

we now see wool coming down over the Government line. Ever since the Midland Company brought in what is known throughout the State as the port to port rate, that company has started to show a profit. That speaks for itself. I do not blame the Commissioner of Railways; the blame should fall on the proper shoulders. The Minister can correct me if I am not right, but I am informed that the Commissioner has not the power to fix rates and fares, that he has to go to the Government for authority. When we pay a man £2,000 a year to manage a huge undertaking like the railway system, he should have the authority to do these things without being obliged to approach the Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If the Commissioner does not do as the Minister tells him, he is not re-appointed.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Our complaint is that Geraldton pays 7s. 3d. for a freight of 112 lbs. to Meekatharra, a distance of 334 miles, whilst Fremantle and Perth pay 8s. 3d. only for 612 and 600 miles respectively. This gives the latter cities the monopoly of the business which by right belongs to Geraldton, because of its geographical position. Either the rate from Geraldton is too high or the rate from Perth and Fremantle is too low. There is no fair comparison between 334 or even 400 miles for 7s. 3d. and 600 or 612 miles or any other long distance for 8s. 3d. What is happening now, notwithstanding the reduced rates on wool that apply over the Wongan Hills line, is that many motor trucks are still bringing a considerable quantity of wool down to Fremantle. The trucks bring down that wool and get back loading. The railage from Geraldton to Meekatharra is £7 10s. 9d. per ton; the sea freight from Fremantle to Geraldton is 17s. 6d. per ton; the wharfage at Geraldton is 9s. 6d. per ton; the wharfage and handling charges at Fremantle are 4s. 6d., and forwarding at Geraldton or merchants' cost of handling in and out of store is another 5s., making a total of £9 7s. 3d. The motor truck freight from Perth or Fremantle to Meekatharra is £8; thus there is a saving by motor truck of £1 7s. 3d. On Class 3 goods the railage from Geraldton to Meekatharra is £9 5s. 11d., plus the charges that I have already mentioned, £1 16s. 6d., making a total of £11 2s. 5d. The motor truck freight being £8, the saving by motor

truck is thus £3 2s. 5d. On spirits, tobacco, etc., the railage to Meekatharra is £9 5s. 11d., plus 10 per cent., which adds 18s. 7d. Then there are shipping charges, £1 16s. 6d. or the Midland railway flat rate of 50s. per ton. That adds another £2 10s. and gives a total of £12 14s. 6d., against the motor truck freight of £8, showing a saving by motor truck of £4 14s. 6d. Is it not time that someone took action? People complain about the roads being destroyed by the heavy six-wheeled trucks that are continually travelling over them from Meekatharra to the city. The figures I have quoted are sufficient to show that something should be done, and I hope the committee, if it is appointed, will get to the bottom of this vexed question and find out who is responsible. Even with an old member on my right and a new member on my left, we are not too certain whether the fault lies with the Commissioner or with the Government. I have nothing against the officers of the department, but I would like to see the responsibility acknowledged and we certainly should know who is responsible for the fixing of these freights, both passenger and goods. I will support the motion.

On motion by Hon. L. L. Bolton, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 15th November, 1932.

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

BULK HANDLING BILL, SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, the time for bringing up the report of the select committee was extended for one week.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1932-33.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 10th November; Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

Vote—State Batteries, £71,546:

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [4.35]: There has been no change in the Estimates for State batteries, except that we provide for an estimated increase of expenditure of approximately £6,000 due to the increased activity in the operations of State batteries throughout the State. It may be said that the State batteries constitute the best barometer of the condition of the mining industry. When it is found necessary to close down a battery, it is usually evidence that even the prospector, who is frequently prepared to struggle along when a company would not continue to operate, has found it impossible to continue. On the other hand, when claims are made for State batteries, it is evidence that there is some revival in the district.

Mr. Marshall: Some batteries have been closed down without warrant.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know of any. As a matter of fact, it can be said that Governments have continued to operate batteries and have tried by all means to retain them in certain districts, although the prospects were against the possibility of successful operations. We have held batteries out of commission, in some instances, for a number of years and have frequently invited people to lease them without payment of rent subject to their treating ore for the public on reasonable terms, and have even leased batteries and provided a subsidy. Claims have been made in the last 2½ years for increased facilities, but I have been referring to the efforts of successive Governments, sometimes in vain, to maintain batteries in districts that gave evidence of petering

out. During the last 2½ years there has been an incessant demand for increased facilities at State batteries, and we have met it so far as funds would permit and when we were satisfied that there was a chance of a continuance of operations. The figures speak for themselves. I doubt whether there has ever been such a phenomenal rise in the tonnage and production of State batteries in any year as there was in 1931 as compared with 1930. In 1930 the tonnage handled increased by 17,635 tons to 49,778 tons, which was a tremendous increase. In 1931 the total tonnage treated jumped 50,964 tons to an actual total of 100,743 tons. The difference between those two totals represents the ore carted to batteries and the ore and slimes treated, both of which showed an extraordinary increase, and which mainly were treated for prospectors of small shows. The increased price of gold, due to exchange and sterling premium, induced the mining of lower grade ore with a consequent decrease in the average of the fine gold product. Ore was taken to State batteries that under normal conditions would not have been carted, but in the main it showed a margin of profit. In 1931 the average value was 57s. 9d. as against 68s. 9d. in 1930. That does not really disclose a loss as compared with the previous year affecting the whole of those who treated ore at State batteries. The production in 1931 was as follows:—

	ozs.	Value. £
By amalgamation	36,751	132,316
Tailing treatment	7,211	45,588

The estimated value of the product in Australian currency was £224,214. The increase did not end with the operations of last year. For the first nine months of the present year—the figures to the end of September are the latest available—the production has been as follows:—

Tons milled.	By amalgamation ozs.	Value. £
57,705	35,316	127,142
	By tailings treated	(actual)
45,239	8,252	57,723
		(with premium)

Thus for the first nine months of the present year the State batteries have treated 102,944 tons, which is slightly in excess of the total treated during the whole of last year. The estimated value in Austra-

lian currency for the first nine months of this year is £216,141, against £224,214 for the whole of last year. The estimated value in Australian currency for the first nine months of this year is 97 per cent. of the full value for the whole of the year 1931. It should be noted that the last quarter of the year usually produces the highest output, so we estimate that there will be a very much increased production for the whole of this year as compared with 1931. Considering the mining industry, particularly from the prospector's point of view, gold production reached its lowest ebb in 1929, but the increase since then is magnificent evidence of the development that has taken place and the possibilities for the future, particularly if gold maintains its increased sterling value and if the premium paid through the Commonwealth Bank is maintained. The total production by State batteries since their inception to the 31st August, 1932, from 1,636,383 tons of ore milled, has been—

	£
Amalgamation	5,408,416
Sand treatment	934,591
Slime treatment	265,266
Residue	9,353
	<hr/> £6,617,626 <hr/>

This is evidence that the State battery system has been of tremendous value to the mining industry.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet)
[4.45]: The figures given by the Minister indicate the great increase in tonnage handled at the State batteries during the last two years and evidence the activity that is taking place in the mining industry generally. Some time ago the House was given the number of men employed in the industry and the details showed that the population of the goldfields had increased 100 per cent. since the last general election, owing to the large number of men who had been absorbed in the industry. At the same time those figures did not include the men who were operating in the outback country, where State batteries are not available. One has but to visit some of the outer localities that were almost abandoned, to realise what great activity is being displayed in the industry to-day, and what endeavours are being made to find gold in those areas again. In my electorate, which includes Mt.

Leonora and Menzies, there are many localities where formerly battery facilities were available but the prospectors are without them at present. In some areas batteries, even those owned privately, were taken down years ago and disposed of, and some of the plant was sold as scrap iron. To-day prospectors are again working those localities. At Davyhurst there were three people some few years ago and to-day that centre has a population of 50 who are endeavouring to make a living from gold production. At Mt. Ida the population has increased from four or five to 60, and the same conditions obtain at Niagara, Kookynie, and Lawlers. People have left the cities and the rural areas and have embarked upon the search for gold in the back country. I am glad to know that the vote has been increased this year although by £5,000 only. I urge the Minister to provide crushing facilities for people in the outback area to whatever extent is possible, seeing that so many have gone back to the task of gold production. It is a happy augury for the country that the gold mining industry can absorb so many men, and also women, because there is no question that had the industry not been able to absorb so many, the number of the unemployed in Western Australia would have been greatly augmented. The goldfields population, as well as maintaining itself, is able to support more people than any other industry in our midst. It is well known that one man on the goldfields supports seven in other industries. Crushing facilities are badly needed, or, in the absence of them, the Mines Department should re-establish the carting subsidy that applied prior to the present Government taking office. During my time as Minister for Mines, it was the policy of the department to arrange for carting subsidies so that people operating far removed from a battery would be given an opportunity to have their ore crushed. It is particularly necessary to-day for the Government to re-institute the subsidy so that people may have their ore crushed at the batteries. Between Kalgoorlie and Leonora there is an entire absence of crushing facilities and a State battery is very much needed in the North country. The old regulations provided for the payment of a carting subsidy of 1s. per ton per mile and it applied outside a radius of five miles from a State battery and within a

maximum area of 30 miles. I trust the Minister will see to it that that arrangement is reverted to. I want to stress the importance of providing crushing facilities in the back-country areas. It is more important that they should be provided now than at any previous time during the last 20 years. The reason for that is to be found in the opportunities available to-day on account of the increased price of gold. I note from a statement appearing in the Press that the price of gold is £7 15s. per ounce to-day, which is 75 per cent. more than was payable a few years ago. Whereas in former years the gold mining industry was not so prosperous and men did not turn their eyes to it to any great degree, there are thousands of men to-day who are willing to engage in the industry. Hence the opportunity that is available to the Government. We complain of conditions in the metropolitan area, but if money were made available, thousands of men would be absorbed in the mining industry. There are extraordinary rumours afloat regarding which I would like some information from the Minister. Probably the rumours are not correct, and the Minister may deal with them in the course of his reply, or take advantage of some opportunity during the discussion on the vote. The rumours are to the effect that the Government are paying £1,000 per annum for the lease of a battery at Kalgoorlie. If the Government are doing that, I am afraid it is a rather extravagant venture. I understand that the owner of the battery that is said to be leased by the Government has a further concession under which, if a certain tonnage is crushed, he is entitled to a bonus. I trust the Minister will give the Committee some information regarding that matter because there is much criticism concerning it. I do not know whether that criticism is justifiable or not.

The Minister for Mines: I gave the facts long ago. If you had been here, you would have heard them. The explanation is on record in "Hansard."

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not think the Minister's remarks were published.

The Minister for Mines: At any rate, my explanation appears in "Hansard."

Hon. M. F. TROY: I will look up the Minister's statement although I do not think it will do any harm if he gives the explanation again. I am glad that the vote provided for the State batteries has been in-

creased, and I hope the Minister will do his utmost to secure even additional funds in order that crushing facilities may be provided in the back country. Much could be done in that direction so as to take advantage of present-day opportunities. Those opportunities may not recur for many years. While the depression lasts and gold remains at its present price, there are thousands of men willing to be engaged in the industry. The Minister rightly said that the State batteries represented the best barometer indicating the condition of the gold mining industry, and the great number of men who are looking for gold. Those engaged in these activities are not looking for a weekly wage; they are willing to work in order to make a living, with the hope of something better turning up. They may make a living to-day, or less than that, but there is always a hope in mining operations that the prospectors will strike it rich and then they are compensated for their hardships. I trust the increased activities of the State batteries will continue for years to come and, at any rate, it is very important that they continue until the depression lifts. It is true that when gold is dear, other commodities are cheap, and equally that when gold is cheap, other commodities are dear. I am inclined to think that the depression will last for a few years yet, and that being so, now is the time to spend money in developing the mining industry. By that means men will be encouraged to go outback with their families and engage in the industry. I am glad to know that they are doing so now. It would surprise members to see the number of families who are established outback under conditions that are very often extremely harsh. They are facing their difficulties cheerfully and I hope success will attend their efforts.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Hannans) [4.55]: I shall not have much to say about the State Batteries vote. I am glad to see that it has been increased, although not to a very marked degree. I recognise the financial difficulties of the Government but I trust that every effort will be made to encourage the operations of the batteries. I want to direct attention to the position of the batteries. Last year we spent £65,587 and the actual revenue received was £72,644. During the present financial year we estimate an expenditure on the batteries of £71,546 and the estimated revenue is

£79,000. The figures quoted by the Minister serve to show the increased activities of the State batteries. I appreciate the Minister's difficulty in securing additional funds for the establishment of more State batteries, but I hope he will do what is possible in that direction. I have one or two small complaints that I wish to voice. I am sorry I have left them until this stage, but the chief reason is that I received the principal one only a little while ago. I forgot about it for the time being, or I would have sent the letter itself to the Minister. The matter is worth mentioning and I hope the Minister will look into it. The letter I received is dated 11th October, and it refers to the difficulties of prospectors along the Menzies line regarding trucking ore up and down, particularly down the line to the State battery at Coolgardie. I am prepared to hand the letter to the Minister and make it available for the Committee. The individual concerned had his ore crushed some time ago at the Kalgoorlie State battery, and he was one of the most unfortunate of those concerned. From memory, I think he put through a parcel of 19 tons, and it took him nine days to get the crushing through. Something went wrong with the battery from time to time, which occasioned the delay, but I think the battery has been put in order since. While the actual result of the crushing was satisfactory, the trouble arose out of the time it took to get the parcel through, and members having experience in connection with the mining industry will appreciate what that means.

Mr. Marshall: He could have put the ore over the pan more quickly than that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That is so. He experienced considerable trouble at the battery although he got good results. Then he tried to get his ore to the Coolgardie State battery, if possible, and when he had another crushing ready he wrote to Mr. Burnside, the manager of the Coolgardie battery. In his letter to me the person concerned says—

Well, this is the trouble. We are crushing at Coolgardie. Mr. Burnside wrote up to us saying he had arranged for trucks: all we had got to do was to see the Railway Department for trucks and get here on the 5th October. I saw Mrs. Beaton—

Mrs. Beaton is the wife of a railway employee. There is no stationmaster at Broad Arrow, but Mrs. Beaton does the booking.

controls the savings bank and so on at that particular station—

—straightaway. Could not get trucks by down train. I offered to pay haulage from Kalgoorlie. After an eight days wait we got trucks out and loaded. Then two trains have gone by and left them in the station. So I don't know when they will be taken. All up the line are meeting the same fate. Probably when we get to the battery we will have another wait through being late, as crushings will be put in ahead of us. So you see the fate of prospectors here.

