

arrived at the conclusion that in framing it the draftsman had given it very careful thought. I am a great believer in the consolidation of statutes. I think it was in 1898, or at about that time, that the late Mr. J. C. H. James undertook to consolidate all the then existing statutes.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It was about 1925.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: All the statutes to that period were compiled, and with such an example before me, I frequently agitated that the different Governments should undertake the consolidation of other Acts of Parliament. The only point to which I wish to draw attention is in Clause 113 and which I will refer to more fully when the Bill is in Committee. I intend to submit an amendment and will ask for its careful consideration at the hands of members. Clause 113 deals with the limitation of the area of a leasehold to 1,000,000 acres. Superficially I agree, and we all agree, that 1,000,000 acres is quite sufficient for any individual or company. I was one of those who supported that when it was before the House on a previous occasion. Since that time, however, circumstances have arisen as the result of which an alteration might now be made. Owing to this limitation to 1,000,000 acres, capital, which otherwise would have been invested here, has gone out of the country. The remedy would be to insert a clause to the effect that any person or company who improved their million acres to such an extent that they could not do anything more with the area, and still had capital available to acquire another property, should be allowed to do so. I know of a couple of instances where other properties might have been taken up in Western Australia and money spent on them had it been possible for the areas to be taken up. Again I congratulate the Minister on the manner in which he presented the Bill to the House. He did not worry us with too much detail, but gave us sufficient information all of which was interesting. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. CORNELL (North) [5.14]: I too congratulate the Honorary Minister on the manner in which he presented the Bill. It is essentially a Committee measure, but I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without adding my small meed of praise for the excellent work that has been done by Mr. Sayer in drafting the consolidation. The

State is indeed fortunate to have a man like Mr. Sayer to do work of this kind as thoroughly as he has done it. It has been an established fact for many years that no litigant was game enough to take on the Lands Department because of the multiplicity of Acts that had to be interpreted in a court of law. Mr. Sayer has succeeded in reducing all those Acts of Parliament to a comparatively small measure. This is the second consolidating Bill that has been brought down this session. It is a tribute to Mr. Sayer's industry that he also dealt with the consolidation of the Road Districts Act, which was so long overdue for treatment in that way. Mr. Sayer has made the interpretation of the Land Act much easier than it has been for many years, and I hope he will long be spared to the State to enable him to continue his work of consolidating the various Acts.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.16]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 31st October, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.17 p.m.*

### Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 25th October, 1933.

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

**QUESTION—EGGS FOR EXPORT.**

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Can he give an assurance that the variation of three-eighths oz. in the 15-lb. pack of eggs is strictly adhered to by all Western Australian exporters? 2, Is it a fact that two and one-quarter oz. eggs are being shipped from Western Australia in the 15-lb. pack?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, No.

**BILL—AUGUSTA ALLOTMENTS.**

Introduced by the Minister for Lands and read a first time.

**BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. LATHAM** (York) [4.34]: The Minister for Health, when he moved the second reading of the Bill, intimated that it was proposed to take advantage of taxation that was being abandoned by the Federal Government, amounting roughly to about £11,000, but he did not tell members how that money would be utilised by the State. When the Minister was in charge of the Medical and Health Departments during the previous Labour Administration, he had the advantage of additional revenue from the entertainments tax for hospital purposes, and during the term of office of the Mitchell Government that revenue was placed to the credit of Consolidated Revenue. Members should realise that the revenue to be raised by means of this additional taxation will go into Consolidated Revenue, and will not be available to the Minister for Health except to the extent that money is made available from the general pool from which the affairs of the State are financed. I object to the Government availing themselves of taxation in respect of which relief has been accorded the people by the Federal Government. The amount involved may appear to be small

and it may be claimed that it is right to tax amusements. I warn members that the taxation proposal of the Government means an additional 8½ per cent. on charges at entertainments amounting to over half a crown, which is a fairly heavy charge for admission. That is what the Minister's proposal means.

The Minister for Health: Your Government imposed additional taxation amounting to 50 per cent.

Mr. Doney: But times were much harder then.

The Minister for Health: Not a bit.

Mr. LATHAM: And the Government gave the people relief in other directions. If the Minister will inform the House that the Government intend to give the people relief in other directions to the extent of £11,000, we will not raise any objection to the Bill. There is to be no such relief whatever. As a matter of fact, with the impost dealt with in the Bill, it means that the present Government has so far provided an additional £25,000 for the Treasury, £14,000 being under the heading of the hospital tax and £11,000 on account of the entertainment tax. In these times it should not be a matter of increasing taxation, but of relieving the people of part of the taxation burden. The Bill will certainly not assist along those lines. If we are to start off in this way and the Treasurer is to take advantage of every portion of the field of taxation evacuated by the Federal Government, such as income tax, land tax, sales tax and so on, the position will be hopeless. I am opposed to the tax, for which there is no need. There is sufficient money already available for the purposes of government and unless we receive an assurance that the money is at least to be used to decrease the deficit to the extent of the amount raised under the Bill, I shall disagree with the Government's proposal. In fact, I cannot agree to it and I will oppose the second reading of the Bill.

**MR. GRIFFITHS** (Avon) [4.37]: I support the protest lodged by the Leader of the Opposition and am in accord with his remarks, which I regard as sound. The imposition of the additional tax on the higher prices charged for tickets may be claimed as justified on the score that the people who pay the higher prices are those who can afford to pay a little more. In the country

districts the charges for picture shows and entertainments are mostly about 2s. or 2s. 6d., so that they will be immediately affected by the Bill. If relief is afforded the people by the Federal Government by means of reduced or evacuated taxation, I consider the State Government should not rush in and add to the financial burden of the people to the extent of the relief granted by the Federal authorities. I shall not say more, being content to support the protest lodged by the Leader of the Opposition and to oppose the second reading of the Bill.

**MR. J. H. SMITH** (Nelson) [4.39]: I oppose the imposition of additional taxation and shall vote against the second reading of the Bill. One's memory does not need to go back beyond the last general election to remember the outcry against the taxation imposed by the Mitchell Government. The Bill will increase taxation.

**Mr. Withers**: It does not mean an increase.

**Mr. SMITH**: Of course it does. There have been other increases. We need only call to mind the emergency taxation, which has certainly been increased. The public of this State were led to believe that when the present Government took office there would be an immediate relief regarding taxation.

**Mr. Raphael**: So there was with respect to those who could ill afford to pay it.

**Mr. SMITH**: The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) is evidently acting as spokesman for the Government! Immediately the Federal Government granted the people relief from the form of taxation dealt with by the Bill, the present Government grabbed the opportunity with both hands on the score that here was something for nothing. They, therefore, decided to increase the burden of taxation to the extent of the relief afforded by the Federal authorities. If the Minister had been fair, he would have indicated that the Government proposed to take advantage of the taxation, from which the people had been relieved by the Federal authorities, and in levying the tax as a State impost, they intended to reduce the taxation imposed upon those who could least afford to pay it. If the Government, while taking advantage of the field of taxation evacuated by the Federal authorities, had relieved those on the lower rung,

Opposition members would have had no objection to lodge. On the other hand, without any word of apology, the Minister has embraced the opportunity to add to the burden of the people. I object to it. It is not right, because the present Government were pledged to the people that if returned to power, they would reduce taxation. This is the second opportunity they have seized to increase taxation since they have been in office.

**MR. WISE** (Gascayne) [4.42]: I am not sure that the small contribution I desire to make to the debate will be in order.

**Mr. Rodoreda**: You will soon find out.

**Mr. WISE**: I desire to deal with the position of mechanics' institutes and similar halls in isolated districts. Many of them were built with the aid of money secured from the Government. Every entertainment held in the halls for the purposes of raising funds to meet the obligation to the Government, to keep the premises in proper repair, to effect improvements, to pay for maintenance, to build verandahs and so forth, is subject to the application of the entertainments tax and part of the money raised by means of the entertainments is paid to the Government under that heading. I would be glad if, either by way of an amendment to the Bill or possibly by way of an amendment to the principal Act, exemption could be granted for entertainments when the object of the concert or picture show was to raise funds for the purposes I have indicated.

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [4.43]: There is not much to reply to as a result of the debate on the Bill.

**Mr. Raphael**: You would not expect anything else from the Opposition.

**The MINISTER FOR HEALTH**: I recognise there is some justification for the point raised by the member for Gascayne (Mr. Wise) but his objective cannot be achieved by way of an amendment to the Bill. It would have to be done by way of an amendment to the Act which imposes the tax.

**Mr. Stubbs**: It should be amended.

**The MINISTER FOR HEALTH**: It cannot be done under the Bill now before the House. I was extremely surprised at the

extraordinary attitude adopted by the Leader of the Opposition, who was supported by the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) and the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith). The Leader of the Opposition suggested that if I had given a definite assurance that the money would be used in reduction of the deficit or had indicated that relief was to be afforded in other directions, he would not have raised any objection to the Bill. In reply to the interjection of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney), who said that the conditions were worse two years ago than they are now, I am prepared to admit that the condition of the individual is better than it was two years ago.

Mr. Doney: And the condition of the State too.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Financially the State is worse off than it was two years ago.

Mr. Doney: But your income is undeniably greater.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is not undeniably greater. From a revenue point of view, the estimates are lower than they were two years ago. The revenue on which the State has to finance is that derived from the earnings of last year, and not from the money being earned this year, and members will realise that last year the average income was lower than it had been in any other year.

Mr. Doney: But the proceeds of this tax will help to swell the present year's income.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The advantage of the increase will be reaped next year, not this year?

Mr. Griffiths: What about the increased Federal contribution?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The Leader of the Opposition wanted to know what would be done with the money. It will go into the Treasury. We used to have a special fund into which the proceeds of the entertainments tax were paid, and every penny of it was devoted to the maintenance of hospitals. The Mitchell Government, however, took the money from the hospitals and doubled the entertainments tax. That occurred two years ago, and the three members who have waxed so indignant this afternoon voted for the alteration. They did not hesitate to grab an extra £33,000 from the amusement-going public of this State two

years ago. They then considered it quite right to do so, even though they knew the money would be paid into Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Latham: You are perpetuating that.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: If it is possible to make any alteration to give the hospitals more than they are getting at present, I shall be prepared to do it. The finances of the hospitals were never so straitened as at present, although we are collecting 1½d. in the pound on earnings from the general public. What I predicted two years ago has come to pass. There is not a committee hospital in this State that could exist without the support given by the Government. That is what has happened from taking away the entertainments tax and compelling the hospitals to subsist on the hospital tax. As for any apology, I have none to offer. It would be ridiculous if taxpayers had to pay 2d. in the shilling on tickets up to 2s. but only 1d. in the shilling on tickets costing 8s. To give relief on tickets costing less than 2s. would necessitate sacrificing £25,500, and the State cannot afford to do that under present conditions.

Mr. Doney: You could adjust that by taking the £11,500 off the lower charges for admission.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The hon. member is a wonderful mathematician. I have tried to get it worked out, but it is impossible to determine how such relief could be given. It is not as easy as the hon. member thinks.

Mr. Doney: I do not say it is easy; I say it is possible.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: That aspect had been considered. The Government concluded that it was essential to be consistent. We could not permit the tax to be dropped without losing the increase imposed by the previous Government on the lower charges, and consequently we had no alternative to taking the £11,500. I consider we are doing the correct thing, and I see no need to offer any apology.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of Section 4 and insertion of new section:

Mr. LATHAM: I am surprised at the Minister lashing himself into a fury in replying to the very meagre opposition to the tax. Let me put him right in respect to revenue receipts. The estimate for this year is more than £100,000 in excess of that for last year.

The Minister for Health: I was not speaking of last year. Go back another year.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member knows there is always a drag, and this is one of them. I do not know whether the Minister was justified in stating that he could not grant relief to people paying the lower admission charges.

Mr. Doney: That aspect has me puzzled.

Mr. LATHAM: I would have supported such relief. As regards hospitals, the Minister has more money than he had when previously in office.

The Minister for Health: Nothing of the kind!

Mr. LATHAM: Then there must have been a considerable falling off.

The Minister for Health: I am £60,000 down on hospitals this year as compared with 1929.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister has the benefit of the hospital tax, and instead of the money received from patients being paid into revenue, it is paid into a trust fund. If the Minister considers the figures, he will find he has a great advantage, so much so that he could afford to bring the Woorooloo Sanatorium, representing £14,000, under the hospital scheme. On top of that the Minister will have the additional money that must be produced by the tax this year, and that money will go into revenue. Neither Queensland nor South Australia will have an entertainments tax when the Federal Government evacuate the field.

The Minister for Health: You are wrong as regards South Australia.

Mr. LATHAM: Those States impose a tax on races but not on amusements. Only in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia are amusement taxes imposed.

The Minister for Health: Is there any three-penny admission to racecourses in South Australia?

Mr. LATHAM: I said the races were taxed. I did not say that I would agree to the Bill if the money were destined to re-

duce the deficit. I said there might be a reason for wishing to impose this tax and that the reason might be to reduce the deficit. Any relief the Federal Government give should be passed on to taxpayers. The Treasurer cannot very well forego any other revenue, but there is no need to add to taxation. The Government have all the money they need unless their object is to reduce the deficit.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There is no amusements tax in Queensland, but I did not quote Queensland. I have a list of entertainments taxes imposed in the various States, and South Australia, after the Commonwealth evacuates this field of taxation, will collect ½d. on admission charges up to 3d., 1d. on charges over 3d. but not over 6d., and thereafter 1d. for each 6d. or part of 6d. irrespective of the amount. We do not collect the tax until the charge is 9d.

Mr. Stubbs: Then South Australia collects 2d. on every 1s..

