

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 25th October, 1939.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—BRITISH PURCHASES OF AUSTRALIAN PRODUCE.

Export Lambs.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has any agreement been entered into between the British and Commonwealth Governments for the purchase of export lambs? 2, If so, what are the terms of such agreement in respect to— (a) price to be paid to the grower; (b) payment to the exporting company, and for what services such payment is made; (c) payment to all agents by way of commission, etc. 3, If no agreement has been completed, under what conditions are export lambs being received now and to what charges are they subject?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The State representative of the Commonwealth Meat Board advised to-day that the agreement is not yet finalised. 2, See answer to No. (1). 3, Receiving and treatment for export is being carried on in the usual way. Works charges are one penny per pound, for which lambs are slaughtered, graded, frozen, wrapped, and placed f.o.b. the steamer. Twenty-eight days' free storage is also included. All meat is being taken over by the Food Committee acting on behalf of the British Government on arrival in the United Kingdom. There is at present no definite knowledge of prices.

Wool.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has the Government a copy of the agreement recently entered into between the British and Commonwealth Governments for the purchase of the Australian wool clip? 2, If so, is it his intention to lay such agreement on the Table of the House? 3, In the event of question No. 1 being answered in the negative, will he obtain a copy of the agreement as soon as possible and lay it on the Table of the House

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No. Such information is not even in the hands of the locally appointed Commonwealth Wool Committee. 2, See answer No. (1). 3, The whole question is a Commonwealth one and the availability of the information will rest with the Commonwealth authorities.

QUESTION—STATE QUARRIES.

Complaints about Explosions, and Loss on Operating.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: In view of the continued and, this year, considerably increased loss by the Government Quarries at Boya, added to the grave objections which persist at Darlington because of the blasting and other operations of this nerve-racking and house-destroying enterprise, is he prepared to investigate arrangements recently made by the Perth City Council and on the same basis give consideration to the purchase of stone for Government use from privately-owned quarries, viz.—The rate to be such as is now charged the Works Department by the Government Quarries at Boya less 2s. per ton.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: No.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Coal Imports and Prices.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How much coal was imported from New South Wales for the Railway Department for the years ended September, 1938 and 1939? 2, Which collieries supplied the coal and what prices per ton were paid to each colliery for such coal?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, Year ended 30th September, 1938—

	Tons.	Per ton. s. d.	Price ship's slings.
Large coal ..	12,204	37 6	Fremantle
Large coal ..	2,073	40 6	Geraldton
Small coal ..	5,035	34 0	Fremantle
Year ended 30th September, 1939—			
Large coal ..	9,022	40 3	Fremantle
Large coal ..	2,008	43 3	Geraldton
Large coal ..	502	50 3	Esperance
Small coal ..	5,510	37 3	Fremantle

Stanford Main, Richmond Main, Pelaw Main and Abermain Collieries were concerned in all shipments at equal prices.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURE.

Crop Insurance.

Mr. BERRY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is the Agricultural Bank receiving commission on crop insurances effected with Harvey Trinder (Australasia), Limited? If so, what is the percentage and on what rates? 2, What rates for fire and hail crop insurance is Harvey Trinder (Aust.), Limited, charging clients of the Agricultural Bank who insure through the Bank?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 19 per cent. 3s. 6d. fire and hail A. class districts; 44s. fire and hail B. class districts. 2, Rates as above.

QUESTION—DRAINAGE.

Butler's Swamp.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is the removal of trees from Butler's Swamp a work on which he could recommend the absorption of men on relief? 2, Has the Town Planning Commissioner made any recommendations to the Government regarding the partial draining of this swamp?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, If submitted by the local authorities concerned on a co-operative basis, the matter will be considered. 2, No.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment.

2. Income Tax (Rates for Deduction).

Introduced by the Premier.

MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [4.38]: I move—

That on Wednesday, the 1st November, and each alternate Wednesday thereafter, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

This is the usual motion introduced at about this stage of the session. In some previous sessions we delayed moving the motion and cut out private members' business altogether after a certain date, but on this occasion we propose to follow the procedure of the last two years and give Government business precedence over private members' business on alternate Wednesdays. As members, know, I have been requested to attend a meeting of the Loan Council to be held in Canberra a fortnight from tomorrow, and I shall have to leave Perth on Saturday week. I am desirous of first introducing various financial Bills, particularly the taxation measures and also the Loan Estimates, so that during my absence the House may consider its attitude to those matters and be prepared to deal with them immediately on my return. We do not desire to cut out private members' business altogether, but in order to get business to the Council, we propose to give Government business precedence on alternate Wednesdays for the time being.

The Government does not intend to introduce much more legislation. I think it undesirable that we should have much in the way of contentious legislation brought before Parliament at the present juncture of foreign relations, but we have necessarily to introduce certain Bills. Most of the measures to be brought down will be in the nature of ordinary business such as measures for reserves and road closure, provision for the revocation of forest areas and similar measures which are usually introduced towards the end of the session. The Government will be compelled to introduce an amendment of the Superannuation Act in order to meet certain difficulties which have been brought to light, and which can only be overcome by revision of the Act. They were not foreseen when the measure was introduced. There will not be a great deal more of important legislation. The Minister for Lands will introduce a Bill dealing

with reserves, having in view the erection of public buildings in an area which the measure will define. There will also be two or three consequential Bills affecting the ordinary administration of departments, but the major portion of the important business of the session will have been introduced by the end of next week. The Government desires to get its business sent forward to the Legislative Council, so that that Chamber may have adequate time for its consideration. Therefore the motion is moved. I reiterate the assurance always given to members in this connection that there shall be opportunities for full consideration of private members' business already introduced. If there is anything further that is urgent or important, and which private members feel should be brought before Parliament, opportunities to discuss it will be afforded. Endeavours will also be made to forward private members' legislation to the Legislative Council expeditiously.

I believe there will be no hesitation on the part of hon. members in agreeing to the motion. I repeat that I am anxious to afford ample opportunities for discussion of all private members' business on the notice paper. Good progress has been made with both Government business and private members' business already before the House, and I think it will not be necessary for Parliament to sit right up to Christmas. With reasonable expedition we should be able to close at the end of November.

Mr. Marshall: If there was not so much time wasted in the House, we would not have to sit so late in the year.

The PREMIER: Perhaps the fact of the hon. member being in the Chair, where he directs the Chamber in the proper manner instead of giving expression to opinions which sometimes by their repetition weary the House—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier must not reflect on the hon. member.

The PREMIER: There are some loquacious members who take up a good deal of time. During this session, however, we have all sincerely desired to give proper and expeditious consideration to business. It is not advisable to have much controversial legislation. Under present conditions, if the House is prepared to sit on and deal with business, the Government will not be

desirous of keeping members longer than is absolutely necessary.

Perhaps in these highly critical times it would be desirable, instead of proroguing Parliament as is usual, merely to adjourn when the business has been completed, leaving the House open to be called together promptly when especially urgent questions arise. Therefore I would suggest leaving the House to stand adjourned instead of proroguing it. Then the machine will be ready to deal with any urgent questions, instead of our having first to go through the formalities of calling members together for a new session.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.46]: I offer no objection to the motion, being quite prepared to accept the Premier's assurance that full opportunity will be given for the discussion of all private members' business, and to transmit their legislation to another place in sufficient time for it to be considered there. I am glad to hear the Premier say he is desirous of avoiding a prorogation of Parliament. That is a sound view to take, because occasion may arise to call Parliament together at short notice, and there would be considerable delay if it had been prorogued.

The notice paper is still very full of Government Bills. Personally I think it would not matter at all if no further Bills were introduced. The country could do very well without them. I do not know how the public keeps in touch with all the legislation that is passed. In fact, there is far too much legislation, and also, I am sorry to say, too much administration. No doubt some Bills of which Ministers have given notice should be considered, but I hope that any measures likely to be presented will be brought down as early as possible. The Minister for Industrial Development, I believe, has on the way a measure to amend the Bread Act though of course it may be introduced in another place. That Bill is likely to prove a hardy annual.

I promise the Premier that this side of the Chamber will render every assistance to get legislation through the House. We have not always given Government measures our blessing but I may claim that we have used none but sound arguments in relation to them. Certainly we have not delayed any legislation during this session. On the other hand, the Government has extended to this

side every reasonable facility and consideration. I hope no more Bills will be introduced; we could do without the Loan Bill this year, I suppose! We on this side of the House will do everything possible to expedite legislation introduced into this House, after having first given it the fullest possible consideration so that the public may rest assured that it has had the wise counsel of members.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [4.51]: Members sitting on these cross-benches do not desire to offer any opposition to the proposal made by the Premier for the conduct of the business of this House. Personally, I am glad to hear the House is only to stand adjourned when the present session is ended; because I believe it to be of the greatest importance that we should be in a position to be called together without any formality to consider any developments that may take place in the world at large. No one can forecast what might happen; events of the gravest importance may arise that will require the consideration of all members. There is one matter I would like to mention. It deals with the position taken up by us respecting legislation so far brought down. The Premier is fully aware of the fact that, so far as we are concerned, we have entirely put an end to party views. We have endeavoured to assist the Government in the legislation that has been brought down in the public interest, and we have not on any occasion endeavoured in the slightest respect to embarrass the Government.

The Premier: That is so.

HON. N. KEENAN: We have done that because we are convinced of the absolute necessity to face the present situation. But there is the relevant duty that falls on the Government not to take advantage of the position we now occupy.

The Minister for Mines: We would not do that.

HON. N. KEENAN: I trust not. I hope that expression of belief on my part will be warranted by the Government's not introducing legislation tending to strain, if not to end, that happy state of mind. I am sure that is the feeling of the whole House, but it is desirable that it should be emphasised. With these few remarks, I assure the Premier that we are not averse for a moment to the time of the House being taken up, so far as

is necessary, with Government business. We do not intend to offer any opposition to the proposal.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.53]: I do not intend strenuously to oppose the motion. I do say, however, that I have great regard for the rights of private members. The Premier must be ultra-optimistic if he considers that we can get through the business on the notice paper by the end of November. Mr. Speaker, from your long experience in Parliament, you know—as I know from my fairly long experience—that at the end of every session we have what are termed “slaughtered innocents”—Bills introduced not only by private members but by the Government of the day—which at the last moment are allowed to go by the board or are decided by managers. I voice my protest against such procedure. I know, and I am sure every other member knows, that the public is demanding that their servants give more consideration in Parliament to the problems of the day. You, Sir, are twitted, I am twitted, and every other member is twitted, with not earning our salaries. People say that Parliament meets in July or in August and sits till Christmas and that members spend the remaining period of the year doing nothing, whereas we should be sitting at least nine or ten months in the year. With that expression of opinion I entirely agree. If we adopt the Premier's suggestion, why not go a step further and abolish State Parliaments altogether? Why not say, “We will have only one Parliament for Australia”—I am opposed to that—and appoint nine Ministers to run the affairs of the State?”

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is getting away from the motion.

MR. J. H. SMITH: Not so very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep to the motion.

MR. J. H. SMITH: If you will permit me, Sir, I will connect my remarks. I believe we should be dealing with problems arising out of the present war, and not with regulations. As I say, the public is demanding that its representatives in Parliament should spend more time in Parliament than they do at present. It is all very well for members representing metropolitan constituencies; but when the House is not sitting, country members are working much harder. When

Parliament is sitting, country members are having a holiday.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the hon. member that we are discussing the motion, not metropolitan members or country members.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier, in his opening remarks, said that he desired Parliament to close in November.

The Premier: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the Premier said that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier did make that statement, otherwise I would not have referred to it. You, Sir, know me well enough to be aware that I would not have referred to the statement had the Premier not made it. I do not propose vigorously to oppose the motion, but I do not like it. Private members have not enough privileges at the present time and I do not desire any of those that do exist to be taken away. Would it not be better to give private members greater latitude to enable them to bring all their business before the House? Even if Parliament sat until Christmas, or after Christmas, no harm would result. I do not propose to divide the House on the motion, because I suppose I would not be supported; but I raise my voice in protest against the motion.

Question put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Doney, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Mann (Beverley) on ground of ill-health.

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

- 1, State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.
- 2, Tramways Purchase Act Amendment.
- 3, Wheat Products (Prices Fixation) Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (2)—REPORTS.

- 1, Death Duties (Taxing Act Amendment).
 - 2, Administration Act Amendment.
- Adopted.

BILL—LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

MOTION—HORSE RACING AND BETTING.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 30th August on the following motion by Mr. Hughes (East Perth):—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the incidence, management and control of horse-racing in all its forms and into betting and other practices arising out of and incidental thereto and report upon the present law thereon, the enforcement of such law and the advisability of any revision, amendment and/or codification thereof.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [5.1]: I do not consider there is much need for the appointment of a select committee as suggested by the motion. Inquiries into this subject have been made in other States faced with similar problems to our own. Investigations were made in South Australia and in Queensland, and we have had the advantage of perusing reports arising out of those exhaustive inquiries. As Treasurer I do not feel inclined to agree to the appointment of any select committees or Royal Commissions, because they cost money and their investigations occupy much time. People say this inquiry will not cost much and that inquiry will not cost much, but there is a Scottish proverb with which the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) will be familiar, to the effect that "Many a mickle makes a muckle": and if we were to appoint many select committees, the aggregate cost would be considerable. Sometimes, I will admit, useful inquiries have been made, proving of great benefit to the House; but the results achieved have not been commensurate with their cost. An investigation such as the motion proposes would develop into a lengthy inquiry, and the expense is not warranted in the circumstances. Hon. members know all about this subject.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Some know too much.

THE PREMIER: I do not believe that anybody can know too much about anything, but some members know more about this subject than others. It is one in which every member of the House is well versed, and there is no need for probing by a select committee. The Government gave consideration to the question of betting last session, and introduced a Bill providing for control. Not meeting with approval, it was

dropped. A Bill having the exactly opposite object of discouraging betting was moved in another place, and that also did not meet with approval. On the vexed subject of betting and the practices associated with it, the community's opinions are divided. As the Government discovered last year, to obtain a consensus of opinion amongst the people or their representatives in Parliament as to the best form of legislation would be extremely difficult. Members will have perceived from replies to questions that, as the years go by, prosecutions for illegal betting increase. People who indulge in this illegal practice are meted in greater and greater penalties as time goes on. The Government does not want that, but it does desire people to obey the law. Like thieving and other evils—

Mr. Raphael: There are a lot of thieves amongst the bookies.

The PREMIER:—this practice can be subdued only by the imposition of effective penalties. Penalties have been inflicted by the magistrates who control the various courts. It is unfortunate that people will persist in breaking the law; but as they do so, they must be prepared to suffer the consequences. The Government has not been lax in endeavouring to curtail these illegal activities. There is no need for obtaining further information by means of a select committee, because every hon. member knows all about the matter. In introducing the motion the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) submitted facts of which every member was already aware. To appoint a select committee would be a waste of time and money, and as Treasurer I do not feel inclined to agree to the expenditure of public funds on an inquiry of this kind. In the circumstances, I oppose the motion.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.7]: I do not propose to speak at length on this motion, but during the course of my remarks I shall possibly tell the House some of my experiences. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) and other members have delved deeply into the question of horse-racing, more especially as regards starting-price betting and kindred problems. Every member of the last Assembly had the matter prominently in his mind; and a good deal of lobbying and propaganda occurred in relation to the Bill

that was introduced by the Minister, a Bill which I suppose had to a great extent the blessing of members of the Government. The motion moved by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) goes much further, covering all ramifications of horse-racing. I have had experience as an owner and breeder of race horses, and have raced them on the course and leased them. I have had experience as a punter and as a starting price bettor. The only experiences I have not had are "swinging the bag" and deriving from horse-racing the benefits that have been secured by others. I speak with a knowledge of the game from A to Z.

