to date, as far as modern railway practice is concerned, since their inauguration. During the 15 years I have been a member of Parliament I have each session drawn attention to the age of our locomotives, and the fact that we were not keeping pace with other countries that had a similar guage. Pre-war I sent to Japan, South Africa and Java for information on their railway working, and I made the information available to the House, but it was of no avail.

A matter of vital importance to the department that seems to have died a natural death is the question of a coal-blending plant. Some three years ago I asked the then Minister for Railways whether the idea of establishing coal-blending plants at Collie and the various large depots throughout the State had been abandoned, and he told me there was no intention of abandoning the project; but we certainly have not got any further with it. It was recommended by authorities. As one who had experience of the blending of coals in Collie some 35 years ago, I say that coal-blending could, in a great measure, be carried out in the larger depots in the State that are equipped with overhead bins of reasonable capacity.

The blending of coal would mean not only financial gain but would also result in more economical working, and the fact of having a uniform coal would prevent the disorganisation of traffic which frequently occurs through the supply of inferior coal. I hope the idea has not been abandoned, but will be quickly proceeded with for the reasons I have stated, and because it would assist in the trains being more punctual.

I believe that the trains are more unpunctual now than they have ever been. Whilst I believe there has been a general toning up of the railway system, I think that the running of the trains is less punctual than ever. I speak not only of the Kalgoorlie express, which runs late more often than it runs on time—and it runs as much as three and four hours late—but of the goods trains on the Eastern Goldfields line which are correspondingly unpunctual. Instead of arriving in Kalgoorlie, at 6 a.m. or 7 a.m. with perishable goods, so as to be there for the morning markets, they often come in at about 10 or 11 o'clock. That late running completely disorganises the commercial section of the community. Not only do the goods and express trains on

the main line run late, but so do those running on the Leonora-Laverton and Norseman-Esperance lines.

Frequently the Kalgoorlie express is late out of Perth because the van is a quarter of an hour behind in coming out of the parcels office. Once a train, due to run on a line fairly well crowded with traffic, is late, it misses its crossings and loses time all the way. It is of no use telling me that the locomotives lose the time. It is true that on occasions the locomotives do have mechanical trouble. That is incidental to any work where machinery is being used. I would say that in the course of a year the engines make up more time than they lose on the Kalgoorlie line.

The department well knows where the delays occur because each guard has to account for where the train has put in the time and where time was lost, in exactly the same way as a driver has to give an account if he loses two minutes in a 30-minute section. He has to explain that on his running-sheet when he arrives at his destination. The main reason for the delays is that the department is trying to do the work of two trains with one, and so long as it persists in doing that I feel that the passenger trains will continue to run late. I do not know why the goods trains run late, but they are constantly doing so, and I would say that the general position with regard to punctuality is worse now than it has ever been.

I noticed in the paper the other day that one of the Commissioners told the Grants Commission that the railways were in a broken-down condition, and instanced that they were unable to haul the freight offered. Of course that is the case, but he did not tell the whole story. When we consider that the total complement of locomotives in the possession of the Railways Commissioners is 421, and that of that number 60 or 80 are constantly out of traffic for repair purposes, together with the fact that last summer between 70 and 79 engines were used for the haulage of water, we can understand why the railways were not able to haul all the freight offering. Had they been able to use—as they could in normal seasons—those 70 extra locomotives for ordinary freight haulage, the department would have been able to handle all or nearly all of the freight traffic offering to it.

The last two years have been particularly difficult for the Railway Department and this year will, I think, be worse in some respects. Unless there are unseasonal conditions in the wheatgrowing areas, with heavy summer storms to fill dams in those districts, the demand for the rail haulage of water will be even greater this year. I believe that the shortage of water in country areas has

been one of the principal reasons why in the last few years the railways have not been able to handle all the freight offering. I believe that factor has influenced the position to a far greater extent than has the allegedly run-down condition of the locomotives. If a locomotive is run down to the extent that has been suggested, it soon cracks up altogether and is a total failure.

An alarming tendency is to be seen in the falling off of our railway suburban passenger traffic. The drop in that traffic over the last two or three years has been to a great extent brought about by the granting to bus companies of authority to run in areas between railway stations and adjacent to the railway lines. The average member of the public will use the means of transport nearest to his home, or one that will deliver him nearest to his destination. He does not give consideration to the fact that he has to foot the bill for the losses on the railways, in addition to having to pay a higher fare by bus than when travelling by rail. I know of two or three instances that have been fatal to railway suburban passenger traffic in the last two or three years.

As members know, Meltham station was constructed between Maylands and Bayswater, following years of agitation for a station there for the convenience of the people. Eventually the station was built at a cost of £10,000 and, immediately it was opened for traffic, the Transport Board granted to a private bus company a license to operate on the road between Meltham and Bayswater, in the area from which the train passengers for Meltham station would otherwise have been drawn. Instead of the whole of the passenger traffic from that area being handled by the railways, a private bus company is now catering for approximately 50 per cent. of it. The same bus company operates alongside the railway between Shenton Park and Subiaco and takes a great deal of the traffic away from the railways in that area.

When the Graylands housing project was put in hand adjacent to the Karrakatta station the Railway Department expected to get the patronage of the public in that area and provided additional facilities at the Karrakatta station. The Swanbourne Bus Service was then permitted to traverse the new settlement area, with the result that the Railway Department is being denied a great deal of the passenger traffic that rightly belongs to it. The earnings of the Bayswater station have been seriously affected by a private bus service which runs through the main residential portion of that centre and was formerly the principal source of passenger revenue for that station. If we are to license private bus companies or run bus services—either private or Government—alongside the railway lines in the metropolitan area, we cannot ex-

pect to gain any increase in patronage for our suburban rail services. The suburban passenger journeys for the previous 12 months numbered 1,307,443 and the passenger miles run numbered 7,750,000 less than in the previous 12 months.

Many other instances of where road transport has been granted permits to run in competition with the railways could be quoted, and the Government should decide what it intends to do in future with regard to suburban passenger services. From information to hand, I do not think that suburban rail passenger services are very lucrative at any time but, when the patronage is depleted, as it has been in the last three or four years in the metropolitan area, it results in a heavy loss to the Railway Department. The Government must decide whether to eliminate entirely the suburban rail passenger services. The main objection to that course is that it would overload the roads with the motor vehicles that would be necessary to cater for that portion of the passengers who are still patronising the railways in considerable numbers. The alternative is to modernise our suburban rail services and run more frequent time-tables. I do not know what the new diesels that the Government has on order will be like, but, if they are suitable for suburban passenger work, it may be possible to modernise the suburban services which are now too slow and obsolete. Even if that is done, there is still the practice of issuing permits for road services to compete with railway passenger traffic, and that matter will have to receive serious consideration. Such road services are pirating passengers from the areas that rightly belong to the railways.

I believe that little attempt has been made by the Transport Board to co-ordinate transport in this regard and in fact I think the board has fostered competition of this kind. The Government should inquire from the Railways Commissioners their opinion as to what alternatives could be adopted and whether they think the rail passenger services should be discontinued in the metropolitan area, or whether they should be modernised and freed from unfair competition by road services.

Last night I had occasion to deal with a Minister who had not supplied certain information which I thought was in the possession of his department and had not been given to me. Tonight, I want to make a complaint about wrong, incorrect and misleading information given to me in connection with certain questions that I asked on the new "PM" engines, early in this session. In that criticism I do not want to include the Minister in this Chamber, or the Minister in the other House. I am certain that the Minister would not know the facts, and would not be responsible for the erroneous and misleading answers given. As a result of

other information I have received, I doubt seriously whether the officer, whoever is responsible for answering questions connected with the Railway Department, tells the truth on these matters. On this occasion, I have definite proof that incorrect answers were given. When I asked for the report of the officers in connection with this matter, the file was supplied to me and the most important document, which should have been on the file and would have proved conclusively that the information supplied to me was incorrect, was missing. I have a copy of the inspector's report, which I propose to read to the Committee.

On the 15th August I asked—

Is it a fact that boilers received for the new "PM" class engines are considered to be below the usual standard of similar work received from England?

The answer I received was just "No." In connection with that I want to read the report of the Chief Mechanical Engineer in this State, Mr. Marsland. This is contained in a letter to the secretary of the W.A. Government Railways Commission. He said—

With reference to the arrival of the first of the "PM" class locomotives from the North British Locomotive Co., an examination has been made of the boiler of this engine, and it is rather disturbing to find that the general workmanship disclosed by this inspection is not up to the usual standard of British manufacturers.

That is why I asked the question, and the answer I received was "No." In other words, it was considered that the class of workmanship was quite satisfactory. I asked another question—

Is it correct that as high as 75 per cent. of crown stays leaked when boilers were being tested, and that they had to be stay jointed with asbestos string and white lead to make them watertight?

The answer I received was—

No. A number of crown stays was found leaking on three boilers which had passed through exacting tests at the makers' works.

As I had in my possession a copy of the boiler inspector's report on this locomotive, I asked the question, expecting to get the correct answer. I also asked for the reports of certain boiler inspectors, including the Chief Boiler Inspector, to be laid on the Table of the House. The file was produced but the report, which would have proved that the information supplied to me by the department was incorrect, was not on the file. I have a copy of it with me and it is dated the 27th January, 1950. It is from A. Coulter,

the Deputy Chief Boiler Inspector of the Midland Junction Workshops to the Chief Mechanical Engineer. It states—

To C.M.E. from C.B.I.

**Hydraulic Test on New Class
PM Boiler.**

No. 803 in boiler shop on the 24/1/50. I have to report that when the above boiler was being tested and 75 lbs. pressure applied, 75 per cent. of the crown stays leaked freely on shell wrapper crown.

It was necessary for all crown stays nuts on crown of boiler to be run back, and stays to be jointed with asbestos string and white lead, to make them tight to pass the test of 265 lbs. hydraulic pressure.

As I had that in my possession, I asked for the report of certain boilermakers and inspectors to be laid on the Table of the House but, strangely enough, that particular report was missing. Had I not had a copy of it, I would have considered that the information received from the officer in the department was totally incorrect and that he had led me astray. In the first place, I want to know why it was denied that 75 per cent. of the crown stays leaked. In the second place, I want to know why the report of the boiler inspector was not on the file, with the other boilermakers and inspectors' reports. A member is at least entitled to correct information when he seeks it. Last night the Attorney General said that frequently members ask questions out of curiosity. I am not asking this question out of curiosity but in an endeavour to find out whether the standard of workmanship on these boilers was up to the usual standard required before locomotives are put on traffic.

I find also that there was considerable correspondence between the railway departmental officers, the Railway Commissioners and the Agent General in London about certain defects in the boilers. I am mindful of the fact that a face-saving inquiry was made by Mr. Justice Jackson and a naval officer in connection with certain statements made by the secretary of the Boilermakers' Union, and the fact that this union had declared the boilers black because of certain conditions and deficiencies that the union considered should not be there. I realised that something had to be done about having an inquiry because no work was being done on them in the Midland Junction Workshops.

The secretary of the Boilermakers' Union said that they were unsafe, and perhaps in some instances he used extravagant language to express himself. Nevertheless, there were, as can be proved from the file, many features of unsatisfactory workmanship on the boilers. I regard the inquiry as a face-saving one

because the ex-Minister for Railways and the secretary of the Boilermakers' Union said some harsh things regarding the matter, and the result of the inquiry was that these two people broke about even. Mr. Justice Jackson and the naval officer, who is supposed to be an expert on the construction of boilers, decided there was some justification for the complaints of the Boilermakers' Union, and also said that in their opinion the boilers were not unsafe.

Following that some comments were made by the Chief Mechanical Engineer, which I will quote—

From the appearance of the tubes at the firebox tube plate, it would seem that the welding of the tube to the tube plate has been done first, and then the end of the tubes beaded over the welding.

Specification No. 510 which was supplied to the North British Locomotive Company stipulates "that the tubes should be beaded over at the firebox end and shall be arc welded to the firebox tube plate after being proved tight by hydraulic test." Irregularities in the welding around the tubes suggest that trouble has been experienced with the tube leaking and these have been re-welded in the places where the leaks developed.

The standard of welding performed on this boiler leaves a lot to be desired and a sample of the finish of the welding at the left hand bottom corner of the shell back plate where a distance piece has been knocked off in transport shows the weld to be porous and of no penetration in depth.

Even a layman knows that if a weld is porous it has little or no strength. I was then informed, as was anticipated, that these boiler tubes were giving trouble. I was told that a locomotive was laid up at the East Perth running sheds and that 79 tubes had to be removed, annealed and replaced in the boiler. So I thought I would pose some questions about it and on the 30th August, 1950, I asked the following question:—

Is it correct that one of the recently acquired "PM" locomotive boilers, after only three weeks' service on Engine 728, has been withdrawn from traffic?

And the reply was—

"PM" No. 728 was withdrawn from traffic in April in accordance with the general order issued that the nine "PM" locomotives already in service be returned to the workshops for modification.

As a matter of fact, at that date, this locomotive had not been on the road at all. It had not been out of the shop and had not turned a wheel on the main line. The second question I asked was—

Is it true that 79 tubes have to be taken out and replaced because of unsuitable methods applied during the construction of this boiler?

and the answer I received was a blunt, "No." The third question I asked was—

Are all the "PM" class boilers of the same construction practices and methods?

and the answer was, "Yes." I decided to visit East Perth running sheds and see who was telling the truth on the matter; whether it was the railway employee, who, in general discussion on these boilers had informed me that this engine had failed, was laid up and was having repairs done to the boiler or, whether it was the department which said that this engine had been withdrawn from traffic and had only minor repairs done to it in accordance with the general order issued in April last after the inquiry, which I mentioned, was conducted by Mr. Justice Jackson.

When I arrived at the running sheds, sure enough the engine was there over the maintenance pit and two or three boilermakers were working on it taking out the 70 odd tubes, annealing them and replacing them in the boiler. Because of the misleading and inaccurate information that had been supplied to me in answer to my questions, I then asked whether the Minister would take steps to ensure that the correct information on this engine was obtained. The Minister was good enough to take the matter up and he received a report from the Commissioner of Railways. This was the letter sent to Hon. C. H. Simpson, Minister for Railways, from the Commissioner of Railways—

With reference to the question asked by Mr. Styants without notice in the Legislative Assembly on the 31st ultimo, it is regretted that in an endeavour to give an immediate reply, inaccurate information was given in replying to Question No. 1 on the 30th idem. Engine No. 728 was not one of the locomotives in service in April withdrawn for modification.