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, which is the amount we will collect if the Bill passes, but South Australia starts on a lower scale than we do.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not concerned about what is going on in the other States, but I do object to the imposition of an additional State tax upon the people of Western Australia to the extent of £11,000. I hope the clause will not be agreed to.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

#### **BILLS (4)—RETURNED.**

- 1, Police Act Amendment.
  - 2, Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment.
  - 3, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.
  - 4, Fruit Cases Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

#### **BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

#### Clause 4—Amendment of Section 4:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of the proviso the word "clerk" be struck out and "inspector" inserted in lieu.

I would point out that a clerk may not be a person who is qualified to the same extent as an inspector would be to deal with this matter.

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

Clauses 5 to 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Repeal of Section 15, and insertion of new section in lieu thereof:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That proposed Subsection 1 be struck out.

The State provides a free employment bureau for those who desire to use it; thus there is no monopoly for the private brokers. If the State office were conducted on better lines, it would attract more people to its doors. Many men do not go there to obtain employment, and women also prefer to go elsewhere. Some of the private brokers demand the payment of a deposit, but I have a proposal, to be dealt with later on, that will do away with that practice. Meanwhile I suggest the deletion of this proposed subsection.

Mr. McDONALD: I support the amendment. I agree that we should retain the private employment brokers' agency as part of the business activities of the State. In the past they have performed considerable services for those who wished to find employment. For the two years ended the 30th June 1927, 2,932 persons found employment through the State bureau, and 8,754 through private agencies. I understand the relative proportions still exist, and that two or three times as many people find employment through private brokers as through the State office. The Minister is on right lines in bringing down the Bill. I support the amendment, however, because I think if the employer has to pay the fee, this will greatly cripple the work of the private employment brokers. These people find employment for household work, farm service and station service generally. The employers cannot pass on the cost, and they take considerable risk after paying the fee, of the employee leaving the place or prov-

ing unsatisfactory. Unless this amendment is carried, the activities of private employment brokers will be greatly decreased. That would be a pity, because the more people we have to-day establishing contact between those who want employees and those who want work, the better it is for the State, provided the activities are functioning on proper lines. So, if we eliminate or reduce the work of private bureaux, we shall reduce one of the agencies linking up the employer with the employee, and thus diminish employment. If employers will not pay the full fee of a private employment broker, two alternatives arise. Either employers will secure employees by advertising in the Press for a small charge—and in this case many of the abuses to which the Minister has referred will be subject to no check at all—or they will apply to the State Labour Bureau. I do not wish to express any opinion on the activities of the bureau. According to the Estimates those activities will during the current financial year cost the State something over £6,000. On the basis of past years, the bureau handles about a third of the situations vacant. If the activities of private employment brokers are abolished or greatly curtailed, the State will have to find much more money to run its bureau. One of the expenses occasioned to the bureau is the advancing of fares for people to go to the country, and only a small proportion of those people refund the fares afterwards. In the case of private employment offices the matter is apparently cared for, under the spur of private enterprise, in such a way that not much is lost. With safeguards such as the Minister has provided in the Bill, the position can be left as it is in regard to sharing of fees. That system has worked well. The employee will be more likely to value the job if he has to contribute something towards the cost of obtaining it. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, there is no monopoly; if employers or employees prefer the free service of the State, it is available to them. No valid reason has been shown for interfering with the existing very fair system. I support the amendment.

Mr. DONEY: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister, upon reflection, will no doubt feel that he has gone further than is wise. Successful applicants will be inclined to enter more or less irrespons-

ibly into contracts, not caring whether they accept or decline appointments found for them, despite the expense attendant upon their applications. A fee should be charged. That which is not paid for is seldom appreciated at its proper value. All employment brokers must have had numerous experiences of applicants having work found for them but not bothering to turn up for the job. The State Labour Bureau caters for applicants who have not at the moment the wherewithal to finance a position through the private employment brokers. I support the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am sure the Minister is taking a step in the wrong direction in endeavouring to secure the passage of Sub-clause 1. Everything possible should be done to secure employment, whereas the sub-clause operates in the opposite direction, and will discourage the securing of work. Any one objecting to a private employment office can always go to the State Labour Bureau, on the conduct of which I have no criticism to offer. Still, it is a fact that many employers prefer to go to private employment offices. The cause may be that the bureau is frequently used for the placing of relief workers. Complaints made as to private employment offices are few, though I do not dispute what the Minister stated in moving the second reading. When a similar Bill was before Parliament some years ago, there were complaints; but the position has improved considerably since. If there is no fee payable for a job, there will not be the same keen desire to retain it as there is to-day. No fee being chargeable, the same person can go along to choose a position again and again. There should be payment on both sides, because a definite service is rendered to both. It may fairly be said that the unions concerned with industry impose a charge upon those engaged in industry. I have been informed that on different Government works being carried on at present, procurement orders may be used by workers to provide for the withholding by the Government pay clerk of an amount of 2s. 6d. monthly, such amount to be paid to the unions for the required tickets.

The Minister for Works: That applies to tradespeople, too.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am told that this is done, and that the Minister concerned has approved of it. If it is wrong for an em-

ployment office to charge for the service rendered in securing work, surely it is at least equally wrong for a union to impose a charge on those who are working, and for arrangements to be made whereby the Government deduct the amount monthly. The sub-clause is a direct interference with private enterprise, and another step in the direction of restriction. Anything which means restriction of employment is certainly not in the best interests of the people.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The point here involved is one of the most important in the Bill. The carrying of the amendment means that the worker will have to pay to get a job. The proposed charge of half the weekly wage is absolutely outrageous. This idea comes, not from the Labour movement in Australia, but from the International Labour Conference at Geneva, which carried a resolution in favour of the abolition of all fee-charging agencies. And two-thirds of those who supported that resolution were anti-Labour in politics. The first Bill dealing with this matter which I introduced kept strict faith with the decision of the League of Nations, which was to abolish altogether the fee-charging agency. But, although the Bill passed this Chamber, it was met with wholesale protestations in another place, the members of which refused to agree to the abolition, but said that if we brought down a measure to regulate the business, they would agree that no fee should be charged to the workers. Now, when we introduce a provision in that modified form just in order to meet those who differ from us, it is hurled at me that I admit a private employment agency to be a legitimate business. I admit nothing of the sort. It is wholly repugnant that people should have to pay in order to get a job.

Mr. Doney: Is it not legitimate in the sense that it is in keeping with the existing Act?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not say it is illegal, but I say it is held by the International Labour Conference, representing every Government associated with the League of Nations, that fee-charging agencies should be abolished.

Mr. Doney: Conditions are different in various countries.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so, and if there be one country in the world that ought to stand up to this, it is Australia. Many other countries are abolishing those agencies. I have compromised on this in

order to meet our opponents, but I now find that the more I compromise the more am I forced back. If the Country Party are taking up this stand, I refer them to page 1137 of the "Hansard" of 1925, where it will be found that their leader said he would support a provision that no employee would have to pay any fee. That was said unconditionally. And in 1932 the Government of which the present Leader of the Opposition was a distinguished member wrote to the Prime Minister saying that the principle of charging fees to the employer alone was a commendable one. And now the Leader of the Opposition has moved this amendment!

Mr. McDonald: I rather think you are wrong.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not want the hon. member to run away with the idea that I agree that this is a legitimate business, for I regard it as totally illegitimate and if I had my way I would not permit fee-charging agencies to carry on. I have here the case of an apprentice receiving 11s. 4d. per week who was charged a fee of £2 10s. before he could get the job.

Mr. Latham: We are not supporting that sort of thing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member knows that in this city the practice is for the employer to pay nothing at all, notwithstanding that the law says the same fee must be charged to each of the two parties.

Mr. Latham: That is because no penalty is provided for the broker who does not insist on both sides paying.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It cannot be proved that the employer pays anything at all. When asked to pay he says he will not, and so the worker has to pay the lot. We have discovered that one registry office in this city is running what it calls a club, the membership of which costs £1. All members of that club have preference in the allotment of jobs.

Mr. Sampson: You raised no objection—

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Nonsense! I am prosecuting him now.

Mr. Sampson: You raised no objection to relief workers having to pay into unions.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Is there any comparison at all between the two practices? The one man pays to get his wages, hours and industrial conditions fixed for him,

and to have a representative in the Arbitration Court. Is there any comparison between that and paying to get a job? The hon. member's imagination must be exclusive to himself. I cannot agree that the employee shall pay anything. If the hon. member who moved the motion is going to suggest that the worker shall pay half a week's wages and the employer pay half a week's wages—

Mr. Latham: In most cases the employees pay a full week's wages now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know it only too well. In Queensland the business is nationalised, and no private employment agencies are permitted. In Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia the fees charged to the employees range from 1s. 6d. to 6s. They are fixed by regulation. But in this State the practice is that the employer pays nothing at all, while the worker pays double. When previously I brought down a similar Bill I was told that if I would be moderate and introduce a provision such as this before the Committee, it would be agreed to. To-day I am surprised at my own moderation, and still I get no better reception than I got before. In Geneva, Australia is posted as a defaulter, as against backward countries such as India and Italy.

Mr. Latham: And a few others are defaulters. We are leading in a number of instances.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We did at one time, but if we are leading in this respect, we must be leading from the rear.

Mr. Doney: We are in the same position as Victoria and New South Wales.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We are not. I would prefer to abolish all these fee-charging agencies. However, I have compromised on that, and now members opposite want me to compromise still further. I am amazed at the conservative attitude of members opposite towards these matters; they are away behind the rest of the world, and they seem to pride themselves on that. The business lends itself to abuse and imposes burdens on a weak section who cannot defend themselves. In recent times there has grown up the practice of offering to pay a premium to get a job. I asked the Crown Law Department to insert a provision to prohibit that, but was informed that it could not be dealt with in this Bill. We have pro-



vided that no premium shall be paid for apprenticeship.

Mr. Doney: Quite right too.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Would it not be right in this instance?

Mr. Doney: No, because the conditions are different.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government have gone as far as they can in moderating the Bill previously submitted.

Mr. LATHAM: Why cannot the Minister do something to render such legislation unnecessary? If the State Labour Bureau were made sufficiently attractive, it would get the business. The bureau does not impose charges on employer or employee.

The Minister for Works: That would not do away with employment brokers.

Mr. LATHAM: Then they must serve a purpose. Why is it the State Labour Bureau is not used exclusively? Country people send to the city when they cannot obtain labour and they send to brokers who understand their needs. The State Labour Bureau has a reputation for sending the man longest on the books to get rid of him, without any consideration as to his suitability. The Geneva Conference could not have had in mind such an institution as the State Labour Bureau.

The Minister for Works: Shall I read the reference again?

Mr. LATHAM: No. The Minister can accomplish through the State Labour Bureau what the Geneva Conference desired. Let the Government test out this idea, and give service equal to that given by employment brokers. If employment brokers render a service, they are entitled to be recompensed. The Minister contends that an employee should not pay anything. If it were certain that an employee would keep the engagement, there would be some ground for the Minister's contention, but the difficulty is to get men to complete the contracts they make. If they pay a contribution to the employment brokers, they are more likely to go to the place they have undertaken to fill. A farmer suffers great inconvenience if at harvest time, he needs a harvester-driver, arranges for one to be sent, and the man fails to put in an appearance.

Mr. Doney: Or if a man sent is not a harvester-driver.

Mr. LATHAM: Probably the State Labour Bureau officials merely ask a man whether he is a harvester-driver and accept his word. Undoubtedly employment brokers render a useful service.

The Minister for Works: Why have you altered your opinion? Your Government wrote a letter to the Prime Minister and your then leader said he would agree to that.

Mr. LATHAM: I might be able to quote some letters that the Minister would not like to hear. If employees were perfectly honest and would carry out their engagements, the waiving of the charge might be possible, but prospective employers need some protection.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am surprised at the Minister mentioning that people offer premiums to secure work. That is proof of the difficulty of getting work and could reasonably be used as an argument for the charging of reasonable fees by labour exchanges. If employees are not charged in excess of the amount charged to employers, no reasonable objection can be raised.

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

Ayes .. .. .	17
Noes .. .. .	24

Majority against .. .. . 7

#### AYES.

Mr. Brockman	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Piessé
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Keenaa	Mr. Seward
Mr. Latham	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Thora
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Welsh
Mr. J. I. Mann	Mr. Doney
Mr. North	

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Clothier	Mr. Munale
Mr. Collier	Mr. Needham
Mr. Cross	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hegney	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Obligation of employer to pay servant's fare on termination of service for any reason other than wilful misconduct:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That a proviso as follows be added to the clause:—Provided that the employer shall not be liable under paragraph (a), in case the employment has not lasted three months, or under paragraph (b) in case it has not lasted six months, unless such employment has been terminated within the period of three or six months, as the case may be, through or by reason of the wrongful act or default of the employer.

I wish to point out to the Minister the possibilities that exist, with the clause as at present drafted. If a man wished to go to Wiluna, he need only apply for a job there, have his fare paid, and then leave the job. In other words, a man could have his fare paid to Albany in the summer and to some other part of the State in the winter. It would be grossly unfair upon employers that this sort of thing should be allowed to go on, although it is a very effective way of killing the private employment brokers' business. Who will determine the degree of misconduct on the part of the employee to warrant the employer in withholding the fare? If the Minister does not accept the amendment, he will surely agree to redraft the proposed new section. It would be better to repeal the whole Act than to allow this to go through.

The Minister for Employment: What is a wrongful act or default on the part of the employer?

Mr. LATHAM: If an employer dismissed a man for no valid reason, it would be a wrongful act on his part. Anyway, it was the Crown Law Department that actually drafted this amendment.