I am disappointed that the Government has not introduced legislation to deal with this old problem. As a result of having read the debates in "Hansard" and newspaper reports of what happened in the 1938 session, I thought that one of the first duties of whatever Government was returned to office would be to submit a Bill dealing with all phases of horse-racing. But what do we find? This Government, and preceding Governments for many years, have closed their eyes to what has been transpiring. Members of this House know that it is just as illegal to bet on a racecourse as on the street or in a starting-price shop. The Government is guilty of an illegal act inasmuch as it is taxing bookmakers' tickets. The Government has no right to do that. I remember when the measure providing for that tax was introduced. So does the Minister for Works. I remember when deputations waited upon the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell. The legality of the question never entered into consideration, but a tax of 3d. was imposed on bookmakers' tickets, and each successive Government has perpetuated that tax, thus breaking the law in order to build up revenue. And the Government expects other people to do its job. Even if the motion is carried I do not think it will do much good.

The Premier: No.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Every member of this House is conversant with what is happening. What is the use of having a select committee and taking voluminous evidence from all sections of the community and then not acting upon the committee's report? Why not introduce a Bill here to legalise horse-racing and betting?

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: If the Government did that, it would not be returned to office next time.

Mr. Raphael: We introduced a Bill last session, and the Government was returned to office.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am afraid my friend the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) would receive a rude awakening if she went amongst the ordinary members of the community and ascertained their opinions regarding starting-price betting. If she went amongst my people and said she intended to endeavour to stamp out starting-price betting, she would not be a representative of that constituency much longer, no matter what following she had. I did not evade this issue in my electorate. I said a man in the bush was just as much entitled to have his few shillings on a horse as was the man who went on to a racecourse in Perth or somewhere else. I pointed out that in each instance the practice was illegal. I said also, in front of ministers of religion, that the drink traffic and the drug traffic, which is possibly a greater curse than starting-price betting, were legalised and placed under strict control. If that was so, I asked, why should not starting-price betting be placed under strict control?

Mr. Withers: Would you apply that to two-up?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am one of those individuals who are never ashamed of the light of day. I do not believe that if people want to do something they should be forced into dark corners and little alleyways to do it. That is how crime originates. The Western Australian Turf Club is licensed by Act of Parliament to conduct its activities. We have heard about its Star Chamber methods—that the Press is not admitted to its deliberations, that it can refuse to grant licenses and can take away a man's living. I have nothing to say against racing clubs generally. It is claimed that the profits they make assist in improving the breed of horses. It was for that reason that licenses were first granted to racing clubs. We now have proprietary clubs, which exploit the public in every way. They collect funds from the bookmakers, and give them the right to bet on their courses. That is quite illegal.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Does that not call for an inquiry?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Will the hon. member say that he knows nothing about horse racing and the like? Does he not know what is going on? Of course he knows all about it, just as other members do. If we know all about these things, why have an inquiry? Proprietary clubs now have their own totalisators. They pay the Government so much a year for that right, and take all the fractions that occur in the bets that are made. The Turf Club does the same thing. If a horse pays 9s. 11½d. the club gives out 9s. and keeps the 11½d. In Victoria the clubs would pay 9s. 6d., and in New South Wales they would pay 9s. 9d. In this State the clubs put the 11½d. into their own pockets. We all know that, so that no inquiry could tell us more. Some members of Parliament say there is nothing but corruption and bribery in the police force. They assert that the Commissioner of Police could close all these betting shops. He probably has a go at them every five or six weeks, and the starting-price bookmakers complain that this happens too often. The Treasurer may say it is a good thing to be getting a revenue of £20,000 odd from that source, that he intends to continue accepting the money. The Commissioner of Police, on the other hand, declares that S.P. betting causes him a great deal of worry. If the Government desired to do so, it could close all starting-price betting shops and put a stop to all betting in two minutes.

The Minister for Mines: By putting a stop to horse racing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: By putting the Act into force. The authorities could go to the Perth race-course or any proprietary course and prosecute all the bookmakers who are operating there. There would then be no more horse racing.

Mr. Hughes: They could not stop the totalisator betting.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That has been legalised. I am talking about the other forms of betting. Everyone knows all about them. An inquiry would serve no purpose. If I thought it would do any good I would support it. We all know the conditions that apply to betting. What I should like the Government to do would be to bring down legislation this session to deal with

the whole question. That should have been done long ago. Had such legislation been brought down, the member for East Perth would not have moved his motion. The Government has fallen down on its job. Possibly it thought that the public would forget all about the matter. As a fact, people have been looking forward to the Government bringing down a Bill of that kind.

The Minister for Mines: What kind of legislation?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A Bill to put the racing business on a proper basis, to legalise betting in every form both on and off racecourses.

Mr. Hughes: Would you include betting on dogs?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I would include everything. I am entitled to wager a couple of shillings that a particular fly on the wall of this Chamber will cross to a certain point before another fly that may be chosen by the member for East Perth. That is the spirit abroad amongst schoolboys and schoolgirls. When young people have a little argument what are the first words they use?

Mr. Raphael: "I will bet you two bob."

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The words are "I will bet you." We have all heard them. It is no use trying to get away from that spirit. Were I to vote for the motion I would be doing no good. Pressure should be brought to bear upon the Government to introduce the necessary legislation. It can then be built up in this Chamber to the requisite standard. I have not always received a fair deal in my racing proclivities. When I owned my own horses and trained them, I did better. The member for Kimberley was my jockey in those days, and I had a good run for my money. I was very proud when I drove my pony all covered with lather and sweat out to the Bridgetown racecourse. My jockey used to complain about it, and almost wept at the sight of the pony, but he invariably won a race on it. If we could get back to the old days everything would be all right. I do know something about the business, having had a long and costly experience of all its ramifications. We should endeavour to influence the Government to legalise betting on all racecourses.

Mr. Thorn: An easy job.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: These practices should be legalised so that nothing need be

done under the lap. No doubt most of us have done something under the lap during some part of our lives. We want to do everything legally, and an Act must be put on the statute-book so that racegoers are not continually robbed. We do not get a fair deal in the starting-price shops. I hold no brief for them. It is hard enough to pick a winner, but when one does one is told that the odds are only six to one. Sometimes one may pick an outsider at thirty to one, but if the horse wins the odds are generally found to be no better than six or ten to one. At the Trots the odds are about five to two for a place. Bookmakers also bet under the lap, and keep the odds very short when bets are lodged on Eastern States races. The Premier could bring down a non-party Bill, one that could be amended in the desired directions by members of this Chamber, without there being any squabbling, interference by the churches and heads of different organisations, the devil being on one side and God on the other. A private member could not bring down a Bill of that kind because it would be looked upon as an interference with the revenue of the State. You, Mr. Speaker, would not allow a private member to introduce such a Bill. Should the Premier not desire to bring down such legislation, he could depute one of his colleagues to do so. Our duty would then be to model the measure along such lines that it would stand for all time. I would like to support the motion, but do not think it will serve any good purpose. We could get nothing out of an inquiry that we do not already know. The member for East Perth, the member for Murchison, the member for Guildford-Midland (who professes innocence) know all about horse racing and betting. No doubt the question is a vexed one.

I believe the police are doing a good job, and do not deserve the allegations of corruption and bribery that have been made against them. The officers of the department are not deserving of such epithets. I know that people do bet in streets controlled by municipalities and road boards. No restrictions have been placed upon them by the local authorities in that respect. That means that women with perambulators and the general public have to walk around coteries of men who are betting either in the street or on the footpath. Far better would it be to legalise the whole thing so that

there may no longer be any more back-alley betting. I am afraid I cannot support the motion.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [5.28]: I had not intended to speak to this motion, because members all know my views on the question. Since hearing the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), however, I am forced to say something. I appeal to the Government not to be cajoled into losing their occupancy of the Treasury bench by the speech Ministers have just heard. The hon. member wants the Premier to bring down a Bill, knowing full well that if he did so neither he nor his Ministers would be returned to power. I undertake to say that if any member of this Chamber challenges me on this question I will go into his electorate, and I bet him he will not be returned to the Legislative Assembly. The member for Nelson does not know whether the Government should legislate on the side of righteousness or on the side of the devil. He is not sure which way it should go. He hopes that if we do legislate on the side of the devil, we shall be doing nothing—to use his own words—under the lap.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I have friends in both camps.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member may have friends in both camps. I feel that we would not be legislating merely for adults such as we are. What does it matter whether the hon. member, at his age or any other member, goes to the devil. It does matter a great deal whether children are given the opportunity to go to the devil. That is why I protest against legislation on such a subject as this, because I am not here in the interests of people of my own age but of those who are younger than I am. I hope members will vote in favour of the inquiry suggested by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). Such an investigation would probably throw quite a lot of light on a question of which many people have little knowledge beyond an appreciation of the fact that starting-price betting is wrong. There are thousands of people throughout the State who know nothing about racing or the starting-price betting problem, other than that starting-price betting shops are a menace to the community. I trust I am not diverging from the main issue when I say it is a common practice for butchers, bakers, grocers and other

shopkeepers in Perth and the surrounding suburbs to accept bets and pass them on to the starting-price shops in their respective districts. It is becoming quite common, too, for the tradesman that calls at the householder's door to act as an agent for the starting-price bookmakers. Surely we do not want that practice to be encouraged! Surely we should not legislate respecting matters that are wrong! We should aim at legislating in relation to matters that are decent, and so assist in making the position for our children worthwhile. We should legislate for the future. I trust members will support the motion.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.32]: I intend to make my position clear on this question. Although I would like to support the motion I am afraid I cannot do so, because the present juncture is not opportune for such action. Probably if it were brought forward during the course of another session, and if the wording of the motion were slightly altered—in addition, if I were sure that the facts were as I want them to be—nothing would give me greater pleasure than to delve into the ramifications of trotting and racing in Western Australia.

Mr. J. H. Smith: The two sections are bound in one.

MR. RAPHAEL: It is marvellous what power some people have acquired through the control they have gained, not so much of the actual racing as in other directions. The position of the president of the Trotting Association is of a peculiar nature. When he was first elected to his present office, he was in poor circumstances. Members who were farmers will agree with me on that point. To-day the president of the association is an influential man, both financially and, I might say, politically.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You have no proof of that, have you?

Mr. Warner: What has he done to you?

MR. RAPHAEL: That man can go away at the expense of the Trotting Association, which pays the whole of his expenses for a tour of the Eastern States. The association gave him £250 to go away with; and when a member of the committee of the association goes away, he gets £250 as well. While they are on such trips they can purchase horses on their own behalf, and on

their return to Western Australia they are able to lease those horses on bills of sale under noms de plume. I have gone to the trouble of visiting the Supreme Court for the purpose of making searches. There is the well-known trotter, Kay Francis, which was leased under a bill of sale from J. P. Stratton to H. Richter. We have been told that when Mr. Stratton purchased the animal, a rank mare, he paid £35 for her. I do not think any other horse of that breeding has ever been purchased in New Zealand or Australia at so low a figure as £35. That animal was brought back here and given an extraordinarily favourable handicap mark, with the result that she won race after race, until at last she is regarded as a potential champion. That is not the only instance I have in mind; it is one of a number. That sort of thing has gone on time after time. The Trotting Association has paid the expenses of its officials to enable them to tour the Eastern States and New Zealand, and when they return beautiful receptions are arranged for them at the Adelphi Hotel. One was held when the president of the association returned, and another when a committeeman returned a week later. On each occasion a large sum of money was spent on the magnificent reception accorded the official after his visit to the East. They may go away together, but they return singly, and so the merry circle of receptions is able to continue.

Mr. J. Hegney: Should that matter be inquired into?

Mr. RAPHAEL: If I thought anything would come out of it, and that we had time to do the job properly, I would support such a suggestion.

Mr. J. Hegney: We have plenty of time.

Mr. RAPHAEL: No, not half the time to enable me to gain the knowledge I would like to secure. Should a select committee be appointed to carry out such an investigation, it will automatically cease to exist when Parliament is no longer in session. No doubt an inquiry should be held regarding starting-price betting as conducted to-day. I am not like the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver). I fought my last election on the starting-price question. When I was asked my ideas about that matter, by religious bodies and others, I replied very definitely that I was in favour

of starting-price betting. Ministers and others attended my meetings and asked me for my views, and I told them flatly that I was in accord with the practice. I told them that the working-class man was just as much entitled to place his bets as was the man moving in wealthier circles. Because the member for Subiaco and so many of her friends in her electorate have plenty of money they can afford to visit the racecourses, but the majority of the people in Victoria Park are not in that fortunate position. Then again the element of class distinction on the racecourses has to be contended with. The worker is not permitted to go into sections of the racecourse where wealthier people are accommodated, because he is not regarded as good enough.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You go to the favoured portions of racecourses.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not go to the races. I have not been on a racecourse this year, so the member for Subiaco is wrong again.

Mr. Styants: You must have reformed a lot.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have reformed to the extent that I am determined to spend my money in whatever direction I choose, and I do not interfere with the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants) in the expenditure of his money. If I want to go to a racecourse, I will go there.

Mr. Hughes: Have I not seen you collecting a few pounds on the trots?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not go to "Robbery Park". I have not been on a trotting course this year, and I do not intend to go there. On the other hand, I shall not attempt to tell any person where he should spend his money. I shall not make myself the custodian of the spending silver of my electors. I confess that I have often spoken to some of them about racing. Some of the old chaps and some of the pensioners have asked me what I knew, and I have passed on to them the good tips that I have received. Unfortunately, after the races were over I heard about it, and I had to refund the old chaps the shillings they lost through following my good tips. I was only too pleased to do that. The position as it exists to-day arises in no small degree from various factors, and I confess I am definitely opposed to the present-day conditions applying to starting-price betting. I come from South Australia, and I well remember

starting-price bookies being locked up in lavatories behind barbed wire. When police raids were conducted, the betting tickets were torn up and thrown down, the chain being pulled so as to dispose of them. That is the sort of thing that will take place in Western Australia if the position is allowed to drift. That is what we can expect if the police attempt to force the issue, as they probably could. I have seen men thrown down on footpaths and the police endeavouring to force betting tickets out of their mouths. Such a spectacle was quite common in those days.

Mr. Withers: And that in the city of churches, too!

Mr. RAPHAEL: All this was caused by the attitude of the police and the continual raids upon betting premises. In consequence, those concerned in the business, including the public, have been driven from buildings and out into the open until now in Victoria Park, Subiaco, and elsewhere, betting is taking place on footpaths because the law provides lighter penalties for offences committed there. Magistrates in their wisdom—I am not speaking of them in any derogatory sense whatever—have imposed varying fines. There is a law for Victoria Park, another for Perth and Subiaco, and still another for Fremantle. A starting-price bookmaker in Perth may be fined £75, but the one operating at Fremantle is fined only £10.

Mr. Hughes: No, you are wrong. The last man was fined £75.

Mr. RAPHAEL: At any rate, the position was fairly easy for the Fremantle book-maker in the past.

Mr. Hughes: In addition, that man was sent on for a criminal trial.

Mr. RAPHAEL: And he got out of it; I remember that case.

Mr. Hughes: But he was fined £75 as well.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have every respect for Mr. Craig as a magistrate, and wish him every good luck. If he considers a fine of £10 adequate, that is at his discretion. If the magistrate in Perth decides upon a much heavier fine, that, too, is at his discretion. But in view of those circumstances, I say the law is wrong. There is this to be said in favour of the Government: Despite the castigations it has received from time to time, it has carried out its duty; and if only some members had had the—I was going to

say, "the guts", Mr. Speaker, but I must not—courage to face up to their responsibilities, the problem might have been tackled. Some members on the Opposition side of the House had the courage to speak their minds. Had they given effect to their expressed views, we would probably have had the starting-price betting problem cleaned up by now. Instead of adopting that course, we had the spectacle of many beautiful damsels attending the House as a deputation and engaging in lobbying, and, as a result of their wiles, some members were persuaded to leave the precincts of this building. They did not vote on the question, despite their promise of support.

Mr. Thorn: You fell for them!

Mr. RAPHAEL: No, I did not—not that I would have minded doing so. Had those members voted and given effect to their spoken word, probably the starting-price bettors and bookmakers would to-day be operating under some form of regulation and control. In the course of her remarks, the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) referred to what she described as the terrible spectacle of women with perambulators in many of the betting shops. From time to time I have visited the various betting houses in South Australia. I always make it my business to do so when I go there, and I have never seen prams at any of the shops.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I showed you photographs!