That was in accordance with the information received by me. This engine was not on the road in April although the railway officials said it had been recalled for minor repairs. The letter continues—

As regards Question No. 2 which read—"Is it true that 79 tubes have to be taken out and replaced because of unsuitable methods applied during the construction of this boiler?" and

was answered "No", the records show that Engine No. 728 was put into traffic on the 20th July, 1950. It received regular weekly washouts and boiler inspections and when examined at East Perth on the 14th August all tubes were tight and there was no indication of any leaking.

This was only five days afterwards. Continuing—

On the 19th August the sub-foreman boilermaker at Northam reported many small tubes of the boiler leaking. The engine was stopped and on the 21st August, 35 tubes were expanded and the engine worked back to Perth for further examination. In the course of this further examination it was found that the 35 tubes were leaking where electrically welded to the firebox tube plate and it was decided that the whole of the small tubes, numbering 79, be re-welded. This was done and the engine returned to traffic on the 4th instant. As only re-welding was required it was not necessary to replace any of the original tubes and therefore "No" was not an inaccurate or misleading reply to Question 2.

Despite the fact that inaccurate and misleading answers had been given to my questions they then endeavoured to distort the King's English by saying that a misleading reply had not been given in answer to question No. 2. My question was, "Was it a fact that 79 of these tubes had to be taken out and replaced?" I did not say they had to be replaced by new tubes. They had to be taken out and I think the process they had to go through was re-annealing and they had to be replaced in the boiler after that treatment. In an endeavour to make the position not quite so bad, they attempted to distort the King's English by saying that I inferred these tubes were taken out and other tubes had to be put back. I said that they had to be replaced and they were replaced after being re-annealed. In his letter the Commissioner of Railways finally said—

Answers to the remaining questions are in accordance with fact and have not been challenged.

I have asked questions previously as to Railway Department matters. I do not know who is the officer responsible for giving this information. On some occasions previously the answers I have received from the department were totally different from the information I had received, not from ordinary workmen but from officials of the Railway Department relating to certain features of railway work and I seriously doubted whether I was obtaining the correct information from them. It was only because I had a copy of the boilermaker's report on this occasion

that I was able to say that, in addition the denial of what was an actual fact and reported on by the deputy leading boiler inspector to the effect that 75 per cent. of the crown stays were leaking on a particular boiler, his report was withheld and not produced with others although I had asked that it should be produced.

This was despite the fact that this engine was actually over the maintenance pit at East Perth having the 79 tubes taken out, treated and replaced because of the alleged defective workmanship on some of these boilers! The department also said it was withdrawn from traffic in April when actually it was not in service; had had the minor repairs effected to it as asked for by Mr. Justice Jackson, and had been put into service again. I do not think that is right. A member is not entitled to be led up the garden path like that. I do not ask questions out of curiosity. I only ask questions which I think are for the public benefit, and I consider I am fully justified in asking them and entitled to obtain correct information in reply. There was no necessity for an early reply to be obtained as was pointed out by the Commissioner.

I am not putting the blame on to the Commissioner at all because he was not responsible for sending me the reply. The particular officer who supplied this information should be reprimanded for sending it out because there was no need for an early answer. We know that Ministers often ask that these questions should be deferred in order to obtain the correct answer, and they are deferred. But all that officer would have had to do was to telephone the East Perth loco. shed and ask if it was a fact that this particular engine, No. 728, was laid up on the pit, and he would have got the correct information. In my opinion, however, he made no inquiries whatever about it and, of course, supplied erroneous, misleading and false information. Therefore I hope some action will be taken against this officer. I do not think it is right, and it should not be permitted, that when members of Parliament ask questions they should be given incorrect information in regard to them.

MR. PERKINS (Roe) [9.21]: I shall very briefly state my misgivings as to whether the West Australian Government Railways management really knows where it is going in the policy it is pursuing at the present time. I listened with a great deal of interest to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say on the Loan Estimates and, so far as Loan expenditure on our railways is concerned, I think his remarks were very much to the point, and something to which the Government should be giving very careful attention. The expenditure which is being incurred at the present time from the Loan fund on railway rollingstock as well as repairs to build-

ings, or the expansion of buildings, and to work on the permanent way, is Loan money which will be tied up for an indefinite time in the future. If by any chance there is a change, and a considerable change, to take place between the economy of transporting or providing services by rail and road, then when we have that Loan expenditure incurred it seriously limits the ability of any Government to rationalise those services at some time in the future. Therefore I think the subject needs very careful consideration.

I do not wish to speak at any length on it tonight but there are plenty of pointers to indicate that the railway management at the present time is not really facing up to the position. I remember the fight which some of us had, mainly to improve the services to some of our country districts and to get the country road bus services established. That proved extremely profitable to the department and it has been given a vastly improved service. Yet senior officers of the department opposed this service in every way possible. They even went to the extent of misrepresenting the position at times.

Mr. Yates: Would not the railway service have deteriorated with the advent of these buses on the roads?

Mr. PERKINS: Surely the hon. member is not going to suggest that there is not plenty of traffic for both railway and road services to handle at the present time! As I see it, the problem is one of rationalising the position and enabling each service to do the job it can best do in its particular sphere. We have the ridiculous position of the railway system, which is surely more suitable than any other system to handle the heavier traffic of the State, fiddling about with light traffic that could be profitably and probably more expeditiously handled by road service. The figures we have indicate that nearly 50 per cent. of the coming harvest will have to be carried by road. Surely that is not a sensible way to tackle the problem in the State!

Mr. Oliver: There is no profit for the railways.

Mr. PERKINS: I do not know whether the hon. member is going to suggest that that is profitable traffic for the railways or not. I am sure he does not know and I am sure the Railway Department does not know whether it is profitable. We know that they have no proper costing system in the department, and no-one knows what lines of traffic are profitable or not. They know what returns they are getting but they do not know what a particular class of traffic is costing to handle. We have this information which in my opinion is of very little value, because it gives no indication what the costs are of handling particular classes of traffic.

It is no wonder that people such as Mr. Braine, of Co-operative Bulk Handling, endeavour to make out a case to show that some of the figures on which the Railway Department is basing its estimates are not properly applicable, particularly when it comes to costs of handling wheat as against handling some other class of produce. I feel that the time has come when the Government must take stock of this position, and that we should rationalise the transport of both goods and passengers throughout the State as between rail and road. If that is done, I believe a better service can be provided and I am quite sure, at least that is my opinion, that the finances of the Railway Department will not be in any worse position than they are at present.

Another factor is that the economy of the State is expanding fairly rapidly; more rapidly, I think, than the transport system generally is expanding to enable it to cope with all the cartage which is necessary in order to cater for this expanding economy. That being so, the position is not going to right itself if we do not take drastic action. In fact, it is likely to become worse; and we know that instead of the position improving from year to year actually it has been deteriorating, notwithstanding the increased amount of rollingstock we have been getting, and the considerable improvements that have taken place in recent times in engine power in the railway system. But those of us who are laymen are unable to have the last word on this particular problem, but one would think that the railway management could have faced up to the problem in a more realistic way.

I can quote instances, particularly in the handling of passenger traffic to our country districts and the department's very sharp resistance to using road transport to handle that traffic, which indicate that it is not really facing up to the problem. In one instance, it has been shown that the change-over to road transport could be made to give an improved service to the people. The road services have been showing a profit, even after allowing for full interest on the capital invested, which is in marked contrast to the actual loss on railway working expenses, disregarding entirely the interest on the capital cost. Members should pay careful attention to these aspects because I believe that, if we allow things to drift along, the position, rather than righting itself, will become more acute.

MR. OLIVER (Boulder) [9.31]: Members know where Boulder is and what it produces. They might also be interested to learn that, of approximately £300,000, 000 worth of gold produced in Western Australia, 80 per cent. has been produced in a mile of country at Boulder. At present that mile of country is yielding 65 per cent. of the total gold production of Australia.

The mines and the town have been served by a railway for almost 50 years. At one period the service was a reasonable one, but in recent years it has been anything but efficient and practicable. What happened was that the department attached a coach to a goods train and ran it from Kalgoorlie to Boulder. Now the department complains that the falling off in passenger traffic renders the continuance of the railway impracticable.

Boulder has not for many years had a railway passenger service in the sense understood in Perth, and yet the department has resolved that even the attaching of a passenger coach to a goods train must be discontinued. Surely a town like Boulder with a population of approximately 8,000 people is entitled to greater consideration than it is receiving! From now until April next, hundreds of people will be taking advantage of the season to spend holidays at the coast and, if the Commissioners give effect to their resolution to discontinue the service, those people will be compelled to travel to Kalgoorlie to catch the express either by taxi or private conveyance. If they hire a taxi, its costs anything up to £1 to travel from Boulder to the Kalgoorlie railway station.

I greatly doubt whether in the whole of Australia there could be found a town of the size of Boulder where the people are asked to do anything like that. Surely it would not be too much for the Government to reconsider the decision to discontinue the passenger service! Surely the service could be continued at least during the summer months and then, towards the end of the season, the Government could give consideration to the question of providing a bus service!

Mr. Yates: Is not that a question for the Transport Board?

Mr. OLIVER: On the Eastern Goldfields, a bus is not run within three-quarters of a mile of the railway station.

The Minister for Works: Do you think anyone would go up to the Boulder station to catch a train?

Mr. OLIVER: The Transport Board might be induced to run a service from the station. That could be investigated, but the people should not be left without any service at all. The train service should be retained at least until the holiday period is over and then consideration should be given to the question of providing a bus service. Such a service would also provide facilities for people living beyond Boulder in places like Williamstown and Trafalgar—people who in the past have used the railway.

Bearing in mind the history of Boulder and the part it has played in the development of the State, I consider that I am not asking too much in requesting such a service. I am aware that the railway has shown a large deficit for the year, but the people of the Goldfields get nothing

in the way of reduced rates. They pay the maximum, and therefore I claim they are entitled to a reasonable service.

(Mr. Yates took the Chair.)

MR. ACKLAND (Moore) [9.37]: I dare say that every member is conscious of the ever-increasing deficits being built up by the railway system. We have recently read in the Press that the basic wage has been increased by another 20s. a week which, of course, must involve the Railway Department in tremendous additional expenditure. Realising this, we must appreciate that railway freight charges will have to be increased.

My reason for speaking on these Estimates is to ask the Government to mete out a little more even treatment should it be found necessary further to increase the charges. On a previous occasion, I pointed out that the increase in wheat freights amounted to 84 per cent. The nearest other increase at the time was timber, the rate on which was increased by 43 per cent. Nearly all other items showed an increase of less than 50 per cent. and the freight on some was not increased at all.

That is not the end of the story by any means because we have an irritating and expensive regulation regarding the minimum freight rate, which discriminates very greatly against bulk wheat. I have before me a statement that appeared in the "Farmers' Weekly" of the 19th October, 1950, wherein the manager of Co-Operative Bulk Handling Ltd., Mr. H. E. Braine, mentioned the minimum freight rate more particularly as applying over a haul of 150 miles and using the most commonplace truck—the 10-ton "Gc." The figures show the charge on bulk wheat as 23s. per ton and the minimum load 10 tons, which returned a revenue to the department of £11 10s.

For barley, flour, oats and potatoes, the freight rate is 23s. 3d., the minimum load is five tons and the freight on that is £8 11s. 3d. For vegetables the freight rate is 23s. 3d., the minimum load four tons and the revenue derived from the truck £4 9s. For gypsum the rate per ton is 13s. 4d., the minimum load six tons and the return £4. I come now to super. This, I think will please the member for Kalgoorlie, because he can never leave super. alone, although the use of it is responsible for more tonnage hauled over the railway system than anything else. On that commodity the freight rate is 13s. 3d., the minimum load six tons and the return £3 19s. 6d.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You would rather have the Government send it by road.

MR. ACKLAND: For firewood the rate is 14s. 6d., the minimum load seven tons and the return £5 1s. 6d. For zinc ingots the respective figures are 44s. 1d., four tons and £8 16s. 4d.; and for goldbearing

ore 20s., six tons and £6. So it will be seen that the minimum freight which can be paid on a truckload of wheat is £11 10s. and the figure goes from that right down to a little under £4 for a truck of super. Therefore, if the Government should find it necessary to increase rates—

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Does the hon. member realise what he said? He said that the minimum rate was £11 and it went down lower. How can you go lower than the minimum?

MR. ACKLAND: The minimum rate on a truckload of wheat is £11 and in respect of the other commodities I mentioned the rate has been as low as £3 19s. 6d.

Mr. Styants: Because you only quoted half a load for the other commodities and a full truckload for wheat.

MR. ACKLAND: I quoted what the minimum truckload could be and, in regard to most of these items, that is about the weight carried. So we find that the dead weight being hauled for these other commodities is very much in excess of the dead weight being hauled with regard to wheat. I am one of those who realise that there must be an increase in freights and my object in speaking is to ask the Minister to be a little more reasonable than he was on the last occasion. Then we had an increase in wheat freights of 84 per cent., with very little increase in the freight rates on so many other commodities that had increased in value to a far greater extent than did wheat. It is because of that knowledge and the continual remarks of men like the member for Kalgoorlie, who is always suggesting that the freights on primary products are not nearly sufficient—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He is a pretty good judge, too!

MR. ACKLAND: —that I got on my feet. When one compares the freight on wheat with the freight on gold-bearing ore, returning to the Railway Department £6, whereas wheat returns £11 10s., both carrying the same dead weight in the truck.

Mr. Oliver: Can you only get six tons?

MR. ACKLAND: That is all that is loaded and I know how difficult—

Mr. Oliver: You took the minimum in one case and the maximum in the other.

MR. ACKLAND: It does not matter whether six tons or ten tons are loaded, that is the minimum rate.

Mr. Oliver: What would be the proportion of gold-bearing ore which is carted?

MR. ACKLAND: I have not the slightest idea. But the facts are as I have presented them, and I trust that when the Government decides that there must be an increase in freights it will be a little more reasonable.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.46]: I am highly delighted that there is a wrangle as to who should carry a fair share of the responsibilities of inflation. Seeing that no-one gives any consideration to the causes of inflation or makes any attempt to remedy it, the whole community has to suffer and it will not be long before the financial crash arrives. There will not be any wrangling then as to who shall carry a fair share of the freight rates on the railways! There will be a deplorable situation in which we will all suffer. I have been endeavouring for years to get members to give consideration to the causes and effects of inflation, but my remarks have fallen on deaf ears. I, like them, will suffer in consequence. Evidently we are doomed to that experience, because even alleged statesmen submit the most hypocritical suggestions as a solution to the problem of inflation. The matter of transport in this State offers no greater problem and none more difficult than is experienced in the other States.

Mr. Bovell: We have greater distances here.