Mr. McDONALD: This part of the Bill does require amendment. An employer may have to pay the fare of some individual to a distant part of the country, and after a week or a fortnight that individual may leave his employment and demand his return fare. Some safeguard should be inserted to prevent abuses of that kind. The amendment as drafted is not quite fair in one respect. It would enable the employer to give a week's notice to his employee before the expiration of the three or six months, and thus avoid the obligation of paying the return fare. That would not be right. Some safeguard should be embodied

in this clause so that both sides may be protected.

Mr. DONEY: Will the Minister explain the meaning of the term "wilful misconduct"? It does not cover ordinary misconduct, quarrelsomeness or drunkenness.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Under paragraph (a) the employer will be required to pay the fare of the servant from the place of engagement to the place of employment. It cannot be intended that he should pay this fare to a person who can leave the day after.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask members behind me to keep order while other members are speaking.

Mr. Marshall: Quite right, too.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No penalty of any kind is provided in the case of the individual who leaves his position the day after he arrives. If his services are terminated at any time for any reason other than wilful misconduct, the employer is expected to provide a sufficient sum to pay his fare back to the place of engagement. If the contract is the usual weekly contract, the employee can give a week's notice and the employer must pay the fare back. What, I think, the Minister desires is to protect the servant in respect to his fare to the place of engagement, but he must also agree that the servant must go there with a bona fide intention of taking the job and keeping it. He cannot desire that the individual shall have his fare paid merely to enable him to reach a certain place, and leave it again the following day with his return fare in his pocket.

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

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I invite from hon. members opposite suggestions as to overcoming the difficulty involved. I am not wedded to the wording of the clause. However, the Leader of the Opposition will have recognised, from speeches made on the cross benches, that there is just as much difficulty in his amendment as in the clause itself. It is hard to arrive at a provision which will deal equitably with both parties. I do not argue that the fault is all on one side. Men over-anxious to obtain work may profess to know many things of which they have no idea, and on arrival in the country may prove unable to perform the work for which they have been engaged. In other

cases they do not give a fair deal. However, I cannot agree to a provision which may be used to inflict injustice.

Mr. Latham: My amendment is nearly as bad as the clause, I admit.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Who is going to determine what a "wrongful act" is?

Mr. Latham: The phrase may be misinterpreted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Chief Inspector of Factories tells me he has plenty of evidence that where agreements are made for the refunding of the fare after three or six months, all sorts of excuses are found to dismiss the employee a week or two before the agreed period has expired.

Mr. Ferguson: That sort of employer deserves no consideration.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I want something that will protect the employee against an unscrupulous employer, and the employer against an unscrupulous employee. The clause could be postponed, and meantime I would ask the Crown Law Department, in the light of this discussion, to draft another provision.

Amendment put and negatived.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 23—agreed to.

Progress reported.

## **BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.41] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is for the purpose of extending the Lotteries (Control) Act of 1932 and making amendments which have been found necessary during the administration of the statute. In asking for authority to extend the term of the Act, I assume it is advisable and necessary to indicate that in actual practical working the measure has justified itself, that it has given reasonable satisfaction, and that it has proved to be a solution of a much-confused problem and a vexed question in this State—the regulation of certain phases of gambling.

When the original Bill was under discussion, it was highly prolific of contentious debate in Parliament, in the Press, and in fact everywhere. It was contended that the measure did not provide a solution of the problem then existing. I think it can be shown that during the time the Act has been in operation it has justified its existence and has achieved what was claimed by those responsible for its introduction. One claim was that the measure would control gambling in Western Australia. At that time there was no control. The original Bill was intended to substitute order for the chaos then prevailing. It is the policy of practically every country to regulate gambling. Very few people maintain that gambling can be suppressed entirely. Therefore it is well that the evil practice should be made as innocuous as possible. The Act, although not perfect, has to all intents and purposes effected that. The Government of the day appointed the Commission controlling lotteries, and have the right to appoint an auditor to examine the Commission's accounts. The Minister controlling the Act has also the right, and in fact the duty, to authorise lotteries, whether State-wide lotteries—these being the main feature—or the small lotteries promoted by numerous organisations. The Lotteries Commission have a responsible duty to perform, one demanding continuous supervision. The members of the Commission are subject to much criticism, and to many requests from the public. In addition, they have had to establish the State lottery. True, a previous Commission had conducted lotteries, but these were subject to much competition. On the other hand, the present State lottery is to all intents and purposes a local monopoly, having only to encounter competition from Eastern States lotteries. The justification for the State lottery is that it is conducted in the interests of the State, and is directed by those in authority in Western Australia. Further, the amount remaining after payment of expenses and prizes is used for the purpose of assisting worthy objects and needy public institutions. Although very little information has been furnished to the public, the lotteries have been supervised very closely. After each lottery, a balance sheet has been prepared and submitted to the Minister. So far, practically no information has been given out regarding each lottery and the financial position generally. I propose to furnish

that information. To date, six sweeps have been completed. The first was conducted early in the year and, after a month, closed with 50,000 subscribers at 2s. 6d. each. Since then there have been five lotteries and, as an indication of the confidence of the public in the Lotteries Commission and the efficient manner in which the sweeps are run, they have proved so popular that recent sweeps have closed with 100,000 tickets at half-a-crown each and have been completely filled within a month. That means that to-day sweeps are run each month closing with 100,000 tickets, whereas, at the outset, the original sweep took between five and six weeks to complete. In those circumstances it is due to the public that information regarding what has happened in respect to the operations of the Commission should be made available. The total amount subscribed for the six sweeps conducted to date has been £77,527, the prize money has totalled £32,100, the expense of running the sweeps £12,627, and the surplus amount available for distribution £32,800. Members will see that, on the average, there has been over £5,000 available for distribution from each sweep, keeping in mind that the first sweep closed with 50,000 tickets only. The question of the cost of running the sweeps has always been contentious. It has been suggested that the running costs were unduly high. When the original Act was passed, 25 per cent. was allowed for running costs. Included in that percentage was 10 per cent. to cover the payments to ticket sellers. Allowing for the deduction, it means that 15 per cent. was actually allowed to cover the cost of running a sweep, including salaries and wages, advertising, printing and other necessary expenditure. In the past it was the usual practice to allow 25 per cent. as the margin to cover the cost of running a sweep. Private promoters, prior to the inauguration of the Lotteries Commission, allowed for that percentage and they were considered remarkably efficient in the conduct of their operations, and tickets in their sweeps were in great demand. People were prepared for the deduction of 25 per cent. to cover running costs.

Mr. Ferguson: And those sweeps showed a good profit, too.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: We can assume that those in control were keen

business men. They had the necessary plant and had their agents scattered throughout the country. In view of past experience, it was assumed that 25 per cent. was a reasonable amount to provide for running costs and, in consequence, provision to that effect was made in the Act. That is important because, although not subject to competition within the State, our sweeps have been subject to competition from outside, including the Golden Casket in Queensland. Tattersalls in Tasmania, and a big sweep that is conducted in New South Wales. Tickets in connection with sweeps in the Eastern States are sent to Western Australia and the promoters advertise extensively. As they run big sweeps, it was necessary for the Western Australian sweep to be run on up-to-date lines in order to compete successfully. It will be seen, therefore, that although there is no serious competition locally, a certain amount of advertising became essential. A good deal of money invested in our sweeps has been sent from the Eastern States as the result of that advertising in search of patronage. The very fact that the sweeps have increased from 50,000 tickets in a month to 100,000 tickets each month is sufficient indication that the local sweep has been popularised and that the public of Western Australia have shown confidence in those responsible. To get down to the actual cost of running the sweeps, I may inform the House that the first sweep resulted in £6,918 being subscribed, of which £3,000, or 43.3 per cent., was paid away in prize money, the cost of running the sweep was £1,276, or 18.4 per cent., and the amount available for distribution was £2,641, or 38.1 per cent. That was the start. Since then the business has been worked up to such an extent that the corresponding details regarding the last completed sweep, No. 6, show that the total amount received from the tickets sold at a cost of half-a-crown each was £14,347, of which £5,900 was paid away as prize money, or 41.4 per cent. of the total amount received, the cost of conducting the sweep was £2,065, or 14.4 per cent., and the surplus amount available for distribution was £6,382, or 44.5 per cent. When it is realised that of the 14.4 per cent., which represented the cost of conducting the sweep, 10 per cent. went to the ticket sellers, it will be seen that the actual cost of running the sweep was reduced to about 4½

per cent. That means to say that less than 5 per cent. was necessary to cover office costs and expenses incurred in running the sweep.

Mr. Stubbs: That is very reasonable.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That is so. That is the reply to those who were in doubt as to whether the sweeps were efficiently conducted, and considered that an undue proportion was eaten up in running costs. I do not believe there is any other sweep in Australia that is run so economically.

Mr. Patrick: I suppose you sell some tickets direct to the public?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Not many. The sales are mostly through agents who are distributed throughout the State. It has to be remembered, with regard to Tattersalls and other sweeps, the buyer of the ticket has to pay the commission to the agent, the amount being deducted on his behalf, whereas the 2s. 6d. paid for a ticket in the Western Australian sweep covers everything and the Lotteries Commission have to stand the expense, which is included in the cost of running the sweep. Earlier in my remarks I gave the total amount available so far for distribution as prize money, as £32,800. It may be said that out of a total received of £77,527, a larger amount should have been made available as prize money. It will be recognised that there was a dual object sought in the establishment of the Lotteries Commission. One was that lotteries should be regulated and the other was that as much as possible should be made available for charitable purposes. No complaints have been received regarding the amount allocated for prize money. That is only to be expected, as people know that the surplus available is distributed among needy charitable institutions that, prior to the advent of the commission, were practically bankrupt, and since then have been able to secure donations that have tided them over their financial difficulties. Therefore the establishment of the Lotteries Commission has been a means of great relief to those institutions. I will give members later on an idea of how those institutions have benefited. The existing system has also been of advantage to the Treasury because the charitable institutions of the public character I have indicated have been performing public duties. I refer to such institutions as the School for the Blind, homes for destitute

children, and so on. Inevitably, those in control of such institutions were constantly approaching the Government for financial assistance, and obviously in recent years it would have been impossible for the Government to have acceded to their requests. Therefore the money distributed by the commission has been of inestimable benefit in furnishing those institutions with donations from time to time. It will be admitted, therefore, that, in securing the regulation of gambling, the creation of a State monopoly has been productive of good. From that point of view, the move can be said to have been successful. From the standpoint of regulating gambling, prior to the control exercised by the commission there were various forms of control, and keen competition for the right to run sweeps. Since the inauguration of the commission, private enterprise has been eliminated and I think it is generally held that the move was a wise one. Those institutions that have benefited have not been provided for in the haphazard manner that obtained in past years, but that assistance has been regulated as well. I think I shall be able to demonstrate that the assistance rendered has been along fair lines that have given reasonable satisfaction. With regard to the publication of balance sheets, it is practically impossible for the Lotteries Commission to do that after each sweep. It must be remembered that the work of the commission is continuous. They proceed from one sweep to another. Although the amount available for distribution after each sweep can be shown definitely, it would be very difficult to get out a balance sheet each month.

Mr. Latham: They have to submit a balance sheet to the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: They do.

Mr. Latham: Then there can be no difficulty in getting a copy.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Actually it is not a balance sheet, but a statement of receipts and expenditure made out in this way:—First of all the amount subscribed, then the amount, namely 25 per cent., which they allow for running costs, and then the balance available for distribution. However, the 25 per cent. is not entirely absorbed in the running of the sweep, and therefore we do not get an actual balance sheet of each sweep. But the money

is there, and the statements issued show the running cost of each sweep and the amount available for distribution. To date the total amount subscribed is £77,000, the amount disbursed in prize money £32,000, and the cost of conducting the sweeps £13,000, leaving available for distribution £32,000. Already there has been distributed £18,000. In this morning's paper there was a statement of commitments amounting to £7,000, which reduces the balance to roughly £7,000. Most of this amount is the surplus from the last sweep just closed, a surplus for distribution of £6,382. The commission have continuous calls made upon them, and so the actual distribution for each sweep could not be defined. But they have constituted a pool as the result of running the sweeps, and from that pool the various requests are met.

**Mr. Stubbs:** Does the surplus carry daily interest at the bank?

**The MINISTER FOR POLICE:** The commission entirely control their own affairs. This money is not paid into the Treasury, and therefore they have their own account at the bank. Whether it is a current account I cannot tell, but I do not think they will be permitted to build up a big surplus, for as I say, they have continuous calls made upon them.

**Mr. Latham:** Do you say they have a credit balance of £7,000?

**The MINISTER FOR POLICE:** Yes, but they have just completed a sweep, the profits from which amounted to £6,382. It is not that they keep it long; they have no opportunity to keep it in hand, for the call is greater than the amount.