I want to point out to the Minister that this is not the first complaint I have had on the same lines. Previously I had a complaint that trains passed through Broad Arrow leaving trucks of ore loaded in the yard there. On another occasion another party happened to meet me in the street. He said he was in Kalgoorlie to see if he could get any trucks. He found he could not get his ore treated at the State batteries, and so he booked up with Hunt's in Kalgoorlie. Hunt only agreed to take the ore provided the man could get it there by a certain date. He consulted the Railway Department to ascertain if he could get the necessary trucks, and found, upon inquiry, that he could get his ore to Hunt's by the given date. He loaded his trucks and put them into the yard. Two trains came by, however, and left the trucks there. There was then only one other train coming from the North, and if that did not pick up the ore, it could not possibly reach Hunt's battery in the time stipulated and the man would have had to wait for three months to get his ore crushed. He then interviewed me. I explained the position to the superintendent, who admitted that two trains had gone by fully loaded; but he said that he would get to work and see if some arrangement could not be made to send some of the ore by the next train coming down. Later on in the same day he rang me again to say that he had arranged for two trucks to be brought on that train, and the balance by the following train. He had also seen Hunt's, who said that that would be satisfactory to them. It is not altogether fair to a prospector, when he goes to Kalgoorlie to try to get some satisfaction, to be told that nothing can be done. I think this prospector went to the stationmaster, who could not guarantee the picking up of the trucks on the down trips from Laverton or Leonora. When there is a full load at the end of the line, they have to leave the trucks on the intermediate stations behind.

I have now received another letter from the same person giving me the results of the crushing of the ore. He makes a complaint about the altered conditions. I quite realise that what the Minister said in connection with the carting subsidy is true, that he cannot afford to pay it; but I cannot understand why this man is being charged so much by the railways. I have here the State Battery's return, so there can be no doubt about it. It is signed by the manager himself. It is a receipt for the money paid. This man had 22¼ tons crushed at 10s. 6d., amounting to £11 13s. 8d. That is the correct charge for crushing; but for railway haulage he is charged £8 12s. 3d., which is approximately 7s. 9d. per ton to carry ore from Broad Arrow to Coolgardie. I think that is exorbitant. I would point out that had the regulations not been altered, the haulage would have cost that man £5 11s. 3d. instead of £8 12s. 3d. On the 22¼ ton parcel it meant a loss to him of £3 1s. Unless there is some explanation, to my mind that is not giving the man outback a fair deal. I understand that when the regulations were altered and one or two batteries along the Government railways were closed, it was not intended to place the prospector in the outback districts at a disadvantage as compared with the man who was closer to the battery. The man outback was to get a rebate. The object was to place all the prospectors crushing at the State batteries on the same footing, because it was to suit the convenience of the department that some of the State batteries were closed down, as the money could not be found to recondition them. As a matter of fact, the activities in the district did not warrant the batteries being reconditioned at that time. If there is nothing wrong in that charge of 7s. 9d. per ton from Broad Arrow to Coolgardie, surely there must be some special reason why that rate was charged. If not, it is outrageous to charge that amount for carting ore to a State battery. Those are the only two points I desire the Minister to look into. I was going to ask some question in connection with the matter that the member for Mt. Magnet mentioned.

The Minister for Mines: Will you let me have those particulars later?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. The last letter I got was dated 24th October.

The Minister for Mines: You do not want to mention any names now.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: So far as this prospector is concerned, I have known him for over 30 years. As a matter of fact, I think he is one of the men who was receiving sustenance in Perth, but was permitted to proceed to the goldfields in order that he might go prospecting. He is a first-class prospector and has succeeded. I think this is the fourth or fifth crushing he has had from the same mine. I am glad to see that the tonnage is increasing and hope it will continue to increase. This can only be achieved by encouraging prospectors to go into the back country and work not only old shows but virgin country. The present increase in tonnage is due to those men who are battling in the back country and what rather surprises me is that bigger finds have not been made during the past two years. However, if they persevere, you cannot tell me that they will not make good discoveries, even if they do not succeed in finding another Golden Mile. I hope the tonnage will increase to such an extent that the department will be compelled to erect more State batteries, because the more that are required the better it will be for the State. I would draw the attention of hon. members who take no interest in gold mining at all to the fact that last year the State batteries actually showed a profit.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [5.10]: I join with the member for Hannans in his request that the Minister will see his way clear to extend the State battery system throughout the goldfields. There can be no question that the figures quoted by the Minister in connection with the State batteries show an improvement. The importance of State batteries to the gold-mining industry cannot be over-estimated, and the wisdom of installing them is fully proved. In my opinion, as I have stated previously in this Chamber, had more State batteries been erected throughout the goldfields, unquestionably the gold production last year would have been very much higher than it was. That would have been all to the advantage of the State. The Minister knows full well that the batteries in existence were not sufficient to meet the demand that was made upon them for crushing, nor are the batteries to-day meeting that demand. The Minister prided himself somewhat on supplying a battery at Kalgoorlie

by renting one. I do not want to go over that transaction again, but I would like to point out, in regard to some figures which the Minister quoted in reply to a statement which I made with reference to that battery, that if the battery crushed 10,000 tons per annum, the Government would pay, by way of rental, £30 per week, or £1,560 per annum. From what I can learn of the battery, there is very little possibility of its being able to crush that tonnage in a year, because it is a second-hand battery, and the engine which drives it is also second-hand and not very powerful. Suppose, however, that the battery did crush 10,000 tons per annum, then 3s. per ton is paid in rent for every ton crushed by the battery during the year. I think that is altogether too high. In addition, of course, there would be the working expenses. The Minister suggested that a battery of that description would cost £10,000. I rather question that statement, in view of the number of stamps that are available in the district, and the possibilities of securing an engine second-hand that would be more powerful than the one which is at present being used on the battery I have referred to. Now, interest at the rate of 5 per cent. on £10,000 would amount to £500 per annum, which would be equivalent to 1s. per ton on the 10,000 tons that are proposed to be crushed. It seems rather strange to me that the Minister, who recognised the necessity for a battery of that description, could not have found that amount of money, especially in view of the fact that the State batteries, as has been pointed out by the member for Hanratt, showed a profit last year of £7,057.

The Minister for Mines: Over working expenses.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Yes. As a matter of fact, I suppose that would be the first year that the State batteries have shown a profit over working expenses.

The Minister for Mines: I think it was.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: They have made a loss every other year. I can remember hearing or reading a speech which the Minister made some years ago when he stated he did not expect the State batteries to show a profit; yet this year the department are budgeting for a profit over working expenses of £7,454. The department have the right at the end of five years to purchase the battery rented by them for the sum of

£5,000; but in those five years the difference between the rent paid and the interest at 5 per cent. would be £5,000, or £1,000 per annum. I do not think the renting of that battery at Kalgoorlie, especially having regard to its condition, was a very good business deal. I should like to know from the Minister who is paying the cost of the cyanide plant at that battery; whether it is an additional expenditure or whether the owner of the battery is meeting it. The Minister mentioned also that there was a considerable saving in cartage fees as the result of this battery; I think he suggested £200 per month was being saved, and that it served to off-set the rental being paid for the battery. But it seems to me this raises the question whether it would not be wiser in future to pursue a policy of erecting small batteries where required throughout the State, rather than pay cartage subsidies.

The Minister for Mines: What do you call a small battery?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: A 5-head battery. I do not suppose you would get one much smaller than that, although I have heard of one of three heads.

The Minister for Mines: Because it is small is not to say that necessarily it would be erected more cheaply.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: You can get one erected for about £3,000. That at Yalgoo cost some £3,500. There are plenty of stamps available.

The Minister for Mines: Stamps are but the smallest portion of the outlay.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Well, what would you call the largest portion of the outlay? At all events, you have the boxes and stamps up there. The Minister in another place said the Government were charging as low as 8s. per ton at that Kalgoorlie battery, crushing on a time basis. But a Huntingdon mill was erected at Hampton Plains, and it crushed $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of ore per hour, charging only 10s. per hour, which is a very much better proposition than 8s. per ton. Another feature of the Huntingdon mill is that it will treat almost any kind of ore, and it cost only £1,000 to erect, including the engine for driving it and including also an engine and pump with which to supply it with water from an adjacent mine.

The Minister for Mines: But would these plants be perfectly satisfactory to the prospectors?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Apparently that at Hampton Plains is satisfactory: for I know a party there who had been taking their ore to Coolgardie, and because of the expense were getting practically nothing out of it, whereas after the erection of the Huntingdon mill, they put through at that plant a crushing secured in three months that netted them £150 profit. So there must be some advantage in the mill.

The Minister for Mines: Do not forget that we have not the money necessary for these enterprises.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: So we understand. I know that I myself have not the £10,000, for I am a bit short at present.

The Minister for Mines: Not shorter than we are.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: However, I do hope that if possible the Minister will see his way clear to making some extension of our crushing facilities in the near future. Recently there was in the newspaper a letter relating to options held at the Gros-mont mine, Coolgardie. It was stated that a bulk crushing would be put through the State battery, and the writer of this letter said he hoped it was true because, as he pointed out, another option was held at Coolgardie, and it had taken them nine months to put through 300 tons. He did not think that gave the mine a fair testing, and so he trusted the bulk crushing from the Grosmont mine at Coolgardie would be put through. But, if that were done, I should like to know how the prospectors are going to get on with their small parcels of ore. The writer of that letter also pointed out that the battery at Coolgardie was unable to meet the demand at present being made upon it for prospectors' parcels. I hope the whole question of State batteries will be again looked into by the Minister with a view of endeavouring to extend the existing facilities: because everything points to a prosperous future for the gold-mining industry. We all hope we shall shortly turn the corner, and that wheat and wool will again come into their own; but there are not yet many indications of our having turned the corner, and in this State we have to look principally to the goldmining industry. So long as wheat and wool and other commodities of the sort are depressed, so long will the goldmining industry be

prosperous and be the only industry to which the State can look forward with any degree of hope.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.23]: It was encouraging to listen to the figures submitted by the Minister, but of course they are only the natural corollary of enhanced values. Unfortunately wheat and wool are now suffering, so it is only natural that people should scramble to supply the demand indicated by an increased price. While we are pleased to see the position of the goldmining industry, it is not at all encouraging to note the alterations and even the abolition of some of the concessions previously granted to prospectors. I shall revert to that presently. In the meantime, I want to thank the department and the Minister for the new 10-head mill erected at Cue, I suppose of all the State batteries, the old Cue battery was the one that from its inception kept going continuously and never stopped for want of ore, but gradually lost ground until the Minister provided a substitute. Actually, the old battery was seven months behind its orders. This is an indication of the prosperity in the Cue district. I remind the Minister that the same thing is happening at Meekatharra to-day. Quite recently I forwarded for his consideration correspondence asking for an extension of the crushing facilities in that district. A few years ago we had one manager attending to two State batteries, one at Peak Hill, and the other at Meekatharra, and I doubt if he was really occupied then.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No, he was not.

Mr. MARSHALL: To-day a manager is required at each of those batteries. Both of them have been operating during the last two years, and neither has ceased for want of ore. To-day the Meekatharra battery is about 3,000 tons behind, and so the position is becoming acute. Prospectors in the main are not in a position to maintain themselves for an indefinite period. Usually they are backed by the business people, who naturally look for repayment of the amounts they advance in credit to the prospectors. It is not fair, either to those business people or to the prospectors, to ask them to wait five or

six months before the crushings can be dealt with. There is at Meekatharra a battery which can be leased. It is a pretty old mill, and will be pretty expensive to put into working order; but if the Minister thinks the Meekatharra district is moving ahead, and there really is no money available for the erection of additional stamps at the battery, he might well consider putting that old mill in order and getting it going. I hope he will give the matter favourable consideration, because the prospectors cannot be expected to go many months without any return for their labour. As to the concessions previously given to prospectors, the point I want to raise is in regard to newly-discovered fields, the alteration of payments for the treatment of sands or tailings, and the abolition of pre-payments on low grade ore. The Minister advances the argument that while the price of gold is so high and attractive the industry should be able to stand on its own feet. In so far as he speaks of the industry, I agree with him; but the Minister knows there are thousands of prospectors not on gold at all, and the value of whose ore sent in for crushing is very uncertain indeed. Yet the Minister says these concessions shall not be granted again until the price of gold falls below £6. Scores of prospectors do not get a fair deal because all those crushing at State batteries are treated on the one plane, with the result that those on payable ore can realise on their product and get the increased price of gold. There are hundreds of prospectors around the Murchison who are not on high grade or even good payable ore, and the value is uncertain.

The Minister for Mines: How are you going to scale up and scale down? How can we come on the general taxpayer more than we are doing?

Mr. MARSHALL: Each case must be treated upon its merits. People get a wrong impression with regard to gold mining. They read in the paper that a certain party has crushed 20 tons for 200 ozs. They say it is a splendid crushing, but they do not know what it cost to get it, or how long it took to get it. That may not be as profitable a crushing as another of 10 dwts. to the ton.

The Minister for Mines: That is the point. How can you scale it up? If you cannot

get an adjustment up, you cannot get an adjustment down.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am speaking of the concessions that were previously enjoyed. The Minister does not now make any refund on low-grade ore. Battery managers usually know how long it has taken to get a particular parcel of ore, and what expenditure the prospector incurred in getting it. Some ore is difficult to get and expensive to mine. In cases where the ore is not of a payable character the concession should be allowed to remain.

The Minister for Mines: The money will have to come out of the other fellow. How are you going to get it?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister should not have cut away so much. The 25 tons of free crushing from new fields has been cut out.

The Minister for Mines: Who is going to pay for all these concessions?

Mr. MARSHALL: This has always been the policy of the Government.

The Minister for Mines: I know, but today the Government cannot find the money from the general taxpayers, many of whom, from the point of view of income, are in a worse position than are those who are engaged in the gold mining industry.

Mr. MARSHALL: Does the Minister imply that every prospector is in a prosperous position?

The Minister for Mines: There will always be some who are on the broad line, no matter what may be done for them.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not a question of taking something away from a particular section of taxpayers who are already in a bad position, and giving that to others who are in a prosperous position.

The Minister for Mines: You admit there are some men on low-grade ore making a profit, whereas others are making a loss or very little profit on high grade ore.

Mr. MARSHALL: I suggest that the State battery managers should be given discretion in these matters.

The Minister for Mines: You will not get any Minister to agree to that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister has made hard and fast rules on which he will not give way. Discretionary power should be given to the managers, who could then act in accordance with the position in which the prospector finds himself.

The Minister for Mines: That has never been done in the history of State batteries.

Mr. MARSHALL: Altogether too much has been taken away from the prospectors. I would not mind if everyone was producing ore that was payable, but that is not so, and yet the Minister persecutes these men still further. Relief in the case of low grade ore has been denied them, as well as the free crushing from new fields. The men I speak of are not in a good position and are not deriving any benefit from the enhanced value of gold. I thank the department for the consideration they have given to a few people, and again urge the necessity for providing additional crushing facilities at Neekatharra.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands—in reply) [5.35]: The matter referred to by the member for Hannans will be inquired into. He has handed me the correspondence, and I will see how it is that the amount he indicates was charged in that particular case. We have not varied the position with regard to railway freights. Where we have a battery alongside the railway, and can provide for the crushing of ore within the railway system, it is infinitely better to do that than to talk of laying out elsewhere capital which is not available to-day. We certainly do not want to be confronted with the necessity for erecting a State battery at any place where this can be avoided. Neither are we anxious to impose any unfair conditions upon prospectors who are close to our railway system, but rather do we desire to help them as much as possible. The whole matter will be inquired into. I have explained the position with regard to the State battery at Kulgoorlie, referred to by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe. It was useless to go to the Treasurer, and if the Leader of the Opposition were Treasurer to-day he himself would admit the uselessness of any application to him for money. No funds are forthcoming for expenditure upon an industry which is the most prosperous within the State when others are going begging for sufficient funds to keep them alive. It is doubtful whether sufficient money can be made available even for the necessitous cases. When the proposition was submitted that a battery could be erected without capital outlay by the State, subject to our paying rent, we went into the whole matter.