Mr. MARSHALL: Each State is suffering most acutely as a result of the higgledy-piggledy methods adopted and through no remedy being applied to the over-all problem. To hear the comments on the position in Western Australia one would think that this was the only State suffering from the effects of unco-ordinated transport. I have yet to learn of a transport system that can eclipse either the railways or tramways from the point of view of shifting heavy loads and big populations. Neither of those systems has anything to fear. A train with five, six, seven or eight coaches attached will shift more people in less time than any road transport system is able to. The same applies to trams. Each of those systems has a rightful place in the transport sphere of this State.

We have what we call our State Transport Co-ordination Act, and I think most other States have similar legislation. But would anyone say that since the passing of that law there has been a serious endeavour on the part of any Government or Minister to give effect to the urgent necessity for fitting into its rightful place in the economy of the State each of the various media of transport that we have? We realise that road, air and rail transport have their proper places in our economy, and that each is complementary to the other. There has to be co-ordination between them, and if we have that we shall experience a change for the better. We can spend millions in modernising the railways and making them the most up-to-date system in the world, but if we carry on with the competitive system it will be a case, as the Leader of the Opposition said, of "We know not where we go."

Ever since I have been in this country I have known of no real improvement in the railway system. Nothing has been done, apart from the addition of one or two new engines and a couple of extra coaches to various trains.

I am not concerned about what members say. The history of Western Australia up till now, as I have known it for many years, is that no Government, Labour or anti-Labour, has had sufficient capital to keep the trains modern and efficient. Each and every Government has starved the department, and it is of no use one party saying that it was not responsible but the other was. How well I remember the ex-Minister for Transport saying that he would revolutionise the railway system in six months if he became the Minister—which he eventually did—and what a dismal failure he was! He said, "Give me six months and I will reform the railways and make them efficient. It wants only a courageous and strong man, with vision and determination, to do it." But he left the railway system in a worse condition than it had ever been, notwithstanding that he had added traction, manpower and everything else, beyond what the previous Government had. This great ex-Minister for Railways was going to bring about wonderful changes. There were changes all right, but for the worse. This only goes to show that, despite all the arguments about what this Government and what the other Government can do, the people get the same results in the final analysis.

I have here the report of a Royal Commissioner appointed 12 months ago by the Victorian Government. He was a man who had become thoroughly experienced and competent in transport matters in the heart of London, and he was appointed to inquire into and report upon the transport system of Victoria. If members are interested in transport, it would do them a world of good to read his report. If he had dealt with the transport system of this State, he could not have made better recommendations for its improvement. I have frequently said that it is due to the administration that we have apathy and indifference throughout the railway system. That is because those running the railway system have known that what was required to give an improved system was brushed aside by the administration. The position went on until we reached the stage when nobody cared what sort of service was given. It is very difficult to put back into the railways and other State-owned transport systems that business-like attitude which is so essential to their successful prosecution. I want to quote from page 9 of the Victorian Royal Commission's report. The author is Mr. John Quist, a member of the Institute of Transport, England. Under the heading, "Transport in Victoria", he said—

What are the alternatives? The easiest to apply and to work is, of course, complete ownership of all transport by the State, operating under one central authority. The dangers of such centralisation are well known, and the chief of these are bureaucratic stagnation and self-satisfaction in administration, resulting in poor service with little chance of redress. This wholesale application of State control is not, in my opinion, suitable for a country still in the process of development.

But if complete State control is to be rejected, a large measure of regulation is inevitable in a State such as Victoria, where the railways and tramways are already State owned and operated. Transport service to the public cannot be successfully provided in watertight compartments. You cannot legislate for railways as though road transport did not exist, nor vice versa. The truth is that the modern State needs all forms of transport, particularly rail and road—not in wasteful competition with one another, but so planned and co-ordinated that full value in service is obtained from each. Where necessary, there should be a pool of receipts to ensure this, as in the London Transport area before nationalisation took place last year.

That is a true description of our experience. I realise, and have done for a long time, that while our railway system is attached to the State Treasury, it will be starved of finance, and there will be no possibility of modernising it to the degree we would like. I also believe a supreme council should be set up with statutory authority to control and regulate all mediums of transport, subject only to ministerial control, and with the right to finance itself, entirely divorced from the State Treasury. From the wrangle that takes place in this Chamber each year we can see that each party wants to get the best it can out of a system that is unable to give of its best. If our transport system is worth having—provided it is up to date and efficient—we should be willing to pay for it.

Of course it will be said that State-owned transport was not instituted to show a profit, and that is so; but in that argument we overlook the fact that, apart from making a profit, State transport is showing a loss of millions each year and no-one wishes to shoulder responsibility for that loss. The loss is due to Government policy, different Governments desiring to court favour with different sections of the community and handing out concessions with the result that the railways system eventually shows colossal deficits. That course cannot be pursued much longer.

The position is now tragic in that if the people have to pay in full for the cost of transport many of our industries will consequently suffer considerably. The Victorian Royal Commissioner did not believe in State-owned transport and his ultimate recommendation can be accepted as fair and just in the light of the circumstances prevailing in Victoria, which are entirely analogous to those in this State. On page 18 of his report he says—

The present omnibus owners in Melbourne and other urban areas should therefore be compulsorily acquired and the compensation they receive should be fair and adequate taking into account past services rendered, capital investment and estimated future earning power, allowing for depreciation of the assets taken over.

He was not advocating nationalisation of the system. Later in his report he said—

The absorption of privately-owned omnibuses in Melbourne will seem to some harsh and unnecessary. I do not doubt that many are providing essential services to the best of their ability. A ride or two on some of these convinced me however, that no independent operator will in the long run be able to serve these suburban routes as efficiently as a central traffic authority. The present buses are sometimes small and out of date and the schedules they run are often unco-ordinated with one another. Some districts are poorly served, especially on Sundays.

How true that is of the position here. At page 14 of the report the Commissioner says—

In Melbourne today as in London before 1933 various transport organisations are in direct competition with one another with the result that urban transport is unevenly provided. There is practically no long-term planning and the providers of transport eye each other suspiciously and fearfully. So important do I regard it that public opinion in the great and growing city of Melbourne should understand the baleful influence that the competitive tangle exercises on their transport facilities and to be able to appreciate the improvements that co-ordination holds in store that I make no apology for including not in the appendix, where it might not be read, but in the text of the report some pertinent extracts from an address given to the Institute of Transport in London in 1938 by the late Mr. Frank Pick, then Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the London Passenger Transport Board. Five years had elapsed since the passing of the Act which for all

practical purposes amalgamated the the urban and suburban, rail, tube, omnibus and tramway services throughout the densely populated area of central London and into the country for 30 miles from that centre.

That, of course, brought about a vast improvement in efficiency and service. Finally, at page 23, the Commissioner said—

I consider the Victorian Railways should not come into the State Budget any more than the Electricity Commission. The finances of that Commission have been separated from the State Budget, also the finances of the Harbour Trust and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. They have to live on their own income and provide for their own expenditure. In the case of the Railways, if the railway income is not sufficient to meet the expenditure, the balance has to be made up out of the Consolidated Revenue. I think in order to get success in any industry you must have the personal interest touch and responsibility. At the present time the Railways Commissioners are responsible for the transportation of passengers and goods. If their income is not sufficient to meet the cost, the responsibility is upon the Consolidated Revenue to make good the difference.

Until we co-ordinate our transport, using road transport where that is most efficient and economical, and rail transport where the long haulage of heavy freight is concerned, our system will fail to give satisfaction. All forms of transport must be co-ordinated into one efficient whole to meet the demands of the State. Just look at the picture presented by the omnibus services in the metropolitan area. There are ten or twelve companies operating, all with their overhead costs, their workshops, staffs, managers, accountants, their carbarns and capitalisation, ten or twelve times more than is necessary. But, as they are individual companies they have all those things. We find in the metropolitan area that half the time omnibuses are lying idle along Riverside drive and the people employed by those particular companies are walking around the city waiting for the peak periods. What a waste of material and labour! The people must ultimately pay for that waste and, having paid for that extravagance, they have to pay taxes to make up the deficit of State-owned transport. So, while we can complain about the inefficient administration of our State-owned transport system, there is just as much maladministration in privately-owned transport systems.

When I was Minister for Transport I was approached by deputations on several occasions to acquire certain om-

nibus services, because of the inefficiency and the particular policies those companies had in arranging their charges for the services they rendered. We had one case which concerned the Beam Bus Company. It was possible to get a return ticket from Perth, opposite the Treasury Buildings, for 1s. 2d. That entitled one to go to within three miles of Guildford and return. But, if one wanted to go another three miles to Guildford, where the train service was most adequate, one could get a return ticket for 1s. 3d. Only another penny for an extra six miles! The reason for it was that there was a train service there, and the bus company made the unfortunate individual living in the intermediate area pay so that the company could successfully compete against the railways. What a higgledy-piggledy method of trying to organise transport in the congested metropolitan areas!

The Transport Board has been a dismal failure. Whether it has been the policy of the Government, particularly in recent years, to influence the board in doing what it has done, I do not know. Only last evening we had a spectacle of what has happened. We had a Bill to close the Upper Darling Range Railway. Instead of the Transport Board using all of the Transport Co-ordination Act and giving effect to it, the board used part of it and sneaked away traffic which rightly belonged to the railways. Later on, the board gave another company portion of the railway business until between them these two companies have practically whittled away all of the profitable business, and a Bill is brought down to close the railway.

It is said, "We cannot give effect to the provisions of the Transport Co-ordination Act because there is no business for which to call tenders." Section 24 of the Transport Co-ordination Act provides for the granting of licenses to omnibus services. Paragraph (b) provides—

Before granting or refusing to grant any such license the board shall take into consideration—

(b) the existing transportation service for the conveyance of passengers upon the routes or within the area proposed to be served in relation to—

(i) its present adequacy and possibilities for improvement to meet all reasonable public demands; and

(ii) the effect upon such existing service of the service proposed to be provided.

The Transport Board has never done that. It has simply given away business which properly belonged to another mode of transport until the metropolitan area is almost like a hive of bees with privately-owned omnibuses sneaking in and running parallel to the railway and tram-

way systems, and it is an utter impossibility for either of those systems to make a profit. That, of course, is after the taxpayer has been involved in heavy expenditure for tramways, trolley-buses and railways to build up a community. It was these mediums of transport that built-up this city and, having done that, at heavy cost to the taxpayers, the business is whittled away and given to private enterprise. As I said a couple of evenings ago, what would have been the result if the State had taken from the privately-owned transport systems business which was rightly theirs in the circumstances, and the State did not pay them compensation? What a hue and cry there would have been by the anti-Labour forces! Yet business is taken away from State-owned transport and given to private enterprise and it is joyfully accepted as something modern.

I am quite satisfied on the question of the Meltham Heights station. I was asked by a deputation to expedite the building of that station. There was a transport system then in existence but the people said they did not want it; they wanted the railway system and a station built at Meltham Heights. They said, "When you put the station there you can take the bus away." Unfortunately I did not remain long enough as Minister to do that. But, after the spending of £10,000 to put the railway station there the Transport Board, with the sanction of the Government, no doubt, and giving effect to its policy, turns round and gives an extension to an omnibus company whose buses run parallel to the railway to Bayswater.

What happened about the No. 7 tramway extension? That concession was handed over to the United Bus service, and I tell the Committee that it is illegal. It was done contrary to the Act, and if I was Minister for Transport tomorrow I would take the concession away from the company. If an industrial organisation goes on strike, or breaks the law, we have a terrific hue and cry from the present ministerial bench. They say that every individual should conform to the law but the Ministry takes an oath that it will give effect to the law without fear or favour. The extension of the No. 7 tram, which was taken away from the Tramway Department and given to private enterprise, was done contrary to the law and the ex-Minister for Railways admitted it. He said that he was wrongly advised but the service is still in effect, and now I am given to understand that the people who fought so hard to get the omnibus service are sadly disappointed. They have had the taste of private enterprise by way of increased prices for their transport. What used to cost them 2d. now costs them 6d.

And, note the impudence of these companies! This one is now endeavouring to influence the Government to permit it to run that bus service right on top of the

tramway service, through Subiaco, and no doubt the company will be able to influence this Government, because Mr. Downing will bring pressure to bear and we will find the United Bus Service traversing the tramway system. Pressure will be brought from St. George's-terrace upon the Government to do this and the State Transport Co-ordination Act will be entirely ignored. I am extremely sorry the Government is taking the trams off those short runs, because no medium of transport will shift crowds more quickly than the trams and I believe the Government is only using the excuse that the trams are obsolete and noisy in order to get rid of them. That is what I conscientiously believe. We now know that engineers have been successful in eliminating most of the noises on trams and some almost noiseless trams are operating in Sydney at present. A modern up-to-date tram is as comfortable to ride in as any other mode of transport that I know of.

We are told the tramway system was responsible for the congestion on the Causeway. Is the same system responsible for the congestion in Wellington-street where one cannot get along other than at a pace of about five or six miles an hour at certain periods of the day and one is even lucky if one can travel at that speed? I noticed a report in "The West Australian" which stated that a test was made by taking a motorcar from Barrack-street along St. George's-terrace, over the Causeway to its eastern side. During the peak period of the day it took 14 minutes for the car to travel that distance and it took only three minutes to travel over the Causeway itself, which is three-quarters of a mile in length. It must also be remembered that that journey was made with no stops such as trams and buses have to make, and it was done under test conditions.

I will admit that because the trams run against the traffic when travelling over the Causeway they do provide an element of danger, but to throw the whole of the blame on to the tramway system as the major cause of retarding the speed of traffic over the Causeway is a flagrant untruth. Had the Perth City Council shown any initiative and put into operation the circus plan at the eastern end of the Causeway much earlier, or paid attention to the eastern and western Causeway approaches, this hostility shown over the traffic bottle-neck at the Causeway would have long since disappeared. But it did not take any such steps until a hue and cry was made over the position and then it used the tramway system as a scape-goat.

Every day we have the tramway system and its management constantly bringing in some innovation which brings the State-owned transport system into disrepute. Firstly, the Government gives

away the traffic which rightly belongs to the tramway system and then, to make it more unpopular, it reduces the services which results in another squeal from a particular section of the community for the fostering of privately-owned transport. To make the system unpopular the Government does everything it can, including the inauguration of one-man buses. Nothing slows down the speed of a tram or bus more than having one man operating them, and it also causes inconvenience to passengers and creates likely dangers.