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do agree with her that it is wrong for men and women to be mixed up in those betting shops on Saturday afternoons.

The Minister for Mines: What is good enough for a man should be good enough for a woman.

Mr. RAPHAEL: We can admit that betting shops are not places where women should take their kiddies. I am in accord with that.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: They are not places where women should allow their husbands to go.

Mr. RAPHAEL: On the other hand, I believe that if a man has 3s. or 5s. to spend—that is the most that many have—then if they want to bet, they should be entitled to do so. This is a free country.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Those men deprive their women folk of that money.

Mr. RAPHAEL: We still live under a democratic form of government. Until Hitler beats us and democracy goes by the board, I shall continue to advocate freedom of action and speech for every man and woman.

Mr. J. Hegney: Freedom of speech is not involved.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the hon. member were to be in the company of some punters on Saturday afternoons when things go wrong, he would agree that freedom of speech is definitely involved. To revert to my references to the W.A. Trotting Association, an investigation such as I would like would occupy quite a considerable time. The guarantee system has been allowed to continue for a period of years and it is only by judicious handling that it has kept trotting going. It should have been wiped out years ago. We find that by devious methods the guarantee is carried on and the latest is that it is extended to the Fremantle Trotting Club, and so that club has been able to carry on successfully. Fremantle trotting is under the control of an excellent committee which could get whatever money it required from the banks.

Before I conclude, I should like to have a word to say about totalisator fractions. I went to a trotting meeting, though not this year, and on the occasion of my visit I took the trouble to check up the number of tickets taken out on each of the six races, the dividends that were paid and the fractions that were kept by the association. Working it out I found that on the six races the fractions totalled £220. That was all money that should have been paid to the public. We know that the argument is advanced by racing clubs that it is only by being able to retain the fractions that it is possible for them to keep going. To me it does not appear right that the racing bodies should retain the fractions. The position should be cleaned up. I could have said a good deal more on the question generally but I will conclude by expressing the hope that during next session something of a more tangible nature will be put before us, and that we will be given a better opportunity to discuss the question, not only as it affects the Trotting Association but racing generally. The Trotting Association we know inflicts penalties on the small man all the time, while the rich man is allowed

to go free. We know that bookmakers, without any reason being given, are told that their licenses will not again be granted, despite the fact that a man may have been following his calling as a bookmaker at that course for 15 or 20 years. That is not British justice. After 15 years or more of betting at the trotting course, a bookmaker is suddenly told that his license will not again be granted. Perhaps he is informed that the racing game would be better by his absence, but it took the Trotting Association 15 years to find that out. One bookmaker I have in mind is as good a citizen as any other man in this State. I know that his home life and conduct generally are unimpeachable and I can say that because I have known him for many years. When a body such as the Trotting Association is given the right to take a man's livelihood from him, it is time everything associated with the racing game should be investigated, and legislation passed to permit a person, treated in the manner that I have just described, to appeal to a higher authority. I do not intend to oppose the motion, but I do hope that next session something more tangible will be submitted for our consideration, something that will be applicable to both galloping and trotting races.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [5.50]: I should like to make a few observations on the motion before it goes to the vote. I regret that for financial reasons the Premier cannot see his way to support the request contained in the motion. I am aware that as Treasurer he must carefully watch expenditure even in the smallest sums; but an inquiry by a select committee would not cost any large amount. It would, however, lead to the elucidation of facts. So I cannot understand the other portion of his argument. We are aware that the betting question is one that requires to be solved at the earliest possible moment because it is drifting to a condition that—it is not too strong a phrase to use—is deplorable. To mix up the question of gambling in betting shops with that of gambling on a racecourse has always appeared to me strangely illogical because those who go to the racecourse go there to gamble. At the same time many go there without any intention at all of gambling. I do that myself. I attend many race

meetings and I can honestly say that for the last year I have not had a single bet on any race. With many other people, I enjoy the outing and I enjoy looking at the horses. That position, however, does not and cannot exist in the shops. The people who patronise the shops go there to bet and nothing else, and they are wasting valuable substance. It is not for one moment alleged that since we know all the facts an inquiry will have no beneficial result. The inquiry would need, I presume, not only to elucidate all the facts but also suggest—and this is what we want to arrive at—a possible solution that will bring to an end the present disastrous state of affairs. It seems to be that the investigation would very possibly have a good effect. I want to dissociate myself with the remarks made by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) when he commented on the introduction of extraneous matter dealing with the constitution of the Western Australian Turf Club committee. I know most of the members of that body and I know perfectly well they are all men of probity. They are called upon at times to do very disagreeable work and for no reward, but solely with the desire to promote the best interests of the sport. It is no pleasure to any man to have the duty cast upon him of disqualifying a jockey, a trainer or a horse owner, no pleasure whatever. That must be done if a committee-man is convinced in his own mind, on an examination of the facts, that a person has been guilty of mal-practice. So I say we should observe some decorum in criticising members of the committee of a racing body, and we should not hold them up to obloquy and declare, for some reason or other, that they have not brains nor a conscience. I very strongly object to this House being made the vehicle for criticising persons who are not able to answer for themselves. These remarks also apply to the comments that have been passed on to the chairman of the Western Australian Trotting Association. I differ from the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael). It is absurd to say that Mr. Stratton was a person of no means when he became associated with the sport of trotting. Mr. Stratton is a man of substantial means.

Mr. Raphael: A lot more substantial now.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is improper to suggest that that person's position is due to his association with trotting. I have never spoken a word to Mr. Stratton; all the same, I do not like to hear a man who is carrying on a work such as that Mr. Stratton is doing, held up to contempt, merely because he happens to make a success of his position as president of the Trotting Association.

Mr. Raphael: I could say a lot more about him.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have no doubt the hon. member could. The hon. member also introduced a lot of extraneous matter concerning totalisator fractions. It surprises me to hear statements made by members in this House, statements that would not be uttered if only those members took the trouble to find out for themselves the facts. I have inquired more than once as to what are the facts regarding totalisator fractions and I have been told that the practice is, if the fraction is anything over 8d., the club pays the 1s.; but if the fraction happens to be below 7d., the club keeps the fractions.

Mr. Raphael: They do not pay anything.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I can assure the House that I have been informed absolutely to the contrary; the facts are as I have stated them.

Mr. Raphael: You have been wrongly informed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Well, now, may I continue with my wrong information? I hope that the motion will be carried because I believe good will result from any inquiry that may be made. It will lead not merely to the elucidation of facts but also to evolving some cure for the evil. With the expression of that hope, I shall support the motion.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [6.0]: I propose to support the motion, because I think a case has been made out for an inquiry into the ramifications of horse-racing, not as to starting-price betting only, but as to the control and administration of horse-racing generally. At the moment I doubt whether Parliament could tackle a more important problem. Every one of us knows that a state of affairs exists that is not desirable, and an inquiry might well be made with a view to finding a solution. I

have no intention of discussing the pros and cons of starting-price betting and kindred matters, but I represent an electorate in which most of the racecourses are situated. The main racecourse, the W.A.T.C., Helena Vale, and others are in my territory, and I make contact with all sorts of racing men. I myself am not a racing man. If I attend a meeting once a year—the Christmas meeting—I have no further interest in racing, but I am concerned to see that the sport is conducted in a proper manner.

In my opinion the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) presented a very good case in favour of an inquiry. I have been told that some members of Parliament are involved in starting-price betting, more than two of them, and they are not on one side of the House only. If it is true that they are running starting-price shops under a nom de plume, the time has arrived when they should be exposed.

Mr. Withers: Stand up the guilty ones!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: An inquiry would reveal whether that sort of thing was happening. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox) tries to pooh-pooh the idea. I cannot say whether the statement is true or not, but it is said that so-and-so runs a starting-price shop and does well out of the business. If that is a fact, it should be exposed.

Since the discussion in this House last year on the Bill to deal with betting, further inquiries have been made into the operation of the South Australian system and have revealed that people there are not at all satisfied with it. Therefore those members who extolled the virtues of the legalised betting in South Australia cannot expect much support along those lines to-day. I approve of the attitude of the Labour Government in Queensland, which tackled the problem boldly. Members of that Government were not going to be run by the starting price bettors, and decided to introduce legislation to suppress starting price betting. Some critics contend that the evil has merely been driven underground. To that statement I reply that it is better to have it subterranean and difficult of access rather than find women and children having ready access to it. To make a bet in Queensland is a difficult matter. Women, children and youths have not the ready access to betting facilities there that they have in this State or possibly in other States. The evil

assumed serious proportions in New South Wales, and the Government was impelled to grapple with it and endeavour to clean up the hotels and other places where betting operations were being carried on. Again, the retort might be made that the problem has not been solved in New South Wales. Perhaps that is so. At any rate, we should consider the moral aspect. When it comes to a matter of the worker's dissipating his earnings in betting shops, money that should be available for the use of the wife and children in the home, the moral aspect cannot be disregarded. If a man has money to spare, he has only himself to please in his manner of spending it, but the community is interested when many people dissipate a substantial portion of their hard-earned wages in starting price betting shops.

The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) in his appeal to the Government, desired that a measure should be introduced, one that we could all support, and in that way he thought the matter would be dealt with decently. The Government did introduce a Bill last session, but unfortunately there was not sufficient support in the House to get it passed. Since then the Government has tightened up matters a good deal, and notwithstanding that the Commissioner of Police is still appealing for some definite direction, the police are taking more stringent action in their efforts to suppress starting price betting. Still, the time has come when Parliament should order an inquiry into all the ramifications of horse-racing. I hear complaints about the W.A.T.C. committee, and about those who control the proprietary clubs. I should like to see a comprehensive inquiry made in the hope that proposals could be submitted that would enable us to deal effectively with this problem. The Government should agree to an inquiry so that the whole matter might be investigated. The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) referred to the chairman of the Trotting Association and his activities. Statements of that kind I do not believe until I have proof of them. They are merely statements of the hon. member. Let the facts be known, and then we shall be in a position to decide what action should be taken. The hon. member spoke about the chairman of the Trotting Association being apparently a rich man to-day. There are many men who were poor yesterday and who will probably be rich to-morrow, and

many men who are rich to-day might easily be poor to-morrow.

Mr. Hughes interjected.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Many instances of the kind could be quoted. As I have said, a case has been made out for an inquiry. If the investigation is made by select committee it will not be costly. Probably a Royal Commission would be a more suitable body to examine the whole of the ramifications, and possibly it would have to visit South Australia and Queensland in order to obtain the facts for the information of the House. Failing an inquiry by Royal Commission, I am prepared to support the proposal of the member for East Perth.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [6.8]: I feel inclined to support the motion. Though much has been said about the knowledge of horse-racing and its ramifications possessed by members of this House, I must plead entire ignorance of the laws controlling racing and of the internal administration. I know nothing at all about those matters. Although I have given much consideration to starting-price betting and have studied the conditions applying in other States and countries, I appreciate that that is only one aspect of the matter. I venture the opinion that not one member is au fait with the laws governing racing in Western Australia and the rules of racing made under those laws. I suggest that not one member can claim to be conversant with the laws and rules of racing. The Premier, in his remarks, merely implied that the motion contained substance for an inquiry into starting-price betting. If that was all the motion conveyed, I would vote against it. What we have to consider very carefully is that since the laws that gave the right to certain individuals to control racing in this State were placed on the statute-book, this form of amusement has changed from one of sport to one of a trade or profession. To-day horse-racing is entirely different as a sport or recreation from what it was when the laws governing it were first set up.

If my information is correct, there was a time when men owned race-horses purely out of a desire to promote the sport of horse-racing. I believe that is true. But if any member is under any misapprehension as to that aspect of the matter to-day,

he must be entirely blind. Everyone is well aware that the circumstances attending horse-racing have materially altered and that it is not the sport it was in days gone by, but has become more of a calling in which thousands engage. As the member for Middle Swan indicated, horse-racing has become a sort of industry. I feel disposed to support the motion with a view to getting a full and comprehensive knowledge, firstly of the laws controlling horse-racing in Western Australia, secondly of the powers reserved to the authorities controlling racing under the heading of "Rules of Racing," and thirdly, but not least, of the administration of horse-racing in this State.

I do not wish to set aside unfairly any individual who has taken a prominent part in the administration of horse-racing. As a matter of fact, I do not know one of those individuals personally, but to me it has always appeared to be wrong in principle that the individuals who actually own the race-horses and indulge in the sport should at the same time be administrators of the sport. We should be acting along parallel lines if we said to the Western Australian Football League that, for the purpose of getting efficient control of football, the premier club of the season would be placed in control of football in this State. Having regard to what has happened, I am satisfied that a complete review of the laws of racing and their administration is urgently needed. I have learnt of incidents that do not appeal to me as containing the elements of fair play and justice. I do not say that justice has been lacking, but it is entirely wrong that an individual should be penalised to the extent of being deprived of his livelihood without being given the reasons for that punishment. It is a distinct negation of British fair play to deny a man the right to carry on his business in an industry in which he has been engaged during the whole of his life without a reason being given him.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: Reverting to the point of the powers that either have been granted under the Act to racing authorities in this State, or else assumed by them, we must take into consideration the manner in which such powers may be used to do grave injustice to, and possibly ruin, numerous in-

dividuals, a large proportion of them being deprived of the possibility of earning a livelihood from the day the penalty is imposed until the day they enter into their eternal rest. The most important aspect, members must realise, is that the persons who are in the power of those authorities, and may be ruined by its exercise, are unfortunately compelled to continue the vocation of jockeying or of training and jockeying horses, and must so behave physically as to ruin their constitutional fitness, thus finding it almost impossible to follow any other occupation. In this regard, racing authorities may inflict greater hardship on such persons than would be the case if the powers were exercised by some other authority or organisation on other individuals, who are perfectly fit physically and have not ruined their constitutions by sweating down to ride racehorses. We know of some instances where penalties have been imposed that did not bear even the semblance of justice. An investigation of this side of racing would prove of untold benefit.

I have always held the view that horse-racing should be controlled by a body of persons entirely free from any outside influences of whatsoever nature. By this I imply that any person serving such an organisation should be free from the responsibility of owning racehorses at all. I suggest it is simply beyond the capacity of human nature, beyond the power of any individual, to fail, at any rate occasionally, to take an advantage which gives him a power pernicious for his fellowmen. I have no desire to imply that those in control of racing do, in fact, work any great wrong; but I suggest it is an altogether lop-sided position in which to place individuals to say to them, "You are owners of racehorses, and whatever may happen during the course of a day's meeting or in a particular race in which your horses are competing, you shall, if anything in the nature of a dispute arises, administer racing law in your capacity as administrators fairly and justly, irrespective of whether it affects you personally or not." I believe there are several individuals in this community who have such authority and also own racehorses. They take upon themselves the responsibility of administering racing in Western Australia. While they own horses, they are subjected, as administrators, to temptations that are too

great, their own interests being virtually at stake. I make that suggestion respectfully. We should not place individuals in such an invidious position. I hold that there should be independent control of racing in general.

Again, we know that the Act under which such individuals adjudicate is obsolete, having been passed about 1892, and not subjected to much amendment. We know from experience, and from debates that have taken place in this Chamber, that the authorities controlling racing, if they wish to formulate a by-law under the Act, have to submit it to the Chief Secretary, and that if the Minister does not veto the by-law it comes along to Parliament for sanction. The same remarks apply to racing regulations. In this respect again, investigation is highly necessary. Furthermore, under the rules of racing these authorities can take to themselves unlimited powers; and the rules of racing are never submitted to Parliament. In point of fact, as I said at the outset, no man within my acquaintance possesses a full knowledge of all the by-laws and of the Act relating to horse-racing; and especially not of those things that fall within the category of rules of racing. Those rules are absolutely foreign and strange to hon. members, though we should know all about them. From that standpoint again, inquiry is absolutely necessary. Finally, I disapprove entirely of proprietary horse-racing.