We were advised by officials of the department that we could save money by leasing this battery upon terms that were agreed upon, and could also save the subsidies that we were paying to private batteries, from which we got no return. We were having to pay cartage to enable people to get their ore to Ora Banda or Coolgardie. In this way we saved more than the outlay on a State battery, and immediately relieved the congestion at Coolgardie and Ora Banda, which would not otherwise have been relieved for six months. In the circumstances we did the best thing that was possible. We are not bound to purchase at the end of five years. We can purchase then if we desire to do so at a price that has been fixed. If it does not suit us to purchase, we are not bound to do so. This arrangement obviated the necessity for prospectors being hung up for several months and being unable to repay storekeepers for the help which had been rendered to them. It also represented a direct saving to the Government and enabled men to get their ore treated without any further delay. It does not matter what charges may be imposed at State batteries or any other treatment plant. There will always be a number of persons who will obtain ore that does not pay them. No one has ever been able to solve the problem of how to put non-paying ore on a profitable basis. There is a certain limit to the value of ore which can be produced at a profit. We have to consider the present cost of production side by side with the return for that cost. There is no question but that if we took away all the concessions that were previously found by the taxpayers for the prospector, he would still, as a result of the enhanced price of gold, plus the premium paid, be in a better position than he occupied before. Thus it is not fair to ask the community, many members of whom are on the point of starvation, to find additional money to pay to an industry which is getting an advantage from the misfortunes that others are suffering. Who pays the premium on gold; not the user, but the general taxpayer. The producer is not only getting the enhanced value of gold but a premium by exchange. The difference between the enhanced price of gold and the amount the producer is actually receiving, namely the premium, is found by the taxpayer. That is enough to ask the taxpayer to put up under existing

conditions. I know that numbers of individual prospectors are struggling for a living, and there always will be a number of such people. Already the general taxpayer is treating the prospector well by paying this premium, and we have avoided interfering unduly with the rates for crushing. The member for Hannans gave some information the other night regarding the treatment meted out to tributers. A tributer is on all fours with a prospector. He goes on to a lease for the purpose of producing ore from which he obtains gold. For the right to extract gold from the lease he has to pay charges which are out of all proportion to the charges imposed at State batteries. The charges are of such a nature that ordinary prospectors could not meet them. If they were called upon to do so, 90 per cent. of those who use our State battery system or private crushing plants, would be unable to bear them. The hon. member said that some treatment plants are able to provide crushing facilities at a lower cost than is the case at State batteries. It would not suit prospectors if we erected a plant of that description. We must give them complete facilities. They have to rely upon proper ore values before crushing is started. We must have umpire samples taken. Proper sampling facilities must be afforded. We cannot throw up any sort of structure. During the last two years we have found money to enable private owners of plant to improve it before the prospector will treat his ore at it. When it came to a question of crushing for the public, and paying subsidies on ore crushed, the prospectors complained that the battery was not suitable, and that unless certain alterations were effected, they would not make use of the plant. Private owners of plants do not supply the facilities we provide at State batteries. The Jimblebah battery could not be put up for £1,500. There is a great difference between the State battery and the ordinary prospector's battery. The Government have to provide up-to-date facilities, and that means heavy capital outlay, which we cannot provide today.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: The Huntingdon mill is treating ore for prospectors, who are evidently satisfied.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is one problem which has not yet been solved, and to which some of our mining engineers should apply themselves. I refer to a treat-

ment plant that would treat a small quantity of ore at a low cost per ton, as apart from the large plant of the Lake View and Star or the Wiluna mine. What we need is a plant that will operate when and how required, and one that can be put up at a small cost and operate inexpensively for the prospector. A five-head mill does not come within that category. We have a number of places in the North-West that unquestionably warrant the erection of small plants for the purpose of testing out. If it were possible to erect those plants, we would find a number of prospectors going out there and the fields would be opened up.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What about your one-head stamp?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It has been tried and it has its weaknesses. If those weaknesses could have been overcome, we would have got a number of the plants. Someone suggested we should use a small ball mill, but it is impossible to use a ball mill where we have a number of customers. With one plant it would never pay because if a man had a small parcel of five tons to put through, he would expect to get it cleaned up, and with a ball mill it would cost three times the crushing charge to have the clean-up alone. I only wish some of our mining engineers would solve the problem for us.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: A prospector would not want you to clean up his small parcel; he would want you to buy on assay.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have a system by which we hand over to the prospector the total gold obtained from amalgamation, less the cost of treatment. The prospector gets the full market value, and it is not £4 an ounce either.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: They cannot sample ore through the stamp mill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Years ago in this Chamber the question of paying on assay value was discussed, but it was found that that would be impossible unless we had an up-to-date plant, and an up-to-date plant is an expensive item.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The assay plant on the Lake View and Star cost £22,000.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We know these problems exist but unfortunately we have not yet found a solution, and the only time we shall be able to find the solu-

tion will be when the finances are in a better position. In the meantime we have done very well by the prospector.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Care House, £6,069; Sale of Government Property Trust Account, £16,616—agreed to.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES—STATE TRADING CONCERNS.

In Committee.

Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

Division—State Brickworks, £14,000:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The estimated expenditure of this department is £14,000, an increase of £164 over the figures of the previous year. Although these works have not paid their way, they have been kept going and have paid a certain amount over working expenses towards interest and sinking fund. As hon. members know the building trade has been at a low ebb for some time and if we had carried on operations continuously the State would have lost a considerable amount of revenue. The capital cost of the brickworks to the 30th June last was £54,012 and we paid in depreciation to the same period £28,195, reducing the book value of the assets to £25,817. A conservative valuation of those assets at the present time is £35,836. If this had been an ordinary private company and profits had been made, they would have been used to wipe off the capital and the balance left would have been £9,845. At the present time the brickworks are in a sound position. From my own observations I consider the works a valuable asset for the future. A good deal of clay has been opened up and it is of good quality. The bricks themselves are the finest produced in the State. Recently I received a report from the department to the effect that the position was considerably better and that the building trade had improved.

Hon. P. Collier: Is the concern working full time?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; we have to work full time to get a kiln, but once it is made we have to stop working. I suppose we are working half-time.

Of course we stopped during the winter months, but it looks as if we will have considerably more work this year than last year. Had the works been allowed to reduce the capital from year to year by surplus profits made, and paid to the Treasury, or alternatively been allowed current rate of interest on those profits, a further amount of £7,180 would be due to the concern, which would reduce the balance not provided to £2,665. It will be remembered that we called for tenders for the sale of the brickworks but we received only one, and that, in my opinion, was not at all satisfactory. If we had disposed of them at the figure that was offered, the purchaser, when conditions improved, would have made a considerable amount of money. The Government considered that the offer was not equal to the valuation, and turned it down. We are supplying bricks now and the prospects are much brighter than they were last year.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I welcome the statement of the Minister. It is indeed pleasing that he, with members of different political views, has had an opportunity to arrive at the true position of this trading concern. The administration that established the State Brickworks did not rush into the venture. In defence of the public right to be able to purchase bricks at reasonable rates, the then Government were compelled to adopt this method. The establishment of the brickworks was designed to protect the public against exploitation. We were fortunate in the selection of the site of the brickworks. The site is a small matter; the shale is an important factor. It is generally admitted that the best bricks manufactured in the State are those made at the State Brickworks. To their success, not only has the shale been a large contributor but economical production has been made possible by the modern lay-out of the works, while the installation of special machinery has helped to make the works a credit to the State. Some members contend that State trading is wrong in principle, that the State should not resort to such practices for the protection of the public.

Mr. Kenneally: Those members are dying out.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The administration of State trading concerns by members representing different parties and their

statements of the position help to allay public fear that such works were installed for some ulterior motive, or that they contribute in no degree to the public good. The present Minister, with other Ministers, has pointed out that the works are in a sound position financially, and it has never been contended that the bricks produced were not of a very high quality. I am more than pleased with the Minister's statement of the financial position, because it has been misrepresented by the Press over and over again. The only justification for the misrepresentation by the Press is that the criticism is based on balance sheet results; a specially compiled balance sheet, directed by legislation unwisely framed, has enabled the Press to convey to the public anything but the true position of the works. The Minister has told us that the profits from the works and the contribution to sinking fund charges leave the works owing the State about £9,000 of capital, but the works still continue to pay full interest and sinking fund charges on the original capitalisation, and under the present system of book-keeping and balance sheets, there will be no end to that.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No private concern could exist for two years under such a system.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We are aware of that. Had the figures quoted by the Minister to-night been given by a Labour Minister, they would have been discounted. Our attitude to State trading has always been misrepresented. It has always been represented as a step towards socialisation. Because we desired to socialise such works, we have been charged with having inaugurated them with a total disregard for the financial burden on the State and with having made statements of their financial position contrary to facts. The Minister has dispelled all that by disclosing the actual financial position.

The Minister for Works: You are not making it appear that I am in favour of socialisation?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Certainly not. If I termed the Minister a socialist, I should have to reconsider my own position. I do not wish to do that: neither do I wish to convey that we, by introducing State trading concerns, deliberately tried to give effect to the policy of socialisation. Nothing was further from our minds. I speak with a

full knowledge of the facts. All that influenced the Government of the day was a desire to protect the public against the unfair prices charged by private firms. A combination existed and exercised undue control against the best interests of the building public. The works are again safe from being handed over to the exploiters. The State brickworks have exercised a great policing influence. They have produced a good article and have sold it at low rates as compared with other manufacturers. The works have been an influence for good, and they can continue to be an influence for good. Although the Minister desired to sell them, and no doubt would have done so had a reasonable price been submitted, I take it that for the time being no sale will be made. I trust that public opinion will ultimately reverse the authority given to the Minister to sell trading concerns without first securing the approval of Parliament. Majorities are sometimes used in other than the public interest. A majority on the Government side, who passed the Bill to permit of State trading concerns being sold without the sanction of Parliament, in my opinion, did a grievous harm to the State. When works have been operating for the public good and operating economically so that the people could secure bricks at a reasonable price, no further proof is necessary that they have operated in the public interest. For Parliament to give to a majority of members the right to dispose of such works is quite wrong. I hope that authority will be reversed and that, before the power of sale can be exercised, the whole of the facts will be placed before Parliament. It would be wrong to dispose of a public utility of this kind. It is called a State trading concern, but it is really a public utility in that it meets the needs of the public in one of the main activities, namely, the building industry. The question of disposing of the works should not be left to a Government with possibly only a narrow majority or possibly to a minority vote of Parliament. Bills are not always passed by a majority. I know that the Government used their majority to secure the authority, and I am pleased that the Minister has not been able to sell the works. I trust that, as a result of the next appeal to the people, a direction will be given by the electors that the disposal of these concerns must be decided by the people's representatives in Parlia-

ment rather than by a majority of representatives on the Treasury benches. The Treasury benches do not always reflect true public opinion. I wish to commend the Minister for not selling the works.

The Minister for Works: I would have sold them if the offer had been reasonable.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I realise that the Government policy is to sell, but Government policy must not be regarded as public policy. Government policy is influenced by sections of the community. The brickworks were established for the benefit of the whole of the community, and the opinion of the whole of the community should be reflected in any proposal to sell this public concern.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am afraid I cannot allow the speech of the hon. member to pass without replying to it. I have given a true statement of the position. I agree that if the capital had been written down, the State brickworks, even last year, would have paid their way. But I do not believe in State trading.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I know you do not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not a socialist. Last year there was a loss of £2,500 on the brickworks. This trading concern occupies a unique position. I know of no other works in the State that have such good clay and can make bricks at the same price. They are in an excellent position to compete with other brickworks.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Replying to the remarks of the member for Guildford-Midland, the Government did attempt to sell the brickworks but we, as a Government, have no intention of giving them away. We owe it to the people to protect their assets. The offer we received was below the value of the works, and therefore the Government did not accept it. As a Government we do not believe in State trading, and Parliament passed legislation enabling us to dispose of trading concerns. We will not sacrifice any trading concern, and as no reasonable price was received for the brickworks, no sale has taken place.

Division put and passed.

Division—State Hotels, £36,310—agreed to.

Division—State Implement and Engineering Works, £52,114:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A Bill has been introduced to remove the State Implement works from the operations of the State Trading Concerns Act, and as the Bill has not yet been passed, that explains the appearance of the Division this year. The State Implement Works do not represent a trading concern but a jobbing department for other Government departments. The vote shows a slight increase compared with the expenditure for last year, and that is due to the fact that more men have had to be employed owing to the increased activity of the works recently. The estimated receipts are £40,000, and the expenditure for the current year, £52,114. As the works are not under the State Trading Concerns Act now, the accounts are not kept in the same way. The Auditor General drew attention to the fact, hence the introduction of the legislation I have referred to.

Division put and passed.

Division—State Quarries, £7,000—agreed to.

Division — State Shipping Service, £186,250:

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Estimates would make it appear that the motor ship "Kangaroo" has not paid for itself. I understand that it has done so and actually shows a profit. The Estimates contain reference to the special sinking fund of £140,000 at 3¾ per cent. on account of the "Kangaroo." It looks misleading.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Perhaps the Minister in charge of the State Shipping Service will tell us whether tenders have been called for the sale of the State ships.

The Minister for Lands: I can assure you tenders have not been called.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister might also tell us whether the State ships are regarded as a trading concern or a public utility. Although the State Implement and Engineering Works were removed from the operations of the State Trading Concerns Act by a special Bill, the State ships still remain under that Act. When

an election took place in the North-West, the State Shipping Service suddenly disappeared from the State Trading Concerns Estimates, and automatically took its place as a public utility. There is no doubt that the service will be regarded as a public utility after Christmas. The members for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) and Roebourne (Mr. Church) may be able to explain the position.

Mr. Church: Or the member for Kimberley.

Hon. P. COLLIER: On the authority of Ministers, statements were made during an election in the North-West that the State Shipping Service was not a trading concern at all, but came within the same category as the railways. If that is so, why do not the Government remove all possible doubt and pass the necessary legislation to take the service away from the operations of the State Trading Concerns Act?

The Minister for Lands: It is too late this session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the State ships represent trading concerns, the Government have statutory authority to dispose of them.

Mr. Kenneally: And refused to exclude them when an amendment was moved for that purpose.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government voted against that amendment.

Mr. Sleeman: Some members kept in or out of the chair at that time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think the vessel will be sold within the immediate future, but some months later there may be a grave danger.

Hon. A. McCallum: Why so suspicious?

The Premier: There is no danger.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But what will be the position early in the New Year? Could the member for Roebourne contemplate a greater disaster than the sale of the ships?

Mr. Church: Not at the present moment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I warn him about the danger. He may wake up one morning and find that the ships have been sold. That is what happened to the Commonwealth shipping line.

Mr. Sleeman: Those ships were not sold.