Only a short time ago a driver was backing his bus without the assistance of a conductor and killed a child because he did not notice it. Apart from that, a driver operating a bus on his own has to collect the fares from passengers and, on stopping to pick up passengers along the route, he has to get out of his seat to hook prams on to the back of the bus, which all tends to slow down his timetable. Apparently, however, that is the very thing the Government is fostering. If an investigation were made into the number of new extensions to existing licenses granted under the State Transport Co-Ordination Act it would be found that the Government has entirely ignored the provisions of that Act insofar as making a proper inquiry into the existing services and their inadequacies is concerned, and has merely granted the licenses willy-nilly in order to destroy any possibility of State-owned transport operating successfully.

The Government is making the State-owned transport system unpopular all the time. Transport is one of the most remarkable subjects that one can study. When a new settlement is developing in the country we find that the people there soon want a railway. The Government hastens to construct it and it is no sooner established than the people want a road transport service, and following the granting of that, they then want an aerial service, without any idea, on the Government's part, of course, of co-ordinating the three services and fitting each of them into the correct sphere for which it is suited. It is thus that we have this constant squeal about the Government transport system.

I now wish to refer to complaints made about the late running of trains and the shortage of railway coaches during peak periods. I suppose one can say that the Murchison line is one of the most neglected branches on our railway system. Whenever the Railway Department desires to economise in any way, it looks immediately to the Murchison and it is the first line to suffer. In consequence, the Murchison people have put up with the greatest inconvenience. The rollingstock used on that line represents the discards from all the other systems. As for the running schedule, that has long since become a by-word. So I join with those

who complain about these particular disadvantages suffered as a result of neglect and inefficiency in the railway system, which is due entirely to the administration.

I have often travelled to the Murchison on the train and there has not been one thing wrong with the engine or the coal, and yet I generally arrive at Mullewa two or three hours late. Having reached that town behind schedule, the administration puts it on to the poor unfortunate fireman and driver to make up the two or three hours on the other half of the journey. It is little wonder that people become discontented. However, the fact remains that that railway is popular with the people on the Murchison as a means of transport.

Our distances are great and our roads are rough so we cannot, with any degree of confidence, get a satisfactory road service or probably the people in that district would be seeking one. Therefore I think that in the main where a greater percentage of the people give their patronage to the railway system, they should be entitled to a better service. I agree with the member for Boulder in his complaint. It only goes to show how bad administration can make a system so unpopular. It is not only State-owned transport that is so unpopular, as I remember having received three or four deputations in regard to privately-owned transport which was giving a most unsatisfactory service.

We will never find privately-owned transport developing a suburb. Take Karrakatta for instance! There was no bus service out there, but as soon as the State Housing Commission started erecting homes we had these bus services whittling away profits which were the rights of the State Transport Board. I can tell the Minister that I will be very watchful of the position in the future, and I want the State Transport Co-ordination Act given effect to in its entirety, not just portions taken out here and there and used as the Government thinks fit. If it were given effect to in its entirety, we would at least get some recompense from these privately-owned companies that take away or have given to them State-owned transport, for then they would at least pay some compensation in return to the Government.

Any Government that will tolerate the giving away of services such as we have seen is doing something most unjust and unfair to the people because, in the final analysis, it is on them that the hardship is imposed. After having to pay for their own transport, they have to put their hands in their pockets and pay for the deficits of our tramways. Then there is a further obligation placed on them to put their hands in their pockets and find money for roads. They do not realise that and never will, but that is what they have to do.

I would like to say in conclusion that the time has arrived when there should be complete co-ordination of transport in this State, based upon that report, and the Government can find nothing wrong with it. I do not know whether Victoria has made any progress in regard to giving effect to the recommendations but they are suffering just the same as we are, and I suppose they will have to give effect to them sooner or later. There is a lot in the report that I find I can support, and I feel that if it were given effect to we would have complete co-ordination of all modes of transport right throughout the State, and an efficient and economic service. That is what the people want, and it is the Government's responsibility to give it to them.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling—in reply)

[10.33]: It would be quite impossible for me to deal with all the observations made by members who have addressed themselves to this Vote. There are one or two matters, however, to which I must make some reference. I think I will start with the last speaker first. I must say of the member for Murchison that I have never heard him in such a frame of mind as he apparently is this evening.

Mr. Marshall: You should not have worked him such long hours.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Nor have I heard him make the unwarranted statements he has made tonight. I would also like to remind him that he has made his contribution towards the long hours just as much as anybody else has. The hon. member set about to indicate, to put the matter shortly, that the Government has been spending its time influencing the Transport Board unlawfully and unfairly to favour private enterprise to the detriment of railway services. I think it scarcely needs any denial from me, but in case it does, I will deny, on behalf of the Government, that any such influence is brought to bear on the Transport Board. The hon. member talks about the State Transport Co-ordination Act being required, and that the whole of it should be placed in operation.

I have very unpleasant recollections of the early days of that Act when the first thing done under it was, without compensation, to confiscate the rights which many men in the country districts had earned by long hours and hard work, by simply saying that their licenses were not going to be renewed, and that they would get no licenses under the State Transport Co-ordination Act after two months. Therefore, that Act started off on the wrong foot and continued so for 14 years. If there is any means whereby the State Transport Board could be influenced, and if that means were used, it was used by an administration of which the hon. member was a strong supporter.

Today I am prepared to say that no influence was used upon the board. What it did it did of its own volition, and I say without fear of contradiction that what it does today, it does because it considers it the right thing to do. I have heard members talking about traffic rightly belonging to the railways—traffic which rightly belongs here and there. While I recognise that the railways must, to the best of our ability, be supported, and enabled, so far as practicable, to carry all the freight that is offering and all the passenger traffic that can be fairly made available, I say that we have to consider the convenience of the public. It is no use asking a man to be happy about getting out of a train to walk three-quarters of a mile to his residence, when he knows that a motor vehicle can put him outside his door.

The argument used by the member for Murchison would amount to this: That if the Government of 100 years ago had a spring cart system, all traffic should be reserved to it irrespective of the fact that there may have been a more convenient vehicle available. If that were the case, we would not have made any progress, and there would have been no change in our transport system. I recognise the need for some co-ordination of transport. I am not prepared to say, after considering the relative rights of privately-owned and Government transport, and also the convenience to the public which must be one of the major considerations, that the Transport Board has not done a fair job up to date.

I now turn for a moment to the observations of the member for Kalgoorlie which, to some degree, were referred to by the member for Moore, and which dealt with railway freights and fares, particularly freights. Here I agree that there is need for the removal of many anomalies in the system of freight rates and classification which have existed over a very long period of years—at least 25 years anyway. It is capable of considerable alteration, and I will tell members who are concerned that the committee in the Railway Department is working on that very subject and has been doing so for some time, with the idea of minimising the classification, removing the anomalies and, at the same time, I fear bringing forward recommendations for a further increase above the average 29 per cent. increase that has taken place in the last 18 months.

Increase of working expenses is a matter common to all industry at present and we must all face up to it, but one needs to be careful not to strike a freight rate system which, on the one hand, is going to deflect traffic from the railways owing to the heavy incidence of its rates, or, on the other hand, going to treat certain difficult industries and the places where they are carried on in such a way that their prospects of success will be rendered uncertain.

Therefore, this complete overhaul, which has been under consideration by the Government for some months, is not such an easy proposition as it appears to be at first sight. Without great care, one is as likely to achieve as many anomalies as one removes, and so some delay has necessarily occurred, but I have no doubt that we shall be able to bring the matter more closely to a final decision in the near future.

The member for Roe sounded a note of warning with regard to the capital expenditure on the railway system. It seems to me there are only two ways out of the present difficulty—either leave the railway system as it is, with much of its rolling-stock, locomotive power and permanent way worn out and unsafe, thus in a very short time to be effectively prevented from taking any substantial part in the transport of the community or, alternatively, spend upon it a considerable sum of money. I think that a few moments' mathematical calculation made even by a tyro would show that this could not be done out of revenue so, notwithstanding the note of warning, even if one wants a bus to run from Perth to Naremben or some such place, the expenditure must come from loan funds.

Unless we are going to abandon the railways to a state of absolute impotency, we cannot avoid incurring considerable expenditure. The Government has faced up to that point of view. We believe that the expenditure authorised has been wisely authorised; it certainly has not been authorised without the utmost care and consideration of the questions as to what it was intended to do, why it was intended to do it, and how value could best be obtained for the money.

Mr. Perkins: The new railcars are carrying not more than one-third of the passengers of which they are capable.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I was not touching on that subject. I said that a note of warning had been sounded, and the member for Roe joined in it, this having relation to the considerable capital expenditure on the railways. In endeavouring to improve a transport service anywhere, one cannot guarantee that it is going to be patronised to the degree expected. There are in this State at present something like 25,000 more motor vehicles than there were two years ago, and many people are using them. Two years ago, that was not expected; it was reasonable to expect that a public form of faster transport would be patronised to a greater extent than has proved to be the case. I do not know whether this tendency by people to use their own motor vehicles is going to continue to the extent they are being used now. If it does continue, doubtless there will be a diminution from that cause of the traffic expected when some of these bus

routes and other improvements are put into effect. I am glad to say that the majority of the bus routes are proving satisfactory. Certainly, the member for Roe is to be congratulated on his persistence in that regard because, in many respects, the points he made in this House two or three years ago have proved to be the case. Generally speaking, I thank members for their remarks on these Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—*Tramways, £788,500; State Batteries, £115,650; Cave House, including caves of the South-West, etc., £24,092; Forests, £117,750; State Housing Commission, £58,305; Chief Secretary, £52,153; Registry and Friendly Societies, £35,567; Prisons, £91,993; Observatory, £2,087; Tourist Bureau, £19,145; Harbour and Light and Jetties, £68,000; Town Planning, £5,150; Local Government, £18,526; Department of Native Affairs, £130,000*—agreed to.

Progress reported till a later stage of the sitting.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1950-1951.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—*Departmental, £151,500* (partly considered):

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [10.54]: I am glad to see that a few pounds are to be spent on harbours, though not nearly enough.

Mr. Marshall: Is anything allowed for Albany?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, and for Bunbury. It is pleasing to know that it has been decided to proceed with the new sheds at Fremantle. That work should have been done a long while ago. New sheds are to be erected that will be equivalent to six new berths. I think they will make a big difference to the handling of ships at the port. Once the work is finished, the Minister for Supply and Shipping should not have so much trouble in getting ships in and out of the harbour. I would like to mention what Col. Tydeman had to say two and a half years ago. At that time he estimated an increase in port tonnage of 5 per cent. per annum. However, there has been an increase of 10 per cent. On the first improvement proposed he estimates that the following expenditure will be required:—For temporary sheds, £120,000; for floors, £120,000; for roads, £60,000; for lifts, trucks, tow motors, trolleys and cranes, £600,000. It will be seen that if the tonnage at the port continues to increase at the present rate, we shall have to proceed with this work pretty quickly.

While six sheds that will be equivalent to six new berths are to be established at North Wharf, we should proceed with the improvements to the harbour straight-away. It is no good waiting until the sheds have been established. I propose to quote from page 149 of Volume 11 of Col. Tydeman's report. Under the heading of "Flexibility of Scheme" the writer tells us that we can have the harbour wherever we want it—inside or outside or in both places. He says—

The ultimate development scheme now proposed is flexible enough to take into consideration many important factors of policy including:—

- (a) The need for improving the existing facilities before providing new berths, and requiring more land mainly for improved rail facilities. This necessitates the use of land which, to avoid the dislocation and expense of resumption, is best created on undeveloped foreshore.
- (b) The possibility that decision may be made in favour of seawards extension either before or after, or instead of, up-river extension.
- (c) The possibility of decision in favour of either seawards extension north or south of the river, or both together, or neither.
- (d) That although Railways consider the hinterland rail approach will be north of the river, it may in future be from the south, or both.

Port development on the lines of the ultimate scheme, either separately north or south of the Swan River, or both together, is possible as dictated by considerations of trade centre, township development, municipal or political reasons.

If this is something that is to be done for the good of the State extension should be outside instead of upriver. If it is to be done for political reasons, we do not know where it might go! The other evening the member for Albany mentioned that Captain Fraser had said that if one ship were sunk in Fremantle the place would be hopeless.

Mr. Hill: Cockburn Sound, not Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Fremantle is better than I thought if only Cockburn Sound would be bottled up. I was going to agree with the member for Albany. There is no doubt that if a ship were sunk in the fairway, ships inside the harbour would be bottled up. The same would apply to Albany harbour.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Or the mouth of the Thames.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes. We should not render it possible for the harbour to be bottled up too much. If outward extension is as good as extension upriver, let us extend outward. It appears that with the sinking of two ships, two harbours would be bottled up. Let us go on with the seaward extension.

Mr. Oliver: How would that affect Bunbury?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That would be more bottled up than either of the other two! The establishment of new sheds at North Wharf will be an immediate improvement. But let us start on the extension of the harbour seaward so that ships will not be bottled up by the sinking of a vessel. Col. Tydeman at page 9 of Vol. 1 of his report recommended that the harbour should go outside. He said—

If port development takes place upstream, existing rail and road bridges also must be re-sited further upstream. In consequence there will be an even greater extent of intensified township area downstream on both river banks, requiring direct cross-river communications for the greater traffic involved; more high level bridges or tunnels (the only positive communication method that does not obstruct shipping) will be required in consequence. This problem to posterity, of virtually insoluble difficulties of bridges high enough to pass increasingly large ships beneath, or tunnels deep enough to allow gradually deeper navigable dredged depths of water, will thus be intensified by upriver development. High level bridges and tunnels are costly structures running into several millions of pounds.

If port development takes place seawards, away from existing township areas, the bridges will remain sited as they are and cross-river communication problems will remain, but in less concentrated form initially than for upstream development. Other problems, arising from resisting existing rail and road bridges, as the first initial stage, will thus be avoided.

He considers the traffic will be so great that some high level communication will have to be made between the present harbour and Point Brown. For that purpose a bridge of sufficiently high level for ships to pass under, will be necessary and it will be likely to cost several million pounds. When speaking of major ancillary problems and the provision of a dry dock he said—

There is no case for the provision of a dry-dock on statistics of ship repairs, or of likelihood of usage by

commercial shipping, in spite of the considerable distances of the nearest dry-docks (see Appendix 1). The only case that could be put forward in favour of installation is that a dry-dock is an item of equipment of a first-class port, or that the desired policy is to inaugurate a ship repair industry. A dry-dock at Fremantle would be an expensive item to install, would require subsidy to maintain, and could only be operated at considerable loss. It would not be a business proposition.

Although he is in favour of a dock, he does not think it would be profitable for some time. There are other references to docks, including those of Sir George Buchanan. I might mention them. At page 21 of Vol. 1, Col. Tydeman said—

Development seawards of the port, unrestricted in the matter of land area, will be more to the advantage of town planners than upstream development in congested and developed areas, and where land resumption and considerable changes would have to take place.