**Mr. Stubbs:** I thought perhaps they were leaving the £7,000 at the bank and not getting interest on it.

**The MINISTER FOR POLICE:** That is not so, and in any event they would not be permitted to carry it for long, for it will be allocated to various institutions. Here are some of the allocations to date:—School for the Blind, £2,000; Children's Hospital, £1,500; St. John's Ambulance, £1,450; Metropolitan Council Unemployment, £1,200; Parkerville Home, £1,200; Blankets for unemployed, £900; Foundling Home, £700; Returned Maimed and Limbless Men's Association, £650; Chandler Boys' Farm School, £600; South-West Unemployed relief, Wok-alup Boy's Farm School, Tardun Boy's Farm School, Model Homes, Ron Doig

Memorial, Clontarf Orphanage and Anglican Boy's and Girls' Orphanage, £500 each; Silver Chain Nursing League, £450; St. Joseph's Orphanage, Unemployed Single Girls' Sewing Centre, and the Braille Society, £400 each; Infant Health Centres, £325; St. Vincent de Paul, £270; Castledare Home, £250; Mental Hospital After Care Committee, £225; Fremantle Charities, Salvation Army Boys and Girls' Home, W.A. Deaf and Dumb School, St. John of God Hospital Free Ward, Jewish Orphanage Committee, Children's Protection Society, and Perth Hospital Outpatients' Department, £200 each; Cunderdin Hospital (X-Ray plant) and Dwellingup Hospital (X-Ray plant) £175 each; Harvey Hospital Nurses' Quarters, £155; R.S.P.C.A., £117; Yarloop Hospital, £110; Hospital for the Insane, £110; Northampton Hospital (X-Ray plant), Pinjarra Hospital, Surf Life Saving Association, Merredin Hospital (X-Ray plant) and Railway and Tramway Hospital Fund, £100 each. And so it goes on. I give that information to show first of all that the sweeps have been conducted in a manner that has gained the confidence of the public, that they have now reached the stage where their popularity is undoubted, and that the amount of prize money given has met with public approval, particularly the approval of the winners. The commission have not gone in for giving one very big prize. I think that is of advantage, and I am confident that the manner in which the prize money is allocated meets with the approval of subscribers. I have also shown that there can be no cavilling at the cost of conducting the sweeps. If it could be suggested that an undue amount of money was eaten up in running expenses, the public would have a just complaint. Under the existing law the commission have the right to allocate the money. Naturally when they are making a donation to any public institution associated with the Health Department, that department is consulted. I discussed this with the commission and they agreed that it would be inadvisable to make allocations to such institutions as hospitals without consulting the Medical and Health Department. So in each instance the amount I have enumerated has been donated only after discussion with the department. Also, the amount allotted to the unemployed committees has been

allotted after consultation with the officials and the head of the department. When I showed an interest in the allocation of the money, the commission submitted to me a list of proposed donations. I will not say that it has my approval, for so far we have not the right to approve, but we propose to take the power by providing that all these donations and allocations of money shall be made with the approval of the Minister. It is not proposed that it shall be the business of Ministers to inquire closely into all the allocations to be made. That is the function of the commission, and I think they are well acquainted with the needs of the various charitable institutions. They have had many years of experience, and that experience stands them in good stead in the making of these allocations. That is why their administration meets with such approval, their wide knowledge enabling them to avoid the mistakes which an inexperienced administrator would be likely to make. That has been their policy in regard to the money already allocated, and they have a policy respecting future allocations. It is not sufficient to give one large amount to any charitable institution and think you have finished with it. From my experience of the Child Welfare Department I know that each succeeding year that and similar institutions are faced with financial difficulties, and so the supplying of their needs is a continuous process. From that point of view the commission have shown, not only capacity, but also the considerable knowledge which is necessary in a very important part of their work, namely the allocation of the available funds. In that they have given full satisfaction. As to the Bill itself, one feature is the proposal that all large allocations are to be made only to incorporated bodies. The various unemployed relief committees are not incorporated bodies, and therefore in the Bill they are specially included amongst those to whom large donations may be made. Also, it is provided that the distribution of money shall be under improved supervision, and the Minister or the Government shall have control of the allocation and shall give approval before any distribution of the money raised is made to any charitable institution; the Minister shall give approval in writing specifying the several sums of money and the persons or bodies who receive

them. Whichever Government may be in power would naturally be advised by the commission in regard to the distribution but it is advisable that the Minister and the Government should have some control over the distribution of money publicly subscribed and which in the main goes to institutions that in the past have looked to the Government for assistance.

Mr. Latham: I think it very unwise to attempt to take that power.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I think it is a necessary power. It will not be exercised to any great extent. At present the practice is to consult the various Government departments and take their advice. The hon. member would not suggest that in the assistance of hospitals or other institutions under the various State departments an outside commission would know as much of the intricate working of those institutions as do the heads of departments. The Minister, naturally, would look to the Health Department and would not presume to make allocations to hospitals on his own responsibility. I pointed out to the commission that in making donations to hospitals they would be immediately in trouble if they did not do it in association with the department. One hospital committee asked for a donation and then suggested that the Medical Department should subsidise that, pound for pound, for the purpose of building a hospital. That is rather a good financial proposition for the hospital committee, but one that requires some supervision.

Mr. Ferguson: Do not you think the commission, and not the Minister, should have the final say?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: No, the Minister should have the final say, though he would be largely advised by the commission after they had been advised through Government departments. The commission exist for the distinct purpose of assisting the institutions which in time past have been financially assisted by the Government, and therefore the old machinery has to come into operation. Where a distribution of funds is to be made, it must not be made haphazardly. The existing machinery must be used, and the Minister must have the final say, though it is not suggested that he would undertake the work of allocating the money. That would be done by the commission and

the proposals would be placed before him for approval.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do not you think you should add a clause providing that the Minister's distribution should be reported to Parliament? It is not of much use the Minister making the distribution unless the result is officially reported to the House.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I see no objection to the fullest publicity being given.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That should be done.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: There is nothing to hide. I have told members exactly what has taken place, but I do not think it would be easy to complete in detail the balance for a running concern.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, I mean a report on the funds as distributed.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Whoever form the commission, the fullest publicity should be given. It would mean nothing if only a detailed statement of each sweep were given, but we could have particulars of the financial position from time to time. I see no reason why it should not be given.

Mr. Griffiths: Was it not the original intention that we should have a commission independent of Parliament?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That depends on whether we have more confidence in a commission than in Parliament. Any board must be subject to some control. We do not hand over complete control to any body. We have a Ministry, but complete control is not handed over to Ministers; they are subject to control by Parliament. The commission will not be interfered with to any extent, but there is to be that control which is exercised over any body of men charged with the responsibility of handling public money. If any difficulty occurred in connection with the running of sweeps, the blame would immediately be placed on the Government. Therefore, in the final analysis, the Government have the responsibility. Those appointed are not greater than those who appointed them, and whether we like it or not, the Government would have to take the responsibility for the commission and Parliament would have to take the responsibility for the machine created.

Mr. Doney: You are taking away the principal function of the commission.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: To which function does the hon. member refer?

Mr. Doney: The allocation of the profits.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: No, the hon. member entirely misunderstands the proposal.

Mr. Doney: I think it stands out pretty clearly.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: For all Government expenditure, allocations are made by officials. So it will be with the commission's allocations. The commission will submit a list of institutions and, unless objection is taken the list will be adopted. Objections may be received from outside, and they could be examined by the Minister to ascertain whether the complaints were justified. The Minister's examination would also ensure that the distributions were being made on an equitable basis and that there was no favouritism.

Mr. Doney: In the past you have had no reason to complain have you?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: It would be necessary to produce fairly good and valid reasons before turning down the recommendation of the head of a department. It is the easiest thing in the world to approve of recommendations by heads of departments, but to disapprove one needs to be forfeited with valid reasons. It would be so in this instance. The Minister having control, the commission would be careful—at any rate, I should be—to ensure that the distribution proposed was fair and equitable. I think this control will be advantageous and will give legal sanction to the practice that has grown up. The Minister is consulted; Parliament is responsible to the people, and the Minister must carry the responsibility. The Minister has to approve of every big lottery, and for every small lottery the commission, under the existing Act, have to get the approval of the Minister. Thus it was intended from the outset that the responsibility should rest upon the Government.

Mr. Ferguson: But not the responsibility for the distribution.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am referring to the authorisation of the sweeps. The Minister could refuse to authorise any sweep. That power is vested in him now. Therefore, when public money is being allocated to institutions of which the Government have knowledge, it will be advantageous to have power to give the necessary



approval. I do not think this would have the effect of altering the work or responsibility of the commission; it would merely bring them into line with other institutions.

Mr. Doney: Can you bring any substantial complaint at all against any past allocation?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I do not think we can.

Mr. Doney: Really there are no grounds for any alteration.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The ground I have mentioned is that of principle. I am not making complaint of any past allocation. The whole principle of the Bill is that the Minister shall exercise control. If he has control to the extent of authorising the sweeps, then he should have control over the distribution of public funds to public institutions. We are really asking for an extension of the power given to the Government under the Act, an extension that will make for improvement in the administration. If the Minister must take the responsibility, he must have the power to approve or disapprove. When the original measure was introduced, it was speculative. We did not know how it would work in practice. I recall the lengthy debates on the Bill and the many forecasts made by members. The Act has been in existence since the end of last year, so that we have nine months of actual experience. On that record I should say we are justified in extending the Act, which will expire in December next, for a further period, and the period set down in the Bill is three years. With the little knowledge we had last year, we acted wisely in limiting the operation of the measure to 12 months, but now that we have had actual experience of its operation, which appears to me to have been satisfactory, I think that our proposal, not to make it permanent, but to extend it for three years, should meet with the approval of members. I now come to a matter that has given cause for worry during the last few days. It refers to a member of the commission, Mr. Clydesdale, M.L.C., against whom a writ has been issued for accepting an office of profit under the Crown. When the measure was introduced originally, it contained a paragraph which it was thought would protect any member of Parliament appointed to the commission. After considerable dis-

cussion and the expression of diverse opinions, the paragraph was struck out. It was contended that as the commission would work independently of Government institutions, and as the moneys received would not be paid into the Treasury, any member of Parliament appointed to the commission and receiving expenses or other payment for his work would not be accepting an office of profit under the Crown. Now, however, a doubt has arisen. The very fact that proceedings have been launched against a member of the commission removes the matter from the realm of speculation. His position has been challenged. I am not able to say whether the action launched is likely to be successful. I dare say that even the legal authorities differ as to the probable result of the proceedings. The point is that Parliament was advised in a certain way, and in all good faith passed the law, and the Government believed they were acting within their legal rights in appointing to the commission two members of Parliament. Whenever the responsibility may rest, it certainly cannot rest upon the appointees. Therefore it appears to the Government to be unfair to expect the challenged member of the commission to bear the expense of defending an action arising out of his appointment by the Government. We maintain that any doubt as to the legality or validity of the appointment should be removed, and the earliest opportunity should be taken to remedy the weakness. While the point remained merely a matter for speculation, no action was necessary, but now that a definite challenge has been issued, we propose, as is usual when an Act is found to contain defects, to rectify them by passing amending legislation. It will be necessary to include a paragraph covering not only the future but the past. We shall have to validate the action of the previous Government in making the appointment. I understand that action may be taken four months after the expiration of the term of office, so that even if the appointment expired this year, granting for a moment that the contention of the law's defectiveness is sound, it would be necessary to include this protective provision, which exempts the member in question from the provisions of the Constitution Act of 1899 and which also validates the action of the previous Government in making the appointment.

Mr. Doney: I do not think the two members would be completely exonerated, or Parliament either.

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE:** The appointment was a Government one. It was one for which this Parliament was responsible; irrespective of the finer points of law, the question of justice comes into it. Every member can be said to be anxious to mete out justice to his fellows. If, as the result of a law that is passed and of an appointment that is made by the Government in good faith, a man is involved in legal difficulties and legal expenses, the responsibility rests upon not only Parliament but upon successive Governments to protect him. I do not say what the result of the action will be. In order to validate the action that was taken, a clause has been inserted in the Bill to provide that no person appointed a member of the commission before or after the commencement of the Act shall be subject to any disqualification, disability, or penalty, under the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, by reason of being, or having been, a member of the commission, and without limiting the general effect of the provisions of this paragraph no such appointment shall be deemed to be an appointment to an office of profit under the Crown within the meaning of the Act. That was the original understanding on the subject. The opinion was expressed, however, by those qualified to give one, that the appointment of a member of Parliament to this commission would not bring him within the provisions of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, and that the position would not be considered to be an office of profit under the Crown.

Mr. Patrick: I think the opinion was expressed that it was not desired to have members of Parliament on the commission.

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE:** The then Minister withdrew the clause in the Bill dealing with this matter, because of the opinion that was expressed that it was not necessary, and that the office in question could not be considered to be an office of profit under the Crown.

Mr. Ferguson: It was definitely stated that it was not an office of profit under the Crown.

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE:** At the suggestion that no protective provision was necessary in the Bill, the Minister in charge,

without the slightest equivocation and without any demur, said, "Very good, I am satisfied that it should go by the board." He allowed it to be struck out. He announced at the time that it was proposed that the old board, on which were two members of Parliament, should continue. The Minister said it was an efficient board, and had done the work and built up the organisation, and he proposed that its members should be reappointed, as turned out to be the case.

Mr. Thorn: Against the wish of Parliament.

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE:** I do not know about that, but it was still the responsibility of the Government, who appointed them, to protect them. The Government interpreted the Act to mean that those who were appointed to the commission would not be subject to the disabilities of the Constitution Act in respect to accepting an office of profit under the Crown. The right of the Government to make the appointments was not questioned. I understand inquiries were made on all sides, and the general opinion expressed was that the Government were within their rights in making the appointments. Doubts have now arisen, and the question is being tested. The responsibility for passing the law rests upon Parliament. The previous Government must also take the responsibility, and the Government which followed them—the present Government—must accept a similar responsibility for the decisions of the previous Government. The Government of the country is continuous. It is not usual for one Government to turn down the decisions of another in a case like this. We are doing what we can to rectify the weakness in the Act, and to remove the doubt which exists in the law. For that reason, in addition to providing for the continuation of the Act for an additional three years, and other amendments I have mentioned, we have included an amendment which is of particular importance at present. I hope the Bill will meet with the approval of the House. The results of nine months' experience of the commission have been entirely satisfactory from a financial point of view, and I believe the public also are satisfied that this is a vast improvement upon the old chaotic method of conducting lotteries which deal with forms of gambling. Certainly this sort of thing has been reduced to some order by the establish-

ment of the commission. Considering the position in which this House and the Government are placed, and in view of the general responsibility of Parliament for the situation, I hope the Bill will meet with the approval of members.