Mr. Marshall: They were given away.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is for the Government to decide at what price they will dispose of the ships. No obligation is imposed

on them under the provisions of the Act. There are members in another place, although none in this Chamber, who have publicly expressed the view that they would be prepared to sell the ships for a song, and that they would take anything that was offered, irrespective of what the price might be. Another Government might take office holding that view too.

The Minister for Lands: Don't let us think of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The ships might be disposed of before the opening of the first session of the next Parliament. That is a possibility.

The Premier: But not a probability.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We do not know. Why are not the State ships dealt with in the same manner as the implement works?

Mr. Kenneally: Why do not the Government exclude the State ships from the operations of the State Trading Concerns Act?

The Premier: It is merely a matter of accountancy.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is more than that.

The Minister for Lands: There is a lot of shipping laid up at the present moment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is depression in the shipping business, as in other businesses, but I do not know that the two ships that proceed to the North-West coast and as far as Singapore are not actively engaged. I do not know that there is much slackness in the trade that comes their way. This is a time when buyers are out to obtain bargains with an eye to the future when we shall have turned the corner that we are always just about to turn. When that time comes the ships will prove valuable assets.

Mr. Angelo: They are the floating assets of the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They may float under another flag in the near future. I understand the member for Roebourne and the member for Gascoyne both feel safe regarding the shipping service.

Mr. Church: I do not think you could sell two of them if you tried.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why not?

Mr. Church: Because they are not fit for anyone to buy.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think the hon. member's statement that the vessels are not fit for anyone to buy will be endorsed by other North-West members. It could not be applied to the "Koolinda", which is a

first-class ship, nor yet to the old "Kangaroo."

The Minister for Lands: And the "Kybra" is a new boat too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am sorry we have not had a Ministerial statement regarding the ships because the Government still retain power to dispose of them. So long as that is the position, we have no guarantee they will not be sold. It is idle to say it is not the intention of the Government to sell them. If that were so, why do not the Government place the State ships beyond any such possibility.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The State ferries have been removed from the State Trading Concerns Act.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have been placed under the control of the Commissioner for Railways. If the State ships were placed in the category of a public utility, it would not be possible for the present or any other Government to dispose of them. There is something sinister behind it all, or the Division would not appear in the State Trading Concerns Estimates. I have done my duty in warning the new member for Roebourne (Mr. Church) of what may happen in the future.

The PREMIER: I assure the member for Roebourne that the ships will not be sold.

Hon. P. Collier: But a Government may be elected who will sell them.

The PREMIER: At any rate, I give the Committee that assurance. When we were discussing the State Trading Concerns Act, it was distinctly said that the ships were not to be sold. I just wish to assure the member for Roebourne, whose mind might well have been disturbed by the utterances of the Leader of the Opposition. These ships are serving a useful purpose.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why not guarantee it to the hon. member by taking the ships from the State trading concerns?

The PREMIER: It would not make any difference.

Hon. P. Collier: There is nothing to prevent that from being done.

The PREMIER: The State hotel that was sold was sold without anyone being consulted. When we discussed the State trading concerns we said that these ships would not be sold; they would be treated as a public utility.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Which State hotel was sold?

The PREMIER: You should remember. The State hotel that was sold was at Bullfinch.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That was not a State hotel.

The PREMIER: Then what is a State hotel? It was owned by the State.

Hon. P. Collier: But it was not conducted by the State.

The PREMIER: It was owned by the State.

Hon. P. Collier: And leased.

Hon. A. McCallum: It was not built by the State; it reverted to the State because the State owned the land.

The PREMIER: It was our friend the Agent-General who sold it. We will not behave in that fashion with regard to the ships. You can trust us not to do that. I hope the mind of the member for Roebourne has not been disturbed unduly by what has been said. The ships will be regarded in the same way as the railway system, which serves the southern part of the State.

Mr. COVERLEY: I am not enamoured of the reply given by the Premier. No argument was put forward to reassure us that the State ships would not be sold. We certainly have the word of the Premier and I am prepared to take his word so long as he is in office, but the Premier, like the other members of this Chamber, has no security of tenure. If I may be permitted to make a forecast, the Premier will not have the authority very much longer to say whether or not the State ships shall be sold. As a matter of fact, one would expect, if the Premier was so emphatic that the boats would not be sold, he would agree to the amendment.

The Premier: We shall be here until they are worn out.

Mr. COVERLEY: You will never see the State ships wear out. One would have expected some argument to be advanced as to why the ships would not be sold by some future Government. The Premier stated that while he was in command the ships would not be sold. He gave that assurance to the members for Roebourne and Gascoyne. He might have agreed to the amendment which I moved to the State Trading Concerns Act. Now we have the opportunity of placing the ships in safety, and a "get-out" that so many members use when electioneering, namely, public utilities. There would have been no

necessity to remove them from the category of State enterprises if the Premier had agreed to that amendment. Now we have another opportunity for him to show how genuine he is: he can bring them under the category of public utilities. The State Trading Concerns Act does not control the public utilities of the State. If the State boats are to become public utilities, just as are the railways, the present Act will not permit any Government to sell them at any time they desire.

Mr. Kenneally: That is the acid test.

Mr. COVERLEY: That is the only test that will satisfy the residents of the North-West. I am rather pleased that the Leader of the Opposition brought this matter forward. The Minister for Lands interjected, when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking. He said there were quite a number of ships lying idle. Here is a golden opportunity for the present Government to show how sincere they are in reference to State ships by purchasing one of those idle ships and placing it on the North-West coast.

The Minister for Lands: What about the unemployed?

Mr. COVERLEY: You would be able to place some of them on the boat.

The Minister for Lands: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. COVERLEY: One of the difficulties is that there are not sufficient State boats to cater properly for the North-West trade. We are sending boats to Malaya in an endeavour to work up a trade there, but we are neglecting the better trade between Darwin and the metropolitan area. Most of the trade with Darwin goes via the Eastern States. If we had another boat on the coast to provide a monthly, or, better still, a fortnightly service, we would more than double the trade we are doing with the State boats at present. In addition, there would be the benefits that would accrue to the metropolitan area by the expenditure of money on wages. It is all very well to say there is not much trade at Darwin, but the majority of the business people there would be only too pleased to trade with Western Australia if there were a more frequent shipping service. As our boats go there only every two months, the majority of the trade goes the other way. I hope the Minister for Lands will go into this particular aspect of the

matter and see what he can do in the way of providing an additional ship.

Mr. ANGELO: It is but fair after the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition to inform him that when the Bill for the disposal of the State trading concerns was brought down I, as a North-West member, had the definite promise of the Premier and also of the Leader of the Country Party that the ships would not be sold.

Mr. Sleeman: The unemployed had a definite promise from the Premier that they would all be employed.

Mr. ANGELO: That just shows how unfair members are. Eight or ten years ago, when Sir James Mitchell was Premier, I gave notice of an amendment that the State ships should be removed from the State Trading Concerns Act. There, again, I had the promise of the Premier that the ships would not be sold; and I am glad to say we have a Premier and a Leader of the Opposition whose word we can take. We are certain that so long as those two gentlemen hold the positions they do the North-West will never be deprived of the State ships. At all events, if members are as little concerned as I am at the likelihood of our losing this absolutely necessary development facility, they have nothing to fear. I want to take exception to the remark made by my colleague, the member for Roebourne (Mr. Church), when he said that there were two ships that ought to be sold.

The Minister for Works: He did not say that: he said "should be sold."

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad to hear that. I want to say that all three ships are doing useful work at the present time. No one would suggest for a moment that the "Koolinda" is not doing most useful work in keeping our North-West ports supplied. The "Kangaroo" is doing useful work and is opening up a trade which I feel positive will mean a big new market for Western Australian produce. I only wish we had another boat so that we could provide the countries of the Near East with a monthly service instead of a two-monthly service. As far as the "Kybra" is concerned, I am delighted to say that full use is being made of her in running up to that most important port, Carnarvon,

where she is now coming back laden with—

Mr. Sleeman: Bananas.

Mr. ANGELO: Laden with sheep, bananas, and other tropical fruit. Perhaps the day is coming when, instead of being put on the south-east run, the Government will get another ship for that run and use the "Kybra" on the run between Fremantle and Carnarvon. All I have to say is that the shipping service will get my support.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have been prompted to rise owing to what was said by the members for Gascoyne and Roebourne. I want to know from the member for Roebourne (Mr. Church), which of the two State vessels cannot be sold owing to their inferiority.

The Premier: He wants better boats.

Mr. MARSHALL: Let the hon. member stick loyally to the boats we have to-day. To compare the "Koolinda" with the "Charon" or "Minderoo" is absolutely ridiculous.

The Premier: The "Charon" is not on the coast now.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member referred to two State vessels which he said were inferior and could not be sold. Take two old boats like the "Charon" and "Minderoo"—

Mr. Angelo: The owners could not sell them.

Mr. MARSHALL: Would you compare the "Koolinda" with them?

Mr. Angelo: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: You can smell their opium-tainted odour before they get within a radius of miles. It is ridiculous to compare those boats with the "Koolinda", which is one of the finest ships on the coast. It is not only pleasing to the eye, but is pleasant to travel by. It is practically right up to date. Yet we have the member for Roebourne telling us that of three ships on the north-west coast, two could not be sold.

Hon. A. McCallum: You are making a speech for him.

Mr. MARSHALL: The "Kybra" does a special trip to Carnarvon. The only vessels running to schedule along the coast are the "Kangaroo" and the "Koolinda," yet the hon. member said that two of the State vessels could not be sold because they were inferior.

The Minister for Lands: No, he did not say that.

Mr. MARSHALL: His implication was that they were not worth buying. The member for Gascoyne has great confidence in the Premier's promise made to him. But nearly three years ago the Premier promised that all the unemployed would be working within three months. Actually there is not as much work offering now as there was three years ago. The Premier promised prosperity for all. Can we see that prosperity around us?

Mr. Parker interjected.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for North-East Fremantle is noted for his giggling in this Chamber.

The Minister for Lands: You needn't be rude about it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister need not be rude either.

Mr. Angelo: You are the whitest member in the House.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would be black indeed if I were as black as the hon. member, who in this Chamber has advocated black labour. I should like to know from the hon. member what is the difference between a public utility and a trading concern. He seems to know the difference, yet he has never explained it. It would be interesting to hear his definition of the two.

Mr. Angelo: All other members know the difference, so what is the use of my explaining it to you?

The Premier: Suppose the member for Murchison explains it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I should like to hear the Premier explain it. I have heard the member for Gascoyne telling his electors that the State steamers are really a public utility and, consequently, very different from a State trading concern. But he did not explain that difference.

Mr. Angelo: It was an intelligent audience I was addressing.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then they were not listening to a very intelligent address. I resent the suggestion that the State boats on our coast are not any good as compared with the "Charon" and the "Minderoo."

Mr. Angelo: The "Charon" has crossed the Styx now.

Mr. MARSHALL: The pity is the "Minderoo" didn't cross with her. To compare

the State vessels with those two is ridiculous.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We ought to have some reply to the question I asked about the repayment of capital. Without the answer, people will think the "Kangaroo" has not paid for herself, whereas we know she has. Yet we are still charging up £5,250 year by year on her account.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the "Kangaroo" was purchased a bond was taken out with an insurance company for the payment. I think there was some doubt at the time as to whether the House would pass the payment, and to protect the Government of the day a bond was taken out. It provided that every year there should be set aside £5,250 as a sinking fund to meet the capital cost.

Mr. Sleeman: But what about the amount she earns.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That goes into Consolidated Revenue, but we have to show this item every year.

Mr. Sleeman: But we want to know approximately what the ship has earned and what she has cost the State. As a matter of fact she has made a profit for the State, whereas people outside, seeing these Estimates, naturally think we are still paying for her.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am sorry the total figures are not here. During the war, of course, the "Kangaroo" made considerable profit, all of which went into the Treasury and has been spent.

The Premier: Not in my time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will get the information for the hon. member if he desires it, but unfortunately I have not it here.

Mr. KENNEALLY: It does not tend to give a correct idea of the standing of the ship when the profits earned by her go into Consolidated Revenue and we annually charge up to the ship a sinking fund of £5,250. There should be placed before Parliament figures showing what the ship has earned and what she has lost. It is not fair to put before us figures that simply show the ship is costing so much per annum, without showing what profits she has earned for the State. I share the fear expressed by a number of members regarding the future of the State steamers. If there be no intention of selling them, why did the Government oppose the move we made when the

amending Bill was before Parliament? We pointed out then that if the State steamers were left in the Bill it would be within the power of any Government to sell them without consulting Parliament. Had the steamers been excluded from the amending Bill they could not have been sold without the sanction of Parliament. Until the member for Roebourne mentioned it, I did not know we had two ships that were not worth purchasing. If that opinion is shared by other members opposite, it is all the more essential that we make it impossible for any Government to sell the State steamers without consulting Parliament. To do that we should remove the ships from the category of State trading concerns and declare them public utilities.

Division put and passed.

Division—State Sawmills, £339,065:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I should like to know from the Minister whether it is intended to sell the State sawmills. It is rumoured that tenders for their sale are about to be called, and I should like to know whether any steps have been taken in that direction.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No steps whatever have been taken to call for tenders for the sale of these mills. I doubt whether at the present time we would be likely to get a buyer. While we did take steps to dispose of them under the amending Bill, it is not at all likely that this or any other Government would give away the people's asset. There is too large a sum of money locked up in the State sawmills for us to dispose of them at any old price, and in view of the condition of the market it is not likely we could sell them if we wished to do so.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Recently there has been some agitation in the Press for the sale of these mills. Generally speaking, opponents of State enterprise have kept silent about the State sawmills, because they have been the outstanding success of the State trading concerns. The State mills opened up forests that private enterprise would not tackle; they put karri on the market; they opened up and populated districts not previously occupied, and finally they have returned to the Treasury every pound invested in them, and to-day the whole of the assets of those mills are absolutely free of cost to the State.

It was no uncommon thing for them to make £40,000 a year profit, and in one year they reached £60,000. Last year was the first since the inception of the undertaking when a loss was shown. No timber concern in the country showed a profit last year. Because the undertaking went behind then after making a tremendous return to the State and employing many hundreds of men, besides opening up parts of the South-West that would have lain dormant in all probability until this day, an agitation was launched to sell the State sawmills. They owe the State nothing, but the State owes them a great deal. Although the Government have power to sell the mills, I hope the Minister will see that they are not sacrificed.

The Minister for Lands: They will not be sacrificed.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We know that pressure will be brought to bear upon the Government. There has always been a prejudice on the part of private companies against the State sawmills, which have effectively policed them in many ways. We know they would like to see State competition put out of the way. It is common knowledge in the city that the merchants want to put up the price of timber, and only this week the State concern has been the means of preventing a rise in the price of that commodity. That has been the position ever since the State sawmills came into existence. They are the only timber mills that have kept going throughout the depression. Not one of the private enterprises in the industry has been able to keep afloat. Although the State mills have not all been working full time, they have been the only mills to keep their wheels turning. But for the State enterprise the South-Western areas would have been in a bad way to-day. They have been the means of opening up that country, and have led to a great deal of permanent land settlement there. The State has done well out of its mills. Before any move is made to dispose of them, I hope the facts will be made publicly known and that nothing will be done secretly. One would think from the correspondence that has appeared in the Press lately that something of the kind was afoot, and I am glad to know this evening that tenders will be called before anything is done.

