

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 20th November, 1930.

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

QUESTION—TRAMWAY STAFF.

Mr. PANTON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that the wages section of the tramway staff are worked on rationed time? 2, Does the same apply to the salaried staff? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, The wages staff preferred rationing in lieu of retirement of a proportion of their numbers. In the case of the salaried staff a number have been retired without fresh appointments being made to the personnel. 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—TOWN PLANNING.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What amount has each local authority contributed towards the cost of (a) the Town Planning Commission; (b) the Town Planning Board? 2, How much have the Government contributed to (a) the Town Planning Commission, and (b) the Town Planning Board?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Local authorities have contributed towards the cost of (a) the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission as follows:—

Local authority.	Popu- lation.	Proportion under Act.
		£ s. d.
Bassendean road board	4,380	58 8 0
Bayswater road board ..	3,510	46 16 0
Belmont road board ..	2,065	27 10 0
Canning road board ..	2,171	28 13 0

Local authority.	Popu- lation.	Proportion under Act.
		£ s. d.
Claremont road board	5,971	79 12 0
Cottesloe Beach road board	4,500	60 9 0
Melville road board ..	3,800	50 13 0
Peppermint Grove road board	1,190	15 17 0
Perth road board ..	19,300	260 0 0
South Perth road board	4,900	65 6 0
Swan road board ..	2,654	35 8 0
Fremantle road board	1,409	18 15 0
Claremont municipality	6,300	84 0 0
Cottesloe municipality ..	4,090	54 10 0
Fremantle City ..	22,000	293 6 0
East Fremantle muni- cipality	5,283	70 8 0
North Fremantle muni- cipality	4,700	62 13 0
Guildford municipality	2,530	33 14 0
Midland Junction muni- cipality	5,100	68 0 0
Perth city	74,971	999 12 0
Subiaco municipality ..	15,879	211 14 0

(b) The Town Planning Board—Nil. 2, The Government have contributed—(a) The Metropolitan Town Planning Commission £875, and the total expenditure or cost of the Commission up to date has been as previously given to the House, £2,980 7s. 8d. (b) The Government contribution under the Town Planning and Development Act £1,288 to the 30th June last. Provision has been made on the current estimates for a further £1,737. The total contribution provided by the Government will therefore be £3,025, of which £1,985 has been spent.

QUESTION—LICENSES REDUCTION BOARD.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Attorney General: In view of the economic depression and the urgent necessity for economy will the Government consider the advisability of abolishing the Licensing Board?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: The Licensing Board costs nothing. The Licensing Court has the same personnel and the Government do not consider it advisable to abolish it.

BILL — ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—HOSPITAL FUND (CONTRIBUTIONS).*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [4.37] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill to enable the Government to impose a hospital tax. Yesterday we passed a Bill to provide for a hospital fund, and this measure is introduced simply in fulfilment of the statutory obligation to impose the tax. It is expected that the tax will realise £156,000, and was explained during the discussion on the Hospital Fund Bill, and after the consideration given to that measure, I think it will be sufficient for me formally to move the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. Marshall: There are some anomalies in it.

The **MINISTER FOR HEALTH**: Then the hon. member may point them out. The Bill provides for the imposition of a tax of 1½d. on all salaries and wages and a similar tax on all income. The period during which the measure is to operate is unlimited just as with the Bill introduced last session.

Mr. Sleeman: Is everybody included?

The **MINISTER FOR HEALTH**: Yes; that was a matter affecting the Bill passed yesterday. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Marshall, debate adjourned.

BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MUNSIE (Hannans) [4.40]: This is another of the little taxation Bills that the Premier has so frequently introduced this session. He said he estimated to get an extra £20,000 by the increased entertainments tax. I think he is very modest in his estimate, even allowing for a decrease on account of the depression. The object of the Bill is to double the entertainments tax. It will double the amount to be paid on tickets up to 2s. 5½d., and on tickets of greater value, the same tax as is imposed by the Federal Government will be charged by the

State. Consequently, from the point of view of the taxpayers the entertainments tax will be doubled. From the entertainments tax last year the State Government collected £38,532.

The Premier: We will not get nearly so much this year.

Mr. **MUNSIE**: The Commonwealth will get less on account of the reduced prices being charged by picture shows, but I think the Premier will get more. Double that amount would make it £77,064, but I do not think the Premier will collect double the amount by doubling the original State tax. There will probably be a slight falling-off in the revenue. Last year the Commonwealth Government collected in Western Australia £25,775 under their entertainments tax, which makes the total tax collected in this State under the two assessments last year £102,839. I am allowing a reduction of one-third for the current year, and I think I am going to the limit in so doing. Probably the taxation collected by the Commonwealth will show a decline of slightly over one-third, but I do not think there will be anything like one-third reduction in the proceeds of the State tax.