Mr. Doney: Is it quite clear that the Bill has retrospective application?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That is a matter upon which I cannot express an opinion. It appears to me to be a very comprehensive effort. The amendment should not only protect the member in question for the future, but the best legal advice we have is that it will definitely have retrospective effect.

Mr. Doney: Which portion of Clause 3 makes that point clear?

Mr. Latham: The beginning of it does.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The clause says that no person appointed a member of this Commission before or after the commencement of the Act shall be subject to any disqualification, etc.

Mr. Doney: That is ambiguous even now.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I would not attempt to interfere with a clause of this description. It has been drafted by the Crown Law Department, and has been scrutinised also by those who are capable of expressing an opinion, and can be considered to be authorities on this subject. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1933-34.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day, Mr. Withers in the Chair.

Department of the Minister for Education (Hon. J. C. Willecock, Minister).

*Vote—Education, £564,000 (partly considered):*

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [8.40]: I wish to refer to the rents that are paid for teachers' quarters, and incidentally to the financial emergency legislation passed by this Chamber two years ago as part and parcel of the Premiers' Plan. That plan provided for a reduction of 22½ per cent. in the salaries of Government employees, including school teachers. In 1931, as part of this

legislation, a Rents Reduction Bill was brought down. It was thought then that school teachers would have gained some advantage as a result of that measure. On the one hand, their salaries were reduced by 22½ per cent., but on the other hand they were under the impression that by the passage of the Rents Reduction Bill they would receive certain compensating advantages. The member for Leederville (Hon. A. H. Pantou) in 1932 referred to the very matter to which I am now directing the attention of the Minister. The hon. member said—

There is a section of the community which has been somewhat penalised by the principal Act, probably through thoughtlessness but certainly with unfair effects. School teachers are compelled to live in Government quarters; and although they have had their salaries reduced by 22½ per cent., they have been granted no reduction whatever in the rents of their quarters.

I understand that when the original measure was passed by this Chamber, it was thought that the officers of the Education Department would derive an advantage from it. In another place a member raised the point that if the school teachers benefited by a reduction in the rent of their quarters, pastoral and mining leases would also be involved. The result was that another clause, exempting the Crown, was added to the Bill in 1931. Since then the Crown has taken every advantage of that section in the Reduction of Rents Act of 1931. So far the officers of the Education Department, although they have suffered the reduction of 22½ per cent. in their salaries, have not received any advantage whatever in matter of rents: and it is to that phase I desire to direct the Minister's attention. The Crown seems to be endeavouring to point the way to other people by saying to the private landlord, "You must reduce the rents of your tenants to a certain extent, but the Crown will not reduce the rents of its tenants." When the financial emergency legislation was brought before the Legislature in 1931, it included a Reduction of Rents Bill, accompanying the measure for reduction of salaries. The Teachers' Union carefully watched the progress of the Bill through this Chamber, upon leaving which it applied to teachers' quarters. In another place attention was drawn to the question of pastoral and mining leases. At a consultation with the law

officers the then Leader of the Council was informed that those particular leases could be omitted, the Crown thus being exempted from the operation of the measure. But there was no mention of the measure not applying to teachers or other Government servants. The Bill passed through all stages on one day, and became an Act. The then Leader of another place assured the Teachers' Union that the rents of teachers' quarters would be reduced and that the new provision in the Bill would not affect teachers. On referring to "Hansard" I find that the late Attorney General, Mr. Davy, upon being faced with the question in this Chamber, adroitly dodged the issue by declaring that the question of the assessment of teachers' rents would be reviewed by Cabinet. I want the Minister for Education not to confuse the question I am putting before him with the question of the assessment of rents.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order. Are hon. members in order in carrying on private conversations all round the Chamber while another hon. member is addressing the Chair? It has been going on all night long.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a pretty noisy corner here, I will admit.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The member for North-East Fremantle may perhaps agree with the statement I am about to make. The question of the assessment of rents of teachers' quarters is almost as old as the monitor of many years ago who is to-day near the retiring age. I wish to emphasise that that is not the question I am now presenting to the Minister. Neither am I asking the Minister to inquire into the kind of houses in which officers of the Education Department dwell—whether the houses are big or small, whether they are well ventilated, or whether they are habitable. I am emphasising that this Parliament has continued the financial emergency legislation for two years, thus continuing the reductions in the salaries of officers of the Education Department. It was thought at the time that those officers would receive some compensating advantage in the reduction of their rents, but no such reduction has taken place. The previous Government said to the private landlord, by the Reduction of Rents Act, that he must reduce the rents of the houses in

which his tenants lived, while the Government themselves, as landlords, were not granting any reduction whatever to their officers. I am not blaming members of the present Government, but I know that members of the present Government, when in Opposition, desired officers of the Education Department to have a reduction of rents simultaneously with reduction of salaries. I think the present Minister for Education, as a prominent member of the then Opposition, took part in that debate. All I ask to-night is that the hon. gentleman should assure the Committee that the rents being paid by officers of the Education Department will be reduced commensurately with their salaries. I understand that the executive of the Teachers' Union have been in consultation with the Minister on the subject, and that the Minister intends to take certain steps to ease the position. However, I am much afraid that it is still in the mind of the department that what the teachers are after just now is the improvement of the condition of the houses in which they have to live, as well as the assessment of their rents. I have here some illustrations of the kind of quarters in which teachers are compelled to live.

Mr. Tonkin: Better tack them up on the wall.

Mr. NEEDHAM: It would not be edifying if I did. But what I am concerned with for the moment is not the class of quarters in which the teachers are compelled to reside. The Government compel the teachers to live in Government quarters if Government quarters are available. The teacher cannot say that he will live over there or over here; he must live in the quarters provided by the department; whether they are good, bad or indifferent, the teacher must put up with them. The time is overdue for consideration of the assessment of rents, the question being, as I have said, age-old. However, it is a question to be considered at another opportunity. I ask the Minister for Education to exercise his authority as a member of the Cabinet to see that the teachers receive some compensation in the way of reduction of rents as a set-off against what they have suffered by salary reductions.

**MR. GRIFFITHS** (Avon) [8.56]: To-night I wish to speak more particularly on country education. I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to the fine work being carried out by the rural branch of school activities. At the Royal Show many thousands viewed the wonderful display which country children sent to the Centenary Hall. I spent well over a day inspecting it, and heard hundreds of people remarking upon the ingenuity, initiative and skill of the country boys and girls who had done the work. Speaking at the recent Merredin field day, I described the exhibition as a species of educational agriculture for grown-ups. Similar work is being done in many country schools. In the first instance I wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Clubb, the Director of Education, who has been largely instrumental in initiating this development. Incidentally I appeal to the Minister for more encouragement to country teachers in this respect. Marvellous work was done by Mr. Rogers, Inspector of Schools, in bringing together such a splendid exhibition, and also in stimulating in country children the love for hobbies, some useful, some entertaining. Extraordinarily fine displays have also been made on the agricultural side as part of the children's education. From that aspect I would draw the Minister's attention to a statement in the report on the activities of rural schools to the effect that it was rather a pity the Treasury had not been able to grant the little country schools some assistance in the form of flower and vegetable seeds. These activities have cost the department, according to figures furnished to me by those in authority, the sum of 3¾d. per school. Mr. Rogers is not the usual type of civil servant, and does not confine himself to working the regulation hours. His heart and soul are in his work. He travels throughout the country at great personal inconvenience, having no means of conveyance. He resembles the Agricultural Department's wool inspector in that he has to travel in brake vans and any old way he can, and consequently loses much time. In questioning Mr. Rogers I gathered that he could practically double the usefulness of his work if he had some adequate means of getting about. I will mention one or two of the activities that particularly appealed to me. There were wonderful exhibits from Moora, Wagin, Bruce Rock and Toodyay, the exhibit from

the last mentioned centre taking the first prize. Not only did the exhibits include samples of fodders and cereals but of handicrafts of various descriptions. There is a remarkable garden at a little school at Kokadine in the Kalannie district. There is a little schoolmistress in charge and there are a very few pupils. I have been told by people who have been there that she is doing wonderful work with the kiddies and she was able to furnish a remarkable display. In the Centenary Hall at the Royal Show grounds, I spoke to Mr. Bruce Leake, who is an authority on animal and bird life, and took him to view some drawings and records, together with models of birds' eggs that had been sent by the children from Welbunning in the Mt. Marshall electorate. There is a little one-horse school there attended by 24 pupils, about nine of whom are infants. They, too, submitted a display covering the study of bird life and Mr. Leake informed me, after viewing the drawings, the colouring and the descriptions, that the exhibit was most creditable. He could not find any fault with the display; the drawings were true to life. That school won the first prize in that particular competition. Recently I had the pleasure of visiting a number of centres in the South-West, and had an opportunity to judge the quality of the rural education that is being imparted to the boys and girls there. At Yammah I saw a wonderful display of fodders and cereals, wire work and the utilisation of waste material in the manufacture of useful articles. What I saw there gave me hope that the lads in the South-West were receiving such a training as would develop them into useful farmers, who would help to save the Group Settlement Scheme in the end. An interesting feature is that the Canadian system has been followed of forming school clubs. For instance, at one centre there was a calf club. It was rather humorous to see the youngsters bringing their calves along for exhibition and judging. The children themselves had to do the judging and it was interesting to find that the girls beat the boys to a frazzle in judging the stock. One girl gave the exact points that had been awarded by the judges.

Mr. Marshall: It takes a girl to beat us boys!

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Another important development relates to the milk supply. That is a prominent phase of educational agriculture, and I was interested to find that the children at Yammah did the milk test-

ing for the settlers at that centre. They had actually discovered two or three machines, which were inefficient and had caused the farmers to lose much money. That will evidence the useful description of the agricultural education that is provided, a trend that should be encouraged by the Government. At Merredin the scholars have established a school magazine, a perusal of which disclosed to me literary skill of no mean order. I draw attention to these various phases of the work being carried out by the department and if the Minister can possibly give additional assistance, I hope he will do so. I shall not dwell at length upon the Education Vote, nor deal extensively with the report of the department. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) gave us practically the whole of the report last night and I do not want to inflict the same upon members to-night. I would like to say to that hon. member, however, that he has come to Parliament with certain ideals, but he will find that when he is up against the Treasurer, his ideals will be shattered. He will discover that he cannot carry into effect what he has in mind. I can assure him, however, that there are many members just as keen as he in their desire to advance the educational interests of the State, and they will be willing to assist him in advocating the advancement of that most important branch of the State's activities.

**MR. CROSS** (Canning) [9.5]: I desire to draw the Minister's attention to one requirement in a part of my electorate where the population is fairly scattered. At the moment I do not know the number of children needed before the Government will consider the establishment of a school.

Mr. Tonkin: Eight is the number.

Mr. CROSS: That being so, I shall ask the Minister to consider the provision of a school in the Riverton district. Because of the geographical situation of the district, the children are forced to walk for more than four miles to the nearest school. It may be said that the children could walk through the Bannister Lagoon and go to the school at Cannington. I do not think that would be a fair proposition, because they would be required to walk through sand where there is great danger from snakes. In that direction, too, they would be compelled to go through swamps. If the Government cannot see their way to establish a school in the

Riverton district, I hope they will give consideration to the granting of a travelling allowance so as to enable the parents to send their children to school by means of a conveyance. There is one anomaly regarding travelling allowances that the Minister might explain. I understand that a year or two ago the Minister for Education arrived at an arrangement with the Minister controlling the tramways by which children who had to travel from the city to Coode-street, were allowed to journey by tram on payment of a fare of one penny. On the other hand, children from Coode-street who had to travel to schools in the city had to pay a fare of 2d. Would it not be possible for another consultation to be held between the Ministers concerned and an arrangement arrived at whereby the same facilities might be extended to the children of South Perth as is granted to children in the city? The expense involved is burdensome, particularly if the parents are out of work or are in receipt of sustenance. That is particularly felt by some parents residing at Canning Bridge whose children have to attend the senior schools in the city. They find they cannot afford to pay the travelling expenses. Would it not be possible for the Government to provide some fund out of which the travelling expenses for children in such circumstances could be paid? There would not be many children concerned and I hope the Minister will do something along the lines I have suggested.

**MR. McDONALD** (West Perth) [9.8.]: I support the remarks of the member for Perth (Mr. Needham). A case has been made out for review respecting the rents paid by teachers. There is a feeling that something should be done to secure the reappraisal of the rents of the dwellings they occupy. I do not think they can claim any particular analogy with the Reduction of Rents Act because that legislation hardly applies to their dwellings at all. Nearly all the dwellings are held on short tenancies of a week or a month and the Reduction of Rents Act does not apply to premises held on less than a monthly tenancy.

Mr. Tonkin: Yes, but there is the law of supply and demand.

Mr. McDONALD: I was coming to that point. I do not think there is any analogy under the Reduction of Rents Act but, as

the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) said, there is a definite analogy with regard to the general reduction in rents of all classes of rented premises. There has been a definite reduction during the past two or three years. I commend this matter to the consideration of the Minister with a view to ascertaining whether the teachers should not receive some additional consideration with regard to the rents they are paying. Consideration could be given to the point as to whether the rents they are paying are commensurate with the position enjoyed by the general community. I am also informed that there is some difference in the appraisal of rents in the case of different officers. Some are appraised on one principle and some according to a sliding scale applying to salaries. I am not familiar with the position, but if it is as represented to me, then the same consideration has not been extended generally to the teachers concerned. I support the member for Perth in his request that the Minister should give consideration to the matter.

Mr. Marshall: What about the railway employees?