The Minister for Lands: They will not be sold until tenders have been invited.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I should like the Minister to remember all that this enterprise has done for the State. I suppose a full financial statement will be prepared before any move is made to dispose of the mills. The Government financial statements do not disclose the true state of affairs. We know, for instance, that the entire capital cost has now been recouped to the State. We can accept the Minister's word that nothing will be done until public tenders are called.

Miss HOLMAN: I am glad to have the Minister's assurance that the State sawmills will not be disposed of without tenders first being called. There have been rumours to the effect that some company is looking them over with a view to purchase. They have been a wonderful asset to Western Australia in many ways. They have kept 500 or 600 men employed throughout the depression, and have saved the Government a great deal by way of sustenance. Some of the men working on part-time do not get as much as they would get if they had been entirely on sustenance. I believe three of the mills have started work on full time, and will run up to Christmas, and the Pemberton mill will be working five days a week. The department have done extraordinarily well to keep the mills going. Any money they earn in profits goes back to the people. The sawmills have a wonderful name for the standard of timber they sell. In fact the administration reflects great credit upon the officers concerned. The sawmills have done a great deal in the way of stabilising prices. It is not altogether because they showed a loss last year that there is an agitation to dispose of them, but it is because of the manner in which they compete with private enterprise. The experience we have had of private companies indicates that they would welcome the shutting down of this State trading concern. Anything in the way of a State trading concern that is doing badly private enterprise would be glad to see continued, but if a profit is being shown there is at once an agitation afoot to dispose of that particular concern. I hope the State sawmills will not be sold. If tenders are called we shall have an opportunity of seeing that the mills are not sacrificed.

Division put and passed.

Division—Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works, £362,017—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates of the Trading Concerns for the year.

Resolutions reported.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th October.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [8.25]: I am inclined to agree with the Minister that this is a highly controversial matter that is bound to lead to considerable discussion not only within this House but outside it. I had intended to move that the measure be referred to a select committee. In view, however, of the fact that the Bill has been held up for so long—I do not know for what reason—and as I am desirous of seeing the matter finalised before the session ends, I propose to deal with the Bill itself to-night and not to move for it to be referred to a select committee. I have no doubt in my mind about the menace of gambling to the community. I am also just as definite that where there is this menace, Parliament should take the opportunity of harnessing it for the benefit of the people. I hope any remarks of mine will not be taken as carping criticism, but will be regarded as a desire to help the Minister in rolling into shape what is undoubtedly a particularly poor effort to harness the menace of gambling. So far as I can see, the Bill makes no effort to deal with the general question, or to deal with newspaper gambling. If it does anything at all, it simply shifts the burden from the shoulders either of the Minister or the Commissioner of Police, wherever they have respective jurisdiction, and places it in the hands of the proposed commission. We have a Criminal Code to deal with these matters. That being so, the authorities should deal with them under that Code and not shelve their responsibilities upon the proposed commission. I do not intend to deal with the moral aspect of gambling nor its economic aspect. It is in human nature to gamble. Gambling, however, has reached such proportions in the City of Perth that some action must be taken against it. It would be a fallacy for me to argue the matter from a moral point of

view. Gambling is a stupid thing. I am often amazed to note how many men of good common sense go to the races every Saturday with the object of beating the bookmaker, whose business it is to engage in gambling. One sees numbers of these men of good common sense walking home, while the bookmaker is riding in his motor car. This proves the fallacy of trying to beat the bookmaker. The human race is made up of gamblers. Hardly a week goes by but we find certain sets of people gambling with the foodstuffs of the world. Next March no doubt every member will have a little gamble on his own. He will lay himself three years' salary to £100 against his being defeated.

Mr. Angelo: We will all be looking for backers.

Mr. PANTON: He will be laying himself three years' salary to the limit of the £100 expenses allowed under the Act that he can pick what the electors are thinking about.

The Minister for Railways: It is a bit of a gamble to suggest that.

Mr. PANTON: I merely suggest that members will keep within the limits provided by the Act. The principal reason given for gambling, more particularly during the war period and since, is that it was for charity. During the war, and for some time after, people everywhere were induced to expect something for every shilling they gave towards some patriotic purpose. It became very fashionable to raise money for the boys overseas. Everything then was in the nature of a gamble, and since then, free giving has become a dead letter. It is very difficult indeed to get people to give to charity unless they get something in return. My association with charitable institutions has proved to me that it is hopeless to make an appeal and expect to get anything like a reasonable result. This has been proved time after time. The Bill before us proposes to appoint four commissioners and to give over to them full control of conducting a limit of 15 sweeps. There are certainly one or two definitions of beneficiaries, but generally speaking the commission will have full control, and the members of it will be able to say who is to receive the money that will be derived from the sweeps, and the amount as well. My experience of the present Sweep Control Board is not such that I would care to give to the four members of

the proposed commission full control to enable them to declare who are to be the beneficiaries.

The Minister for Railways: That is not correct; they will not have full control.

Mr. PANTON: The Bill gives them full control.

The Minister for Railways: It does not.

Mr. PANTON: The Bill proposes that when the commission desires to run a sweep, all the members of it will have to do will be to get permission from the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: Then how can they have full control, as you said?

Mr. PANTON: The Minister will allow 15 sweeps per annum, but if anyone outside should desire to conduct a sweep, he will have to get permission from the commission.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. PANTON: Then I have not read the Bill.

The Minister for Railways: You have not.

Mr. PANTON: Apparently the Minister has not read it. If he had read it properly, he would not have introduced it.

The Minister for Railways: Argue on facts: that is the main thing.

Mr. PANTON: I am giving the facts. There is one institution with which I have been associated for many years, the Institute for the Blind. The Braille Society are responsible for at least 212 blind people, and the Institute for the Blind for another 68, and prior to the appointment of the Sweep Control Board, whenever an appeal was made on behalf of those unfortunate people, it was made by the two bodies together. They worked together and the net profit was divided 60 per cent. to the Institute and 40 per cent. to the Braille Society. But since the appointment of the Sweep Control Board, the Minister will not argue that he has had very much say as to who the beneficiaries are to be. Since the appointment of the board the Institute at Maylands has received £4,200, and the Braille Society £100, plus £50 which was granted by the board the other day after the Braille Society themselves had raised £100. That is how the money is divided when an appeal is made on behalf of the blind. If we are to have a national sweep or a State sweep, Parliament should say who are to be the beneficiaries, and that will be quite an easy matter. The charitable

institutions in this State are not so numerous that they cannot be mentioned in the schedule of the Bill. It is my opinion that that is where the names of the institutions should appear, and that it should not be left to the four members of the commission to determine the question. If the Minister holds that he is to have the final say, it will be worse than ever, because all the political strings in the world will be capable of being pulled if he is to be in control. I have very little faith in the four commissioners, but I shall have less faith if control is to be political and strings can be pulled. If we are to have State sweeps, let us keep them as far away as possible from political control. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) the other night asked whether the amelioration fund of the Returned Soldiers' League was to be used for the purpose for which it was obtained. As a trustee of that fund I can answer that by saying it is being applied purely and solely for the purpose for which it is raised.

The Minister for Railways: All the money provided by the State goes to the amelioration fund.

Mr. PANTON: We charge up any overhead expenses to the general fund, and charge nothing out of the amelioration money in any shape or form. Further than that, the trustees have held, and what they have done has been upheld by congress, that it is the returned soldiers' fund and not the Returned Soldiers' League Fund, and irrespective of whether the individual is an ex-member of the A.I.F. or an overseas soldier, he is entitled to the benefit provided he can produce his discharge. Regarding the Bill itself, it is interesting to read the definition of "charitable purposes." It certainly gives a great deal of discretion to the Minister. In one case, the Minister has to be satisfied that the supposed beneficiary shall be an incorporated body extending throughout the State. Why was it necessary to camouflage the Ugly Men's Association under a clause of that description? If this is a worthy association, why not say so straight out, without covering it up in a clause which proposes to give so much power? I give due credit to the Ugly Men's Association for what they have done, but I would point

out that during the last two years there have been other organisations that have done equally good work. There are no fewer than 32 operating in the metropolitan area known as relief committees, and as such they have relieved the work of the Uglies to a considerable extent. In Leederville, we are doing work which was looked upon at one time as the work of the Uglies.

The Minister for Railways: I have seen the hon. member's name associated with some of their sweeps.

Mr. PANTON: If there have been sweeps, the subscription to them has never been more than 1d.

Mr. Thorn: Anyway, you are just as entitled to run a sweep as anyone else.

Mr. PANTON: Every penny that has been earned by these relief committees has been collected by voluntary effort. I hope the House will not agree to any one particular section of the community, whether they be ugly men or ugly women, getting an advantage over other organisations doing equally good work and in an honorary capacity. When the relief committee asked for assistance from the Sweep Control Board, we were told that we were too big a job for them. What bunkum! We were operating in the metropolitan area—at least 32 relief committees—and there is no reason why the Ugly Men's Association should have the right to conduct a £2,000 sweep any more than any of the relief committees acting under a council which is operating for the benefit of those seeking relief. The House should decide to include in the Schedule the names of all the proposed beneficiaries, provided, of course, we are going to get the Bill. I notice also in the definition it is proposed to give assistance to any section other than the Uglies, but the amount is limited to £100. So that is the difference between the Ugly Men's Association and any other body that is doing relief work. It might be argued by the Minister that to include the names of the various bodies in the schedule would create dissatisfaction because new organisations might come into existence. It will certainly not involve a great deal of work because the charitable institutions operating in the State at the present time are sufficiently well known, and if the argument is used that another charitable body might come

into existence, I am prepared to give the Governor in Council the right to add its name to the list. Personally I have no fear of its coming into existence so quickly that Parliament would not be able to deal with it within a particular time. With regard to crosswords, money words and news words, these have become particularly popular, I suppose because of the odds that are offered, £1,000 to 6d., which I am told are pretty long odds. It may be that these competitions are popular because those who invest in them get their results quickly, but it is rather remarkable to remember that when they were started there was no intention to assist charity, so far as I know. In each case it was a matter of charity beginning at home. But I am safe in saying that if some of the money had not been allotted to charity there would have been considerable noise made by the public.

The Minister for Railways: The most noise was made by the sellers of coupons in the streets.

Mr. PANTON: Yes, before the police took a hand in the matter. The bookmakers of Belmont were never in it with the row that was made in Hay-street on Friday afternoon by coupon sellers.

The Minister for Police: I have never been to Belmont.

Mr. PANTON: Of course the Minister has never been there and neither has he been to a lot of other places.

The Minister for Lands: You had no right to be there to see him.

Mr. PANTON: What is good enough for a Minister of the Crown should be good enough for a private member. He should set the example.

The Minister for Railways: Go where I go and you will be all right.

Mr. PANTON: It is rather interesting to consider the amount of money invested in what is undoubtedly straight-out gambling. From my rack at home I took three papers at random. I do not wish to be accused of having selected special issues. I found that the "Sunday Times" in that week had 153,135 entries for their crossword puzzle at 6d. each, totalling £3,711 13s. 6d. The "Mirror" in the same week had 128,341 entries at 6d. a total of £3,203 11s.

The Minister for Lands: That would not be in the same week.

Mr. PANTON: Well, in the same fortnight. The "Daily News" received 101,540

entries at 3d., a total of £1,269 5s. The total entries submitted to the three papers in the two weeks was 383,016 representing £8,189 12s. 6d.

Mr. Patrick: You have only counted one "Daily News" competition for the fortnight, whereas that paper conducts one a week.

The Minister for Lands: You are not an authority on it yet.

Mr. PANTON: Those three papers were issued in the one fortnight.

The Minister for Lands: But there would be two "Daily News" competitions in the fortnight.

Mr. PANTON: Who is telling the yarn? I am dealing with the three papers and the entries they received in a fortnight. If there were more entries, it makes the case better.

The Minister for Railways: It makes the case worse.

Mr. PANTON: And makes the Minister's Bill worse also. Out of the £8,189 12s. 6d. charities received £806 14s. 3d. Averaging the three competitions, the number of entries per week represented 191,508 and the money invested in the competitions £4,094 16s. 3d. During the week in which the newspapers received £4,094 for crossword puzzles, a local sweep was being conducted and there were also Tattersall's sweep, the Golden Casket, and the Irish sweep. I do not know whether any money was sent to the New South Wales sweep.

Mr. Hegney: What about the Calcutta sweep?

Mr. PANTON: I did not go any further. I saw for myself that those sweeps were being conducted.

Miss Holman: Where?

Mr. PANTON: If I told the hon. member, she would be surprised. Considering that the average for crossword competitions was £4,094 per week, I think it may be regarded as a conservative estimate if I say that £5,000 is being invested in sweeps and newspaper competitions weekly. That sum is equal to £260,000 per annum. From the Estimates I ascertained that the Treasurer received just over £50,000 from totalisator tax for the year. That tax is based on 7½ per cent. on receipts. Taking £50,000 as the figure, there must have passed through the totalisator in that year a sum of £666,666.

I do not know what money passes through the bookmakers' hands. Perhaps the Minister could tell us that in his reply.

The Minister for Railways: I do not know.

Mr. PANTON: I have been told by men who profess to know something about it, men who have spent money in trying to find out, that taking the starting price bookies and the bookies on the racecourse, there would be as much, if not more, money invested with them. That would mean a total of £1,333,320 invested with bookmakers and with the totalisator, and adding to that the £260,000 for newspaper competitions, we get a total of £1,593,320 invested in the forms of gambling I have mentioned per annum.

Mr. Kennelly: That is about the amount of the deficit.

Mr. PANTON: Then there are all the smaller fry. The Minister mentioned the penny raffles to raise a few shillings to relieve distress.

The Minister for Railways: Football clubs and cricket clubs, they are all in it.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. It would be impossible to form an estimate of the total amount invested in all forms of gambling.

The Minister for Railways: There were also the cancer rays.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. They had a particularly good job, but I hope the amount subscribed will not have to be used for cancer. I was associated with that movement too. In connection with any charitable organisation that adopts forms of gambling to raise funds, my name will be found somewhere. It is a hobby of mine.

The Minister for Railways: During that function I heard of quite a number of forms of gambling of which I had not heard before.

Mr. PANTON: If the Minister lives long enough, he may hear of many more.

The Minister for Railways: What about the voluntary giving?

Mr. PANTON: If the Minister is trying to get one on to me as a member of the executive, I am prepared to stand up to his criticism. I have been a believer in weekly contracts all my life, but was unwittingly let into helping to make a contract for a man to be paid by results. I am sorry that he did not get £1,000, for then we would have got £20,000, and every

penny of that amount was wanted badly. However, I was showing that a fair amount of money is being invested in various forms of gambling every year. I do not think legislation will ever prevent three parts of the gambling in which people indulge to-day. The only effect legislation will have will be to run a lot more men into the police court and produce a little more revenue by way of fines for the State and generally cause dissension and trouble in the community. I am one of those who for years have said that the administration of the gambling laws in Western Australia has not been carried out with any equity.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Or with courage.