The width of the existing waterway in the port, viz., 1,400ft. (and the existing narrow, curved harbour entrance), limits the general use of the port to ships of about 750ft. long in favourable wind and current conditions and with full tugboat requirements. Thus in upstream development, unless this stream width is increased in the existing Inner Harbour or a larger diameter turning basin created at the expense of many of the existing berths, ships of no greater size than at present will ever be able to use the inner port. If seawards expansion takes place there will be no difficulty in creating immediately a turning circle of sufficient size to admit the largest ships afloat today or likely to exist in the reasonable future. Thus seawards extension has an advantage in the matter of ship size; this is not likely to be a matter of immediate importance as there are but few regular ships of 750ft. length calling today or likely to call in the near future.

At page 21, Vol. 2, he says—

If future extensions of the port are ever carried seawards, many unfettered sites for graving-docks will become available. There are no bores in these areas. Seawards sites are the most favourable future solution: This is a point in favour of seaward extensions.

That is the only reason he gives for going seaward. At page 76 of Vol. 2 we find what a friend of the member for Albany had to say—

Sir George Buchanan considered that Fremantle would continue to be the principal port of Western Australia. Considerable work would be necessary for it to keep that position and provide for the great trade in prospect to Western Australia. There were good natural facilities and the lay-out required careful consideration and should be on a generous scale.

He goes on to say at page 77—

A dry or floating-dock is part of the necessary equipment of any first-class port, and as the closest dry-dock to Fremantle in Australia is the Alfred Graving Dock at Williamstown, Melbourne, about 2,000 miles away, a large modern graving or floating-dock at Fremantle is undoubtedly indicated. It is a question of policy to be discussed by Government and the port commissioners, but I wish to make it clear that the dock is unlikely to be a source of profit or even to pay its way for many years to come. Fremantle is at present not a terminal port and ships are only docked when obliged to do so.

Nevertheless as already stated, a first-class port cannot be considered to be properly equipped without a dry or floating-dock large enough to take the largest vessels visiting the port. The question whether a dry-dock or floating-dock is to be preferred cannot be reasonably answered without a great deal more information. Generally speaking, if the strata is suitable, a dry-dock is to be preferred to a floating-dock.

Sir George Buchanan was quite satisfied that Fremantle would always be our leading port, and that to become a first-class port it would need to have a dock. At page 159 of Vol. 2 Col. Tydeman said—

The proposed upriver scheme of 11 berths (Scheme 11) cost of £1,130,000 compares with Scheme 3 seawards, 10 berths, at £1,453,000 per berth. Upriver extension initially is thus the cheaper method to adopt and is recommended.

He considers that because it is a little cheaper we should adopt it, but I do not think the cheapest jobs are always the best. All the way through he says that the seaward extension is preferable. I would prefer to pay a little more rather than have a cheap and nasty job. Several times in his report he points out that the inner harbour can be used for much smaller ships. I think the Government would be well advised to go ahead with the outer harbour development before the North Wharf is finished. It is necessary to go on with the north wharf immediately, but if we are to wait until that is finished before starting work on the harbour we will be a long way behind. The member for Albany the other night said that I

had made a vicious attack on him, when in fact all I did was to make a few observations. He quoted Fremantle and Bunbury, so surely I am entitled to quote Albany. I have made some inquiries and find that the particulars of Albany harbour are as follows: It covers an area of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles by $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; the deepest portion is the Banjo area which measures three-quarters of a mile by half a mile. If a ship happened to get out of that Banjo it would be likely to have a rough time.

Mr. Hill: It would not. You should be sure of your facts.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: In the Banjo, which is the deepest area of the harbour, the depth is from 30 feet to 34 feet, and a ship of any considerable draught would be in trouble if it got outside that area. There is a large part of the harbour outside the Banjo with a depth of from 20 to 23 feet, and also a lot of shallows. As the member for Albany has said, Jellicoe steamed by Fremantle and sailed into Albany. That would depend on the kind of ship he had. The "Hood," for instance, steamed by Albany—

Mr. Hill: You are absolutely wrong there.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: —and came into Fremantle.

Mr. Hill: Keep to the truth.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: She came from Albany to Fremantle.

Mr. Hill: The "Hood" went to Fremantle and then came to Albany to get fuel.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: She steamed into Fremantle and tied up in a quarter of an hour. I would ask the member for Albany how he would get on if he had the "Mauretania" at Albany. That vessel used Fremantle harbour but I could not see it taking on Albany as a port.

Mr. Hill: Tell us what is the difference in expenditure on the two harbours up to date.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The maximum depth of water at Albany is from 32 to 34 feet and the "Mauretania" drew 32 ft. $10\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Mr. Hill: Do you expect as much for £150,000 as for £2,000,000?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I remember that in 1948 the member for Albany told us that the Duchess of Gloucester, when at Albany, said "This is a beautiful place. Where are your ships?" He had to tell her that the ships were not there. He also told us how he met Commander Dalziel of the Salvation Army, who said to him "What a place to be so neglected." He told the hon. member that, as representative of the district, it was his place to see that Albany was put on the map. Commander Dalziel may be a capable and good man but his job is to save souls and not look after ships. It is no use

the hon. member telling us fairy-tales about what the Duchess of Gloucester said, because she is no more an authority on harbours than is Commander Dalziel. I do not want the hon. member to rise next time and tell us that he met Mrs. Kafoops and that she said to him "This is a lovely harbour. Why have not you any ships?" The fact is that there is something wrong with the place.

Mr. Hill: There is nothing at all wrong with it.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The Government of the day even reduced the freight on wool to Albany in a vain effort to get people to use the port, but all the inducements and enticements that have been offered have not done much good for the port, because not many people are going there to buy wool and little wool is being shipped from Albany. Will the member for the district tell us what is wrong with the place?

Mr. Hill: Will you tell what the captain of the "Arawa" said about Albany this year?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: How can I tell what the captain said, when I do not know? If the member for Albany has anything worth while to tell the Committee about Albany, let him tell it, but I will not have him telling me that Commander Dalziel and the Duchess of Gloucester recommended the port. Why does not he quote someone who can speak authoritatively on shipping matters? I hope the Government will decide to continue with the outside port at Fremantle. The improvements to north wharf will be a great boon and a considerable help to shipping, but we must get on with the other job. Col. Tydeman has recommended the outside scheme and I trust that the Government will decide to go on with it. We are anxiously awaiting the report of the other engineer and would like the Premier or the Minister for Works to tell us when it will be available. We want to see what he recommends.

MR. GRIFFITH (Canning) [11.16]: I hope the subject I am about to discuss will not prove as controversial as that of harbour development. It is just as well that the Government does not contemplate building a gaol at Albany, as otherwise the member for that district might be able to give us advice on that also. In this House the other day the member for South Perth asked the Chief Secretary—

(1) Has a site been selected for the new gaol buildings?

(2) If so, in which district was the land selected and when are the buildings likely to be commenced?

The reply was to the effect that the site had been selected in the Bull Creek area in the Canning district, and that because

of pressure for building private homes the date set down for commencing the building operations was indefinite. That started my telephone working overtime to such an extent that I do not know that I am indebted to the member for South Perth for having raised the question. However, I must now bring the matter to the notice of the Committee. I feel I must criticise the Government for its proposal to carry on with the construction of this gaol—although at some indefinite period—in the Bull Creek area. In 1945 the subject of a new gaol site was a matter of controversy and the Government of the day appointed a Joint Select Committee to inquire into the question. I will quote the majority opinion of that Select Committee. It is as follows:—

The majority opinion of the Committee, after much consideration, favoured the outer metropolitan area for the establishment of the new institution, but encountered great difficulty in locating a suitable site which would comply with the recognised requirements.

Eventually a site situated on the Toodyay-road was thoroughly investigated, including a detailed soil survey by the Department of Agriculture, and the majority of the Committee are impressed with its suitability, subject to ample water supplies being proved to be obtainable.

This site comprises portions of Swan Locations 12, 13, 13A, 14, 14A and 1253, together with Crown Reserves 8922 and 3304 and a small area, originally reserved for a sanitary site, covered by Certificate of Title 1005/428. It is, approximately, 648 acres in extent but only portion of the total area would be required. The site is about 14 miles from Perth, with a bitumen road on the north-western boundary and good road accesses from the south.

It was used as a camp during the war and is served with a 6-inch main from the metropolitan water supply. Part of the area is reticulated with pipes, which may be found to be of some use.

Electric power and a road transport service are available, and being within three miles of Midland Junction would present little difficulty from a staff point of view.

It cannot be said that the site is isolated, but the district is not likely to be developed for residential purposes for very many years to come.

There is no sewerage system to which it can be connected, but there should be little difficulty in providing the necessary facilities. The land is mainly privately owned and is not of very high value.

The Committee therefore recommends that this should be the site of the new main gaol, providing ample water supplies are proved to exist on the site for agricultural purposes, including the irrigation of a few acres.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Is that the committee of which Mr. Kitson was chairman?

Mr. GRIFFITH: Yes, the chairman was Mr. Kitson and the other members of the committee were the late Hon. Chas. Baxter, the member for South Fremantle, the present Speaker of this Chamber, the present Minister for Lands and Sir Hal Colebatch. I understand that the report of this Select Committee was tabled in the Chamber but no further action was taken. The next development that I saw about the gaol site was an article which appeared in "The West Australian" under date the 16th August which read—

An inter-departmental committee has recommended that about 310 acres of land in the Bull Creek area of the Canning River, about seven miles from Perth, be the site for a new gaol.

The article goes on to state—

The Committee considers that an adjoining 310 acres should be held for other Government institutions. In announcing that the Committee had presented a unanimous report concerning the use of 620 acres recently acquired by the Government in the Bull Creek area the Acting Premier (Mr. Watts) said yesterday that the State Cabinet would consider the report next week. The committee had proposed that about half the area (Canning Location 27)—

which incidentally lies within the Canning electorate—

—should be reserved for a gaol site and that the remainder (Location 26)—

which is in the electorate of Melville—

—should be held for other Government institutions. The committee had consisted of Messrs. H. S. Francis (then Acting Under Secretary for Lands), A. McKillop (Deputy Comptroller General of Prisons) and D. L. Davidson (the Town Planning Commissioner). It had inspected the Bull Creek area with the Comptroller General of Prisons (Mr. H. T. Stitfold).

It is curious to note that two of these gentlemen, namely Mr. McKillop and Mr. Davidson, were examined by members of the Select Committee in 1945 and, from the evidence that I have examined, at no stage of the game did either Mr. McKillop or Mr. Davidson offer any objection to the site suggested by the Select Committee. What has happened to the site on the Red Hill road is unknown to me.

Following this article in "The West Australian," the Melville Road Board gave the Government an alternative proposition of

some land in Jandakot. I do not know what happened there either, but I do know that following on the question asked by the member for South Perth I asked the Chief Secretary whether the Government would give consideration to choosing another site for a gaol in view of the rapid residential development of this area and the suitability of the area for residential purposes. The answer that I received was, "I can promise the hon. member nothing other than that I will give the matter some consideration. But I have to advise that the Bull Creek site is the least objectionable of many sites."

With great respect to the Chief Secretary, I am sure that the least objectionable site would not be from the point of view of the people who live in the area. Over the last two days my telephone has worked overtime with people registering protests about the Government's intentions to establish a gaol in this area. I am sure that the area is known to most members. It is situated on Bull Creek which is actually a tributary of the Canning River, and the land in the vicinity is known as Mt. Henry, Salter's Point and Woodman's Point. This land is valuable now. Blocks in the vicinity of the areas that I have mentioned are bringing high prices, and I am sure that nobody who wanted to build a house and settle there for the rest of his life would pay a high price for land if he thought that it would overlook a gaol site.

It has been suggested to me that this is a big area of land and that a gaol building would be of such a structure as not to be objectionable to anybody overlooking it. The mere fact that a gaol is to be built within six miles of the metropolitan area is most unreasonable. The evidence given to the Select Committee, and the site recommended by the members of the Committee, was within 14 miles of Perth. The Comptroller of Prisons was asked whether he saw any objection to the distance from Perth. He said, "It is distance in the terms of time and convenience that matters." Surely in these days of modern transport, 14 or 20 miles from Perth is not inconvenient. I do register a strong protest at the action of the Government and its persistence in wanting to build this gaol in the Bull Creek area. I am sure the member for Melville will also have the same convictions about the matter as I have. It is highly undesirable even to contemplate putting a penitentiary within six miles of the capital city. This area, in addition to being most suitable for residential development, is an arable area and in 10 or 15 years' time will be built up like the rest of the areas around Mt. Henry, Salter's Point, and the district known as Melville.

Mr. Brady: That is not as bad as putting marshall yards within four miles of the city.

Mr. GRIFFITH: We have had a lot of talk about the marshall yards on that Bill, but I want to confine this discussion to gaol sites.

Mr. Brady? Do you want to transfer it to Midland?

Mr. GRIFFITH: No, I was not suggesting where it should go but I am suggesting that on no account should a gaol be built right in the heart of the metropolitan area. I do wish to register a strong protest about this proposal and ask the Premier and the Government to give consideration not only to the question of not using this particular site as a gaol, but also to strike out of their mind once and for all the idea of placing within six miles of Perth any institution of this nature that would far from improve an excellent residential area.

MR. ACKLAND (Moore) [11.30]: I want to make brief reference to one of the headings under the Loan Estimates, namely, additions to hospitals, including medical and nursing quarters.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The hon. member need not specify an item.

Mr. ACKLAND: It is to that item I wish to confine my remarks, with the object of trying to correct a statement by the Premier as it recently appeared in "The West Australian." Members will recall that earlier in the session, during the debate on the Supply Bill, I pointed out that the Government's expenditure on hospitals in particular had not been fairly allocated to the different parts of the State; and that in the South-West Land Division, excluding the metropolitan area, £359,790 had been spent south of the east-west railway; and £4,080 had been spent north of it, which means that for every £1 spent in the north, approximately £88 has been spent in the south. So much discontent was expressed at Dalwallinu that it resulted in the holding of a public meeting and a deputation to the Premier.

In reply to the deputation the Premier stated that since 1947-1948 this Government and the Lotteries Commission had made available £21,912 to the Dalwallinu Hospital, and that the local hospital board had subscribed only £2,491. That may be substantially correct, but it is most misleading because certain payments are made to all hospitals in the State and, by way of subsidy, the Dalwallinu Hospital has received a total of £17,822 15s. 9d. during that period, which left a balance of £4,089 4s. 3d. On inquiry at the Lotteries Commission I find it has made a grant to this hospital of £2,409, leaving a balance of £1,608 4s. 3d. So the information given to that deputation, namely, that £21,912 was the amount contributed by the Government, was wrong, and the amount should have been £1,608.