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. member can deal with them on the Railways Vote. We are at present discussing the Education Vote.

Mr. Marshall: They have had a reduction in their wages but their rents have not been decreased.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are not dealing with the railways.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [9.11]: I desire to express my appreciation of the excellent work of the Education Department, more particularly during the period of the depression. I was particularly pleased to hear the speech delivered by the Minister last night and have read with interest the report of the Education Department. I desire to pay a special tribute to the Director, to the Chief Inspector, to the inspectors generally and to the staff of the Education Department. There is no Government department that comes so closely in touch with so many people throughout the State or enters into the welfare and happiness of the people so much as the Education Department. We owe a special tribute to those associated with the education of our people

because we know that not only have the teachers suffered a reduction of salary under the financial emergency legislation, but they have been called upon to do work of even greater responsibility than in normal times. They have performed the work without complaint and have borne the additional responsibilities that have devolved upon them. Not only have they been concerned with the education of the children, but with their health. The position has been accentuated by the depression because so many parents are out of work and naturally their families have suffered to some extent. They have been very watchful in that direction and have not allowed the children to suffer unduly. It is gratifying to know that we have such wonderful co-operation between the Government and the Minister for Education, the Director and the staff, and I am pleased also with the co-operation evinced by the parents' and citizens' associations which, during the past two or three years, have been very active and have manfully shouldered their responsibilities. I am pleased to know that the Minister for Health is extending the dental inspections to country schools, for it will mean a very great deal to our children. If there is one department calling for special consideration, it is the Education Department. As already pointed out, this department differs from many other Government departments, and I think its officers would be only fairly treated if the cut in their salaries was not maintained for any long period. The member for North-East Fremantle said it was hard to reconcile the fact that teachers are called upon to make sacrifices and still be expected to teach the children of persons who are well able to pay something for the education of their children. I do not suggest that we should make charges for primary education, because we all agree that that should be free; but if the depression is likely to continue, I think Parliament would be justified in reviewing that question, for it seems to me it is unfair to expect the teachers to take pains with the children of parents who could well afford to pay for their education. I do not wish to labour the question raised by the member for Perth, but I remind the Minister that during last session, when the Reduction of Rents Bill was under consideration, the question of rents charged to teachers was brought up, and the then Minister for Education, the late Mr. T. A. L. Davy, replied to something

brought forward by the member for Leeder-ville. He said—

The rents charged to teachers by the Education Department are on an extremely low scale, and on a rather illogical scale. The basis of them is a percentage on capital value, but in addition the income of the teacher is taken into consideration.

Later, he said—

The teachers were not being charged an economic rent; they were not being charged a rent fixed on boom conditions; they were charged a rent based purely on a formula. The times have changed to such an extent as to justify an alteration in the rents.

And again—

The matter has been discussed at considerable length between the Premier and myself, and by the department and the teachers. I have suggested a formula for fixing the amount of rent to be paid, and am expecting to hear in the near future whether that basis will be accepted or rejected.

I do not know how far the present Minister has been able to go in the matter, but I want him to realise that, as pointed out by the member for Perth, the excessive rent at present being charged to teachers does not apply in all instances. However, according to the formula fixed by the department in the past, it has been raised according to the importance of the classification of the teacher. In many instances, teachers who have great responsibilities, have suffered a reduction in salary to the extent of £125. Moreover, the rent of private residences in country towns has been reduced by quite 50 per cent. So I think the Minister might well take into consideration the claims which have been pressed, not by the teachers themselves but by members of this Chamber, for many of the teachers are being called upon to make a double sacrifice. I have nothing further to say, other than to remark that the department has never failed to try to meet the growing needs of education, especially in the backblocks. They have kept their schools in the larger centres well equipped and well maintained, and there is a wonderful spirit of co-operation between the teachers and the Director, and the parents and citizens' associations. We might well be proud of our education system.

**MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.24]:** I join with other members in expressing appreciation of the work of the Education Department. The enthusiasm of the Director, the inspectors, the teachers and everyone con-

nected with the department is outstanding, and we have reason to be pleased with the progress being made. There have been in the Press references to the difficulty in regard to the forwarding of letters in the correspondence class lessons, unless stamped at letter rates. Although it was believed that this difficulty had been overcome, it still remains, and the Postmaster General's Department has not approved of the inclusion of a personal letter in the lessons sent by post. There can be no question of the value of such a letter; it brings the children into more intimate touch with the teachers of the correspondence classes. If the children were not pupils in the correspondence classes, the letters would not be sent. The objection which has been raised is apt to do a very grave injury. It may be necessary for some regulation to be amended or another to be formulated, but whatever is required should be done without hesitation. The fact that the children are pupils of the correspondence class is proof that they are living in more or less isolated districts, and the least the Postmaster General's Department can do is to give them this concession. We talk a lot about the importance of living in the outback and developing the hinterland, and so on, but when it comes to giving encouragement to the children of the people out there, the Postmaster General's Department is sadly lacking. I cannot understand the objection. It is not an important matter from the standpoint of the Postmaster General's Department, although it is very important from the standpoint both of the children and of the teachers of the correspondence classes. They are exceedingly enthusiastic, and the excellence of the results secured was proved by the exhibits of work at the Royal Show. I hope the Education Department will persist in urging consideration by the Postmaster General's Department, with a view to securing this privilege for the children. I appreciate the sympathetic regard given by the teachers of the department to project clubs. In the South-West, very great advance has been made in this way, and undoubtedly the interest of the children is quickened and the results have proved satisfactory to all concerned. I suggest that, in the appointment of teachers to outlying schools, consideration should be given to those whose sympathy and inclination lean to the development of those clubs.



In Queensland, great progress has been made with those clubs, but I do not desire to draw a comparison or suggest that our own department has been lacking in any way. Our own department has done a tremendous amount of good which, with a little help on the part of the citizens and the Government, can be materially extended. The department suffered a severe loss early this year by the death of Mr. Thomas, one of the inspectors. He had one object in life, and that was to carry out his duty as an inspector. He was sympathetic, kindly, and capable to a remarkable degree. His knowledge of the children in his district was extraordinary, and the regard in which he was held by children and teachers was an indication of his real worth.

[*Mr. Sleeman took the Chair.*]

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM** (Kalgoorlie) [9.31]: I desire to direct the attention of the Minister to the need for repairs and renovations to the central school Kalgoorlie. The asphalt approach to the school is little more than a series of cracks and ruts, and the bad condition is very much to the detriment of the children. I do not think any repairs have been effected to the asphalt approach since my last visit to the school. The woodwork also needs painting to freshen it up and give it a more agreeable appearance. The only "paint" the school has received for years has been the coating of red dust left by the dust storms. I think that applies to all the schools on the goldfields. Apparently the various Ministers for Education have been under the impression that the people of Kalgoorlie are a Communist community who delight in that colour, but it is in the interests of the department that the schools be kept in a proper state of repair. A coat of whitewash indoors would also be acceptable. Damp patches have made their appearance, and have gradually crept down the walls and form resting places for the dust. Years ago the fence had pickets on it, but quite a number have disappeared. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), when Minister for Education, visited the district and was impressed with the need for spending some money to effect the necessary repairs. Previous speakers have mentioned that teachers in various parts of the State suffer

great disabilities on account of the house rents payable to the department.

Mr. Raphael: And on account of the houses, too.

**HON. J. CUNNINGHAM**: In my district house rents have increased enormously. Anyone going to the Kalgoorlie district has to spend several weeks before he can secure a dwelling in which to live, and has to incur substantial expenditure to pay for accommodation at a boarding house or hotel. Nothing has been done to relieve the position, notwithstanding that the teachers on the goldfields have suffered a reduction of salary through the passing of the emergency taxation. I understand that something is being done to afford them relief, but I have not been informed of it either by the Treasurer or by the Minister for Education. The member for the district should be notified, as an act of common courtesy, when any departure is made or any relief is granted affecting the people in his district. The Minister does not appear to be paying much attention, but I shall be satisfied if he reads my remarks in "Hansard" and if the officers of the department are asked to furnish the necessary reports. I understand it is the policy of the Government to spend a substantial sum in renovating public buildings throughout the State, especially schools, courthouses and such-like buildings, and I do not want Kalgoorlie to be overlooked. Many years have passed since any public money was spent in the Kalgoorlie electorate, and seeing that the residents of the goldfields pay their taxes and are good citizens and provide wealth that benefits not only the community of this State but of the whole Commonwealth, their interests should not be overlooked. During recent years there has been quite an influx of population to the goldfields areas, and particularly to the Kalgoorlie electorate, which means that the number of children attending the schools will be largely increased. Additional accommodation must be provided, or the Government must renovate those portions of the school buildings that have been out of use to make them comfortable for the children. I do not want the Minister to overlook the needs of the Kalgoorlie central school. Doubtless the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smih) will speak of the needs of the secondary school between

Kalgoorlie and Boulder which, to my knowledge, requires renovations to put the building into proper order.

**MR. STUBBS** (Wagin) [9.37]: I wish to say a few words in praise of the excellent work done by the Director and officers of the Education Department. More particularly do I desire to stress the importance of the correspondence classes to the out-back areas. I doubt whether town members realise fully what they mean to a large number of settlers located 70 or 80 miles from a railway when there are seven or eight children, but not enough to warrant the construction of a school. Many of those families would not stay in the out-back country but for the wonderful work being done for the children by the correspondence branch, the staff of which, in my opinion, are rendering excellent service that is not fully appreciated by the average city resident. We can congratulate ourselves that for many years not only the heads of the department but the different Ministers for Education have taken a keen interest in the work of educating the young people. We provide £500,000 each year for the education of the young, and when we consider that that amount has to be found by some 400,000 people, we have reason to be proud of the achievement. Notwithstanding that the amount is large, the expenditure is warranted. The conditions prevailing in the country are not comparable with those enjoyed by children in the city. Probably £1,000,000 a year would be required to give equally good service to every child in the State. If such a sum were available, I am sure the Government would provide it and the public would not grudge it. The present expenditure represents 25s. per head of the population, but were it not for the generous vote passed by Parliament each year for education, there would not be the development that is taking place in the agricultural and mining areas situated hundreds of miles from the capital city. Another matter I wish to bring under the notice of members. Is it fair that a University professor should tell young boys and girls over the wireless that their fathers and brothers fought in the Great War for no purpose whatever? I have been informed on the best of authority that that was done.

**Mr. Raphael:** The professors preach communism as well.

**Mr. STUBBS:** I do not think a professor is paid to preach that sort of thing.

**Mr. Tonkin:** No, he draws two guineas extra for that.

**Mr. STUBBS:** It is not right for University professors to use their time and talent in that way. I ask the Minister to ascertain whether the statement is correct, and if it is not correct, I will readily apologise.

**Mr. Marshall:** What was the statement?

**Mr. STUBBS:** That a University professor stated over the wireless that the Great War was financed by a lot of Jews and other people, that blood was shed in vain, and that the war was fought in vain.

**Mr. Marshall:** It is a rather debatable subject, but he was very close to the truth.

**Mr. STUBBS:** It is not the province of a University professor drawing a salary from the State to preach that sort of stuff over the wireless.

**The Minister for Works:** If he believes it is right, why should not he say it?

**Mr. STUBBS:** He should not preach that gospel to the young people while drawing a salary from the State, because it is tantamount to saying that the war was unjustified, and that if England became involved in another war, Australians should not take part in it.

**Mr. Needham:** He was quite right.

**Mr. STUBBS:** I enter my emphatic protest against a University professor utilising his time in that way.

**MR. RAPHAEL** (Victoria Park) [9.44]: Though wishing to castigate the Minister respecting a number of items, I also wish to congratulate him on having put certain works in hand in my electorate. The Victoria Park East school is about the largest primary school in the State. The Minister knows what accommodation is required there and that it is necessary to remove the existing tramway terminus, but he does not seem to realise how necessary it is to increase the area of the school grounds. The class-rooms are greatly overcrowded and further additions are vitally necessary. In order to provide facilities for children of the sixth standard and over, who are now in schools east of the James-street school, a new central school should be established in Plain-street, East Perth, which is regarded as the most suitable area. Such a school is urgently needed and I hope will soon be established.

I have discussed the matter with responsible bodies, who are of opinion that East Perth would be the most suitable locality for such a school.

Mr. Cross: It should be on the south side of the river.

Mr. RAPHAEL: And the hon. member ought to be in it. The present method of supplying equipment to the teachers should be scrapped. We know that times are bad, and we have been forced to believe that money is scarce because of the reduction in our salaries. The member for Wagin says that the education system costs 25s. per child per annum. The money is well spent. The girls in the schools were being taught sewing, but the tuition has been gradually curtailed because of the lack of material. It is important that this work should be continued so that the girls may be better housewives later on. It is also hoped that the reductions which have been made in the teachers' salaries will be restored at no distant date. Quite recently I visited a country school where 15 children were being taught in a tin shanty comprising three rooms. Two of the rooms are class-rooms, whilst the third is the bedroom, the sitting-room, the kitchen and the bathroom of the teacher. I hope an investigation will be made into this case, because I do not suppose it is the only one of its kind. Teachers should be given decent living quarters. The temperature in this school building goes up to 118 degrees. The children are supposed to be released from school when the temperature reaches 108, but as the lowest temperature in summer is 109 there, they would not get much tuition if they were allowed to go. It is idle to expect that children can be efficiently taught under such conditions. We could hardly expect an investigation to be made into these matters by the Nationalist Government, but now that the Labour Government are in power we may expect means to be found for the amelioration of these hardships and disabilities. The member for Wagin complained about the remarks of a University professor.

The Minister for Education: That is out of order.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister is not Chairman of Committees, and is not sitting in the place of the Chairman.