Mr. PANTON: I am not blaming the present Government or any previous Government. I have been in Western Australia a long time and gambling has been going on all the time.

The Minister for Railways: Where have you said anything about it?

Mr. PANTON: Even if I have only said it to myself, I have said it. If the Minister took the trouble to read "Hansard" he would find that I had said it.

The Minister for Railways: I have been trying to find it.

Mr. PANTON: I am glad that something is hidden from the eye of the Minister. I have spoken more than once about the hypocrisy over gambling in this State and the lack of equity in administering the law. I am not blaming any particular Minister or any particular Government. All of them have been in the same box. Still, it is nearly time that the weakness of human nature was understood. We should be honest to the extent of putting everybody in the same position, instead of showing favours to this one and no favours to somebody else. Under the present system, a man may follow horse racing. I do not follow it because I hold that if anyone is going to wear diamonds, I do not see why my wife should not have them instead of the bookmaker's wife. If I want to back a horse, I have to go to the racecourse to back it.

Mr. Parker: Oh no.

Mr. PANTON: Either that or take the risk of having the hand of the law laid on my shoulder.

The Minister for Railways: Hand the money to some of the know-alls like the member for North-East Fremantle.

Mr. PANTON: It is rather good business for the legal fraternity, but if a man wants to back a horse, why should he have to go to a racecourse? Is there any logical reason why a man should not be able to back it anywhere? Is there any logical reason why he should have to go to a racecourse or a race club, irrespective of whether they are making a profit out of it?

The Minister for Railways: A man will not be able to back a horse elsewhere if I can help it.

Mr. PANTON: I do not think the Bill will help in any way.

The Minister for Railways: You might easily change your attitude.

Mr. PANTON: If I did, I would not have changed so often as has the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: Well, you would be following a good example.

Mr. PANTON: Not by following the Minister's example.

The Minister for Railways: One opinion is as good as another.

Mr. PANTON: Sometimes.

The Minister for Railways: Always.

Mr. PANTON: Another system of gambling that is rather interesting is carried on. A man can gamble at a club till all hours, but if he gets behind a pile of logs and plays two-up he is offending against the law. If I wanted to gamble, I should choose two-up. I know of no game more fair than the national game of Australia—two-up. There is no doubt about that.

The Minister for Railways: Two-up is not the national game.

Mr. PANTON: It is the national game: it was taught to the Prince of Wales. It is one of the fairest games.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Provided it is played fairly.

Mr. PANTON: If it is not played fairly it becomes a gamble. Will the member for Hannans say that all horses are run fairly?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I admit that two-up is as fair as any gambling provided it is played fairly.

Mr. PANTON: If it is not played fairly, it ceases to be a game and becomes a gamble.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Surely two-up is a gamble!

Mr. PANTON: Of course it is. If I wanted to play two-up, I should have as much right to play it in a little shack as I

would have the right to play poker or bridge in any aristocratic place in the State.

The Minister for Railways interjected.

Mr. PANTON: Bridge is not a gamble!

The Minister for Railways: It is a game of skill.

Mr. PANTON: It is a game of skill undoubtedly, but it is rubbish for the Minister to say it is not a gamble. Every game entails a certain amount of skill.

The Minister for Railways: Even cross-word puzzles.

Mr. PANTON: It is possible to make skill out of anything. I do not know if the Minister is a bridge player, but I venture to say that if he is an expert, the average player would beat him if he got the cards. One needs to get the cards before he can display the skill.

Mr. Hegney: I doubt that.

Mr. PANTON: A young married man like the hon. member should know nothing at all about gambling. My contention is that sufficient money is being invested in gambling in Western Australia and that the Government should control gambling through the Criminal Code. The Government should be big enough and game enough to control all such activities. There is no occasion whatever for the Bill. The Bill simply serves to perpetuate the ineptitude of the Administration. It will not alter the existing state of affairs in any shape or form. According to the Bill, the Minister can give the commission the right to run 15 sweeps every year, but if anyone else wishes to run a sweep, whether it should take the form of a goose club that has been run for generations past in a factory, or a sweep in connection with some organisation, then the majesty of the law can be wielded by the Minister or the commission, and a period put to those activities. I appeal to the House not to allow the Minister to have his way with a Bill such as that before us.

The Minister for Railways: It is as good as the Bill you supported previously.

Mr. PANTON: That was a far better Bill.

The Minister for Railways: There was less of it.

Mr. PANTON: The Bill before Parliament now provides that 25 per cent. of the gross profits shall be paid away in expenses.

The Minister for Railways: No, it does not.

Mr. PANTON: What does it provide for?

The Minister for Railways: I will tell you later.

Mr. PANTON: The Minister introduced the Bill and it shows that up to 25 per cent. of the gross profits may be used in the way I have suggested. Is that not right?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Mr. PANTON: Then, does the Minister imagine that the commission, after paying themselves £1,000, will do the work for less than 25 per cent. of the gross profits? Surely the Minister is not so optimistic as to believe that. I do not regard £1,000 as too much to pay the commission if the members of that body control 15 sweeps during the year and do the work properly.

The Minister for Railways: That amount covers the payments to all the members of the commission; they do not receive £1,000 each.

Mr. PANTON: I know that, but the 25 per cent. will include the £1,000 to be paid to the members of the commission. I have already said that I do not complain about the payment of £1,000. If the 15 sweeps are run properly, it will be cheap at that price. The fact remains that the members of the commission may use up to 25 per cent. of the gross profits.

The Minister for Railways: The work is being done now for 19 per cent.

Mr. PANTON: Do those in charge now pay themselves £1,000 a year?

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. PANTON: Then what is the meaning of the Minister's interjection?

The Minister for Railways: But £1,000 is a very small item when you consider the amount involved in 15 sweeps.

Mr. PANTON: But the commission have to be paid out of the money received and the Bill will give the members of the commission the right to do what I suggest.

The Minister for Railways: But they will not do it.

Mr. PANTON: That is what the Minister says, but the Bill proves that that is the position.

The Minister for Railways: The Bill limits the expenses to 25 per cent.

Mr. PANTON: Yes, that is the maximum, and the Minister will find that the maximum will be the minimum.

The Minister for Railways: The present position proves to the contrary.

Mr. PANTON: There are a lot of sweeps run for which the expenses are much less

than 19 per cent. I think that percentage is altogether too much. What does the 25 per cent. represent on 15 sweeps? I have worked it out for myself and on the basis of 2s. 6d. per ticket, the returns for the year will be £91,750. If we take 25 per cent. that will account for £23,437 being deducted from the gross amount. Then allowance must be made for prizes on the basis of 40 per cent., which accounts for £37,500. That leaves £32,813 for charities. That means to say that the amount available for charities throughout the year will be £9,000 only more than it will cost to run the sweeps. I do not think that is a wonderful effort on behalf of charity.

The Minister for Railways: But it does not necessarily follow that your figures are right.

Mr. PANTON: I think they are.

The Minister for Railways: They are not.

Mr. PANTON: What is the good of the Minister talking like that. He was not following me at all. Let him say what were the two first amounts I mentioned. Of course he cannot do so. I know the Minister and his ways. I do not think it is necessary to go into the question of competition with other lotteries. The Minister is an ardent advocate of local industry and his advocacy in that regard will enable him to overcome the element of competition with efforts made in other States. It is as well for him to remember that the Western Australian sweeps, with prize money based on 40 per cent., are a long way below the standard of those being conducted in the Eastern States, in connection with which prize money is more substantial. He will probably find himself confronted with keen competition because of the bigger prizes available elsewhere. I am not advocating larger prizes. If we are to run sweeps for the charities, let us run them along those lines and not conduct them for the benefit of promoters, or for the particular persons who will win the big prizes.

The Minister for Railways: But those who will be in control will not be promoters here.

Mr. PANTON: What will they be? A salary of £250 each is not too bad in addition to what the members of the commission may receive from other avenues.

The Minister for Railways: That is not the position.

Mr. PANTON: Four members of the commission are to divide £1,000 and I think that works out at about £250 each.

The Minister for Railways: But they are not promoters.

Mr. PANTON: What will they be, supervisors?

The Minister for Railways: They will be appointed to do what is necessary to control the sweeps.

Mr. PANTON: I do not care what the Minister calls them: the fact remains they will be paid the amount I have mentioned. I am anxious to know if we are to continue the present lax administration of the gambling laws. Can the Minister tell me why in Leederville we are not allowed to bet on the whippet races, whereas the people at Kalgoorlie can bet as much as they like on the whippets there? Is it a geographical factor that determines whether the bookmakers are to be allowed to call the odds?

The Minister for Railways: You know that under the Licensing Act the hotels on the goldfields can keep open until 11 p.m., whereas the hotels elsewhere have to close at 9 p.m.

Mr. Withers: The people bet on the whippets at Collie.

Mr. PANTON: Did Parliament ever give the right to the people on the goldfields to bet on whippet races and deny people elsewhere the same right? What is the good of talking about the licensing laws?

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: You have to take the amenities of civilisation into consideration.

Mr. PANTON: I do not know whether the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe considers that an indication of the position on the goldfields.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: They must do something to amuse themselves.

The Minister for Railways: So they go to the dogs.

Mr. PANTON: In my opinion, the people should have a perfect right to bet as much as they like on the whippet races, but that right should not be confined to the people of Kalgoorlie alone. If that right is conceded to them, then people in other parts of the State should have the same right.

Hon. J. Cunningham: There is no dog racing or whippet racing in Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Parker: The races are conducted at Boulder.

Mr. PANTON: I find myself falling into quite a lot of errors to-night! It does not matter where the race meetings are held. If the people in one town are allowed to bet on the races, others elsewhere should be allowed the same privilege.

The Minister for Lands: Will they be able to do it after next Saturday?

Mr. PANTON: I do not know what significance attaches to the Minister's interjection. I know one hon. member complained about a certain gamble in his district. The most remarkable feature about the administration of the gambling laws in Western Australia is that if a man is wealthy enough to own and train a horse, he can bet on his horse to his heart's content. But if he owns a dog, or has a son who is a champion pedestrian or a champion cyclist, he is not allowed to bet on dog, foot or cycling races, in which those he is interested in are competing.

Mr. Patrick: They can bet on them in the country.

Mr. PANTON: There is another injustice. This must be a political matter.

Mr. Parker: What about Collie?

Mr. PANTON: What do they do at Collie?

The Minister for Railways: The member for Collie is present.

Mr. Wilson: We bet under the lap at Collie.

Mr. PANTON: At Leederville we do not propose to bet under the lap; we want to bet openly and above board. We are entitled to do so whether it is in connection with horse-racing, dog-racing, pedestrian events, cycling races or anything else.

Mr. Thorn: All this shows how badly the law is administered.

Mr. PANTON: Of course it does, and it is time that Parliament took action. What effect will the Bill have in that direction? It will not assist in the slightest degree. Betting will continue to go on under the lap. Each week-end the same number of men will be arrested for street or shop betting. The same number of men will train and bet on the whippets and there will be the same amount of betting in connection with foot racing and other events, although the latter

is not allowed. I have always held the opinion that the man who owns a horse or a dog, or who can run or ride a bicycle should have the right to back himself if he so desire. He should be able to do that openly, and should not do it under the lap.

Mr. Thorn: It will be just as bad as bootlegging in America.

Mr. PANTON: It is as bad as that now.

The Minister for Railways: You are advocating more of it.

Mr. PANTON: No, but I am advocating equity in the administration of the betting laws. If the Government seek to stop one section, they should stop the rest. They should not prevent one section from betting and allow the others to continue.

Mr. Parker: Parliament permitted the tote to operate.

Mr. PANTON: Will Parliament permit the tote to operate in connection with whippet races? Let the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker) give us some cheap legal advice.

Mr. Parker: You do not require cheap legal advice, but the correct advice.

Mr. PANTON: Then I will not go to the hon. member! If we are to deal with the gambling laws, let us make a job of it. One remarkable feature of the position to-day is that week after week the police raid the street betting shops.

Mr. Hegney: And the Chinese gambling dens.

Mr. PANTON: Week after week the "Sunday Times," the "Mirror" and the "Daily News," irrespective of the provisions of the Criminal Code, continue with their job and conduct their gambles.

Mr. Hegney: But those are powerful newspapers.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member does not suggest that there should be one law for powerful newspapers and another for the workers.

Mr. Hegney: Certainly not.

Mr. PANTON: That was the hon. member's suggestion.

Hon. P. Collier: Not a suggestion, but a fact.

Mr. PANTON: No member of the Government will say there is not sufficient in the Criminal Code as it stands to-day to prevent the continuance of the crossword, newsword, or moneyword competitions any longer. There is no doubt on that point.

The Minister for Railways: Is there not?

Mr. PANTON: No.

The Minister for Railways: You say there is not, and I am not disputing your assertion, but I was just wondering whether there is any doubt about it.

Mr. PANTON: A little while ago another system of gambling was inaugurated. I refer to the tipping competitions. When they were drawn publicly, the police intervened; when they were drawn privately, the police again intervened. The newswords and other newspaper competitions can be drawn privately and there is no interference. They are not gambles!

Hon. P. Collier: They are not drawn; they are adjudicated.

Mr. PANTON: I do not know whether they are adjudicated or drawn but the newspapers are carrying on the job.

Hon. P. Collier: Not adjudicating now; but doing time

Mr. PANTON: If the Government intend to continue allowing that form of gambling, let us be quite honest with ourselves and admit that the Criminal Code requires overhauling. Surely the Minister for Railways will admit, at any rate, that the present proceedings are not in the best interests of the community. I have no objection to any man or woman gambling to his or her heart's content, but I do object to little kiddies running along with their sixpences to put in their coupons. The curse of this cheap gambling of to-day is the fact that little kiddies who cannot reach to the top of the counter can be seen every day of the week in newspaper offices, putting in their coupons. I do not think the newspapers themselves should sanction that sort of thing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And if a kiddy should win, he gets his photograph in the paper.

Mr. PANTON: Children are robbing their money boxes to-day in order to indulge in gambling.

The Minister for Railways: You cannot expect brothers and sisters to put in their coupons and the rest of the family to look on.

Mr. PANTON: The Minister should put a stop to that sort of thing.

The Minister for Railways: I do not want to be a Daniel.

Mr. PANTON: I do not think the Minister does. Let the law be administered with equity. If it is good enough for the patrons

of the racecourse, and for others to indulge in gambling, it is good enough for other people to do likewise, and have a bet on bicycle races, foot running or whippet racing. Let us be honest with ourselves and do away with betting on horse racing altogether, and of course then there will be no horse racing. I disagree with the powers proposed to be given to the commission. The Bill provides for the Minister to have authority over the commission. According to my reading of the Bill the commission is to be given power over other bodies. Personally, I think the commission should have full power, or else the Minister should take control and be responsible to Parliament. Personally, if we are to have sweeps, I think they should be controlled by someone outside Parliament and politics altogether.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. PANTON: I do not think the Minister should have any say in the matter at all. If we are able to trust the commission, there is no occasion for the Minister to control the members of it in any shape or form. We can lay down in an Act just how far the proposed commission can go, how many sweeps can be run, and who are to be the beneficiaries. The commission should be outside the control of the Minister, so that there cannot be any political wirepulling in any shape or form.