Mr. Lambert: Now you are getting down to something practical.

Mr. MARSHALL: I candidly confess that I am prejudiced in that regard. I consider that no State should permit private ownership of racecourses.

What has been said about betting in shops on horse races is familiar to hon. members, having been repeated here over and over again. I daresay we shall always hold divergent opinions on that subject. However, I suggest we may agree unanimously that no private person should be permitted to conduct a common gaming place such as a racecourse, while other persons are prosecuted and fined for doing the like acts off a racecourse. If this industry of horse racing is to be conducted as an amusement for the benefit of the community, all proprietary racing should cease at once. I do not wish members to believe that the abolition of proprietary racing would reduce betting to any great extent. It cannot. Strange as it may appear, in South Australia as well as in

Western Australia, the major volume of money invested on horse racing is bet on races run outside the particular State.

Mr. Patrick: So we would not stop betting by closing down on horse racing.

Mr. MARSHALL: No. It might reduce betting infinitesimally. Perhaps a slight reduction in the volume might result. However, the greater portion of the money invested in betting by Western Australians would still be invested if racing in this State were stopped entirely; for it is invested on horse races outside this State. If we look for the reason why bettors in Western Australia or in South Australia, for example, invest their money outside the particular State, we can only come to the conclusion that that portion of the public which follows horse racing to enjoy it as a relaxation or as an amusement, considers that horses running outside the particular State run more consistently and more true to form. If we accept that conclusion, we must acknowledge that horse racing in Western Australia needs an immediate and thorough investigation. We can only presume that the public investing on horses running in Western Australia—not to go beyond our own State—is not treated either honestly or fairly.

Those are my views on this motion, and therefore I shall support it. In my opinion an entirely independent board should be given control of Western Australia racing, and the same body of men could control our lotteries. As for the cost of the suggested inquiry, I remind the Premier that he is deriving and for years has been deriving—in fact, ever since he became Treasurer—huge sums of money from the industry in the form of direct taxation on amusements and on bookmakers, and by way of fines. The cost of the suggested inquiry would be infinitesimal compared with the total of those items paid annually into Consolidated Revenue. Therefore the matter of cost need not be considered. I support the motion because the time is long overdue for making a thorough investigation and a complete overhaul of the laws and rules of racing now obtaining in Western Australia.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [7.45]: The inquiry proposed by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) is, I presume, from many aspects a necessary one. In my opinion, in the speech he made some weeks ago he did establish justification for an in-

quiry. The observations that have been made in the House this evening, however, combined with my own experience in past years and more recently of the operations of select committees, definitely lead me to the conclusion that an inquiry by a select committee is not the best method of dealing with this matter. It seems to me that we want an inquiry of a different nature. Most of us, as members of Parliament and as individuals, have very pronounced ideas for or against betting and also on the subject matter of the motion. If we were appointed to make an inquiry into this matter, most of us would, at the conclusion of the inquiry, find ourselves of the same opinion as when we started with respect to the necessity for the alteration or the enforcement of the law, the abolition of proprietary clubs or otherwise. Nevertheless, as I have said, I have come to the conclusion that an inquiry of some kind is necessary. The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) gave the House reasons why he intended to oppose the appointment of a select committee. His reasons, in my opinion, support the contention which I now put forward that an inquiry by a select committee is not the way to deal with this matter. Considerable time will be required to explore all the ramifications of racing. The more we hear of the matter, the more numerous those ramifications appear to be, and the more difficult it would be to frame a report upon them. I therefore feel that an inquiry by a Royal Commissioner would be the better way to deal with the matter, and I propose to move an amendment asking the Government to appoint a Royal Commission. A Royal Commissioner has much more extensive powers than has a select committee, and he can obtain the information he requires much more easily.

Mr. Lambert: You are wrong in that respect.

Mr. WATTS: I am not sure. I have sat on four select committees, and my experience convinces me that the powers of a Royal Commissioner under the Royal Commissioners' Powers Act are far more satisfactory if an inquiry of the kind proposed is to be conducted into something that vitally concerns a large number of our people and upon which very decided and divided views are held.

Mr. Lambert: That shows how superficial is the knowledge you have of the respective

powers of select committees and Royal Commissioners.

Mr. WATTS: Without paying attention to the observations of the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) I move—

That the words "a Select Committee be appointed" be struck out, with a view to inserting other words.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie—on amendment) [7.50]: It was not my intention to speak upon this motion; but probably the member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) has little, or no knowledge of a previous investigation that was made into racing in this State. In 1915 a select committee investigated the conduct of racing in Western Australia, and presented a comprehensive report. I do not intend to traverse all the evidence that was given, nor to discuss the merits or demerits of racing and gambling in all their aspects.

Mr. Fox: Who sat on that committee?

Mr. LAMBERT: Mr. Hudson, who was chairman, and Messrs. Allen, Baxter, Connor, Gilchrist, Underwood, Colebatch, Bolton and Willmott. No notice whatever was taken by either branch of the Legislature of that committee's report. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) now seeks to obtain the appointment of another select committee to deal with racing. In my opinion, the time has long gone by when we should have a clear review not only of the conduct of racing, but also of the powers of the W.A. Turf Club. I agree to some extent with the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), who said that the members of the committee of the W.A. Turf Club—honourable gentlemen as they are—

Mr. SPEAKER: I draw the hon. member's attention to the question before the Chair, which is that certain words shall be struck out of the motion.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have to link the amendment up with the control of racing, have I not, Sir? I agree with the member for Murchison that we should decide whether it is right for the people controlling the W.A. Turf Club and owning racehorses to adjudicate upon the performances of jockeys, for instance. It is not right that persons owning and running racehorses should adjudicate and give decisions in connection with the running of their horses. But how far we shall get in an

investigation of this kind is quite another matter. Speaking to the motion—

Hon. P. Collier: For the first time!

Mr. LAMBERT: The time has arrived when we should review the conduct of racing in Western Australia. I am not in agreement with the prejudiced view of my friend the member for Boulder.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that we are not discussing the member for Boulder. We are discussing the amendment that has been moved by the member for Katanning.

Mr. LAMBERT: As a matter of fact, I can find no virtue—

Mr. Speaker: Order! I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. Marshall interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Murchison must keep order.

Mr. LAMBERT: If members will study the report of the select committee to which I have referred, they will get all the information they require without the assistance of another proposed select committee.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth—on amendment) [7.56]: The proposal to substitute a Royal Commission for a select committee is no doubt a desirable one. A Royal Commissioner would have many advantages; because we have heard expressions of opinions by members that it might be thought they had fixed ideas on the subject and would approach an inquiry with some conscious or subconscious bias. The amendment is, however, a curious one to move at this stage, as the major argument against the appointment of a select committee is based on the ground of expense. Members who may sit on the select committee, if appointed, will of course not receive any remuneration for their services; even if they decided to visit the other States they would not be paid either remuneration or travelling expenses. It is hard to see what expense would be involved in the appointment of a select committee. On the other hand, if a Royal Commissioner were appointed his fee might be anything from 300 to 1,000 guineas. Not long since a Royal Commissioner received—it is curious to note—a fee

of £150, whereas his assistant was paid a fee of £450.

Mr. Lambert: An honorary Royal Commissioner could be appointed.

Mr. HUGHES: Honorary Royal Commissioners are not too numerous.

Mr. Raphael: I will not act as one again.

Mr. HUGHES: The Royal Commissioner and his assistant would probably receive in fees the greater part of £1,000. What a curious amendment to move! If the amendment is carried, will the Government appoint a Royal Commission?

The Premier: I do not think it will.

Mr. HUGHES: Is that true?

The Premier: I do not think the Government will appoint a Royal Commission for the reason I gave when speaking to the motion.

Mr. HUGHES: Then there is no need for me to waste the time of the House in addressing myself to the amendment, because it is abortive; it is almost destroyed upon being conceived.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.1]: I am not in favour of the motion. I feel it is unnecessarily comprehensive and cannot, so far as I am competent to judge, be of any service. I do not profess, nor have I any right to claim, to be an expert in horse-racing, but as far as I can see our racing clubs are well conducted. On odd occasions I have attended race meetings, chiefly in order that I might acquire some little knowledge as to the manner in which such gatherings are conducted and thus qualify myself to come to a decision on questions such as that before the House. We have the Western Australian Turf Club, the Perth and Fremantle Trotting Clubs, the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs, and other clubs throughout the State. Life is not such a thrilling experience, or such a joyous adventure, that we should attempt to put an end to what is a very proper pastime, namely, attending race meetings. When I have attended such gatherings I have walked about on the lawns, met friends—

Mr. Warner: And lost your cash!

Mr. SAMPSON:—and in different ways enjoyed the meeting. I must admit I have never been impressed by what is sometimes referred to as the sordid side of racing. I know a number of owners and some train-

ers, and they seem to me to be good citizens. The breeding and running of race-horses and the conduct of race meetings is properly a part of the interest of a community. I have therefore decided not to vote in favour of the motion. Had it dealt solely with starting-price betting, I would have adopted a different view, because there is some justification for action being taken in that direction. Those who bet on the racecourse use stamped tickets and although we are aware that, strictly speaking, such betting is illegal, the eye of authority has winked at the practice for so long that it has now become more or less approved.

Hon. P. Collier: Why do you object to an investigation?

Mr. SAMPSON: Because the investigation proposed is so widespread and so comprehensive as really to defeat its own ends.

Hon. P. Collier: Are you so parochial that you do not want a wide inquiry?

Mr. SAMPSON: To oppose a comprehensive inquiry is not to be parochial. I am surprised at the hon. member's being confused about terms.

Hon. P. Collier: You object to a wide inquiry?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SAMPSON: I object to an unnecessarily comprehensive inquiry. Let us deal with the matter little by little; let us deal with it on its merits.

Hon. P. Collier: Little by little suits you.

Mr. SAMPSON: The motion proposes that the select committee shall be appointed "to inquire into the incidence, management and control of horse-racing in all its forms, and into betting and other practices arising out of and incidental thereto"—

Mr. Doney: What else would the inquiry be for?

Mr. SAMPSON:—"and to report upon the present law thereon, the enforcement of such law and the advisability of any revision, amendment and/or codification thereof." That is a life work. We could not expect that to be done during the period of this Parliament, and as the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) is aware, it is not competent for a select committee to continue after the House rises.

Hon. P. Collier: So you want a narrow inquiry; not a comprehensive, wide inquiry?

Mr. SAMPSON: I want an inquiry that will be of some practical service; not a

high-faluting proposition that will get us nowhere but simply confuse all concerned, including the member for Boulder.

Hon. P. Collier: Confuse me? You have been confused all your life.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to address the Chair and not to take any notice of the member for Boulder.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am endeavouring to inform the member for Boulder where I stand in this matter and I am making it perfectly clear that I do not propose to support the motion because I do not think it is practicable. The inquiry could not be completed in the period permissible. Moreover, it is about time this epidemic of select committees came to an end, or rather that there was a steadying influence exhibited in regard to them. Almost every subject that comes before the House is suggested as a proper subject for inquiry by a select committee. An inquiry in the present instance, seeing how widespread it must necessarily be, would not be of any real and practical service. I regret that there has not been an opportunity to deal with starting-price bookmaking, but I am not prepared to vote in favour of a motion for such a widespread inquiry, one that is so many-sided and so impracticable.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [8.8]: The debate should remove any indefiniteness in the minds of members as to whether the motion should or should not be carried. When the discussion was opened this afternoon I considered that we were too far advanced in the session for any hope to be entertained of the rather extensive inquiry proposed being finalised before Parliament rose. Again, the time of members is so occupied at the close of a session dealing with parliamentary matters that it would be somewhat difficult to find a sufficient number with the necessary time to devote to an inquiry of this description. We have to remember, however, that members of Parliament should be capable of reflecting public opinion and public estimation. If in the debate that has taken place hon. members have correctly interpreted public estimation of racing in this country then that activity is as near the gutter as it can possibly get. I am not prepared to subscribe to that view. I believe there are men associated with racing and its administration in Western Australia who are as reputable,

capable and honest in their endeavours as any member of Parliament. I believe that those men are trying to conduct racing in a decent manner. It is true that I breed horses. I have been doing so for the last 30 or 40 years and have always taken a pride in so doing. But immediately one breeds a decent horse he becomes a questionable character. So long as he breeds duds, the activity is quite reputable, but immediately he happens to secure one decent horse over the years he is open to public attack. His character is questioned because he happens to breed a horse capable of running in, even if not of winning, a race. That should not be so. Racing is not in the gutter in other parts of the world. Why should it be damned in Western Australia, as it is, if the opinion expressed by hon. members is a true estimate of its value in the opinion of the public?

The question definitely calls for an investigation. Reflection has been cast upon administrators, upon individuals whose names have been mentioned. This is not the first occasion on which that kind of thing has happened during discussions on racing. How long is it to continue? Are we to sit here and see racing continually drifting? According to some members, it is in the gutter now, but there is a good deal of it out of the gutter. True, much of it is in and was never out of the gutter. Not those who are associated with the more elevating side of horse breeding and horse racing are responsible for degrading racing and public administration generally, but those right down in the gutter. I agree with the member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) that this inquiry could be more effectively undertaken by a Royal Commission. I did not, however, vote for the amendment because I knew that if it were carried the decision would rest with the Government and the Government is not favourably disposed to Royal Commissions. If the motion is carried, however, it will be a decision of the House and the select committee will have to be appointed. As I have stated, at the outset of this debate I was not in favour of the appointment of a select committee for the reasons I have given, but after having listened to the discussion I am of the opinion that we should give the men administering the racing clubs and who have been attacked—

The Premier: They have not been attacked seriously.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They have been attacked by members of Parliament. If that is not serious I do not know what is.

Mr. J. H. Smith: By how many members?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If members of Parliament are to have a license to make speeches such as those to which we have listened, it is time that outsiders had a voice as to whether this sort of thing should or should not continue. The speeches made have tended to demonstrate that not only racing administration has become degraded but that the men referred to are degraded.

The Premier: So because one or two hon. members say something about somebody we must have a select committee about it?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The statements have been fairly general.

Members: Oh no!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: So general that I am satisfied that we cannot let the matter rest where it is.

The Premier: Rubbish!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I intend to vote for the motion and I hope it will be carried. I trust, too, that the inquiry will be elevated. The inquiry should be lifted above the standard of the debate we have had to-night. As a result of such inquiry, I hope some means may be found whereby racing can be lifted out of its deplorable plight, if we are to take seriously the speeches of members. They were the speeches of men elected to represent the people, and they must be taken seriously. I do not subscribe to many of the sentiments expressed. I believe the W.A.T.C. is well administered. If it is not as democratic as we would like it, that can easily be remedied. The club is working under legislation, and, if the Government thinks the institution should adopt a more democratic system of control, it can put that right by amending the law. That is not the question before the House. The W.A.T.C. is working in a commendable manner. It is doing its best to keep racing from drifting to the extent that members would indicate. I know that starting-price bookmaking is degrading the sport, and has brought it down to where it is. We should not reach down to that standard to find out whether the administration is all it ought to be. I am sure there is a more elevated opinion of the administration generally, as is evidenced by the activities

of the W.A.T.C. Because of the debate, I feel we should have an inquiry, and, holding the views I have expressed, I will vote for the motion.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [8.17]: If I thought the appointment of a select committee would achieve the object desired by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), I would vote for the motion, but I hold the contrary view. After listening to the speeches to-night, I feel that all the evidence that could be brought before a select committee is already available to members. If they got together, I feel sure they could evolve legislation to amend the racing and betting laws of the State that would bring about what is desired. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) said that a reflection had been cast upon the administrators of racing, and for that reason a select committee should be appointed. I hold a different view. Assuming that certain criticism that has been levelled at the W.A. Trotting Association and the officials of the racing clubs has been more than just criticism, and reached the stage of being a reflection upon them, I believe the most effective manner in which we could dispel such reflections would be by voting out the motion, thereby demonstrating to the people concerned that, in our opinion, there is no foundation for the reflections upon them, and no necessity to inquire into their business.