That was the total amount which the Government subscribed to the Dalwallinu Hospital during the three years period. I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee but I did think it necessary to correct that statement. People have stopped me in the street and asked me why Dalwallinu people have been dissatisfied when they have had nearly £22,000 spent on their hospital during that period.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: And that is without taking into consideration that there are in existence plans for the Dalwallinu Hospital.

Mr. ACKLAND: The plans, of course, have been in existence for ten years and have been sighted by the Minister, and were on the Premier's table when the Under Secretary made the statement that they did not exist. However, I do not blame the Premier one scrap for making that statement because it would have been prepared for him, and I believe he made it in good faith. It is impossible for the Treasurer to know all that goes on in every department. The officer who gave the Treasurer such misleading information as that should be reprimanded. I sincerely trust the Premier will see that in his future Estimates a more equitable distribution of the expenditure is made.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (Melville) [11.35]: There are several matters covered by these Estimates, to which I wish briefly to refer. The first deals with harbour extension work at Bunbury. I notice that the Government proposes to spend £200,000 at Bunbury in the same way as it does at Albany, suggesting that the Government agrees with the member for Albany that the Albany Harbour is equally as important, and rightly so, too, I think. I am wondering, however, whether we are going to get the benefit of this expenditure, or is it to cover that vessel, the "Loebnitz," which I understand is not doing any work at Bunbury? The Minister tried to cover the matter up when I asked questions about it from time to time. This vessel is causing great expenditure to the State. It did not do a complete day of eight hours all the time it was stationed at Albany. Attempts have been made to show that it was to be used on other work later on, but my complaint is that it is still causing expenditure without giving any service. Does the Government intend to use it?

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Where?

The Minister for Works: It is to be used for breaking up rock.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But it will not break up rock. The vessel will not stand the weight of the needle.

The Minister for Works: I am advised that, after the clay has been removed, it will be successful in breaking the rock.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We hope! When will the clay be removed?

The Minister for Works: The clay is being removed by dredges now.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: All the time the vessel is down there, it is being patched up, I am told.

The Minister for Works: Who told you?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Surely the Minister would not want me to tell him that. He has his sources of information and I have mine. Mine are more reliable.

The Minister for Works: I doubt it!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister should not doubt it, because he might make me attempt to prove it.

The Minister for Works: Well, if it is so important, you had best prove it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister knows it is not doing any work?

The Minister for Works: I am told it is being used for sounding and testing depths.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: A rock-breaker being used for soundings! Is that the work it is doing? It is certainly not breaking any rock and not making any contribution to the deepening of the harbour. It is not a compliment to the person who suggested it was a suitable vessel. The department ought to wake up to itself and stop wasting money in this direction. The information the Minister gave me recently was that in a short time the vessel would be engaged in breaking up rock, but apparently that period has not yet been reached.

The Minister for Works: Not to my knowledge.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: As to the extension of the Fremantle harbour, why have we not had news of the Meyer report?

The Minister for Works: Because the report has not arrived, and it was not expected until about this time.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It has not arrived yet?

The Minister for Works: No, it has not.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That gives us good ground for hoping that it might be a more useful report than was first thought when Mr. Meyer was appointed.

The Minister for Works: That is your suggestion.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Others have shared that view, because it looked at the time to be a shot in the dark by the Government. Mr. Playford happened to be in the State then, and, in a discussion with the Premier, Mr. Meyer was suggested.

The Minister for Works: You are only guessing.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, the Premier told us that. That is how it occurred. Otherwise the talk of Mr. Meyer might never have occurred.

The Minister for Works: It did not originate that way, anyhow.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier said it did originate that way.

The Premier: I was asked if we could get the services of Mr. Meyer, and as the Premier of South Australia was over here I asked him about it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier's remarks are recorded in "Hansard" and he has already told us here what happened.

The Premier: It was not just a chance meeting.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is how it appeared to me. My recollection of it is that Mr. Playford was here on a conference and the Premier was discussing harbour development and suggested to Mr. Playford that he might make Mr. Meyer available.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I might look it up and get an opportunity from the Speaker to read it out.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Discuss it on the Appropriation Bill. You can go all round the world on that!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I think that is what he told us. I hope, however, when Mr. Meyer's report is received the Government will not just sit on it.

The Minister for Works: It will only be following what previous Governments have done from time to time.

The Premier: No, we will not sit on it. I promise you that.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Why sit on it when you can put it on the shelf?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope the Government will take some notice of the report. The member for Fremantle read out some remarks from Col. Tydeman's report which it will be well for the Government to consider. However much we might feel it is desirable that the extension be made one way or another, we cannot get over the fact that Col. Tydeman has definitely stated in his report that if we make an upriver extension we will pass on to posterity insoluble problems in cross river communication. If we are to be parties to passing deliberately on to posterity the problems which we are warned beforehand will be insoluble, then posterity will be entitled to think very little of our capacity as administrators. That is the part of Col. Tydeman's report that has me worried. He goes into the matter carefully and reaches the conclusion that a seaward extension has all the requisites that an upriver extension has not. Then, as a final statement in connection with the matter, he draws our attention to the fact that an upriver extension will mean that we will pass on to posterity insoluble problems so far as cross-river communication is concerned. I hope that Mr.

Meyer has given his attention to that aspect of the report because we cannot lightly pass over it.

I for one am not going to give my assistance in any way whatever to something that will result in passing on to posterity, however far off that may be, problems which we are told will be insoluble. It is our job and responsibility when we are making preparations for our immediate need to see that we are not making insoluble problems for those who come after us. That has mostly been the trouble, because these problems with which we are now confronted result from the inability of those who went before us to see what was going to happen. Take as an example the trouble we have had with schoolgrounds! We have a number of our schools on small pieces of ground and sited in the wrong places, because in the days when the schools were erected those responsible did not have sufficient experience to see what they were storing up for those following after.

No doubt we are committing mistakes now without knowing that we are going to cause additional expense and trouble for posterity. But if we have had it pointed out to us—if our experts have told us beforehand that they recommend a scheme and if we adopt it we will pass on to posterity insoluble problems—then what excuse can we have? So that causes me to give this matter the most serious consideration before I will be prepared to lend any support whatever to the proposal for upstream development.

The Minister for Works: If that is the main consideration then Col. Tydeman is risking his reputation in recommending to the Government that it first proceed with upriver development.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Oh, no he is not risking his reputation, because he can fall back and say, "I have told the Government that if it adopts this and makes and upriver extension we will pass on to posterity insoluble problems in cross-river communications."

The Minister for Works: Nevertheless he recommended that upriver extension be proceeded with.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He recommends both, because he told us that the seawards extension had all the requirements of a harbour.

The Minister for Works: Yes, but he recognises the upriver development and has gone to the various local governments defending it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That was because of the difference in cost.

The Minister for Works: Nevertheless he has taken into consideration the fact, and has said there is an insoluble problem of cross-river communication which will be passed on to posterity if an upriver extension is made.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but that leaves him in the position to be able to say, "In the facts before you I pointed out that this upriver extension was passing on to posterity insoluble problems in cross-river communication. It was not my business as an engineer to worry about that; it was yours as a legislator."

The Minister for Works: How can he justify saying to the Government "go upriver," nevertheless?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Has he said that?

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Well it must be accepted as a most remarkable document, because it cannot be gainsaid that more than once in his report he has pointed out the difficulty in cross-river communication which will result from upriver extension. He has also pointed out that that will pass on to posterity insoluble problems. If he has changed his mind about that I would like to know when he did it and why. If he has not changed his mind then we are very foolish legislators to accept a plan that will result in passing on to posterity insoluble problems. Let us face up to that.

I notice the Government proposes to spend quite a substantial amount, £50,000, for bulkhandling facilities at Fremantle. What sort of facilities is it intended to put up, because the existing facilities have been handed over to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. for a period of years? Does the Government intend to spend a lot more State money and then hand the facilities over to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd.?

The Premier: Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. will pay interest and sinking fund on any money spent by the Government.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It will?

The Premier: Yes. This is an extension of the wheat silos.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: This might be a question of reacquiring the site from the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I lodged some questions on the subject this afternoon and I hope they will be answered tomorrow. It occurred to me that possibly this money had been provided for the purpose of purchasing the wheat hospital silos from the Australian Wheat Board. If that is so, I have no doubt that, before the ink is dry on the agreement, the installation will be handed over to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. and, in accordance with past practice, some two years later, an agreement will be entered into setting out the terms.

Finally, I wish to offer a few remarks on the proposed site for a new gaol, which impinges on portion of my electorate. An

institution like a gaol should be placed on land that is not high-priced and not good land. We have too few river frontages in this State for them to be used in this way. The area along the Cannington and around Bull Creek will, in a few years time, be regarded as some of the best residential land. Because of the situation and its proximity to the river, it is a delightful spot and should not be used as the site for a gaol. I should like to know why a departure was made from the recommendation of the committee. Even if we went a few miles away from the proposed site, we could get sandy country more or less useless where drainage would not present a difficulty.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think there is any need for a new gaol at all? There are fewer prisoners in the Fremantle gaol now.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Do you think so, as a member of the Government?

The Minister for Lands: I was not a member of the Government at the time.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: You were a member of the Government that fixed this site.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think there is any need for a gaol site?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What do you think?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is need for a gaol and therefore need for a site.

The Minister for Lands: We already have a gaol.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am not arguing that question. It is intended to build a new gaol on the proposed site.

The Minister for Lands: And you say you do not want it there.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Government should not fix a site for a gaol on good residential land with a river frontage.

The Minister for Lands: No-one wants a gaol.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is going to be built at Bull Creek because you do not want it. Is not that so?

Mr. Yates: Do you favour the site selected by the committee?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have not considered the question. A committee was appointed and made a recommendation, but regarding this proposed site, I say that I have a number of objections and I am pointing out that I consider they are valid objections.

Mr. Yates: I agree with some of them.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Firstly, we have too few residential areas in Western Australia in proximity to river frontages—ideal spots. I have such a block, and I know the joy I get from living on the river and what joy other people would experience if they had a like advantage.

Mr. Yates: Prisoners would not gain much advantage from the river.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Quite so, and we might as well make such land available to people who want to build residences on land with a river frontage. My next point is that it will be many years before any sewerage system will be extended to the proposed site, and so I suppose a septic system will be installed and that the effluent will be run into Bull Creek or into the Canning River. That would be very bad for the locality because there is not the quantity of water in the stream to take the effluent without causing bad results for the locality.

Not far from there, we shall have established some very large buildings housing many people. For example, we have Aquinas College, and we have the new building to provide for aged people, and so we shall have a lot of people living not far from where it is proposed to have the gaol erected and in proximity to a stream which could easily be polluted by drainage from the gaol. I hope that before the Government takes an irrevocable step, it will give the matter further consideration with a view to obviating the disadvantages which I feel will inevitably occur.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray—in reply) [11.57]: The Leader of the Opposition made certain observations to which I think some reference should be made. He again uttered a warning about the cost of importing materials from overseas. This is a matter about which the Government is greatly concerned. I told members previously how much more expensive were the goods we were importing compared with local commodities. I refer mainly to steel, but the indications are that it will be a very considerable time—years, in fact—before Western Australia is able to get its supplies of steel in Australia, and if we do not send overseas for them, it would mean that the comprehensive water scheme would be held up and that our railway rehabilitation plan, and indeed all other work both private and public requiring steel, would be seriously curtailed.

We have taken advice regarding the purchase of our steel requirements overseas and, despite rising costs, we have been advised to buy because, with the rearmament programme that is actually being proceeded with, it appears to be certain that there will be not only a rise but also a steep rise in the price of overseas steel. The Leader of the Opposition also expressed concern about the railway rehabilitation programme. As Treasurer I, too, am greatly concerned about the millions of money, spread over the years, that will have to be spent on railway rehabilitation. No Government can act on any advice other than that which it receives from

its experts. I have told the Commonwealth what we are doing in regard to railway expenditure. The Commonwealth knows that it will have to come to our assistance because this is a claimant State. I have asked that one of its experts should be sent to Western Australia to consult with our own railway experts in order that the Commonwealth might know just what is taking place and what expenditure is contemplated.

Reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition to the need for wise spending of loan money. I have heard other Leaders of the Opposition tender the same advice. It is good advice; but in a country like this we have got to obtain loan moneys; and with the inflationary spiral of today, the loan money we are getting far and away exceeds the amount we spent a few years ago. It is also exceedingly difficult to select what would be immediately reproductive works. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, most of our public works for a considerable time to come cannot be reproductive and we have to pay interest on that part of the debt that is not productive, which means an increase in the capital cost.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke most interestingly about northern development. I agree that a greater interest must be taken in that development both by the Commonwealth Government and by the British Government. I would be only too glad to hear of any practicable schemes that could be put forward to which the Government could give consideration. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that a huge area such as that, so sparsely populated, is not in the best interests of this country or of the British Empire generally at a time like the present.

The Commonwealth Minister for Industrial Development will be coming to Western Australia some time in January and the question of northern development is one of the matters I intend to discuss with him. In fact, it is one of the most important subjects I hope to discuss. The Minister told me that he hoped to visit our northern areas and meet the people there and have a look at things for himself.

The member for Fremantle referred to the position in regard to harbour development at Fremantle. We are most anxious to push on with that work. Statements have already been published about the extra berths to be established at the North Wharf. The report which we expect to receive shortly from Mr. Meyer will not be pigeon-holed as was suggested by the member for Melville, but it is a matter to which the Government will give very early consideration. The port of Fremantle, with its greatly increased volume of trade, is a place in connection with which we

must make a decision one way or the other. I agree with the warnings sounded by members that whatever decision is made should be soundly based and that we should obtain the best possible advice. I think we have tried to do that.

I do not propose to enter into the gaol controversy tonight. I can only tell members who are interested in the matter that I cannot see any early prospect of a commencement being made with the building of this new gaol, so I do not think there need be any immediate concern in that connection.

Vote put and passed.

Votes — Railways and Tramways, £6,527,606; Electricity and Gas Supply, £3,121,057; Harbours and Rivers, £926,386; Water Supply and Sewerage, £2,488,732; Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £275,100; Development of Agriculture, £788,630; Roads and Bridges, Public Buildings, etc., £1,000,000; Sundries, £1,519,265—agreed to.

This concluded the Loan Estimates for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILL—LOAN, £14,366,000.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 5th December of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Principal and interest charged on Revenue;

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I would like to ask the Premier the meaning of the words "pari passu." I think it is about time we got back to the use of the English language in our Bills. What is the correct meaning of these two words?