The Minister for Railways: You can easily restrict that, if you want it in the Bill.

Mr. PANTON: I think it should be restricted. It is not a bit of use, in my opinion, having a half measure. I stated at the outset it was my intention to move for a select committee, but the Bill has been delayed so long that, to say the least, I consider it would be inadvisable to move for a select committee so late in the session. I am just as anxious to have the Bill settled one way or the other—

The Minister for Railways: You have not told us which way.

Mr. PANTON: The Minister will see that when the division bell rings. As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted by the Minister, I did propose to move for a select committee, but in view of the fact that the Bill has been so long delayed I do not propose to do so now. I was in hopes that a select committee would mould the Bill into something like reasonable shape. I am quite satisfied that the Bill cannot be so moulded when it reaches the Committee

stage. I cannot possibly see how we are going to frame the Bill in such a way, at any rate, as to justify my voting for the second reading. In the circumstances, I have no option but to vote against the second reading. If the Bill is framed in such a way as to make it a State Sweep Bill, it will do much towards minimising the present system of gambling. I think that not only the Minister, but every member of this House must deplore the fact that there are so many children taking advantage of the present system of cheap gambling that has sprung up.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) {9.20}: It is an extraordinary thing that a Bill of this description should go through on two speeches.

The Minister for Railways: It has not gone through yet.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I desire to say most definitely that I never anticipated I would have to speak to-night.

The Minister for Railways: I did not, either.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I thought the leaders of the House would have something to say on an important matter of this description.

Mr. Withers: They do not try to justify anything they bring down.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: The question arises whether we should not devote some attention to considering whether it is right for the State to depart so far from the ordinary methods of raising revenue as to attempt, by a Bill of this kind, to legalise the demoralisation of the people of the State. It is true that to-day gambling is on the increase. It is true also that women and children who never gambled before are gambling to-day. The reason for that is not very hard to find. It is due to the fact that people who usually have sufficient to maintain them are not getting enough to-day. Gradually, but surely, they can see their homes being depleted of furniture, they can see debts mounting, they can see their clothing wearing out, and all with no prospect of providing for the needs of the home by obtaining the necessary money through the ordinary channel of selling their labour. The position with them has become desperate, and in their desperation they are turning to any means to raise the wind. It is, or was until re-

cently, quite a common statement in homes that the only hope of putting things right for them was to win a Tattersall's sweep. While a ticket in Tattersall's was possible as an investment during the early stages of the depression, it is beyond most of the people now. They are descending now to the level of newspapers that encourage gambling on the 3d. crossword puzzle. We know that that form of gambling exists, but I ask members in all seriousness whether we should follow the people down to their degradation, whether we should capitalise that which the people are indulging in to-day to their own detriment, whether we should raise money even for charitable institutions in this manner. By a Bill of this description we say that certain charitable institutions cannot continue unless lotteries or some other forms of gambling are legalised, authorised, condoned and encouraged by the State by special legislation. I appeal to my Labour friends on this side of the House to realise what that means. In actual fact, it is indirect taxation. Charitable institutions should, according to my Labour principles, be maintained by those in a position to pay the taxation necessary to provide for them. If this Bill be passed, we say it is quite right that the people should descend to the 3d. crossword puzzle, and so enable newspapers to make huge profits to re-establish the stability of journalism. We say it is quite right for the State to take advantage of such a situation and use the small gambler as a means of providing for the needs of those charitable institutions. If we do pass a Bill of this kind, it is only one section of the community that will contribute. The men with large incomes, the leaders of the professions in Western Australia, the big investors, the collectors of huge dividends and interest, are not interested in this method of raising revenue, except that they know that by measures of this kind the worker goes on contributing towards and paying for the needs of these institutions while they are evading their responsibility. I, for one, am not going to support this kind of legislation. I deplore the conditions of to-day, but surely it is our task to try to rectify them, not to capitalise them. If the law to-day is not strong enough to enable the Minister and his department to suppress this evil of gambling in our midst.

then the law should be strengthened. The weakness of the law should not be availed of as a means of raising money.

The Minister for Railways: You seem to be repeating all you said a few years ago.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know what I said then.

The Minister for Railways: You were inarticulate then.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have never once raised my voice in favour of legislation of this kind.

The Minister for Railways: You did not oppose it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I venture the opinion that I must have opposed it, because, whenever legislation of this kind is introduced, I never support it. It is against my principles to support measures of this description. I cannot recall what the Minister is referring to, but it would be an astonishing revelation to me to find I was caught in supporting legislation of this description. What was it?

The Minister for Railways: The previous State Lotteries Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I think the Minister will have to look again. I cannot recollect it. I do not think it can be said that I supported legislation in favour of lotteries. However, whether I did or did not, I am opposing this Bill, which is not comparable with the Bill that the Minister has referred to. After all, that was on a different basis, and, as I say, even on that different basis it did not meet with my approval, as far as I can remember. Is my name there?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is just as well that this matter has been referred to. I was in hospital when that Bill was introduced. The member for Leederville (Mr. Panton) came to my bedside and told me of it. I expressed my astonishment that the Bill should have been introduced, and inquired from him whether the party, as a party, had endorsed it. He pointed out it was not a party measure, but it had been introduced. I expressed my definite hostility to the Bill. I remember distinctly that I regretted I was unable to attend in order to oppose the Bill.

The Minister for Railways: That was at the meeting of the party, not in Parliament.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course, I was not here at the time.

The Minister for Railways: It is a serious reflection on the Whip of the time.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know how the pairing was arranged.

The Minister for Railways: But would it not be a non-party question?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That only goes to show that one does not know what is recorded against one, but the member for Leederville can testify to the correctness of my statement. It was many months before I was able to attend Parliament after the experience that I have referred to, when the hon. member came and told me exactly what was happening in regard to that proposed legislation.

The Minister for Railways: That last statement is not correct, because you spoke in Committee a few days afterwards.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is an extraordinary thing. However, I will look it up myself. I am not prepared to accept that.

The Minister for Railways: I will give you the page and number of "Hansard."

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I will have a look at that. When this Bill reaches the Committee stage, if it does, I will be able to speak again. I hope it will not reach the Committee stage; it will not with my support and vote. I do not believe the Bill is in the public interest. I do not believe that we should approach this question in the manner proposed by the Bill. I quite agree that legislation can, with advantage, be introduced for the control or suppression of gambling. The conditions to-day are vicious, as the member for Leederville correctly pointed out. Certain things are allowed, and other things overlooked, and the public has no idea of what the law is respecting practices of this kind. Therefore I trust the House will not support the Bill. It will reflect no credit on Parliament, nor on the State. There is a proper way of financing these institutions, and we are evading that which we should do in the form of legitimate taxation, and putting it in an indirect way. In consequence, the people are called upon to contribute beyond their capacity. They are invited to gamble instead of being called upon to pay

direct taxation for the financing of these institutions.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [9.32] in moving the second reading said: This is merely a continuation measure in order to continue for another year Section 10A of the Act. In 1930 that section was inserted in the Traffic Act in order to compel certain vehicles to keep to prescribed roads. I realise that many other amendments to the Act are necessary, but in view of the state of the Notice Paper we have decided merely to deal with this section.

Mr. Wansbrough: Why not extend the Act for another three years?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: It is an emergency measure, and next year we may have an entirely different Act. This question has been discussed by every Government in the Commonwealth. The Federal Government called a conference which was attended by all the Commissioners of Railways and others. It was intended by the Premiers' Conference to bring down a uniform Transport Act for the whole of Australia. Our original Act of 1930 was based on the then Queensland Act. Since then, New South Wales has brought down a very drastic measure to stop all competition with the railways. Victoria has not done very much in that direction, but South Australia has brought in what, in my view, is the best Act in Australia. Although it does appoint a transport control board, and prescribes roads upon which passenger or goods vehicles shall be allowed to run, it does not go as far as the Queensland Act of 1930 and prohibit the use of roads to individuals; that is to say, in South Australia the individual can carry his own goods. In our original Act the Minister was given power, in exceptional cases, to grant permits. This has been consistently availed of. The Act imposed some hardships on certain sections of the community. People living in all that area of country between Perth and Williams can use the railway only by going a considerable distance to the east, thus greatly increasing

the mileage over which their goods have to be carried. In many instances, we have given permits to farmers and others in that district to carry their own goods. When the Act was before Parliament it was frequently asserted that it would stop all competition with the railways. That has not been so, as will be seen by the following figures:—In 1930, the number of vehicles registered was 132, and the license fees received amounted to £780 6s. 8d.; in 1931 the figures were, vehicles 165, license fees £3,019; in 1932, vehicles 180, license fees £2,681. That was to June, 1932, and at the 30th September, 1932, the vehicles numbered 201. So members will see that the competition with the railways is increasing, notwithstanding the heavy fees imposed.

Mr. Marshall: That is due greatly to the depression.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: It was thought that under the heavy license fees no vehicle would remain in competition with the railways. In actual practice it has been found that, notwithstanding those fees, the competition has increased. The sole reason for bringing down this Bill is to extend the period of Section 10A for another year. When the Bill left this House there was no time limit to its operations, but another place so amended it is to make it expire on the 31st December, 1932. The Bill provides for a continuation until the 31st December, 1933. When time permits, some further legislation must be brought down to deal with this question. It is not easy to decide what one should do. I had hoped that the committee appointed by the Premiers' Conference to investigate the position would have been able to give us something upon which to frame legislation, but so far nothing has arrived in this State. Consequently I am asking the House to re-enact the measure for another year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. C. Willcock, debate adjourned.

BILL—PEARLING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. J. H. Smith in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 16:

Mr. CHURCH: I move an amendment—

That paragraphs (a) and (b) be struck out.

These paragraphs provide for a limitation of the area to be fished. This is unjustifiable, because it will not limit the shell fished. Apparently there has been some arrangement between Darwin, Broome and Thursday Island as to the quantity of shell which should be taken. These paragraphs will only confine Broome boats to shelling in the Broome area, thus precluding their trading at other important places on the coast, such as Hedland, Cossack and Onslow, where shelling has been going on for the past 60 years. Why should those important areas be closed up? The object of the Bill would be attained by curtailing the quantity of shell to be fished per boat. The cost of fishing at Broome and at Cossack is reckoned to be the same, but the shell fished at Broome is of much more value than it is farther south, and, moreover, many more pearls are found at Broome than are found lower down. If the boats were limited to the Broome area, those that chose to go down the coast to fish would be precluded from doing so. It would not prevent the boats at Broome from fishing in their own waters. What we desire is that the output beyond a certain quantity should be limited. I do not know what the quantity should be, but the Minister could arrange it. If there were 100 boats and they were limited to five tons per boat, it would be perfectly fair. That would prevent over-production which, I take it, is the object of the Bill. To prescribe an area, however, would be very unfair.

Mr. COVERLEY: I cannot agree with the member for Roebourne who, I think, has missed the intention of the clause. He said the clause restricting the area in which the boats would be allowed to fish would confine the boats to the Broome waters. That is not intended. The object is to empower the Minister to stipulate the area in which a boat will be allowed to fish. Wherever a boat was registered, the Minister could prescribe an area in which the boat would be allowed to fish. At Broome 89 boats are registered and the Bill will empower the Minister to prescribe an area in which those boats

could fish. Three boats are registered at Cossack and two at Onslow and the same principle would apply to them. The Bill will not affect the Roebourne district. The object of the Bill is to assist to control the industry owing to the fluctuating market. The pearling industry has suffered more than most primary industries. Wheat and wool are not confined to a particular market, but only two firms buy m.o.p. shell and both are American firms. A majority of the pearlers in Australian waters have made an agreement with one American firm, Girder & Co., to take a certain quantity of shell proportionate to the different waters in which m.o.p. is fished. Surely those pearlers with most to lose should be considered when we are passing legislation! I think there are only two boats registered at Hedland, and they, with the three at Cossack and two at Onslow, make seven, compared with 89 at Broome. It is logical that the greater number at Broome should receive protection. The hon. member agrees that legislation is necessary to control the output, and it is equally necessary to restrict the area. It is in the interests of the State to retain the overseas market. Broome shell is recognised as being of the highest quality in the world and brings the highest price. When I refer to the Broome area I exclude the area represented by the member for Roebourne. The shell from the Broome area is valued at from £10 to £15 per ton above that fished in the waters further south. A hand-pump boat working in Broome waters is hard put to it to collect five tons of shell per season. In the area represented by the hon. member a similar boat might get seven tons of shell. While the shell is of less value, the production is greater to the extent of two tons per boat, and that is the main argument for restricting the area to the 89 boats that have agreed to the reduction of output.

Mr. Church: That is what I suggested—restrict the tonnage per boat.

Mr. COVERLEY: The industry is suffering from a fluctuating market. The market was at a low ebb when a representative of Girder & Co. came to Australia to get the fishing interests to agree to control. For the first 12 months the pearlers at Thursday Island, controlled by Burns, Philp & Co., did not join the Girder con-

tract: therefore the whole scheme was not successful. After 12 months' experience of the contract, the Thursday Island pearl-ers joined with the Darwin and Western Australian pearl-ers to control the output. They realised the benefit of the scheme. Surely those mostly concerned are entitled to suggest how the industry should be controlled. Another firm has entered the market and is offering £4 to £5 per ton more than Girder & Co. The pearl-ers of Broome have been hard-pressed to find a market, and now they have an assured market for a certain tonnage, they are not going to risk losing the organisation if they can help it. Therefore they have decided that the Girder contract is suitable. In the first place, the representative of the company was not sure of the success of the scheme and so he offered Broome an allocation of 350 tons of shell for the first year, 400 for the second year and 550 for the third year. The 350 tons output has been supplied. This year he has agreed to take 400 tons and, if successful, he proposes to take 550 tons from the Broome area next year. The quantities from Thursday Island and Darwin will be correspondingly increased each year. That is why the Bill stipulates six tons per boat. They will not get six tons this season. The contract does not provide for buying it, even if they did get it, but it does provide for another 150 tons next year. I doubt whether they will get six tons per boat when they are confined to the Broome area. If they are allowed to operate up and down the coast, particularly in the areas the hon. member has in mind, they will get seven tons per boat and then there will be over-production.

Mr. Church: They are supposed to be limited to a certain quantity per boat.

Mr. COVERLEY: At present they can fish what quantities they like, sell what they like and sell it at whatever price they like.

Mr. Church: They are selling to Girder and Co.

Mr. COVERLEY: Then they are very foolish for they could get £5 per ton more from the other firm. If the Broome pearl-ers did not realise that the Girder contract was beneficial to the industry, they would sell to the other firm offering the higher price. However, they know how the market fluctuates, and how quickly over-production can result. They have asked for the amending

measure to protect the industry and I hope the Minister will not agree to the amendment.