I heard a great deal to-night about the inconsistent running of horses on our racecourses. On several occasions when I have attended meetings I have backed the wrong horse, and sometimes have suspected that the animal has not been doing its best. Possibly many punters hold the same view. I have in my younger days taken part in athletic events. I know that on certain days I have felt in such a condition that I knew I was going to do my best. On another occasion, although comparatively fit, I felt that I did not possess that extra kick that one required in order to do one's best. An athlete can tell his trainer and those who are supporting him that he does not feel as well as he did on the previous day when he was successful in his efforts, but a horse is not able to do that, and very often the people who have backed the animal because of his previous form have been let down,

and then assumed that corrupt practices had been indulged in.

It has been said that if a man is in a big way he can run his horses inconsistently and get away with it. That may be so. Will the appointment of a select committee prevent such a thing? I say it will not prevent horses in this State from running inconsistently.

Mr. Hughes: I do not think that would come within the province of the inquiry. The committee would not deal with the form of horses.

Mr. STYANTS: Anything that savoured of corrupt practices would be taken into consideration by the select committee. I wish now to deal with the question of undistributed fractions. The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) made out a good case on that point. The member for Netherlands (Hon. N. Keenan) said he had inquired into the method whereby these fractions were withheld. He is probably right as to the method, but that does not do away with the fact that in this State for the last 12 years or so the Western Australian Trotting Association has withheld from distribution, because of the system in vogue, a sum of approximately £120,000. That money has been kept from the public in the form of undistributed fractions. There is no hearsay about that. Some two or three years ago a return was called for to ascertain how much money had been received by trotting clubs and racing clubs in Western Australia in the form of undistributed fractions. At that time it appeared that over the previous ten years the W.A. Trotting Association had received a sum of just over £100,000 from undistributed fractions. Assuming that the same system has been carried on since, I will be safe in saying that about £120,000 has been withheld from distribution by that means. The racing clubs have not so large an amount of patronage as have the trotting clubs, and would have withheld a smaller amount from the public, but even in their case the substantial sum of many thousands of pounds has been withheld from distribution to the investors in the totalisators. We have the official returns, and do not require a select committee to tell us what fractions have been withheld. The system is different in the other States, where the money is distributed either to the nearest 6d. or the nearest 3d. We do not require a select committee to give us that information.

I am inclined to agree that proprietary racing is not altogether as desirable as is racing conducted by the official body, the W.A.T.C. That club is not run for profit. It offers good stakes, caters for a good class of horse, and is an asset to the horse-breeding industry of Western Australia. I do not think we could get any more information about proprietary racing by appointing a committee than is already in the possession of members of the House. There are those who hold that it is not desirable to have proprietary racing, where individuals are allowed to race for private profit. They would still hold that view if a select committee were appointed, notwithstanding that evidence might be given to the contrary, and the select committee decided to express a view contrary to their own. We do not want a select committee on these grounds.

The matter of starting-price betting was thoroughly discussed last year, and I do not think any reiteration of the debate is necessary at this stage. We all expressed our views then. At the election in Kalgoorlie, the matter was introduced by those who were opposed to the legalisation of such betting, and we all stuck to our guns. The better control of starting-price betting would do away with many of the objectionable features that, I admit, permeate the whole business. Another matter referred to was the method of electing the committee of the W.A.T.C. I am sure that 99 per cent. of those who attend the race meetings at headquarters do not give a second's consideration to the method by which the committee of the club is elected. All that people are concerned about are the conveniences that are given by the club to its patrons, the admission charges, and so forth. Provided the sport is carried out with reasonable efficiency, and the needs of the public are catered for, that is all the people require. Some members have suggested that when the stipendiary stewards held an inquiry, insufficient publicity was given to the proceedings. They thought that the Press should be admitted. Last week the mover of the motion said he was not altogether sure about the impartiality of the Press. He was referring to the question of admitting the Press to the inquiry held by the select committee into investment trust companies.

The best indication of whether the public are satisfied with the manner in which the club committee is elected, racing is con-

ducted, and inquiries are held, is to be found in the patronage accorded to the meetings. If people are not satisfied, they will not continue to attend. If they are satisfied, they will go to the meetings in their thousands, as they have been doing for many years. I admit that attendances have fallen off on account of starting-price betting. I am not guided by the question of the expense of a select committee or a Royal Commission. That would not influence my vote in this matter. Were I of opinion that we were going to achieve results by an inquiry of this kind, I would vote for the motion. If the inquiry would do away with many of those objectionable features of our racing sport in this State, any money involved would be well spent, but I am afraid that if the appointment of the committee were agreed to the money would be spent in vain. It is rather the fear that the holding of an inquiry would achieve little in the way of results than the thought of the cost involved that influences me to vote against the motion.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth—in reply) [S.29]: I will reply first to the remarks of the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants). I did not at any time conceive that the inquiry would deal with the form or the running of individual horses. The investigations would cover the management of racing, but would have nothing to do with whether horses ran true to form or were allowed to run, either true to form or otherwise. If any such committee had to embark upon an examination of the performances of merely a small proportion of the horses engaged in racing, the task would be beyond it. At no time have I conceived to be part of the inquiry I propose, an investigation of the management of horses. Unfortunately the horses do not manage the racing; the horses are managed by those associated with the sport. The motion deals with the law, which is enforced sometimes and not at other times. As the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) pointed out, the divergent views expressed by members furnish the strongest possible argument in favour of an inquiry. What is the proposal of the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants)? Like other members, he does not agree that everything is right with racing. He suggests that we do nothing! What is wrong, must be allowed to remain wrong! He says that no good purpose will be

achieved by the appointment of the proposed select committee. He suggests we could do what is necessary if members got together and applied their combined efforts to formulate appropriate amendments. Is not a select committee the only means by which members can achieve that very end? There is no other machinery available whereby members can get together, make research, institute inquiries, and furnish recommendations. A select committee, chosen as far as possible to be a true reflex of the varying points of view expressed in the House, could make an effort, after due inquiry, to submit a remedy.

Mr. Styants: You cannot compel a member of Parliament to give evidence before a select committee.

Mr. HUGHES: Would a member of Parliament refuse to give evidence before the committee, if asked to do so?

Mr. Styants: That would be for each individual member to decide.

Mr. HUGHES: I cannot conceive that any member of Parliament would refuse to do so, nor can I conceive of his being afraid to say outside Parliament what he was prepared to state before a select committee. I do not think any member would desire to adopt that attitude. If the member for Kalgoorlie's statement be examined, I am convinced it will prove much stronger in favour of a select committee than in opposition to it. A select committee would have the advantage in that a quasi judicial tribunal would be established, and any person having a point of view to stress could appear before that body and give his evidence. It would have the advantage of being able to engage upon research, and consideration could be given to the divergent views to be expected. That could not be done except by the selection of a committee and the assembling of the people prepared to express their divergent views, and that can be done fairly regarding the administration of that particular branch of our laws. I contend the appointment of a select committee would certainly do some good. It would collect data and I am convinced that the labours of the chosen five members of the House would not be in vain. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), in his own curiously inimitable fashion, suggested that the inquiry proposed would be too comprehensive. He said he would like it lim-

ited to an investigation of one section of racing. I imagine that if a member made a statement in Parliament that in certain departments of our administration and in the application of certain sections of our law, a number of things were wrong and then suggested an inquiry into one phase only, he would be asked, "What would be the use of an inquiry like that? It would be so circumscribed and limited that it would not achieve anything."

Hon. P. Collier: That suggestion was in line with his limited capacity.

Mr. Sampson: There is evidence of incapacity in other sections.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: What would be the sense of authorising an inquiry into starting-price betting only? To my mind that would be very unfair. If I approached the House and said, "Let us have an inquiry into starting-price betting only, although we know other matters affecting racing are wrong," what could I expect? Members would point out that there were other phases requiring attention. There is the question whether or not we should permit proprietary clubs to continue or whether the W.A.T.C. has treated some people fairly. Let us put that aside and deal with one phase only—that is the suggestion of the member for Swan. It might be said that the proposal arose from a desire to exercise a personal grudge against someone or some club. That would reduce what I suggest to the level of a select committee that was recently appointed.

Mr. Sampson: But there is no question of a personal grudge in this instance!

Mr. HUGHES: At any rate, such a proposal would reduce the inquiry I have in mind to the level of the appointment to which I have referred, and to which the member for Swan gave his wholehearted support.

Mr. Sampson: Which one do you mean?

Mr. HUGHES: I suggest that an inquiry of this nature, to have any value at all, should be sufficiently comprehensive to cover the whole ramifications of the subject matter regarding which the investigation was instituted; otherwise it would be lopsided and would involve a considerable waste of time. Now we come to the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan). He said it was very unfair on my part to

criticise members of the W.A. Turf Club as they had no opportunity to reply. I am constrained to agree with the hon. member. To attack a man or a body without the party or parties concerned having a chance to reply, is very unfair. I wonder if the members of the W.A. Turf Club after reading my speech in Parliament—I speak of them as a corporate body and not as individuals—felt hurt. If they did, I would ask them to pause and think. How do they consider a man feels, when the renewal of his license has been refused by the W.A. Turf Club, without his being given an opportunity to know why it was not renewed or the nature of his offence? If the feelings of the W.A. Turf Club members were hurt, then they can appreciate what men in the position I have stated have felt in the past. I admit it is unfair to attack a person without that individual having an opportunity to know what the attack is based on or having the right of reply to charges levelled against him; but that is the very complaint I have against the W.A. Turf Club. By his defence and his criticism of me, the member for Nedlands has justified my complaint. People carrying on their ordinary business as bookmakers, jockeys or trainers have to apply periodically for the renewal of their licenses. At times those licenses are not renewed, without any intimation that the individuals concerned have done anything wrong or their being given opportunities to answer complaints about their conduct. Their licenses are simply just not renewed.

Hon. P. Collier: Hitlers!

Mr. HUGHES: That his license is not renewed is a reflection upon the individual concerned. The general impression—quite properly, I submit—is that if a man's license is not renewed, he has been guilty of some mal-practice that would warrant the non-renewal of his license. Such a man is in the unfortunate position of having no indication given him as to why his license has been refused, and so he is thrown back on his imagination. Let members consider the invidious position of the man who is thrown back on to his conscience to determine just what sin of commission has occasioned the action against him. The next time I present myself at the W.A. Turf Club, unless I am warned off—

Mr. Withers: You would possibly know the reason why.

Mr. HUGHES: I would certainly have to exercise my imagination, and if I did so, I would probably arrive at the conclusion that the action against me was in revenge for something I had said in Parliament. Yet that might not be the reason at all. The W.A. Turf Club committee might consider that I had worked a big commission and secured a lot of money. That will indicate to members the unfortunate position in which a man finds himself when he has to resort to his own imagination. The W.A. Turf Club does not do to people it has dealt with what I myself did to the W.A. Turf Club before I criticised that body in Parliament. I went to the head of the Turf Club and said, "Surely you can tell a man what he has done." The reply I got was, "We cannot do that because we might risk a libel action." To that I said, "Why not get the man into a room with you. There will be only two persons present, and no question of a third party. You could then tell him what was the matter and give him a chance to say, 'In this case you have made a mistake' ". The reply to that was a definite "No." I have been to the secretary of the W.A. Turf Club more than once and I have been to the president of the club. I have asked them why they do not tell the men the reason for the action taken against them, but they will not take the risk involved. If men connected with the turf have done wrong, they must suffer the consequent penalties, but the W.A. Turf Club will not adopt the attitude I have suggested. So, in reply to the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), I say that the injustice I did the Turf Club, is the injustice that body displays to those subject to its control, and I have merely followed a bad example, but to a lesser degree. At any rate, the members of the W.A. Turf Club now know what others feel in somewhat like circumstances. No body should desire power to deprive men of their livelihood without those men being afforded an opportunity to defend themselves. What a terrible thing it would be if that principle applied in other directions! I submit that is where we have the basis in support of the case for an inquiry.

Now let me deal with the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael), who is in a very rational mood at present—being asleep!

He made an attack upon the president of the W.A. Trotting Association. Although Gloucester Park is in my electorate, I have only on one occasion spoken to the president of the Association; that was when I went to his office on business. I think the member for Victoria Park told the House only half the story. If he had taken us fully into his confidence, he could have told us his real grievance against the president of the Trotting Association. He could have given us the details of the Belgian Betty case. He would then have allowed us to judge whether his remarks against that official were justified. He would then have treated that gentleman fairly. If he has a grudge regarding the Belgian Betty case, why not divulge it to the proposed select committee and permit the interested parties to show that they had been unfairly treated? I do not profess to know whether the Trotting Association was right or wrong in the Belgian Betty case.

Mr. Patrick: What was that? I have not heard of it.

Mr. HUGHES: I think the member for Victoria Park was wrong in accepting one side of the story only. I doubt whether he has ever approached the president of the W.A. Trotting Association and asked him for his version of the Belgian Betty episode. So if the president has been doing things that are wrong, why should we not have that matter inquired into? It is important because we vest, by law, in the Trotting Association certain powers, and if those powers are being abused, as has been alleged by the member for Victoria Park, surely the sooner they are investigated and a report made to this Chamber the better for all concerned. But no; the member for Victoria Park makes his attack on the president of the Trotting Association and then says, "We are not going to have an inquiry. Having made my attack I am not prepared to give the president the opportunity to state his side of the case." If an inquiry is conducted the president will be able to state his case and the Belgian Betty people will be able to state theirs. With a limited knowledge of the facts I think the member for Victoria Park would then be compelled to admit that what he had stated was not all against the president. The hon. member also said that the president of the Trotting Association had become a rich man

out of trotting. So far as I know the Trotting Association is a body that is incorporated by law. It is compelled to have trustees, and its accounts are audited from time to time. The president has no individual control over the funds, and he dare not take 1s. of the Trotting Association's money for his own purposes. If he did so he would be in grave danger of having to answer for the consequences. I understand that Mr. Stratton gets certain expenses in connection with the duties that he performs. I do not see how a man could carry on the presidency of such a body unless he received an allowance for outgoings. Then the hon. member mentioned the case of trotting mare Kay Francis. Kay Francis does not win every time she starts, though I understand she won eight races out of nine. I was there one night and invested 10s. on her.

Mr. Styants: And she did not win!

Mr. HUGHES: No, it was the ninth time. So I think the member for Victoria Park has made out a very strong case for inquiry, and I am surprised that he is not prepared to be fair to the president and to vote for the motion. The hon. member would have the opportunity of meeting the president face to face. The president would say to him, "Prove your allegations against me whatever they are, and I will reply to them."

The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) said he had an open mind on the question. He told the House that he knew the racing game inside out.

Member: He must have paid dearly for his experience.

Mr. HUGHES: Very likely. I, too, know something about the racing game. The member for Nelson has been a punter; I have been a successful punter. I have been to the races and it cost me only a fiver, but I suggest that the member for Nelson did not know everything that was going on while he was at the races, and he could not know, either. He claims that a select committee will do no good because we all know everything there is to know about the subject. In my opinion the speeches made by members disclose that they do not know anything about it. I myself, until I heard the member for Nedlands earlier in the evening, was under the impression that the racing clubs took the whole of the fractions from the totalisator. The member for Nedlands assures us that that was not so. I was not aware of that

until I heard the hon. member tell the House. Next, the member for Victoria Park assured us that the member for Nedlands was wrong. Thus it would appear that we are not in possession of undisputed information. The member for Nelson also told us that if members opposed starting-price betting they would probably lose their seats at the next election. I do not believe that. Admittedly, starting-price bookmakers were a formidable force at the last elections. I should know that because I had a Mag'not Line all around me, and those who were responsible for it spent over £1,200 in my electorate, and the Electoral Act was suspended. Even then they did not succeed in putting me out.