The Attorney General: They mean "on equal footing."

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the clause stand as printed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I want a reply to my question. If I cannot be told what these words mean, I will move to have them struck out.

The Premier: I am informed that they mean "with equal place, together."

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If that is what they mean, why not substitute the English words?

The Premier: Oh!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The Premier laughs but can he give any reason why the English language should not be used instead of Latin? The average man would know what was meant if it was in English.

The Attorney General: It is English.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: This is not English. I think we should strike the words out.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5, Schedule, Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and had appointed Hon. H. K. Watson, Hon. E. M. Davies, Hon. H. L. Roche, and the Minister for Transport as managers for the Council, the President's room as the place of meeting and the time, 9 a.m. on Friday the 8th December.

Sitting suspended from 12.12 a.m. (Friday) till 5.20 p.m.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Conference Managers' Report.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I beg to report that the conference managers met in conference on the Bill and the numbers of the amendments I propose to quote in the report will be the numbers of the amendments as they appear on the notice paper. The following agreement has been reached:—

No. 2.—Not agreed to.

No. 3.—Agreed to.

No. 4.—Clause 5—After the figures "1949" in line 33 insert the word "or" and insert the following paragraph:—

(b) in respect of premises the lessee whereof is the Crown or any Crown instrumentality.

No. 7.—Agreed to.

No. 8.—Agreed to with the substitution of the word "thirty" for the word "thirty-five."

No. 11.—Clause 6, Page 3—Insert after paragraph (b) paragraphs (iijb) and (iiic) as follows:—

(iijb) After the commencement of the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act Amendment Act, 1950, and in respect of premises being a dwelling house or used or occupied for the purposes of residence and first leased prior to the first day of January, 1948, any lessor may give to the lessee one month's notice in writing that the rent of the premises shall as from the date of the expiration of such notice be increased by twenty per centum of the amount of the standard rent of the premises and unless prior to such date the tenant applies to the Court for a determination of the fair rent the rent shall be increased in accordance with the notice. If the tenant applies to the Court for such determination the Court shall make the determination and the rent shall apply as determined by the Court as from the date of the lessee's application: Provided that in respect of premises first leased as aforesaid but for which an increase on the standard rent has been made prior to the commencement of the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act Amendment Act, 1950, by order of the Court or otherwise the increase of rent provided for in this section shall be inclusive of and not additional to the increase already made.

(iiic) Any lessor who has not given a notice under the provision of the last preceding paragraph may at any time make an application to the Court for a variation of the percentage increase fixed by the last preceding paragraph and the Court shall have jurisdiction to hear the application and to fix such other percentage increase being not more than fifty per centum of the standard rent as the Court thinks fit; or alternatively the Court may at its discretion determine the fair rent of the premises.

A further amendment agreed upon is to substitute the word "lessor" for the word "landlord" and also to substitute the word "lessee" for the word "tenant" wherever occurring in clause 6.

No. 13.—Clause 7, Page 4—Delete all the words after the word "follows" in line 2 and substitute—

11. In determining the fair rent the Court may take into consideration any factors which the Court considers relevant.

Nos. 14 to 19 (both inclusive).—Not agreed to.

No. 23.—Clause 11, Paragraph (a)—Insert after the figure in brackets "(2)" the following words: "and substituting the following:—

(2) The lessor of shared accommodation who personally occupies portion of such accommodation may give to a lessee thereof—

- (a) where the lessee is unmarried two months' notice, or
- (b) where the lessee is married six months' notice,

to terminate the lease and on the expiration of the period stated in the notice the provisions of this section shall cease to apply in respect of those premises."

No. 24.—Clause 11—Delete the words "being a dwelling house" from paragraph (c).

No. 25.—Clause 11—Insert a new paragraph (d) as follows:—

(d) By adding a subsection as follows:—

- (5) The provisions of this section shall not apply as between the principal lessor and his lessee in respect of premises where such lessee, without the consent of the principal lessor, has sublet the premises either wholly or in part to sublessees or lodgers or has granted leave or license to any person to use the same either wholly or in part.

No. 26.—Clause 12, Pages 6-8—Delete all words from line 39 on page 6 to line 15 on page 8 all inclusive and substitute the following:—

15A. (1) Subject to subsection (7) of this section where the lessor has been or becomes the owner of premises and has resided in the Commonwealth for not less than two years and requires the premises for his own occupation or for the occupation of his married son or married daughter who has resided in the Commonwealth for a period of not less than two years, and after making a statutory declaration to that effect, he may serve on the lessee notice to quit and deliver up possession of the premises at the expiration of a period which—

- (a) in the case of a lessor who, for not less than three years, has owned the premises being

a dwelling house or premises leased for the purpose of residence, shall be at least three months expiring on or after the thirtieth day of June, 1951;

- (b) in the case of a lessor who, for less than three years but for more than six months has owned the premises being a dwelling house or premises leased for the purpose of residence shall be at least six months expiring on or after the thirtieth day of September, 1951;
- (c) in the case of a lessor who, for not less than three years, has owned the premises not being a dwelling house or premises leased for the purpose of residence shall be at least three months expiring on or after the thirtieth day of September, 1951;
- (d) in the case of a lessor who, for less than three years but for more than one year, has owned the premises not being a dwelling house or premises leased for the purpose of residence, shall be at least six months expiring on or after the thirty-first day of December, 1951.

And such notice shall at its expiration determine the rightful occupation of the lessee notwithstanding the Common Law condition requiring the notice to quit to expire on a periodical day of the tenancy.

(2) At any time after the expiration of the notice to quit the lessor may apply to the Court for an order for recovery of possession of the premises and for the ejectment of the lessee and any other person, if any, therefrom, and on proof of the facts referred to in subsection (1) of this section the Court shall make the order and may make the order and may award mesne profits or damages.

Nos. 28 to 36 (both inclusive).—Not agreed to, but covered by recommendations on No. 26.

No. 37.—Not agreed to.

No. 38.—Not agreed to; already covered by the recommendations as to No. 26.

No. 40.—In proposed new section 15C delete the word "month" and substitute the words "period of three months."

Nos. 42 to 45 (both inclusive).—Clause 17—Delete paragraph (d).

No. 46.—Agreed to, subject to the deletion of the word "thereupon" and the words "in priority to all other applicants."

No. 48.—Agreed to.

I would like to express my regret and that, I feel sure, of every member of the conference that the consideration of the proposed amendments has taken so long—16 hours in all. I would like to explain that the delay has been entirely unavoidable. Another matter I would like to mention is that the conference is indebted to the Solicitor-General, Mr. Good, for his very valuable services during the sitting of the conference. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I cannot quite grasp the explanation given by the Minister as regards the eviction of tenants by the landlord. What is the position concerning the landlord who wants to get a tenant out of his house? The other question is as to a man being given priority over all other applications by the Housing Commission.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I take it the hon. member is referring to No. 46. In that case, the priority has been deleted.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What is the position as to a landlord getting a tenant out of his house?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: From what type of premises?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: A dwelling-house.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The explanation of this should have been in the present construction of the amendment. The reason for allowing occupancy to the married son or married daughter is one reason additional to those which appeared in the original Bill. The hon. member might recall that there was a proposal by another place to put all forms of relatives in line with occupation. We did not consider that was a fair thing because every owner of every house, or group of houses, would have such a large number of relatives that it would have been entirely unfair to the remaining members of the public wanting houses, so we restricted the occupancies to the man himself and his wife and family and others, to his married daughter, husband and family and married son.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What notice has to be given for them to get out?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It depends entirely on the length of time that the owner of the property has been in possession of the property.

The Minister for Education: Between six months and nine months.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As the Minister for Education says, it varies between six and nine months.

Mr. SHEARN: It is with some difficulty that we tried to listen to the Minister from our position in this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has just replied. Does the hon. member want to ask a question?

Mr. SHEARN: Yes. One can appreciate the difficulty of the Minister after 16 hours in conference, but I am anxious to know whether he can tell us just what has happened in relation to No. 38, which I assume relates to business premises.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member want the words repeated?

Mr. SHEARN: I want to know what the position is in relation to business premises.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. 38, of course, was not agreed to, and I find here no writing showing the reasons why, but paragraph (c) in No. 25 does make a reference to it, and reads as follows:—

In the case of a landlord who for not less than three years has owned the premises not being a dwelling-house or premises leased for the purpose of residence, shall be at least three months expiring on or after the 30th day of September, 1951.

Question put and passed and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the conference managers' report.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1950-1951.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Department of Industrial Development, £108,800—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

The PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1951, a sum not exceeding £21,217,696 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS ESTIMATES, 1950-51.

In Committee.

Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the State Trading Concerns for the year ending the 30th June, 1951, now considered, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Divisions—State Engineering Works, £344,000; State Quarries, £650; State Brick Works, £89,978; State Saw Mills, £1,046,050—agreed to.

Division — State Shipping Service, £819,883.

Mr. RODOREDA: I congratulate the Premier on the manner in which he has engineered so many of the Estimates through without discussion. I should like him to give some indication as to what we may expect regarding a new boat for the coastal service. I understand that we are losing one of the chartered boats, and that another boat having little passenger accommodation, is to be obtained from the Australian Shipping Board. That will leave us in much the same position as regards cargo, and at present there is very little space for cargo. Consequently we are going to be in a difficult position until an extra ship is obtained. I read in the Press that shipping experts have been here from England to determine what type of vessel is required, and I should like to know what arrangements have been made for an additional ship. I urge upon the Premier that the greatest necessity exists for getting a new ship on the coast as soon as possible.

The PREMIER: The hon. member, in referring to the chartered ships, had in mind the "Dorrigo" and the "Dulverton." A new ship, the "Dongarra" will be here next year in time to take her place in the transport of cattle from Derby to Fremantle and also to bring down frozen meat. The other ships will also be running. The "Dongarra" is an additional ship and no arrangements have been made to hand back either of the chartered ships, as we realise that they will be needed.

As regards the new ship, experts have been here from Scotland and, during their visit, they went North to see the ports and the facilities so that they might have designs drawn for a suitable ship. Certainly no order has been placed yet. We have not received the designs or the costs, but the new ship will be a cargo vessel with stock carrying space and passenger accommodation, something on the lines of the "Koolinda," of about the same tonnage, and fitted with refrigeration. I think the main concern of the hon. member is that he is going to lose a ship. That will not happen for some time to come.

Mr. RODOREDA: I am pleased to have that assurance from the Premier. Practically everyone in the North-West is under the impression that the new Australian ship next year is to replace one of the chartered ships that are now operating. I am happy to know that the ship we shall obtain next year will be additional to the present fleet. I have no doubt that in these circumstances the State Shipping Service will be able to cope with the cargoes offering.

Division put and passed.

Divisions—Wyndham Freezing Works, £785,684; State Hotels, £144,069; West Australian Meat Exports, £176,910—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates of State Trading Concerns for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

First Reading.

In accordance with resolutions adopted in Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, leave given to introduce the Bill, which was read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [5.53] in moving the second reading said: This is the annual Bill to appropriate the amounts required for the services of the year as detailed in the Estimates of Expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund, which have just been passed by the House. Two Supply Bills have been passed this session granting in all £8,500,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund, and £500,000 from the Public Account for Advance to Treasurer. The Bill grants further supplies, as set out in Schedule "A." The total amount required from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is £26,739,549. Of this sum, £5,521,853 is permanently appropriated by Special Acts, and the present Bill appropriates the balance, £21,217,696, as summarised in Schedule "B."

The estimated expenditure from the General Loan Fund is £16,798,276, and from the Public Account for Advance to Treasurer, £2,000,000, and these amounts are also appropriated for the purposes set out in Schedules "C" and "D." The Bill further confirms the appropriation of expenditure from "Advance to Treasurer, 1949-50," being the amount spent in excess of the sums voted for that year. Full details of this expenditure are set out in Schedules "E" and "F." Finally the Bill approves of expenditure from the Reforestation Fund, as set out in the scheme of expenditure, which has already been laid on the Table of the House, and requires the approval of Parliament. A summary of the proposed expenditure is given in Schedule "G." I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Application of moneys:

Mr. OLIVER: I was told, in reply to a question some time ago, that the Government had spent £45,000 on improving the Kalgoorlie abattoirs. Members would be entitled to think, as a result, that the meat problem in Kalgoorlie was solved, but that is not so. Kalgoorlie and Boulder are still without adequate supplies. I have just received some urgent messages from Boulder—and I know that other Goldfields members have, too—requesting that we do something about the position before Parliament adjourns. I suggest in all seriousness that something be done. I understand that the present supply of meat is about one-third of the normal requirements. We cannot now get parcels of meat from Perth as the transport facilities are not suitable. While people could supplement their supplies during the winter months, they cannot do so now. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that Kalgoorlie and Boulder have a supply.

The Attorney General: Would you favour decontrol so that they could get it?

Mr. OLIVER: There is the report of the Select Committee.

The Attorney General: I am asking whether you favour it.

Mr. OLIVER: I am not prepared to go beyond what that committee recommended. It is the responsibility of the Government to see that the people are supplied with meat. As the abattoirs are being used at present only to store the meagre supply of meat that the master butchers are prepared to handle, I would ask the Premier to give an assurance that something will be done to ensure that normal supplies of meat are made available to the people of the Goldfields.

The PREMIER: I am aware of the position that exists on the Goldfields and have wondered why the butchers there are not operating on the open market, as large numbers of stock are now coming into the metropolitan area as well as into country saleyards. I promise the hon. member that next week I will see that attention is given to the matter and will advise him as to what can be done in regard to it.

Mr. BRADY: An assurance was given to the people of the Midland Junction area that a hospital was proposed to be built in the district, that land was about to be taken up and plans drawn to proceed with the midwifery section of the

establishment. I learned this afternoon that certain business interests are to approach Cabinet next week asking to be allowed to extend a business enterprise in that area. If that course is allowed to be followed I understand the departmental officers will not continue to recommend the site for a hospital.

The Premier: Is the hon. member referring to the brickyards?

Mr. BRADY: Yes. I would like an assurance from the Premier that the people of that area are not be let down in regard to the promise made to them about the hospital. The Premier probably realises that there are special reasons why that hospital should be proceeded with.

The PREMIER: Legislative Council representatives of the hon. member's electorate approached me and the Minister for Health earlier today in this matter. At present I can promise only that an immediate investigation will be made of the position, and if a hospital site has been selected I can well imagine that it is not desirable that a clay pit should be started in the area proposed. I will have the matter looked into early next week and will advise the hon. member of the position.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I agree with what the member for Boulder said about the meat position on the Goldfields. If residents there cannot be supplied through the master butchers will the Government consider opening a butcher's shop in Kalgoorlie and another in Boulder, as in the summer months Goldfields residents cannot have meat railed to them from other parts of the State?