The Minister for Education: University matters do not come under this Vote.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I claim the protection of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member need not take any notice of interjections.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Why should we interfere with the professors? In a time of climax it is generally the professors to whom Premiers turn for suggestions. When a professor suggested that wages should be cut, Governments stood behind him. It will not do any harm if a professor does suggest that war is harmful; it will not hurt the country. If men do preach against war, I hope they will be allowed to continue their good work.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [9.50]: I am pleased that the Teachers' College is to be re-opened in 1934. I suggest to the Minister, when the classes are being formed at the college, that the new students be instructed in regard to the care of children's teeth. We spend a lot of money in trying to cure dental troubles amongst the scholars. According to the opinion of experts quoted in the Press as to the cause of dental troubles, three children out of every four are affected. Since the facts are now known by experts, I see no reason why the Minister for Health should not collaborate with the Minister for Education in arranging for teachers at the college to be instructed to acquaint the children with the causes leading up to dental troubles, so that the children, in turn, may eat the right foods to overcome the difficulty.

Mr. Lambert: They have to get the right food, too.

Mr. NORTH: I make this suggestion subject to our having experts who are aware of the cause of these troubles. The matter certainly should be taken up by the department. The teachers are trained at the college to inculcate knowledge into the minds of the children. I see no reason why they should not use the knowledge they possess at the right time in a child's life.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.53]: I do not know why the Minister for Education took exception to the remarks of the member for Victoria Park concerning the relationship of the University to the Education Vote. No exception was taken to the matter when the member for North-East Fremantle gave his useful contribution to the debate last evening.

The Minister for Education: I merely suggested that in this Vote there was no provision for expenditure upon the University.

Mr. LAMBERT: The vote itself allows for a wide range of discussion on educational matters. In view of the statements of the member for North-East Fremantle, the Minister should, before there is any further allocation of money to the University, have the balance sheets and accounts of that institution scrutinised by the Audit Department.

The Minister for Education: It comes under the Treasury.

Mr. LAMBERT: Where could we discuss it?

The Minister for Education: On the vote for the University.

Mr. LAMBERT: No. That is a statutory amount. Unless one is prepared to move a direct motion, discussion of the vote is not permissible. Seeing that the State is involved to a considerable extent, we should know exactly where we stand regarding the contributions towards the upkeep of the University. With all due respect to those now attending the University, I express my belief that 75 per cent. of them will never, except in a general sense, play a part in either the scientific or economic life of Western Australia. There are, however, a few students at the Perth Technical School and at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines who will play a useful part. The member for West Perth said, by way of interjection, that a number of students are attending classes to qualify for the legal profession. Though I believe in the widest possible extension of free education, I have yet to learn that there is any advantage to the State in keeping a lot of students who will merely add pure mediocrity to an already overcrowded profession. Students of arts and sciences will be able to make useful contributions to the commercial life and the general activities of the State; but to give students a free education in order that they may become solicitors and retail their legal knowledge, while the working man or working woman of this country has to pay fees to have his or her children taught at the Perth Technical School or at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, is distinctly wrong. I hope the Treasurer will not hesitate to have a most searching investigation made into the finances of the University. That institution is a glorious conception, and all honour

should be paid to the man whose name will, I hope, be imperishable in the history of Western Australia, the man who made possible the beautiful University buildings of to-day. He might well have hesitated if he could have conceived the manner in which his money would be spent. Had those funds been invested for some years on sound lines, the accrued interest alone would have made possible bursaries which might have rendered our University the outstanding educational feature of the Commonwealth. The omission to take such a step is not, of course, the fault of the man who conceived the great ideal. In view of the statements made by the member for North-East Fremantle, statements which I accept without reservation as he has a greater knowledge of the subject than I have, there is sufficient evidence for the Committee at least to ask the Treasurer to stay his hand. Much of the money going into that channel should be going into a channel which would assist the boys of the community attending the Perth Technical School and the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. They are much more worthy of assistance than are the young fellows who are merely wasting their time in trying to push into some niche in an overcrowded profession. The member for Claremont raised the question of the kiddies attending the Training College, who suffer from disadvantages entailed by the defective teeth. We commit to a lifetime of misery boys and girls whose parents cannot afford ordinary dental care for them, and yet we lavish money on a University for what purpose? To keep about 700 people most of whom will contribute neither directly nor indirectly towards the welfare and advancement of the country. I do not disparage the great work of the University. I regard that work as jealously and as highly as any other member of the Committee. However, there must be some line drawn. I hold it to be the Treasurer's duty to obtain a clear assessment of the relative value derived from moneys given to these institutions. I trust my remarks will not be misinterpreted as indicating on my part a want of belief in the freest and fullest education. I agree entirely with the wonderful contribution made to this debate by the member for North-East Fremantle. Everything depends upon education, and only upon it can we rely for advancement

in civilisation. I trust that from the aspect of useful education the Treasurer will point out to the University where better work can be done. Let me instance the farmers. We are preaching the gospel of "Back to the horse." The man who wants to acquire veterinary science must leave Western Australia to acquire it. Would the State be any poorer if the 65 or 66 law students left Western Australia to gain knowledge elsewhere? I do not think so. On the other hand, the State would be much the poorer if it were not possible for those desirous of obtaining a knowledge of veterinary science to acquire that knowledge here.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member had better deal with that under the Agricultural Vote. He is not in order in discussing veterinary science at the present stage.

**Mr. LAMBERT:** No, but I would be if I discussed the Chair of Veterinary Science.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member is not in order in attempting to discuss the Chair of Veterinary Science. He can speak generally on the University.

**Mr. LAMBERT:** Having mentioned the point, and having drawn attention to the fact that the Chair of Veterinary Science is non-existent, though it should be established, I need say no more.

**Mr. Latham:** Deal with it under the Dentists Act Amendment Bill.

**Mr. LAMBERT:** I hope the question raised by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) regarding the deplorable condition of many of the schools, and the inadequate accommodation provided for the teachers, will receive the consideration of the Minister. In these times, lavish expenditure on school accommodation and facilities has not been possible. Now that there is apparently a surplus of money available for the construction of footpaths, and in the Commonwealth arena there is so much money that members of the Federal Parliament seem to be able to dispose of it to their own satisfaction, I hope that at least some money will be expended on reconditioning country schools. Some of the schools in my electorate have not been visited by a painter or a carpenter for countless years. I hope that the Minister will see that, instead of allowing money to be spent by the Public Works Department in directions that are questionable, and on works that could be held up for some time to come, the money will be

diverted for purposes that will not only make for the additional comfort of school children and teachers throughout the State, but will provide for what the member for North-East Fremantle regards as a first essential—efficiency in the teaching available at our schools.

### THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton—in reply)  
[10.10]: I thank members for the manner in which they have dealt with the Estimates of the Education Department. As I stated, there is no limit to what we desire to do, but the limitation placed upon our efforts has been that involved in the provision of funds. If money were available, we would be able to spend it in many ways that we regard as desirable. I trust there will be no misconception on that point. As to school buildings, that phase was dealt with when the Works Estimates were considered, and the policy of the Government was indicated. I think it will be found at the end of 12 months that considerable improvements will have been effected in the reconditioning of schools and teachers' quarters throughout the State. I do not desire to discuss at length the speech of the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin). The University does not come under the control of the Minister for Education, who has no possible say, by virtue of his office, in the control of that institution. The Government make provision for funds for the University, but it is governed by its distinct organisation. If Parliament considers it necessary that an investigation be made regarding the University, the manner in which University funds are expended, the personnel of the staff, the hours they work, and so on, it can be done through the Treasurer, who could make representations to the Senate or the Convocation with regard to those matters. Of course, Parliament does make available money for the institution. I think the amount is £24,000, which is provided under a special Act. If Parliament did not agree to that money being provided, or decided to repeal the special Act, the University would be without funds. So, from that standpoint, we have some power, but I, as Minister, have no jurisdiction, influence or control of any description over the activities of the University.

**Mr. Marshall:** The Estimates contain a paltry amount of £1,850 for the University.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** But the principal amount is provided under a special Act.

**Mr. Marshall:** That is the trouble; so much of this sort of thing is done piecemeal.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) referred to the rents charged for teachers' quarters, and said that the charges should be governed by the Reduction of Rents Act. As the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) pointed out, a very small percentage only of ordinary dwellings come within the purview of that Act, which deals really with business premises. The Crown has taken no advantage of the circumstances. There is no legal lease involved in connection with teachers' quarters, but, in any circumstances, they would not come within the scope of the Reduction of Rents Act. If the former Minister for Education had lived long enough to complete his inquiries with the Treasurer, there would have been some finality on the question of what would be done regarding the rents charged for quarters occupied by teachers and other Government servants throughout the State. That matter came before me as a result of a deputation from the Teachers' Union. I looked into the matter to ascertain how the rents had been assessed, and to see whether there were any serious disabilities. I found that there were entirely different circumstances regarding teachers' quarters, compared with those of other Government servants. A complicated formula was adopted, which does not work out justly in all cases. I think it is based on 8 per cent. on the capital value of buildings without regard to the land itself, however valuable the land may be. In addition, there are certain variations in accordance with the classification of the teacher. A teacher receiving a certain salary may reside in school quarters for which he will pay £25 a year as rent. Another teacher may be appointed to the same school, and merely because he possesses a different classification and receives a different salary, he may be called upon to pay 50 per cent. more by way of rent for the same building.

**Mr. Needham:** That is not the trouble now. It is a question of reduction of rents under the emergency legislation, not the assessments.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** Parliament deliberately passed the legisla-

tion knowing what the position was. It did not make any provision for a reduction in the rent of quarters occupied by teachers. There was some justification for that attitude. During the decade between 1913 and 1923, according to the Statistician's figures, rents increased by 70 or 80 per cent. But teachers' rentals did not increase at all.

**Mr. Needham:** That is no argument.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** The argument in regard to the reduction of rents is that the teachers' salaries increased very considerably during that period. Yet they did not have to pay increased rent. The argument of the hon. member is that when the teachers have their salaries reduced, the rent must be reduced. Similarly then, when salaries are increased, surely the rents should be increased. However, the whole position is most unsatisfactory in regard to the assessment of rents, not only of teachers, but of certain railway employees, of employees on the Goldfields Water Supply, of the police, of the caretakers, and many other classes of public servants. It is an anomaly that certain teachers can occupy premises and be charged £30 rent, and that their successors may be charged £50 rent for the same building. What I think should be done is that there should be a fair rent assessed for each house, irrespective of the teachers' salaries. At present, because a teacher draws a big salary he pays a high rent for his quarters, although others on lower salaries have paid a lesser rent for the same building. The whole position bristles with anomalies, and something should be done about it. The matter has been considered by the Government. I put up to the Premier a memo. which has been agreed to. Here is the memo. I submitted—

To the Hon. the Premier,—The position as regards the provision of accommodation or quarters for Government employees seems to be very unsatisfactory at the present time. The Education Department and the Railway Department have systems which are not uniform, and which give rise to anomalies, and which apparently give satisfaction to no one. In the Police Department, I understand, an allowance is made for rent where houses are not provided for police officers. Of course in small country districts accommodation is always provided as part of the police station. For single men in the metropolitan area, barracks are provided. Caretakers of some of the public buildings are also provided with quarters of varying types; and Goldfields Water Supply men are also affected to some extent. In the Education Department the basis apparently is that 8 per cent. on the capital value

of improvements is charged. (That is to say, excluding the value of the land). But this is governed by a proviso that the rental shall not exceed a rate fixed according to the status of the teacher, and where the existing buildings do not come up to the standard required for the class of teacher of the school to which the quarters are attached, a reduction is made. The position is anomalous, inasmuch as owing to financial exigencies, houses which may originally have been the same in value may now differ considerably, and want of money for repairs and renovations makes one house less valuable for rental purposes than another. Also, with regard to capital values, it can readily be seen over the past 20 or 30 years that there have been big fluctuations in capital values owing to the different money values existing from time to time. A house built 30 years ago may be capitalised at only £500, whereas the same, or a similar, house built four years ago would be 50 per cent. higher, and yet the two houses, if kept in a proper state of renovation, are of about the same value. It seems to me that a valuation of all departmental properties should be made and a rental fixed for each, irrespective of the salary received by the employee; because if an employee has a reasonably good house he is not averse to paying a little more rent for the extra comfort, whereas if his house is in poor condition or inconvenient, some allowance should be made so that he may receive some recompense for the discomforts imposed. In these circumstances, I think that perhaps if a conference were held by officers from the Works Department, the Education Department, the Railway Department, and the Police Department, with a Treasury official, the matter could be dealt with and a recommendation made so that the whole question could be put on a uniform basis. This matter has become a live question with the Teachers' Union which, as you will remember, has requested that teachers' rents should be reduced proportionately to the reduction under the Rents Reduction Act. Of course this could not be given effect to without full consideration of the position as a whole.