I venture to say that the punters themselves are not in favour of the starting-price bookmaker. There is not one punter I know of who agrees with the limitation of the odds. When a horse pays 25s. at Pinjarra, the starting-price bookmaker in town pays only 17s. I do not know that any punter is satisfied with that kind of business. In my opinion, if we are to have this form of betting it should be controlled and the profits devoted to some useful purpose. But even on that question I am not dogmatic. I put this to the member for Nelson. In the ramifications of the racing business there are many complaints. For instance, a complaint that is nothing whatever to me now is that the bookmakers created a big fund before the last election and distributed that fund for election purposes. That is the allegation that is made. Since the election the small men in the starting-price business have got the idea that the big men are trying to wipe them out, and certain of the small men who contributed to the fund have repeatedly asked those who collected the money to furnish a statement showing how it was all distributed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is now introducing new matter.

Mr. HUGHES: I respectfully submit Mr. Speaker that this matter was introduced by the member for Nelson. He said that he knew everything about racing and its ramifications, while the member for Middle Swan made a statement which I think was even more serious than that made by the member for Guildford-Midland when he said that it was freely stated with a good degree of truth, that members of this

House were engaged as starting-price bookmakers. It is hard to imagine a more serious charge being made against a member of Parliament. It is really a very serious statement to make that members of this House are carrying on an illegal business. They could only do it under Government protection; they could not carry on an illegal business unless it were under Government protection. Then with regard to the question of the fund to which I was referring, that was raised by the member for Nelson. The smaller men in the starting-price business have asked for a statement showing how the money was distributed and they are not able to get it from the big men who collected it. That is a matter of public importance and should be cleared up. There is nothing wrong with asking that that be investigated, and in the interests of everybody cleaned up. That, too, I submit would come within the scope of the motion dealing with the starting-price industry. Those who are associated with it should have nothing to fear from a full disclosure. After all, if the fund was spent on the return of certain members of Parliament, the bookmakers were entitled to spend it in that way. Indeed they had a perfect right to do so. There are numerous instances of a similar nature.

The Premier: And you want a select committee because those who subscribed to the fund are denied the information that they are seeking.

Mr. HUGHES: No, that is a minor matter in connection with the whole business. The member for Nelson also made the point that if a person wanted to go to the racecourse he could do so and bet there in defiance of the law. That is true. He added also that if one of his electors not in the position to go to a racecourse wanted to have a bet in town, he would be denied the privilege because he would be breaking the law. Surely that is the worst aspect of this whole business. The law is administered with discrimination. I go further and say, "Why use discrimination between the race-goer and the non-race-goer?" There is also discrimination in the prosecution of the starting-price bookmakers. Some men in my electorate are prosecuted more frequently than others.

Mr. J. Hegney: The police deny that.

Mr. HUGHES: I have seen the Commissioner of Police and tackled him, and he could not deny it. He sent one of his officers out to make inquiries, and the record showed that one shop had seven convictions recorded against it while other people had not had a conviction at all. The police records show that that is so. The Commissioner of Police says that so far as he is concerned there is no discrimination, but I know from the reports in the daily paper that the occupiers of these shops are not prosecuted in their turn.

The Premier: Some people rob others for six months before being caught.

Mr. HUGHES: But has the Premier heard of a police officer who has seen a man commit a theft, and then do nothing?

The Premier: No.

Mr. HUGHES: Neither have I, but the police pass by people who are breaking the law and do nothing. They went past one shop in Fitzgerald-street to the shop of another man a chain away and he was fined £100. That happened quite recently. Who owns the lucky shop? That is the point. Rather than have the present unfair state of things continue, it would be better to institute no prosecutions at all. If we let one offender go, we should let them all go. I submit that the man in Fitzgerald-street, who was arrested and fined £100, although he was breaking the law, was doing no more than was his neighbour a few doors away and he went scot free. The man who was prosecuted had a legitimate cause for complaint on the ground of unfair discrimination.

This sort of thing has a very bad influence and is breaking down the morale of the police force. Young men are taken into the force and trained to arrest some law-breakers but not others; they have to walk past the shop of one man and arrest another man. That is destroying the very basis on which a police officer serves, and conveys the impression that he is the judge of whether the law shall be enforced. He is being placed as a sort of court of appeal over and above Parliament. No worse influence than that could be introduced into the public life of the State. If we are going to allow betting on or off the racecourse, let us have it, but it is wrong to say that one person may bet against the law and another may not.

I submit that no case has been made out against the motion for an inquiry and that such an inquiry is long overdue. It would be the means of enabling much data to be collected and collated; it would give public bodies and interested parties an opportunity to appear before the committee and state their case. If an inquiry was held, what would be wrong with allowing starting-price bookmakers to state their case? What would be wrong with allowing the representatives of the churches to put their views? No better information could be secured to form the basis for reviewing our legislation, and I think members will agree that a review of our racing legislation is long overdue. I hope the motion will be carried.

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

Ayes 16

Noes 27

Majority against .. 11

AYES.

Mr. Berry
Mr. Boyle
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver
Mr. Collier
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. Hill
Mr. Hughes
Mr. Johnson

Mr. Keenan
Mr. Marshall
Mr. McLarty
Mr. North
Mr. Seward
Mr. Shearn
Mr. Willmott
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Coverley
Mr. Cross
Mr. Fox
Mr. Hawke
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Holman
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Leahy
Mr. Millington
Mr. Needham
Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Panten
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Raphael

Mr. Sampson
Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Styants
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Triat
Mr. Warner
Mr. Watts
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Wise
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

MOTION—UNEMPLOYED, HOMES.

Building Materials and Land Allotments.

Debate resumed from the 13th September on the following motion by Mr. Sampson (Swan):—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that in order to assist approved unemployed or partially unemployed residents of the State to provide homes for themselves, the Government should supply the requisite material for the erection of such homes and, where necessary, should also make available suitable allotments of land for the purpose,

the work of erecting such homes to be carried out by the persons so benefiting; technical assistance, if required, to be provided.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [9.8]: I have some sympathy with the motion moved by the member for Swan. My opinion expressed in the House sometime ago was that every man, especially every married man, is entitled to receive the consideration of having a home of his own. The member for Swan certainly proposes to give every man an opportunity to get a home of some description, provided he is supplied with the home by the people of the State. To a great extent I agree with that suggestion, but at the same time I realise that if a proposition of the kind was submitted to this House, members would not sanction it. The right of a man to have a home without any payment being made by him is not one that everybody would subscribe to, but I think that the right to a house on terms within his means is one that everybody would subscribe to. While I agree largely with the sentiments expressed by the hon. member, I cannot approve of the method by which he would have such homes provided. The hon. member proposes that in order to assist approved unemployed or partially unemployed residents of the State to provide homes for themselves, the Government should supply the requisite material for the erection of such homes and where necessary should also make available suitable allotments of land for the purpose. That means that everybody in the State, whether employed, partially employed or unemployed, could apply to the Government for a home.

Mr. Sampson: But it would be granted only in approved cases.

Mr. TRIAT: It would rest with the Minister or the officer in charge to determine whether the applicant was suitable or otherwise. I think the Government could assist people who have not the means to provide homes for themselves by supplying them with material at a reasonable price, in fact, at cost price. I would support any motion that would provide for people in partial employment having the right to build a home under those conditions.

Another factor that has a big bearing on the question is where homes of that type could be erected. Many of the municipalities and road boards will not permit people to build homes unless they comply with

specifications laid down in the by-laws of the local authority. Many of the employed or partially employed people would be located in areas so far from their work that it would be impossible for them to provide for means of transport. The buildings sanctioned by the Workers' Homes Board have a minimum cost of £360. That information was given to me by an officer of the board. The deposit is £5, and a light rental is charged to pay off the balance. The officer told me that there is not a district in the city area and that there are very few areas in the suburbs where the local authorities will permit houses of that type to be erected.

Mr. Cross: That is wrong.

Mr. TRIAT: That is the information given to me.

Mr. Cross: The Workers' Homes Board authorities know differently.

Mr. TRIAT: The officer told me that wooden homes may be erected only in certain places and they were homes of the £360 type; in other areas that have the advantage of speedy transport facilities, a home has to be of greater value. I think the officer was not far out in the information he gave me. A home of that type cannot be built in a reasonably near suburb.

Mr. Withers: It would have to be more than a mile from the Town Hall.

Mr. TRIAT: I am very keen on securing an extension of the principle of providing reasonable homes for the workers, whether they are located in the metropolitan area or on the goldfields, and I shall support any scheme that offers the prospect of providing reasonable homes for married men. I have had occasion to speak of the practice adopted by the Workers' Homes Board when dealing with applications for homes on the goldfields. In centres where the population has more than doubled in the last two years, not a worker's home has been built. A home of a value of £200 to £350 would be quite suitable for those areas, and the people would be prepared to buy homes of those types. They are prepared to purchase such homes if only they are made available. Many people not associated with the goldfields seem to think that a man can take his wife and family to the fields and live in a tent, but I would impress upon such members that the age of tents is past. The building of workers' homes and, in fact, of homes of any description on the gold-

fields could be undertaken at a profit by the board. A cheaper type of house than that which has been built in the Kalgoorlie area would be quite suitable. I intend to move an amendment to the motion. I do not know that it will cover all I desire, but it will go further than the proposal of the member for Swan. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "desirable" be struck out and the following words inserted in lieu:—"to extend under the Workers' Homes Act the building of workers' homes of the same type as the group settlers' homes at a cost of £200 to £360 to workers in centres where such class of home can be erected; also to provide the building ready cut out for erection when required, and that when desired partially employed workers be supplied with building material at cost price.

That would give a man who was partially employed an opportunity to have a home built in a district where such homes were permitted to be built, and to get it at cost price. Beyond that I would not be prepared to go. I do not think members of this Chamber would agree to supply material at no cost at all, to unemployed workers. The member for Swan will, I trust, accept my amendment, which will further his purpose. Every man is entitled to a home, and I am prepared to enable him to secure it.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan—on amendment) [9.16]: I appreciate the sympathetic expressions of the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat), but the sympathy has rather died out as regards the amendment. I fear, however, the suggestion that buildings at a cost of £250 would render the proposition impossible as regards unemployed or partly unemployed persons. My object is to give consideration to those who are placed in an exceptionally difficult situation. I realise that on account of the building laws of various municipalities and some road boards, a small cheap building such as would be possible under the proposal of the motion would not be competent for erection in the areas of some local authorities. For blocks of land of three to five acres in the outer suburban districts and in the environs of country towns, the proposal contained in the motion is one that would greatly assist some who, because of pressure, are unable to meet the cost required by the Workers' Homes Board or the suggestion contained in the amendment. I

hope that the amendment will not be carried, and that subsequently the motion will be carried.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan—in reply) [9.18]: As I have stated, my proposition is to make possible the provision of building material to enable approved unemployed or partly unemployed to obtain their own homes. Some unemployed or partly unemployed would be unable to carry out the technical work, unable to take charge, as it were, of the carpentry work necessary in the erection; and so the motion provides that where required, technical assistance should be furnished.

Mr. SPEAKER: I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that he is entitled to reply only to what has been said in the course of debate.

Mr. SAMPSON: Quite so. I propose to reply to the remarks of the Minister for Works. That Minister did make references along those lines. There is in many centres difficulty in building a very cheap type of home. Nevertheless there are numerous districts where the building by-laws are by no means severe; and there, I am quite sure, it would be possible, if the motion received the Government's approval, for much-needed help to be given to those on whose behalf the motion is brought forward. The Minister referred to workers' homes. The matter of workers' homes calls for big expense over a long period. Though admittedly the worker's home is an excellent proposition, a very good proposition for a man in regular work, it is not practicable for those who are subject to seasonal or intermittent work, as is the case with so many relief workers and also with small settlers. A suggestion was made that a small-loans scheme might do what is necessary, but the relative Act does not give the needed power for erection of buildings in the absence of security; and it is for those who suffer from the absence of security that the motion has been specially moved. After all, the small-loans scheme refers more to buildings and repair of buildings already in existence. The McNess homes have been mentioned; and undoubtedly those homes represent a magnificent scheme. They cost approximately £350—or more now, because unfortunately the cost of building material is ever on the upgrade. The buildings at Herdsman Lake

are simple buildings; but their cost, I believe, was not less than £250. They have been erected now for many years, and probably the cost of erecting them to-day would be over £300. The Minister referred to shacks erected at Canning Dam. The shack for the single person, an unlined dwelling, cost for material £36; and if lined the cost was £48. The two-roomed shack—for the married man, I understand—cost £135. I must acknowledge that I was surprised when I heard these costs stated, but I presume they include labour. I remind the House that I pointed out that persons approved under the material for homes proposal would, with the help in cases where such was needed, erect their own homes.

Mr. Warner: Would you give authority to have those shacks erected close to the town?

Mr. SAMPSON: It would all depend upon whether there are building by-laws. It is not every district where objection is raised so long as ample air space is provided. The material, as suggested in my speech introducing the subject, was to cost from £64 to £84. If a brick chimney were erected in place of an iron chimney, the cost would be increased by approximately £15.

In connection with the proposition, I submitted to the House a number of plans which I have had prepared. Certainly the buildings are simple, but homes would be provided. I say again that the expenditure of this money in approved cases would be a practical proposition. Every case would, of course, be considered on its merits; and I would ask, if the proposal is approved, that the Workers' Homes Board be the authority to arrive at the decision. In the road district of Melville, east of Fremantle, some buildings were erected several years ago. I know the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell, showed himself quite sympathetic; and a few buildings were erected.

Mr. Warner: Sir James Mitchell would be sympathetic all right.

Mr. SAMPSON: The cost of the material at that time, I understand, was £50. Those buildings are now used by families, whose outlook for that reason is very much better than it could have been otherwise. I admit there may be some question about the period during which there should be no interest charged, but hon. members will realise that in a very simple building such as

would be erected from material not costing in excess of £84 there would be additional work required. After the three years there was to be an interest charge of 5 per cent.

The Minister for Lands: You are not stone-walling, are you?

Mr. SAMPSON: I thank the Minister, and I will accept the suggestion. In conclusion let me say that there is very little opportunity indeed for many of these unemployed or partly unemployed people unless the proposition meets with some approval. I have received a letter which replies to most of the objections raised by the Minister; but in view of the suggestion made by one who I venture to hope is a sympathiser, I shall not read it. I want to put up a practical proposition to the Minister. I asked in the course of my remarks that he might as an experiment, after careful consideration in the case of every request made, approve of the supply of 50 lots of material. That would mean potential homes for 50 unemployed or partly unemployed men and their families—the wife and possibly a child or two. I will make a bargain with the Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot make any bargain now, unless the matter was brought up in debate.

Mr. SAMPSON: This was asked for by me in my remarks.

The Premier: And now you are replying to yourself.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am replying to the Minister. I regret that the Premier did not speak and that therefore I cannot reply to him. Had the hon. gentleman spoken, this motion might have been passed on the night when it was introduced. However, he did not speak. But I must reply to the Minister for Works. It was suggested that 50 homes be decided on as a trial. If the Minister does approve of that, I will undertake to provide for five of them. I do not think there is much risk about it; in my opinion, it will prove to be one of the finest propositions submitted to the House.

Mr. Hughes: Do not you think people would be helped to acquire homes if second mortgagees were a little more reasonable?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That has nothing to do with the motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not think it has, but peculiar ideas are floating around the

Chamber to-night; and perhaps, by some stretch of the imagination, there is an association of ideas. I suggest the Minister should agree to the motion. To show my bona fides, I will, as I have said, provide material for five homes myself. I submit the motion in the hope that members will give it their approval.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulations.

Debate resumed from the 20th September on the following motion by Mr. Boyle (Avon):—

That Regulations Nos. 17, 18, 23, 24, 30, 31, 32, 39, 53, 54, 64, 65, 72, 73, 76, 80, 81, 85, 88, 89, 94, 99, 106G, 106I, 108, 142, and 144 of the regulations made under the Native Administration Act, 1905-1936, as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 8th September, 1939, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 12th September, 1939, be and are hereby disallowed.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. A. A. M. Coverley—Kimberley) [9.32]: I wish to say a few words in opposition to the motion. I appreciate the manner in which the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) spoke and also his kindly references to myself, as Minister for Native Affairs. He told the House that he thought that I, as Minister, would adopt a sympathetic attitude to all the various native problems that came before me. Mr. Boyle having introduced the matter in that way, I thought he had given close consideration to the regulations to which he objected. I am afraid, however, he did not give them that usual close attention which he gives to other matters upon which he addresses the Chamber. He remarked that, having closely examined the regulations in question, he could find very little difference between them and the regulations disallowed by Parliament last year. He added that in one or two instances the word "Minister" had replaced the word "Commissioner." Apart from that observation, he really said very little in support of his opposition to these regulations.