The PREMIER: I have already indicated to the member for Boulder that I am aware that the Goldfields meat supply position is unsatisfactory. I feel there is an obligation on the Government to bring about a more satisfactory state of affairs, but all I can tell the hon. member at this juncture is that the matter will receive the early attention of the Government and that what he has said will be borne in mind.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Schedule A to G, Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Deep Sea Port at Port Torment.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the statement appearing in "The West Australian" dated the 6th December, 1950, in evidence by the Director of Works, Mr. Dumas, to the Grants Commission, as follows:—

Surveys for a deep sea port at Point Torment, near Derby, were proceeding.

(1) Has the Government definitely decided in favour of Point Torment?

(2) Has the Government consulted the Naval authorities and also the master mariners trading on the North-West coast regarding whether the best site for a deep water port is Point Torment or Entrance Point?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) The Government is awaiting a report following completion of surveys now proceeding.

(2) The naval vessel "Lachlan" surveyed the whole of King Sound for the location of a suitable site for a deep water port. Point Torment was selected by the "Lachlan" survey staff as the most suitable site. Master mariners trading on the North-West coast have been consulted regarding the use of Point Torment.

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

As to Employees' Retiring Age.

Mr. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Minister aware that the Fire Brigades Board has introduced, or, intends to introduce, a regulation which will provide for the compulsory retirement of its employees at the age of 60?

(2) Is it a fact that such employees will not receive any superannuation benefits?

(3) Does the Minister realise that many of these employees will be obliged to seek other employment at age 60?

(4) Will he take action to see that such position will be rectified?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1), (2), (3) and (4). I have no knowledge of any intention that the officers referred to will be retired at 60. I do know there is some talk of introducing a regulation dealing not so much with the question of the retiring age as with requiring officers to undergo a medical examination. Some objection has been raised to the suggestion of a regulation being drawn now, which would mean that Parliament would have no opportunity whatever of perusing or discussing it. I have, therefore, made it known in the quarter whence the inquiries came, that I would ensure that a regulation would not be drawn until the House meets again when there would, of course, be an opportunity of tabling it and members might then object or agree to it as they so desire.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I think the Minister gave an undertaking to the member for Melville to that effect.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so. I was not prepared to give the names when replying to the hon. member.

SWAN RIVER.

(a) As to Control.

Mr. BRADY (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the following Press statement which appeared in "The West Australian" of Wednesday, the 1st March, 1950—

Statutory Powers for River Body.

The Government aims at introducing a Bill in the next Parliamentary session to define the duties and responsibilities of the Swan River Reference Committee and to give it statutory powers.

and as no Bill has been introduced by the Government, will he support the Bill already on the notice paper standing in my name?

The MINISTER replied:

As I have intimated to the hon. member, I intended to oppose his Bill because I believe it is a hotch-potch way of tackling this important problem. I have also intimated to him that in the new year I will endeavour to make a full inspection of the river myself, and following upon that I will call a conference of representatives of the Perth City Council, local governing authorities concerned and departmental officers with a view to discussing the whole question, and ascertaining from them if they believe it is necessary to set up any committee clothed with statutory powers. At this stage I can say no more except by way of explanation, namely, that the Government did promise it would introduce such a Bill, but certain local governing bodies felt that the clothing of the Swan River Reference Committee with statutory powers would achieve very little. I was of the same opinion, and felt that if we are going to tackle this problem we should obtain all the information necessary to ensure that any steps taken are taken in the right direction.

(b) As to Inspection by Members.

Mr. HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

Following upon the Minister's explanation, in answer to the member for Guildford-Midland, will he give those members interested in the problem of river pollution an opportunity of accompanying him on his river inspection trip?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

BASSENDEN RAILWAY WORKS.

As to Appointing Compensation Committee.

Mr. J. HEGNEY (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:—

In view of the passage of the two railway Bills that vitally affect so many people in the districts concerned, will he give immediate attention to appointing the compensation committee to which he referred, so that persons displaced from their homes can make immediate representations to him?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: I have already discussed the question with the Minister for Railways and he is agreeable to taking action along those lines as soon as it is necessary. It must be agreed that the final plans of the route, which will absolutely pinprick those places that will be affected, I am told may not be available for a week or so. It will be time then for those persons to make their representations, and I assure the hon. member that there will be no active work of resumption carried out until that has been done.

Sitting suspended from 6.17 to 7.12 p.m.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Loan, £14,366,000.
- 2, Appropriation.
Without amendment.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

The PREMIER: This concludes the business of the session and, before I extend the usual Christmas greetings, there is an announcement I should like to make to the House. Cabinet has decided that I should visit England next year, and it is my intention to leave on the 7th February. The Agent General, Mr. Kitson, strongly urged the importance and desirability of my making such a visit. The Premiers of other States have visited London since the war, but no Premier from Western Australia has been to London for 14 years.

The retarding factor in the development of Western Australia is shortage of materials and manpower. Britain and other parts of the world require great quantities of food, and we in this State have the latent capacity to produce much more food than we are doing at present. Therefore I feel that, if we can persuade the people of Britain to invest capital here in productive enterprises, and to send us the steel, machinery, plant, prefabricated houses and the migrants we require, Britain as well as ourselves will reap the benefit.

Members know that we have ordered from Britain millions of pounds worth of material, mainly steel, in order to carry

on with the rehabilitation of our railways, harbour extensions, the comprehensive water scheme and other works and, as I told the House tonight, we have arranged for plans to be drawn for a new ship to cater for the requirements of the North-West. In addition to interest in the development of our agricultural and pastoral industries, there is much interest in London in our goldmining industry and, indeed, in our secondary industries, as well as in our migration plans. I aim at stimulating this interest and at meeting those who wish to learn more of our prospects and policy for the future.

Northern development is another matter that I should like to discuss with members of the British Government, because I feel that there must be a closer understanding about our northern areas between ourselves and the British Government. The British Minister for Commonwealth Relations, when out here, also expressed the hope that I would visit London, as he considered that such a visit by the Premier of the State was desirable. Many prominent British businessmen have also expressed the hope that I would go to London where they considered I could do some good. So I am hoping that, as a result of my visit, I shall be able to do something to forward the interests of this State.

As members are aware, it is expected that the King and Queen will visit Western Australia in 1952, and I hope to get some more intimate details as to how long they propose to spend in this State and what parts of the State they may be able to visit.

Once again it is my privilege to express to you, Mr. Speaker, good wishes for Christmas and the New Year, and also to extend similar good wishes to the Chairman of Committees and the Deputy Chairmen. I thank you for the manner in which you have conducted the business of the House. I think I can say that there has been good feeling and that you have shown tact, and that generally the way in which you have handled the affairs of the House has contributed greatly towards maintaining the good feelings that have existed.

I thank my colleagues on the front bench for their loyal co-operation during the last 12 months and for the able manner in which they have assisted me. In saying this, I am not overlooking those members who sit behind the Government, and I thank them for their support. Some of them have been critical in certain directions, but that is their right, and we as a Government cannot expect to escape criticism even from our own supporters. However, I am grateful to them for their assistance.

I regret that the Leader of the Opposition has had to leave to keep a prior engagement made some considerable time ago—one that it was necessary for him

to keep. In his absence I extend to members on the Opposition benches good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. The session has been a strenuous one and, if I expressed my personal feelings, I should confess that I am glad this moment has arrived. Whilst it has been a strenuous session, I believe that members share my feeling that we are parting without any personal ill-will one towards the other. It is the duty of an Opposition to keep an eye on the Government and to give expression to its views when it thinks the Government is not on the right track. Although those expressions have sometimes been given forcibly, nevertheless it is the duty of the Opposition to act in that way, and, as I say, there are no personal feelings I hope—I am sure there are not—of ill-will amongst us.

I am also grateful to the officers of the House who have at all times rendered us efficient service. They have been most courteous, and over the many years I have been here I have always heard expressions of gratitude for the manner in which they have carried out their work. Indeed, that goes for all the employees of Parliament. They do their duty cheerfully and are always willing to help us. To the staff and all those who are connected with Parliament in any way I want to express the good wishes on behalf of the Government for Xmas and the New Year. I do not forget my friends of the Press who carry out a most important function in Parliament. Their duties are arduous. If we sit for long hours, they have to do so as well. Probably they sometimes think the long sittings are quite unnecessary, but nevertheless they remain here.

Another body of people who render us great service and who at times must find the work particularly arduous are the members of the "Hansard" staff. I want to thank them for their efficiency and co-operation. I would be glad to extend to the Chief "Hansard" Reporter and his staff our good wishes for Xmas and the New Year. Naturally I am hoping that the international position will improve and that the great Xmas message of peace on earth and goodwill amongst men will prevail, and that this great State of ours, in common with the rest of Australia, and indeed the world, will enjoy a period of peace, prosperity and happiness.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: As the Premier explained, the Leader of the Opposition has had to keep an important engagement, which, when he learned that the session would not end as soon as was anticipated, he found it impossible to break. He asked me to express publicly his appreciation of all his Party on the Opposition benches for their loyal and effective co-operation both inside and outside the Chamber, during the session. He also asked me to support to the utmost the words of thanks offered by

the Premier to you, Sir, to your officers and to all those who assist in carrying on the affairs of this Chamber.

The session has been a strenuous one. The Opposition felt it had a duty to challenge the Government vigorously on a number of vital matters, and in accordance with its parliamentary rights, and also its duty in the circumstances, it voiced its challenges in a manner which was effective to the degree that the Premier this evening indulged in open confession, which is supposed to be good for the soul, by telling us handsomely of his great relief and pleasure that the moment for the closing of the session had arrived. If time had permitted this afternoon, when we were discussing the remaining Estimates, I would have pleaded with the Premier to bring down some supplementary Estimates before the session concluded to provide some special recompense for the unfortunate members chosen by the Chamber to be managers at a rents conference between the two Houses. I think that not only would they be deserving of such recompense but, in addition, margins for skill, patience, loss of sleep and other things.

Early next session, if the Government will allow us to have an Address-in-reply debate, or one upon the Estimates, I think I will put forward suggestions for overcoming some of the difficulties and disabilities, to which I have just referred, associated with conferences. The Premier, in addition to thanking all those who assist us in the House, extended his thanks to the Press reporters for their toleration and patience. It is unfortunate that in later years, particularly, the main incidents in Parliament to be featured in the Press are those which involve something in the nature of sensation, and where there is a good deal of hot, cross-fire between members on one side and the other, with demands for withdrawals and threats of suspension. That is unfortunate because a great deal of the constructive work of Parliament is never published for the information of the people generally. Consequently many people in the community develop the idea that Parliament is a place where there is no end of disputation and ill-feeling, and where one side is all the time trying to pull the other to pieces to prevent any constructive work being done. Actually, 90 per cent. of the time in Parliament is spent on work that is peaceful and constructive.

All members co-operate for the purpose of doing the best possible in the interests of the people they represent and of the State as a whole. When there is strong criticism and even a personal attack by one member upon another in the heat of the moment, there is something possibly to be regretted, but even so I think it is better for us in this State, and in Australia generally, to fire words at one another,

even though they be hot words, rather than to use the more dangerous methods adopted in some countries of firing guns or using knives, or some other physical weapons for the settlement of their disputes. On behalf of the Leader of the Opposition and myself I offer to the Premier, his Ministers, members of the House on both sides, to you, Mr. Speaker, to your officers and everyone on the staff of the House—even down to the messenger boy—and to members of the Press, as well as our friend the policeman in the gallery, our best wishes for a cheerful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. BRADY: Out of regard for the decorum of the House I did not rise while the Premier was making his speech, but I wish now to state that I take strong exception to the fact that I was not informed of the intention to discontinue the notices that I had on the notice paper. I would have derived no personal benefit from the Bills, but introduced them with a desire to help certain important sections of the community. I regret that those measures have not received from this House the attention they deserved. One could speak very strongly and be tough on the Government in regard to action of this kind. If it is intended that private members are to be denied the right of introducing legislation and having it dealt with, I feel that the Standing Orders should be amended. It is ludicrous to think that one can put in a lot of time, with others, over a period of four or five months in preparing legislation, only to find that it is treated in this way. I understand that these Bills are to be numbered among the slaughtered innocents and that I am not the first private member to have had this experience.

If in the future it is not to be the intention of the Government to receive and deal with private members' Bills, we should be given proper notice to that effect. When moving the suspension of Standing Orders the Premier told the House that everything on the notice paper would be dealt with. If one wished to stick out in regard to the question I think one could have seen to it that the House did not adjourn until everything on the notice paper had been dealt with. Despite the suspension of Standing Orders as moved by the Premier, I think the other sections of the Standing Orders would still apply, and that the Premier would not have the right to adjourn the House without giving all Bills on the notice paper proper attention. I enter my emphatic protest at the way in which these Bills have been dealt with by the Government. It means simply that the promises of the Government to help workers in industry amount to nothing.

Mr. READ: It is my privilege to extend to you, Mr. Speaker, the compliments of the season. I take this opportunity, on

behalf of the member for Maylands and myself, to thank you for the kindly consideration you have shown us at all times. In that we include the Chairman of Committees and his deputies. We are not unmindful of the service rendered by "Hansard" and the Clerks of the House and we offer our thanks and good wishes to them. Unlike the position at this stage last year, we have not now almost immediately to face an election. Last year at this juncture we were doubtful whether we would all be seen here again.

I trust that, God willing, we will all assemble here again next year. Australia is enjoying a period of prosperity which I hope will long continue and I sincerely trust that the threat of war will lift from the world in the near future. There is no doubt that we, in Australia, are among the most privileged people on earth today. As Independents, the member for Maylands and I have not been able to please all parties, but we hope that our electors will not be too critical of us. To you, Sir, to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and all members, we extend our wishes for a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Mr. SPEAKER: I thank the Premier, Leader of the Opposition and the member for Victoria Park for their kind references to myself. I fully endorse their tributes

to the Chairman of Committees, his deputies, the Clerks of the House, members of the "Hansard" staff, the Press, the Controller and the staff of the House Committee. One and all have fully deserved the encomiums passed this evening. Before concluding, I would mention to the member for Guildford-Midland, who has chosen this opportunity of registering a protest, that in the past other members have had the unfortunate experience that he has had today. I understand that the Premier, before he rose to close the session, knew that another place had already adjourned and, that being so, members will realise that if an attempt had been made to deal with any Bills remaining on the notice paper they could not have been taken further. I mention that merely in order that members may understand the position. I come now to my final duty of the session. I offer to one and all the compliments of the season.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to a date to be fixed by Mr. Speaker.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 7.40 p.m. (Friday).