On the receipt of that memo. the Premier gave effect to the recommendation: the committee have been formed and have met, and I expect they will soon be in a position to report. I hope that as the result of that report we shall not continue to have these anomalies, and that people occupying quarters will occupy them at a fair rental, irrespective of the salaries paid. If the matter be settled on those lines—and that is the Government's intention—we shall have a comparatively satisfactory solution of this vexed question which has been going on for years. At present it is an entirely anomalous position, and if we do what is set out in this memo., I am sure we

shall arrive at a more satisfactory position. If members will leave the matter to the Government, I think that before the Estimates are discussed next year it will have become a dead instead of a live question. That was the most serious item discussed, together with that of the University, but I do not wish to touch upon that further. The member for Kalgoorlie mentioned the need for renovations to the central school at Kalgoorlie. The Director has been in the district during the past six or seven weeks and has made recommendations to the Works Department. I do not think the hon. member will have any cause for complaint after the matter has been dealt with by the Works Department. The member for Victoria Park mentioned the central school accommodation in the metropolitan area. The accommodation for the children of Perth, and east and south of it, is not satisfactory. There is no central school between Perth and Midland Junction and there is none on the south side of the river. All the children have to go to the James-street school, which is overcrowded to the extent of about 350 scholars, and it is necessary to provide additional accommodation for the children in the advanced classes. To overcome the difficulty, the Training College at Claremont is being utilised for about 200 scholars. That will relieve the pressure on the James-street school. If the Treasurer will agree, we may be able to do something at East Perth regarding the proposed central school for girls, which has been on the tapis for three or four years. Just previous to the former Labour Government leaving office, the Treasurer and the Minister for Works had almost agreed to start that work. Unfortunately, the financial depression hit the Treasury and the money could not be provided for the purpose, and we have been dealing with the matter in a piecemeal manner since. The James-street central school is overcrowded and something must be done. The utilisation of the Training College will not interfere with the general work of the college because, when the college is re-opened, it will not be used as a living-in school and the accommodation provided for that purpose will be available for central school scholars. At present we are utilising a fair proportion of the space for the correspondence classes. If any further infor-

mation is desired, I will endeavour to supply it when the items are being discussed.

Item, Primary and Central Schools, forage, district cleaning and retiring allowances and proportion of leave, £438,936:

Mr. TONKIN: School teachers, in common with other Government workers, suffered a 20 per cent. reduction in their salaries, but unlike other public servants, they also lost their right to long-service leave. When the Public Service Appeal Board were fixing the salaries of teachers, the officers of the department made a special point of the number of holidays enjoyed by teachers. It was pointed out that at Christmas teachers had a long holiday, that they had frequent holidays during the year and also got long-service leave. There is not the slightest doubt that when the board fixed the salaries, they attached a good deal of weight to those representations from the department. That is to say, the long-service leave was really considered to be part of the salary. Had the teachers not been entitled to long-service leave, undoubtedly the salaries would have been assessed on a higher scale. By making the teachers suffer the loss of long-service leave in addition to the 20 per cent. reduction of salary, I maintain they have suffered a double reduction. Their loss has been greater than that which any other section of the community have been called upon to bear. When the financial emergency legislation was before us, we understood that the spirit behind it was equality of sacrifice, but there is no equality here. Some recognition should be given to this point and something should be done to equalise the sacrifice by teachers with that made by other sections of the community. If the Minister has any doubt that the board did take into consideration the long-service leave, I ask him to look up the remarks of the board when they assessed the salaries and he will see that my statement is correct. It is not fair that that section of the Government service should be called upon to bear a double reduction.

Item, Salaries of officers under the control of the Public Service Commissioner; salaries and wages including temporary assistance, district allowances, allowances for leave due to officers on retirement and to officers under

Public Service regulations, students' allowances, students' advances, £72,755:

Mr. TONKIN: In the "Government Gazette" of the 13th October a vacancy for organising inspector of manual training was advertised and the salary range was stated as £475 to £565. I happen to know that the vacancy is occurring because of the projected retirement of Mr. Joshua Hart, and his salary was £650 less 6 per cent., or £601 12s. If Mr. Hart was receiving £601 12s., why is the position now being advertised at the lower range? I do not know whether the lower range is subject to a further 6 per cent. reduction. Who has taken it upon himself to reduce the amount assessed for the position? The Public Service Appeal Board assess the salaries of positions, not individuals. Where is this sort of thing going to end? I wonder if the same thing was done in the case of the vacancy for a senior inspector for the Audit Department, advertised at £430 to £520. When a salary is assessed by an appeal board, only the board should reduce or increase it. Members on this side of the House believe in arbitration. The Appeal Board fixed £640 for the position.

The Minister for Education: No.

Mr. TONKIN: That is what Mr. Hart was receiving.

The Minister for Education: No; special consideration was given to Mr. Hart on account of his service, not by the Appeal Board but by the Minister.

Mr. TONKIN: Will the Minister say that the board fixed the range advertised?

The Minister for Education: No.

Mr. TONKIN: Then it is immaterial whether the amount was £640 or £630.

The Minister for Education: I think it was £600.

Mr. TONKIN: Apparently someone has taken it on himself to reduce the range. Was it the Public Service Commissioner or the Director of Education?

The Minister for Education: Both of them, I think in collaboration.

Mr. TONKIN: What right had they to do it?

The Minister for Education: The individual holding the office often makes a difference.

Mr. TONKIN: If that were so, various Ministers and members of Parliament would be drawing various salaries. That is a suggestion of payment by results.



The Minister for Education: I merely say I think that is what happens.

Mr. Marshall: How can it happen if there is any constitution governing the situation?

Mr. TONKIN: The Public Service Appeal Board does not fix the salary of the person holding the position of head teacher of the North-Fremantle school, but fixes the salary of the position of head teacher of a Class 2 school. Mr. Hart's job becomes vacant, and the man who fills the position will be expected to do the work Mr. Hart did. The successor to Mr. Hart should therefore receive the salary paid to the position. Either the Public Service Appeal Board fixes the salary for these positions or it does not.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I should like to know why the salary paid to the Superintendent of Technical Education last year was £683 and why it is £644 this year. The cost of technical education throughout Australia in 1929 was 2s. 6d. per head of the population compared with 31s. 5d. the cost of primary and secondary education. In Western Australia for that year it was 1s. 6d., but in 1932 it had dropped to a little over 1s. The average number of primary school students in this State in 1931-32 was 57,700, the cost was £418,270, and the percentage of the whole was 71. In the case of post-primary education, intermediate, high school, central school, and Narrogin School of Agriculture, the average number of students was 5,609, the cost £73,690, and the percentage 12.5. In the case of secondary education the average number of students in 1932 was 1,686, the cost £48,600, and the percentage 8.3. In the case of technical education the average number of students was 4,123, the cost £21,320, and the percentage 3.6. In the case of the University the number of students was 770, the cost was £27,050, and the percentage 4.6. I have some figures dealing with individual students at our Technical Schools. In 1929 the number was 3,746 the enrolment was 7,653 and the cost was £33,690. In 1930 the number of students was 3,969, the enrolment 8,677, and the cost £33,210. In 1931 the number of students was 4,067, the enrolment 9,060, and the cost £28,930. In 1932 the number of students was 4,123, the enrolment 9,000, and the cost £21,320. In regard to the Perth Technical College, the figures are—for 1929 the number of students was 2,641 out of an enrolment of 5,164; in 1930 the number of

students 2,723, the enrolment 5,996; in 1931 the number of students 2,798, the enrolment 6,288; in 1932 the number of students 2,832, the enrolment 6,362; in 1933 the number of students 3,060 and the enrolment 6,500. The expenditure on technical education in this State has dropped from £33,690 in 1929 to £21,320 in 1932, a drop of 36.7 per cent. The average number of individual students attending those schools, however, increased from 3,746 to 4,400 in those years. They now have 4,400 individual students out of 9,000 enrolments. The Perth Technical College has increased its average number of individual students from 2,641 in 1929 to 3,060 in 1933. I am drawing the attention of the Minister and of the Committee to this because of the importance of technical education. I am sure the importance is realised. We know what technical education has done in other parts of the world. During the great years of 1914 to 1918 we had reason to discover what technical education had done towards preparing Germany to make that great onslaught. I am wondering why these Estimates treat technical education so lightly, reducing the amount to be granted to the Superintendent of Technical Education. Last year the cost of technical education was £21,320, representing 3.6 per cent. of the total expenditure on education. A comparison of these costs with those in other branches and in the University will show that insufficient attention is given to the important branch of technical education. I did not realise that lack of attention or lack of interest until, some months ago, I made it my business to visit the Perth Technical College. Then I had an eye-opener as to what that college has done, what it is doing, and what it is capable of doing. Within recent weeks, the Minister himself, with other hon. members, had an opportunity of seeing what the college has done and is doing under highly disadvantageous conditions. A glance at the annual report shows the wide-spread activities of the branch of technical education. It caters for the requirements of those training for industry, the professions, commerce, domestic art, and electrical and chemical science and engineering. It is linked up with the University, and, by a co-operative arrangement between the two institutions, Technical College students who are forced by circumstances to work during the day are enabled to qualify

for certain University degrees. One phase of technical education struck me as particularly important on my visit. It has a direct bearing on the distressful times in which we live. One of the tragedies of the economic depression, if not its greatest tragedy, is the tragedy of youth. Youth finds itself up against a stone wall, without an outlook, without an avenue of employment in either the industrial or the professional ranks. The youth of our country, after having cost their parents a great deal of money in getting the best education, find themselves without the possibility of obtaining employment. The parents have denied themselves in order that their children may be well equipped for the battle of life. During the past three years thousands of children have left our schools with no chance of employment in any walk of life, industrial or professional. At the Technical College I found a number of highly intelligent boys and girls occupied in improving their knowledge so that, if the opportunity occurs, they can step right into some calling. In that respect, as well as other respects, the Perth Technical College is doing good work.

Mr. Sampson: Are you agreeable to have a greater quota of apprentices?

Mr. NEEDHAM: That has no bearing on the question I am dealing with now. Let me remind the member for Swan that trade apprentices and workers in all branches of commerce, science and industry are also enabled to qualify for promotion and better appointments by attending the Perth Technical College. The training given to unemployed boys and girls from 1930 up to the present has been instrumental in helping hundreds to keep their self-respect, and to give them occupational qualifications which will be of great value to them throughout their lives. These boys and girls are being enabled to spend what I may term their compulsory leisure hours so that, if the opportunity offers, they will be able to take on almost any position. The problem of the unemployed youth between the ages of 17 and 20 is most serious. Such youths are past the age of apprenticeship, even if apprenticeships were available. They are too old to serve a period of five years, as employers desire that at 21 years apprenticeship should be completed. The Technical College, under its pre-vocational system of training, has turned out many boys who would make ideal apprentices, but are now over the age of 16. They have no chance of apprenticeship,

whether it is limited or unlimited. Even if there was no quota of apprentices or journeymen in any trade—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting pretty wide of the mark in dealing with the subject of apprenticeship generally.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I will revert to the Perth Technical College. The buildings and equipment, to my mind, are utterly inadequate.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. member cannot deal with that aspect under this item, which refers only to salaries.

Mr. NEEDHAM: If I cannot make reference to that matter at this stage, perhaps I shall be able to do so under some other heading. I am referring to the buildings where the teachers are carrying on their work and am directing attention to the inadequacy of the premises. If you rule me out of order, Mr. Chairman, I shall have to bow to your decision.

Mr. Marshall: You need not; you can move to disagree with the ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to proceed further along those lines. I have given him a lot of latitude.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The Superintendent is handicapped by the class of building available for the Technical College. The Minister and members of this House were present a few weeks ago and could see that, from a health point of view, it was unwise to allow the teachers and students any longer to occupy some parts of the premises. I merely rose to inquire the reason for the salary of the Superintendent being reduced, and I had hoped to be able to refer at greater length to the necessity for improving the housing of the students who are receiving technical education. I think the Superintendent's salary should be increased rather than decreased. He and his staff are doing excellent work under conditions that could be much improved. I hope the Minister will do his best to increase the amount available, so as to improve the building and enable those concerned to do their work under more centralised conditions than is possible today. Students are taking part of their technical education in other parts of the metropolitan area, and it would be much more economical and advantageous if the whole of the technical education were provided in one central building. I suggest that the Government take into consideration the advis-

ability of selling portion of the present building that fronts St. George's-terrace, and extending the buildings towards the river so that all branches of technical education could be dealt with under the one roof. I hope the Minister will inform the Committee why the salary of the Superintendent has been reduced.

Mr. Marshall: I hope he will not.

Item, University Exhibitions, £1,850:

Mr. LATHAM: I take advantage of this opportunity to point out that it is of little use Parliament providing exhibitions for students attending the University, if the professors, instead of the Senate, are to run the University. In the "West Australian" of the 17th October last, there appeared a report of a meeting of the University Senate at which the professors objected to a certain regulation which provided that the Senate might dismiss any professor or lecturer "whose continuance in his office or in the performance of his duties shall, in the opinion of the Senate, be injurious to the progress of the students or to the interests of the University." That regulation seems very sound, but the professors were able to defeat the object of the Senate. I am fully aware that the Minister has nothing whatever to do with the University, but Parliament has something to do with it.

The Minister for Works: It is time we amended the University Act.

Mr. LATHAM: If the Senate cannot control the professors, we should amend the Act and assume control ourselves. Parliament provides £24,000 a year under a special Act, and also sets aside money to assist students. I regret that some of the youths who go through the University express views that, to say the very least, are not commendable to the citizens of this State. If the professors are responsible for that kind of thing, and the Senate cannot control the professors, then Parliament will have to do so. I do not know whether it is true, but I am told that there is quite a little school at the University preaching communism. I do not say that the professors are engaged in it, but I am told a section of the students indulge in that practice. I do not know whether there is to be a new order of things and I do not care, but let us proceed slowly. We do not desire

to be half a century ahead, because that will merely cause bitterness and strife throughout the State. As a public man, I say emphatically that if the Senate cannot control the professors, Parliament will have to do so. In order to give the Senate some backing, I hope some notice will be taken of the few remarks I have made. I had intended to continue my remarks at some length, but in view of the lateness of the hour, and the time that has been devoted to the Education Vote, I shall not do so. Parliament has the necessary power, and should exercise it.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 11.8 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 26th October, 1933.*

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

- 1, Goldfields Allotments Revestment.
- 2, Supply (No. 2), £1,201,000.

### BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.