My analysis of the regulations now before Parliament and the regulations disallowed by the House last year shows that last session 65 regulations were objected to. Of

that number, 24 were re-cast and altered. Of the 32 regulations objected to by the member for Avon, he requested permission when moving the motion, to withdraw one, thus leaving 31 regulations objected to, compared with 65 objected to last session. Those figures can be confirmed by hon. members, who will see that the present regulations are vastly different from those objected to last year. Had the member for Avon said that the present regulations had not been altered in principle, I would have agreed with him, because the principle of the regulations is practically the same. They are framed for the purpose of administering the Act.

I have made a further analysis, the result of which I will give for the benefit of members. An hon. member in another place last session objected to eight regulations, six of which were altered to conform to his objections. The member for Kanowna (Hon. E. Nulsen), to whom the member for Avon referred on one occasion, raised objections to nine regulations last year, four of which have been re-drafted. Some of the regulations objected to by that hon. member were also objected to by other members. There was duplication in the regulations objected to. Another hon. member in another place objected to 18 regulations, eight of which have been re-cast to conform with the argument advanced by him. I could not do more than revise the regulations in accordance with the arguments adduced by the members who objected to them. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) objected to six regulations, and I myself objected to four. Another member, who unfortunately is not with us to-day, objected to 12 regulations. In all, a total of 65 regulations were objected to. I do not wish to deal with the 65 regulations that the member for Avon said were similar on this occasion, but with the 31 regulations to which he raised objections. Of the 31 regulations, the hon. member gave reasons for objecting to nine; he glossed over another 16, giving no reason whatever. I am at a loss to make a reply in respect of the 16 regulations. I will, however, explain them for the benefit of the hon. member and of other members who may be interested enough to listen.

Dealing with Regulation No. 17, the hon. member said the Minister already had the power under the Act which he was claiming under the regulation. I interjected and

asked him to read Section 12 of the Act. The hon. member then said he would make his statement in his own way, to which of course I had no objection. I draw the attention of members to Section 12 of the Act, which reads—

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

Any native who shall refuse to be so removed to or kept within such reserve, district, institution, or hospital, shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

Regulation 17 reads—

At any time after the Minister has decided pursuant to Section 12 of the Act to cause any native to be removed to and kept within the boundaries of a reserve, district, institution or hospital, or to be removed from one reserve, district, institution or hospital to another reserve, district, institution or hospital and kept therein, he may issue his warrant according to the Form 6 in the Schedule hereto, directed to all or any officers of the police of the State directing them to remove such native and convey him within the boundaries of the reserve, district, institution or hospital or from one reserve, district, institution or hospital to and within another and him safely to keep during the Minister's pleasure within the reserve, district, institution or hospital to and within which he shall be conveyed pursuant to the warrant.

The regulation merely gives the Minister power to do what the Act instructs him to do. The Act provides that the Minister shall do something, but does not say how it is to be done. The Act does not say whether the Minister himself is to race up to the North, arrest a native and place him on another reserve, or how the Minister is to operate the section. Regulation 17 gives the Minister power to employ the police throughout the State to carry out the duties imposed upon him by Section 12 of the Act.

The hon. member did not state his reason for objecting to Regulation 18. Actually, however, that regulation is purely consequential on Regulation 17. Before leaving Regulation 17, I desire to say for the information of members that there has been a revolution in the building of hospitals for natives in the North-West during the last five or six years. The Government has erected a leprosarium at Derby costing £16,000. The Government has also gone to the expense

of erecting large, up-to-date native hospitals at Wyndham, Derby and Broome. Further, the Government has appointed a travelling medical officer at a salary of £1,000 per annum, plus travelling expenses. That was done pursuant to the report of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Moseley. It had been pointed out that very many natives were suffering from contagious diseases, and therefore these hospitals were provided so that the sufferers might receive medical attention. The Government, having expended the taxpayers' money to that extent, should surely have power to force natives suffering from contagious diseases to enter a hospital where they can receive necessary medical attention. If hon. members agree to the disallowance of that regulation they will not be doing a service to the natives. What they will do in effect will be to instruct me to inform the Government that it is wasting money on hospitals and leprosariums and that it might as well retain that money for other purposes. No native, of his own accord, will leave a reserve to go to hospital. As the Government has gone to the expense of erecting hospitals and appointing doctors it is necessary to have this regulation, because many natives must be forced to leave their particular hunting grounds. It is not right that people suffering from leprosy and other contagious diseases should be allowed to run loose just because they dislike going into hospital for treatment. We shall either have to agree to this regulation or close the hospitals. Regulation No. 18 is consequential on Regulation No. 17. It states—

(a) When the Minister has directed a native to be removed to a reserve, district, institution or hospital, and such native has been so removed, such native shall not leave the reserve, district, institution or hospital without permission of the Minister.

(b) Provided that any such native whose conduct, after admission, is unsatisfactory to the relative superintendent or manager and is likely to disturb discipline and good order as the last resort may be required by the superintendent or manager to leave a reserve, district, institution or hospital.

There are times when a native who has been placed in some particular reserve or institution may, as is indicated in the regulation, be a disturbing element with the result that the department or the superintendent of a mission or Government-con-

trolled institution, as the case may be, may wish to transfer him to some other place. That would not occur very often; but it has occurred, and the administrator, whoever he may be, must have the power provided in the regulation. Regulation No. 24 is one with which the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) disagreed, but he gave no reasons for his disapproval. The regulation reads—

Whenever any person other than a native for any stated reason desires to enter a reserve, the Commissioner may require such person to enter into a bond in respect to any sum which may be named therein, or to deposit with him a like sum guaranteeing the observance during occupation of the reserve of such conditions as may be required to be included in an authority to enter. When such bond or deposit has been supplied to the satisfaction of the Commissioner he may recommend the Minister to grant an authority to enter accordingly, and the Minister may in his discretion cause the same to be issued. Any authority so issued may stipulate a time limit agreed upon. The bond shall be according to Form 7, and the authority to enter shall be according to Form 8 of the Schedule.

The hon. member gave no particular reason for the disallowance of this regulation, but I would point out to the House that Section 14 of the Act states—

It shall not be lawful for any person other than an aboriginal to enter or remain, or be within the boundaries of a reserve for any purpose whatsoever, unless he is a superintendent or a person acting under his direction, or a person authorised in that behalf under the regulations.

Apart from a missionary or a protector of natives, no person other than a native is entitled to enter a reserve. There are, however, occasions when the department desires to give special permission to certain people to enter a reserve. For instance, there are scientists and others who wish to do so for scientific purposes. Under the Act we cannot give them permission. There are many other reasons why the department may want authority to issue special permission to people to enter a reserve. Recently an application was made to me, as Minister controlling native affairs, for permission for a person to enter a reserve to cut timber for the Yampi Sound Iron Ore Mining Company. In my opinion, I should have given him that permission, subject to certain restrictions. I do not think that industry in the North should be penalised simply because a particular area of land within some miles of Yampi Sound is

classed as a native reserve. It is not fair that those engaged in industry should have to come to Perth to purchase sawn timber, or to cut bush timber for shipment to the North, when there is any amount of timber on the native reserve that could be used for their purposes. Under the Act there is no authority to give special permission to people to cut timber. Again, all the pearl-ers repair their own boats with bush timber, that is, locally grown timber. They mostly build their vessels with local timber, but under the Act none of the timber cutters would have the right without authority to go on a native reserve to cut the timber they needed. Nobody has been prosecuted up to date for this offence. The department has not taken the opportunity to prosecute every person who has gone on to the reserve to cut timber. There have been many instances in which the department has had to prosecute people for going on to the reserve, not to cut timber but for other reasons. Hon. members will agree that the department should have authority to issue permission for entry upon a reserve in instances such as I have mentioned. No complaint should be made against the department's desiring power to give effect to the Act in a fit and proper manner. Objection was raised to Regulation No. 30, but the member for Avon did not give any reason for his disapproval. That regulation states—

No livestock belonging to any inmate shall remain within any institution or reserve without the authority of the superintendent or manager. Such stock shall be removed when directed or may be turned off the reserve or destroyed.

I am surprised that the hon. member, being a practical farmer, objects to a regulation of that description. I can imagine what would happen if a half-caste went to his farm seeking a job as a shearer and taking with him a horse that had a cold or a touch of pneumonia or strangles. I can imagine the hon. member telling the half-caste what to do with that horse. The Government controls three cattle stations. Some of the natives on the stations have horses of their own. Those animals are generally fairly old and worn out before they are presented to the blackfellows. We should have the power to destroy old and diseased animals or any that chance to be bogged in a decent water hole or that have strangles. There is no need to stress the

importance of that regulation and I think members on the other side of the House will support me in my desire to retain it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think you are exaggerating.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The hon. member should know the position in a place like Quairading, where many natives have horses. If any of those animals should become aged and diseased and reel on the road, the Leader of the Opposition will agree that it should not be revived. The use of the wood axe would be the quickest and cheapest way out.

Mr. Warner: There is a difference between the size of a farm and that of a native reserve.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I believe the reserve at Quairading consists of about 1,000 acres, but it would not feed two horses for 12 months. I would not expect a horse to get a living out of that country. There are smaller reserves with a similar carrying capacity. Probably the regulation would not be used in those cases because the natives value their animals and would probably be very friendly with the farmers who would allow them to paddock animals that were reasonably sound. We do, however, desire this regulation to control diseased stock on native reserves, which, in the North, might be classed as cattle stations. I do not think we should be expected to allow diseased horses on a reserve like Moola Bulla. Regulation No. 31, to which the hon. member objected, states—

No person shall take or attempt to take photographs of any kind whatsoever upon or within any institution or reserve for natives without the permit of the Minister.

(b) The Minister may grant a permit in such form as he may think fit to any person desiring to take photographs upon or within an institution or a reserve for natives upon and subject to such conditions and restrictions as he may think fit to impose and shall specify in such permit.

I am sure the hon. member when objecting to this particular regulation had no idea of its purport. It is necessary to have authority to give certain people permission to take photographs for scientific purposes and for other reasons. The department desires control over the photographing of natives, because on one or two occasions certain photographs have been taken of naked gins. I do

not know that any hon. member desires to permit that kind of thing. The member for Avon became very excited over this regulation. He said he had taken photographs himself, and was not prosecuted. That surely is evidence that the department does not enforce the law stupidly. I do not think the hon. member would take objectionable photographs of the kind I have referred to, but I know that such photographs have been taken. I have not been told that by the administrator of the department, but know it personally. But because I had the temerity to reintroduce this regulation, the Leader of the Opposition referred to me as a departmental puppet.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I have not spoken on the motion.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: By interjection the Leader of the Opposition said I was a departmental puppet.

The Minister for Lands: He makes a lot of his speeches like that.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I have not admitted that charge, but I want to save the natives from the depraved type of mind to which I have referred and I would expect the Leader of the Opposition to support me rather than to wax sarcastic.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am not very sarcastic.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I hope the hon. member will join the decent-minded people and allow this regulation to stand.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think I am decent-minded.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: As a matter of fact, I think so too and I hope the regulation will not be disallowed. The hon. member gave reasons why he disagreed with regulation 32. and said it would destroy the initiative of natives. It reads—

No person shall, either within or without the boundaries of any institution or reserve for natives, contract or negotiate with any native whilst he is residing in such institution or reserve for the manufacture for such person, or purchase or attempt to purchase or negotiate for the purchase from such native of or obtain or attempt to obtain by gift or otherwise from any such native any weapon, implement, utensil or other object of native manufacture or construction, including wearing apparel of any sort.

There are two reasons why the department asked for this control. It desires to control the commercialisation of natives which has occurred in the past. It wishes to prohibit trading with natives in that respect. Furthermore, many contagious diseases occur amongst natives in the North-West. We desire to prohibit the purchase of native weapons and the like from the North-West lest they should be brought into the southern areas. People who buy such articles from natives know nothing about the diseases that exist amongst them, and if they did know would shun the natives. Many natives in the Derby district do certain work for purposes of sale. For the protection of people who do not know what they are buying, this regulation ought to be allowed to stand. No reason was given by the member for Avon for his objection to Regulation 39, which reads—

All letters to and from the inmates of an institution shall pass through the hands of the superintendent or manager, who may in his discretion withhold them from transmission or return them to the writer.

There is no crime about such a regulation. It refers only to wards of the State. Such a regulation is imposed in the case of white wards of the State, but nothing is said against it. When it is applied to native wards, it becomes a crime. At Wyndham a native ward, who had learned to write, wrote from the mission to a Chinese storekeeper in the town. The letter was interesting, for it purported to be an order for a lot of material to be sent by the Chinaman to the mission by lugger. The letter was censored, and the order did not arrive. But for the fact that the letter was censored, the order would have gone to Wyndham. As it was, publicity was given to the incident. There is, therefore, some semblance of sense about this regulation. No objection is raised to it as applied to white wards of the State. After all, there is nothing very terrible about it.

The next regulation to which the hon. member objected was No. 53. He said that he had a particular authority to guide him in disagreeing with it. I wish to say quite modestly that I am that authority. As I have stated, the hon. member has not closely studied any of these regulations. I did not object to this particular regulation. There is a vast differ-

ence between the one I objected to last session, and the regulation to which the hon. member has objected. I hope members will accept my word that the regulation I objected to is that which appears in "Hansard." It is very different in wording from Regulation 53 that is now in force, as members can see for themselves by comparing them. There is now a vast difference in the meaning of the present regulation—as will be seen from the inclusion of the word "paid" before "employment" and the inclusion of other words—and that to which objection was raised last year. The hon. member quoted "Hansard" to show that I was very emphatic and strong in my protest against the regulation. I should, therefore, like to read a few words of what I said last year in that connection. My remarks were as follows:—

I realise that regulations must be framed so that the Act may be properly administered. No doubt many of these regulations are in the opinion of the department requisite to enable it to carry out its administrative duties. Several of them would be all right if we were in a position to alter words here and there.

The hon. member forgot those words, and said I was emphatic in protesting against the regulation. I paid the department the courtesy of saying I realised that it wished to have the regulation agreed to, and that some of the other regulations would be all right if we could alter a word here and there. My objection was that the wording was incorrect. I was not in a position to re-model the regulations, because under the Standing Orders members are not permitted to alter the wording of regulations, and I was, therefore, obliged to move to disagree with the regulation in question and others. That action has been misinterpreted to mean that the regulations were bitterly opposed at the time, when actually that was not so. I did not speak for or against any other regulations except those with which I particularly disagreed. I have now re-written this regulation in accordance with what I felt at the time was necessary. I have done the same with respect to other regulations. The reasons given by members for objecting to them have been weighed, and we have endeavoured to frame the regulations in accordance with their views. If I have failed in that respect, it is bad luck for me. After the explanation I have given, members must

agree that the regulation with which I disagreed is entirely different from the present regulation 53. Regulation 64 reads—

Permits to employ must state where the natives covered by the permit are intended to be employed. Natives in respect to whom a permit or permits to employ on land have been issued must not serve any person other than the employer named in the permit during the period covered by the permit, but may work under the immediate direction of a competent employee other than a native, in the service of the said employer. If any employer lends his natives to work for any other employer who is not authorised under these regulations to work the natives concerned, he commits a breach of these regulations.