Mr. ANGELO: I support the amendment. It has become necessary to restrict the output, but I cannot see why any limitation should be placed on any area of the pearling grounds whence the pearl-ers wish to take shell. It appears that a contract has been entered into between the Broome pearl-ers and a New York firm for the purchase of pearl shell. Unless this amendment is carried, it looks very much as if the Broome people will have a monopoly. When I went to the North-West in 1887 Cossack was the centre of the pearling activities and Broome was unknown. Why should this practically new centre have a monopoly of the pearl shell business? I am opposed to any limitation of the area over which a man may fish along the coast.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: One of the objects of the Bill is to restrict the output of pearl shell, and also restrict the area over which fishing may be done. The paragraph the hon. member desires to delete refers to the restriction of area. If boats were allowed to fish off Onslow, Hedland and Cossack and were permitted to put their shell on the market, that would defeat the object of the Bill. No doubt, however, the better class of shell obtained in the North would attract the best buyers. We should not give the exclusive right to one port along the coast, for other ports are entitled to the same consideration. If pearl fishers desire to go further down the coast there is no reason why they should not do so subject to the approval of the Department. Members would be well advised to leave the Bill as it is.

Mr. PARKER: It seems wrong to restrict the area over which pearl fishing may be done, because that would lead to the necessity for more policing of the grounds, and create a lot of trouble and need for expenditure. It would also take away a certain amount of freedom from pearl-ers without any particular object being achieved. Why should not boats be entitled to get shell where they like? Mother-of-pearl pays the expenses of the industry and the pearls represent the profit.

The Minister for Lands: There is a very limited market for pearls.

Mr. PARKER: The price of pearls has come down considerably. I cannot see any reason for restricting the areas over which

the boats may fish. At certain times in the year boats fish on grounds where they can secure protection from the willy wilies. It may be that the Minister will fix an area that will afford no protection for boats at that time of the year, with the result that they will not be taken to sea. Some hardship may be inflicted, and I do not think the carrying of the amendment will affect the object of the Bill.

Mr. LAMOND: I support the amendment. There is justification for restricting output but I see none for restricting the area over which the boats may fish. The Bill may provide the boats licensed at Broome with a monopoly, and an unfair advantage over the boats that are licensed further south. The member for Kimberley explained the relative values of the shell fished in various waters, and on a six-ton catch, the return to the Broome boats would be £1,110 and to the boats licensed further south a return of £1,020, showing an advantage to the Broome boats of £90. The only way that could be rectified would be to allow the southern boats an extra half ton so as to make up the difference. Under the Bill the Broome area could be extended to Condon and that would have the effect of forcing the southern boats to go still further south, into waters where the shell is of a poorer quality. There is danger to be feared in restricting the area.

Mr. COVERLEY: No logical arguments have been advanced in support of the amendment. The member for Pilbarra said that it might be advisable to allow the southern boats to fish an extra half ton, but as the Bill stands they are allowed an extra ton. The member for North-East Fremantle suggested that a fleet of boats would be required to police the grounds. Surely the pearlers, who have formed a co-operative pool amongst themselves and signed a contract, can be trusted to police their own industry.

Mr. Parker: How many are not parties to the contract?

Mr. COVERLEY: Approximately 17 boats. I would prefer to take the views of the pearlers to those of the member for North-East Fremantle, and the pearlers themselves have asked for the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. Angelo: You admit that the Broome people have asked for it?

Mr. COVERLEY: I have already explained the position fully. We have passed legislation to deal with the protection of other primary products, and the same principle should be applied to the pearling industry.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The member for Pilbarra said that the Broome area could be extended to below Condon and thus force the southern boats lower down.

The Minister for Lands: We are going to leave the areas as they are now.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I should like to know whether the Broome area is specific or is an area to be declared under the Bill that will be different from the Broome area as it is recognised at present. We should have some particulars of the boundaries proposed to be fixed by the Bill. It should not be impossible to state what might be called the boundaries of the Broome area. I do not think the Committee would be justified in passing a Bill which would give power to define the area of Broome down as far as Denham or Shark Bay. That appears to be what members are fearful of.

Mr. Church: Why not leave the area out altogether?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: About 90 per cent. of the pearlers of this State would be doing a good job for themselves and a better job for the State by getting foreign capital into the country as a result of the sale of their product.

Mr. Church: They will not be interfered with. We are afraid of nothing but the area.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: It might be advisable not to pass the Bill at all.

Mr. Church: Do you want to limit the quantity of shell?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Two principles are involved in the Bill. One is to limit the output. It was proposed to limit the area over which these men might fish. It is very difficult to define boundaries. It may be found that one class of shell may have a more ready sale than perhaps a better class. It depends on the market. I contend that the quality of shell fished will determine the ground. Broome shell is cer-

tainly far superior to that obtained further south. If there is a sale for first-class mother-of-pearl shell, then Broome will be the fishing ground. If a lighter or whiter quality shell is required, then probably the fishers will go further south. If the amendment is carried, the output will be restricted to 400 tons, or whatever the quantity is that the contract entered into between the pearl-ers and the buyers provides for. In view of the information we have received, I think hon. members fear that Broome will not get a fair deal. Broome will, however, get a fair deal because of the quality of the shell there.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: No more boats can be licensed?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	23
Noes	..	..	..	..	19
Majority for					4

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Barnard	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Church	Mr. Parker
Mr. Davy	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Piessie
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wells
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. North
Mr. H. W. Mann	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Coverley	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munsie	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Johnson
Mr. J. H. Smith	Mr. Pantou

Clause, as amended, thus passed.

Clause 3—negatived.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—negatived.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—negatived.

Clause 8—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—GOVERNMENT FERRIES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd November.

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [10.30]: I have looked through the Bill and I can see no objection to it. As the Minister said, it is merely to pass the control of the ferries to the Commissioner of Railways, to give him the necessary authority to run the ferries. This control, of course, must be given under Act of Parliament. The Bill does not go any farther than that, so I will support the second reading.

MR. WELLS (Canning) [10.32]: I have no objection to the transfer of the utility embodied in the Bill, and I am pleased to note that the ferries are one of the utilities showing a slight profit. But while the ferries may be quite satisfactory from that point of view, the boats in the service are not satisfactory. The "Perth" is far too large and costly in running, and I think an alteration could be made by the provision of two smaller boats which could be operated at very much lower cost. A few years ago a Diesel engine for a proposed new boat for this service was purchased at a cost of £4,800. Up to date interest on that engine has accrued to the amount of £1,500, and so we have in cold storage an engine which has cost the State £6,300. That engine is scarcely suitable for a boat such as is required for this service, consequently I urge upon the Minister that he sell that engine and use the money in the provision of two suitable boats.

The Minister for Railways: Do you know a buyer?

MR. WELLS: You never know what you can do till you try. I have sold many things which in the first place I did not expect to sell. At any rate, efforts should be made to sell that engine, because it is eating up a good deal of interest, and all to no advantage.

MR. CORBOY: But is it not obsolete now?

MR. WELLS: It may be obsolete for the purpose for which it was purchased, but it would be a very useful engine for some other purpose. The "Perth" is not only very expensive to operate, but during the summer season she is frequently taken off the service to run river trips and excursions, and at such times other boats have to be

hired to take her place in the ferry service. Also during the winter months the smaller permanent boats are by no means suitable, and passengers travelling by them are put to inconvenience and discomfort. I urge the Minister to dispose of that engine in cold storage and use the money in building two suitable boats for the service.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

**BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS, AND
MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT
AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th September.

MR. KENNEALLY (East Perth) [10.40]: This measure is designed to extend the existing Act for one year. When notice was given to introduce the measure, we pointed out that it would have been far better to introduce it in a manner to give an opportunity to improve the provisions of the Act rather than confine the procedure to voting for or against an extension of the existing provisions. The Government would not listen to that proposal. In most of our emergency legislation we have endeavoured to explore hitherto uncharted channels, and the result of the experience gained from the operations of the Acts has enabled us to ascertain ways in which such legislation could be improved. It is a pity that the action of the Government prevents us from moving amendments to improve this legislation. The Act has been a godsend to people who, through unemployment, have not been able to meet their rent commitments or who, having entered into contracts to purchase homes on the time payment principle, have found themselves, through unemployment, unable to meet their obligations. The administration of the Act calls for a meed of praise for the magistrate who has mainly had to give effect to the measure. Mr. Moseley has

displayed a keen insight into human nature and has been desirous of seeing that the right thing was done between tenant and landlord. The fact that the relief asked for has not always been granted has been due, not to any desire on the part of the magistrate not to do the right thing, but to the limitations imposed upon him by the Act. Therefore, it is a matter for regret that the Government have not enabled us to point out the defects of the Act and move amendments to remedy them. One main direction in which the Act could be improved would be by the deletion of the provision for contracting outside the Act. When the Bill was before the House, it was pointed out that that provision would be detrimental. If a person is unemployed and is directed to vacate a house on account of inability to pay the rent, and if he secures another house, the second landlord may compel the tenant to sign a document agreeing not to take advantage of the Act. If he signs undertaking, no matter what misfortune may overtake him afterwards, the magistrate has no power to grant relief. Members on this side of the House, and I believe members on the Government side who have had experience of the Act, desire that such a person should be able to take advantage of the Act. However, the landlord dictates to a tenant before he is able to go into the house and the measure fails to give the relief intended. The Minister said if a case could be put up for amending the Act, he would give attention to the introduction of another Bill.

The Attorney General: I think I said that any member was perfectly free to introduce a Bill.

Mr. KENNEALLY: That would be a private member's Bill and it would be placed at the bottom of the Notice Paper, whereas a Government measure would take precedence.

The Attorney General: There would be an opportunity to consider it.

The Premier: Are you satisfied with this Bill?

Mr. KENNEALLY: No; and I do not think the Premier is, either.

The Premier: I am.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I do not think the Premier is, because the Act allows a man to contract himself outside the provisions of the measure, thus placing himself in no

better position than he occupied before the legislation was enacted. Therefore the Premier must have been a little premature in expressing his satisfaction with the Bill. I think there are other members on the Government side who are not altogether satisfied with it. Generally speaking, the landlords of the city are not acting in a manner that could be called unreasonable. I pay them that tribute. Representing a district that is to a large extent composed of poorer people, I am brought into contact with landlords as much as is the average member. There are exceptions. Generally speaking the landlords are playing a reasonable part in these difficult times, but one has to keep an eye upon those who are not playing the game. There are some who are insisting upon seeing a signed receipt for the rent paid in the case of the house previously occupied, before they will allow anyone to go into their own dwelling. Other landlords are insisting upon the tenants contracting themselves out of the provisions of the Act before they enter their doors. Tenants who are out of employment are having a hard time. They obtain protection orders from the court for, say, two months, and at the end of that period may get an extension for a similar term. On the next occasion the magistrate may say to them that the landlord has done a fair thing by them and that they must find some other place of abode. If that tenant is out of work he can have no money with which to pay the rent of another house. If then landlords insist upon seeing signed receipts for the rent paid for the previous house and in other cases insist upon the tenant contracting himself outside the Act the unfortunate people who are seeking a home are as badly off as they were before this legislation was passed. I want to see the Act amended by the deletion of Section 24, which enables people to contract themselves outside the Act. I would also refer to those persons who entered into a contract to purchase a home during the good times and who now find that, in many cases, their equity in the property has entirely disappeared. The purchaser may have paid £150 down and a good deal of money besides by way of instalments. The property had a certain value when the contract was entered into, but that value has been decreased to such an extent that the purchaser would be better off if the contract could be

allowed to go by the board, and he could set about buying a new home at present prices. In effect, the depression has meant that the purchaser has paid out more than the property is worth at to-day's value. To such a man the existing legislation affords no relief. Then there is another point. The magistrate has ruled that if the wife is the owner of the property, and, because her husband is out of work, she is no longer able to continue the payments, he can do nothing for her within the four corners of the Act. I am sure it is an oversight that such cases as this have not been provided for. It is not a question of the husband being unable to pay because he is out of work, but of the wife being unable to pay because her husband is out of work. The magistrate can give no relief in such a case. This is an obvious flaw in the Act. Members on both sides of the House agreed as to the necessity for this legislation, and we all thought that it would apply to a case such as this. It is most important that all those anomalies should be rectified. We are told that unless a private measure is brought down these defects cannot be remedied. I fail to see why the Government should not bring down a Bill to enable these oversights to be made good. If we do not give protection to the wife in the circumstances I have disclosed, by the time we turn the imaginary corner a great deal of difficulty will be created. It will be impossible to employ everybody at once. That being so, whatever equity may remain in the name of the wife will have entirely disappeared by the time her husband is able to resume the job of earning a livelihood for his family. She will not have the opportunity, particularly if the protective legislation should terminate suddenly, to retrieve her position. If what was in the minds of members at the time we passed the legislation may be judged, it was intended that the protection should be provided, irrespective of whether the property stood in the name of the husband or the wife, so long as it could be shown that the non-payment of the money was due to unemployment. That being so, it seems to be necessary to rectify the wrong that we unwittingly did when we passed the legislation in its present form. Now that it has been ruled by the court that the Act does not apply where the wife owns the property, we should amend the Act to make it clear that we did intend it to so apply. I

preciate the beneficial effect of the Act. Had the Act not been passed, more troublesome times would have confronted the community. Many people were being turned out of their homes, and that could not continue without creating tremendous problems. We are now afforded a favourable opportunity to amend the Act by dealing with these two material blots. There are other small alterations that one's experience as the result of many appearances in court on behalf of persons who have applied for protection orders, suggests should be dealt with; we were overhauling the Act, but, in the meantime I hope the Minister will grant relief on the two major points I have mentioned.

On motion by Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.4 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 16th November, 1932.

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

QUESTION—SUPERPHOSPHATE BONUS.

Hon. G. W. MILES asked the Chief Secretary,—To assist the dairying, pig-raising, grazing, and fat lamb industries of the State, is it the intention of the Gov-

ernment to urge the Commonwealth Government to maintain the superphosphate bonus of £1 per ton recently announced?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The payment of a bonus is entirely a matter for the Federal Government.

QUESTION—COLLIE COAL, ROYAL COMMISSION.

Hon. G. W. MILES (for Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom) asked the Chief Secretary, 1, In what circumstances, and for what reasons, was a Royal Commissioner appointed to inquire into the business of the Amalgamated Collieries Company? 2, At whose instigation was it done, the Premier, the Government, or any member of the Government? 3, What will be the cost of employing Dr. Herman for conducting this Commission? 4, Is it intended to conduct a further inquiry under this Royal Commissioner into other companies, such as the Swan Brewery, the West Australian Newspapers Company, the Orient or P. & O. Navigation Company? 5, If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, and 2, A resolution was passed by the Legislative Council requesting the appointment of a Commission on the 12th November, 1930. Copy of resolution is attached. 3, The cost cannot be stated until the inquiry is completed. 4, No. 5, The Government has not (as was the case in connection with the Coal Commission) received a request to hold an inquiry. Resolution—That a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into and report upon the coal industry of the State and particularly regarding:—1, The present position of the coal industry including the production, carriage, distribution, bunkering, and sale of coal. 2, The cost of production, including interest, rent, royalties, commission salaries, wages, railway and shipping freights and all other expenditure. 3, The profits or losses of collieries or corporations interested in the coal industry. 4, The efficiency of management, marketing, and control, including business methods, keeping of accounts, method of mining, and the utilisation of by-products. 5, The importation of coal into the State, the relative values of imported and State coals.