I wish to explain that the permit to employ natives is a personal responsibility of the person taking out the permit. I do not know that there is anything wrong with such a regulation. The law itself makes the person take out the permit to employ natives, and the permit is the responsibility of the person who takes it out. The reason why this regulation has been drafted is to prevent the dummieing of natives, or the lending of natives by one employer to another. We had a recent experience in Broome where a person who had no permit to employ natives borrowed a couple of natives from someone who had a permit and was employing natives. Both the two natives, from some unknown cause, were drowned off a lugger. The person who held the permit to employ them was unable to furnish any explanation. He could give none, not having been present at the time the accident occurred. Members will recognise the department's difficulty in ascertaining the cause of death of those two natives. Another consideration is that the permit is a protection to the permit-holder, because he has to pay into a medical fund for accident, sickness and so forth of the natives employed by him. Yet another consideration is that some person who, in the eyes of the department, is not a fit and proper person to employ natives, and would not be given a permit by the department to employ them, might borrow natives from some person holding a permit, and so would defeat the aim of the department. Thus there are three reasons why this regulation should be allowed to stand.

Regulation 65 is consequential on No. 64. No. 65 reads—

Natives employed by contract drovers, well-sinkers, or other persons engaged under con-

tract with any particular employer, must be covered by separate permit to be taken out by the person in charge as may be required by the Protector. Any branch of any pastoral station or agricultural undertaking which is under separate management or oversight shall be regarded as a separate property for the purposes of these regulations. The permit, as I have already stated, is the personal responsibility of the person who takes it out. In the northern portions of Western Australia many contract drovers come along to pick up a mob of sheep or cattle. They may be short of plant. The natural thing then is for the station-owner or station manager—who will not hand over stock to a drover without a full complement of plant and men to look after it—to lend the drover a couple of natives. That drover might bring the stock down to Wiluna, get on the drunk, and forget all about the natives. He may forget that he has brought them down, and that he has the responsibility of sending them back to the station or locality from which they came. Then the local policeman or protector picks up the natives. He asks, "Where did you come from?" The native gives the name of the employer. Immediately a report comes to the Chief Protector that the station in question has a native employee who is running loose in Wiluna without food or accommodation. The responsibility is on the station, because it loaned the native to the drover. Again, a contractor comes along to a station and secures a contract for sinking a well or erecting a fence or some other work of that kind. He may have no labour, and therefore borrows natives from the station. In the course of the work there is an argument, and finally the department has trouble with the natives. The department then says to the station owner or manager, "This is your responsibility." Then there is another argument. The regulation is for the protection not only of the native but also of the person responsible for the property. In my opinion the regulation is highly necessary, and I hope it will be retained.

No reason is given for seeking the disallowance of Regulation 72, which reads—

A native or natives engaged under a contract to perform work or services, notwithstanding that the relationship is not that of master and servant, must be so engaged under permit or permit and agreement.

I am advised that the object of Regulation 72 is merely to clarify the legal position.

The Crown Law Department states that if the regulation is not allowed to stand, there may be a heap of trouble for the employer. It applies to natives employed under so-called contract. Not being a lawyer, I can give no further information beyond the reason stated by the department.

Regulation 73 is designed merely to substitute a simple contract for a complicated contract. I could quote two or three cases where a half-caste contract-drover has made an agreement with a person in the Kimberley district, has brought cattle overland to Wiluna, and finally has found that the contract agreement was not worth twopence, and therefore did not get a shilling out of the contract. If this regulation has the force of law, the Commissioner of Native Affairs will be able to substitute a simple and effective form of contract.

Regulation 76 reads as follows—

In the event of a person who is not a native seeking a permit to engage a native or natives to perform work for him under contract, such permit may be refused unless the applicant produces a written agreement between the employer and the native or natives concerned which contains an express prohibition against the native contractor engaging other natives for the purpose of the contract, or an express condition that the native contractor will not engage another native or natives unless and until he has obtained a permit to do so under Section 18 of the Act.

Here likewise the Crown Law Department advises that the regulation is highly necessary for the protection of the employer. Again, not being a legal practitioner, I cannot give any further advice, but have to accept the Crown Solicitor's opinion that the regulation is necessary for protection of employers. The department has accordingly drafted this regulation on the advice of the Crown Solicitor, and it should be retained.

Regulation 80, in respect of which the member for Avon did give some reasons for his objections, reads as follows—

On the refusal by a protector to grant any permit, the name of the applicant, together with the reason for the refusal, shall be supplied to the Commissioner and to all protectors in the districts adjoining that in which the applicant resides, and it shall be unlawful for any protector thereafter to grant a permit to such applicant without the authority of the Commissioner.

The hon. member complained bitterly that we proposed to advertise the fact that a

particular person had been refused a permit to employ a native. Let him compare that with what happens regarding the prohibited list. If a man has been convicted before the Police Court and his name has been placed on the prohibited list, we do not hesitate to plaster his name on the bar doors of every hotel. In this instance the person concerned would not really be disadvantaged. In fact, he would not be at such a disadvantage as the person convicted of alcoholism, because his name would not be plastered on hotel doors. All that would happen would be that a confidential note would be sent to all protectors concerned intimating that the permit of a certain individual to employ natives had been refused or cancelled. If the member for Avon were a protector and I were to approach him regarding the employment of a native after my permit had been cancelled, he would simply tell me that he could not give me a permit. Surely there is not much to complain about in that! Officers of the department should be notified when a permit has been cancelled.

Regulation 81, respecting which the member for Avon did not give any reason for his objection, reads—

(a) Employers of native labour must provide accommodation to the satisfaction of the Commissioner for their native employees, upon or within such distance of their own premises as the Commissioner may require. Where it is inconvenient to accommodate natives near the employer's premises, and other suitable arrangements can be made, representation may be made to the Commissioner through the local protector for approval accordingly.

(b) In all cases bedding, and mosquito nets and ground sheets as required, shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Commissioner.

(c) Suitable sanitary conveniences shall be provided where necessary or as required by the Commissioner.

(d) Every employer of native labour shall, if so required, supply his native employees with suitable, substantial and sufficient food and drinking and bathing water to the satisfaction of the Commissioner. Saccharine shall not be substituted for sugar without the consent of the Commissioner.

The reason for that regulation is that the Commissioner of Native Affairs desires to protect the health of natives, particularly against the ravages of malarial fever. Members may think that the regulation embodies dreadful powers with which to vest the Commissioner, but in the interests of the natives

themselves those powers are necessary. Two seasons ago an outbreak of malaria caused the death of a hundred natives in the Kimberley district alone. Had those natives been provided with mosquito nets, I would not exaggerate if I said that half of them would not have died. They can protect themselves to a certain extent with smoke fires and other methods, but only mosquito nets can afford them adequate protection. When asleep, a native takes a lot of waking, and a swarm of mosquitos would quickly inoculate him with the malarial fever germ. Members should give consideration to that aspect before voting against the regulation. The Principal Medical Officer can prove by means of a map how the mosquitoes travelled along the various rivers, and at the stations along the route the deaths occurred of the natives, as I have indicated.

Regulation 85 reads—

The Commissioner may direct that the wages or part of the wages of any native shall be paid to him in trust for such native, in any manner he may think fit, and the wages shall be paid by the employer accordingly.

This particular regulation has proved highly controversial. I have had much advice and many letters indicating that I should withdraw it. The reason for the regulation is the protection of the taxpayers, and its provisions will not be insisted upon except in special instances. The officers of the Department of Native Affairs have had a long experience with half-caste girls and boys who have been placed in employment. The half-caste has little sense of responsibility where money is concerned. He or she may have a position in which the wages are 10s. or £1 a week, and it can be guaranteed that when the employment terminates, the native will be stoney-broke and will have to apply to the department for sustenance and protection. While the natives are in work, should not portion of their wages be collected and be cared for on their behalf?

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What if a legacy is left to a native?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I do not think there is any need to worry about legacies. Should there be any they will be retained in the hands of the Commissioner of Native Affairs until the natives concerned reach the age of 21 years, at which stage those concerned may consult lawyers and, if necessary, take action to secure recovery of the money. There is no

thing wrong with that position. In many instances natives have paid their money into the department, which has looked after and educated their children. When those young people are old enough to go to work, surely the taxpayer is entitled to some protection by ensuring that the natives, while at work, will not squander their money, and then when they lose their employment have to return to the department for protection.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: White people do that.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I agree with the hon. member's statement, but white people do not adopt that attitude to the same extent as natives. The next to which the member for Avon took exception is Regulation 88, which reads—

Whenever required by the Commissioner, an employer to whom a native is being sent as employee shall pay in advance all costs of the employee's conveyance from an institution or any place within a radius of 20 miles of the General Post Office, Perth, to the place of residence of the employer or where the native is required to work.

I am rather surprised that the hon. member should take exception to that regulation. He supports the policy of permitting private labour bureaux to operate. He agrees that if such a bureau obtains a position for an individual, the employer shall not only be asked to pay the fare of the employee, but he is willing that the private labour bureau shall demand, by way of return, the payment of half the man's wages for the first week. On the other hand, because a native is concerned, he objects to the employer being required to pay the cost of the employee's conveyance to wherever he is to work. Surely there is no need for me to stress my opposition to the hon. member's attitude regarding that regulation. Surely no member will contend that the department that has protected the interests of the natives should bear the expense of sending the native to work! I disagree with such a burden being placed upon the general taxpayer.

Mr. Watts: If you did not collect so much as 75 per cent. of the man's wages, we would not mind.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: We have not collected 75 per cent. The hon. member says that where the employer is concerned we must not touch him or ask him to pay the fare for his native

employee, but when a white man secures a job through a private labour bureau, the employer can be asked to pay the fare and the bureau allowed to claim half the wages paid to the employee during his first week. Members should be fair and consistent. If they are prepared to allow such conditions to apply in private employment, they should at least have some regard for the interests of the taxpayers, in this instance represented by the Department of Native Affairs.

The next to which the hon. member objected was Regulation 94, which is consequential upon other regulations. It reads—

In the event of wages payable to an employee being payable in part direct to the employee and in part to the Commissioner in trust for such employee, the employee shall, whenever required by the Commissioner so to do, provide a pocket money book in which shall be entered the amount of wages payable direct to the employee weekly, and wherein the receipt of such wages shall be acknowledged in writing by the employee, and a note of any legitimate deduction made by the employer shall be made.

The regulation is designed to protect both the employee and the employer. As I have already said, natives are not always responsible where money is concerned. The department has had many complaints laid against employers by natives, who have said that they did not receive their money, or, if they did, could not state the amount. This system will protect the employer from employees who make misstatements; it will also save the department much trouble in inquiry into cases where the whole truth has not been told.

Regulation 99 is another regulation in respect of which the hon. member did not state the reasons for his objection. It reads—

An employer shall not sell to or purchase for any ward any land, building, livestock, bicycle, vehicle or musical instrument at a cost exceeding £1 without the consent of the Commissioner. For the purposes of this regulation musical instrument shall include gramophone or radio set.

Members will note that the regulation refers to a ward of the State. Even if it applied to natives, we ought to agree to it so as to protect the native from himself. A native may be influenced into buying a musical instrument costing £50 or £60. Nothing would suit a native better than to obtain a piano-accordeon, which no doubt he would be able to play well. These instruments cost £40

or £50. If an employer were allowed to purchase one for a half-caste, the latter would be working for many years before paying off the amount. Natives should not be allowed to purchase these instruments without the consent of some person in authority. It may be that the Commissioner would know after having made inquiries that a native could afford to purchase such an instrument. Nevertheless, natives should be protected and therefore I hope the regulation will be allowed to stand. The department has had much experience of these cases and can quote instances of half-castes, or natives, as they are termed under the Act, not having been given a fair deal.

Regulation 106 was the next objected to. This is merely a machinery regulation dealing with tribal marriages. Tribal marriages are illegal. The regulation gives the Commissioner power to deal with such cases. Regulation 106 (I) empowers the Commissioner to refuse acceptance of money as a contribution to the medical fund. He should have that right. I know of several cases of employers who have refused to contribute to the medical fund, but who, after a native has met with an accident, or two or three natives have fallen ill, have rushed in to pay the contributions. It is like an employer who has not insured his workers rushing to an insurance company after an employee has lost a leg.

Mr. Watts: This regulation applies only to the moneys paid with the permit.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No.

Mr. Watts: That is what the regulation says.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: There are some employers whom no insurance companies would insure. Probably some insurance companies would refuse to insure my motor car. If private companies have the right to refuse business in that way, surely no objection should be raised to empowering the Commissioner to refuse contributions to the medical fund in certain cases. He is unlikely to refuse contributions unless he has particularly good reasons for doing so. I hope hon. members will not oppose this regulation.

No reason was given for objecting to Regulation 108, which reads—

A protector may cause any deserted or abandoned native dwelling which is situated

on Crown land or a reserve to be pulled down and destroyed. If a protector finds that a native's dwelling, which is erected on Crown land or any reserve, requires repairing he may order the occupier to repair it, and if such occupier shall wilfully neglect or refuse after reasonable time to do so he shall be guilty of a breach of these regulations and may be proceeded against accordingly.

For the benefit of members, I may explain that there has been much argument over the destruction of a house in the Broome district. It had been occupied by a mother and two daughters for many years. These natives were then sent to the leprosarium. The Commissioner of Native Affairs ought to have power to destroy such a dwelling; as a matter of fact, I felt tempted to put an axe to it myself. That is not an isolated instance. Shacks—termed houses—that have been occupied by natives suffering from contagious diseases ought to be destroyed; the Commissioner should have power to destroy them. They are only carriers of disease and are unfit for occupation. Cases have occurred in the southern areas where the department has supplied iron, hessian and other material to repair natives' camps on reserves, but the natives have been too lazy to do the work. In such cases, the department should have power to deal with them. It is on record that some half-castes in the South-West were supplied with material by the department, but were too lazy to repair their dwellings.

Regulation 142 reads—

A certificate of exemption will not be issued to a native living in conjugal relationship with another native of the opposite sex to whom such native is not legally married.

I do not think such a native ought to be classed as a responsible citizen. Certificates of exemption are only issued to natives living under European conditions and trying to improve their status in life. Such persons ought to be classed as responsible citizens.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Will you do the same with the whites?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Two wrongs do not make a right. I am not controlling whites. If I were, I would probably introduce severer regulations.

Mr. Watts: You had better get to work on them at the same time as on the natives.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Regulation 144 has to do with the position of exempted married half-castes who separate. It provides that in the event of such a separation, either of the parties can retain the exemption granted. That is to say, the exemption can be renewed or cancelled, as may be thought fit. I do not think there is any reason to take strong exception to that. Both parties should not be penalised because there has been a disagreement or a divorce or separation. In such circumstances it is unlikely that both parties will be in the wrong and therefore the exemption of both should not be cancelled. Two people should not be penalised for the sins of one.

That is all I have to say. I am sorry to have taken up so much of the time of the House, but I wanted to explain fully the reasons the regulations are desired. I hope I have convinced members of their necessity. I have convinced myself or I would not have introduced them. I gave a lot of consideration to the regulations. I read the speeches of members in "Hansard" and noted their objections. Wherever it was possible to re-word the regulations to conform to the wishes of members who had opposed them, they were re-worded. There can be no harm in giving the regulations a trial and I hope therefore that they will be allowed to stand.

On motion by Mr. W. Hegney, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 26th October, 1939.

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

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of his report on the Treasurer's statements of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1939. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

QUESTION—BULK HANDLING.

Additional Bin Facilities.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Agriculture: In view of the Minister's announcement in the Press that bins are to be constructed at Bonnie Rock, Wialki and Beacon for this season's wheat, for what reason did he refuse similar facilities in the Lakes Country, Beenong and Quender?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: It is the responsibility of Co-operative Bulk Handling, Ltd., to instal bulk facilities. The Government has not the responsibility of installing such facilities, nor has it refused to instal them as the hon. member suggests. Bonnie Rock, Wialki and Beacon are three times as far away from existing bulk handling facilities as Beenong and Quender and have the necessary weighbridges. There are not weighbridges at Beenong and Quender and there is not suitable weighbridge equipment available in Australia. Weighbridges and elevators are two essential parts of bulk handling facilities which at present are unobtainable.