The Premier: I hope you will prove to be right.

Mr. **MUNSIE**: Allowing for a decline of one-third the Premier should collect £68,560. I recognise that the Government are confronted with financial difficulties. Times out of number the Premier has stated that any taxation introduced this session would be designed to do as little harm as possible to industry.

Mr. Panton: The industry of horse-racing will be spoilt.

Mr. **MUNSIE**: I do not know whether the Premier places picture shows in the category of an industry, but I think he is going quite to the limit in taxing certain sections of the community. Although previous to the election he said that taxation ought to be reduced and that he would not increase taxation, as recently as Tuesday last he stated in an interview that taxation ought to be reduced. I agree with that view. However, I realise the Premier's difficulties from a financial aspect. Seeing that there are so many of these little taxation measures to review, it may be as well to examine what the Premier has already done during the course of this session in the way of extra taxation. He has introduced a good many

new taxes, though not all of them have yet been passed. Under the measure reducing Parliamentary allowances the Premier will, according to his own estimate, receive £5,000. The Bill taxing salaries is, according to his estimate, to produce £105,000. From the hospitals tax he expects £156,000. From the first and second Bills to amend the Stamp Act he expects £5,000 each. The totalisator tax is to yield £10,000, the entertainments tax £20,000, and the winning bets tax £5,000; or, on the Premier's own estimates, a total of £311,000 in extra taxation.

Mr. Panton: The Premier will be a millionaire before he is finished.

Mr. MUNSIE: If the Premier's anticipations are realised, he will be on a good wicket. Some of the taxing Bills are already assented to. As to the present Bill, my view is that the Premier will get £30,000 additional, instead of the £20,000 he estimates. As regards the winning bets tax, he has under-estimated at least £70,000. He forecasts £5,000. If the Bill becomes law as introduced, he will get at least £75,000. On the average of last year's betting tickets, he would have got £100,000; but I am cutting down the figures as compared with last year. If the Premier gets all his taxing Bills through, therefore, he will have increased taxation to the extent of £391,000. I do not know whether the Premier has had a conference with the picture people regarding the entertainments tax. The returns show that the £38,532 collected from that tax last year was obtained as follows: from racing, the greater part of the tax on which goes to the Commonwealth, £1,771; from theatres where the charge is under 2s. 6d., which is rare, £1,175; from picture shows, £27,744; from dancing and skating, £3,913; from concerts, £140; from miscellaneous, £3,787; making a grand total of £38,532. The Premier is doubling small taxes by this Bill. The three leading picture shows paid a fair amount to the Commonwealth last year. With the exception of Saturdays and holidays, the State will now collect the whole of that revenue, the charges for admission having been reduced. However, even on Saturday nights the Premier will get his cut. I well remember what was said to me when I introduced the Entertainments Tax Bill, upon the Commonwealth Government withdrawing from that field of taxation. I happened to get a wire stating when the Commonwealth would withdraw, and I arranged for my tax

to operate from that date. I well recollect how the then Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier, criticised me for taxing children who wanted to go to a picture show. I admit that I taxed them to the extent of ½d. The Premier now proposes to tax them to the extent of 2d. If I was wrong then, he is four times as wrong now. The Premier contended that I had no right to tax the only amusement which some people could afford to visit. I took that action for a set purpose, to make people who could afford to attend picture shows, skating rinks, races or concerts pay some little fraction towards the maintenance of hospitals. By this Bill the Premier is taking money away from the hospitals and putting it into Consolidated Revenue to help the Treasury. Moreover, he is doubling the amount of the tax. If I was wrong in acting as I did from a charitable point of view, where does the Premier stand, his intention being to help Consolidated Revenue? It is no use for me or any other member on this side to oppose the Bill. There was a fair test of strength last night on the measure imposing the hospital tax. One of the reasons for the opposition to that measure was the Premier's action in taking away the assured revenue the hospitals would get from the entertainments tax and substituting a very doubtful proposition in the shape of collections from Government hospitals. However, that Bill went through, and I suppose this measure will pass. If the picture people will not bear the burden and put the extra penny on to the present charge of 9d., there may be some falling-off in attendances. The people are being taxed as much as they can stand at present. If the Treasurer wants this revenue, I suppose he must have it; but we should always bear in mind that although this Bill may mean only an increase of £30,000 in taxation, the Government have during this session introduced taxation Bills which will increase the burden by a total of £390,000.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [4.54]: I have taken exception here repeatedly to the action of the present Government in repudiating all their election promises, one of which was that they would not increase but would decrease taxation. Here we have just another little tax that the Government bring along, doubling an existing impost and also doubling a Federal impost. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) has said that

there is no limit to this tax. Previously the limit in State taxation was 2s. 6d., but this taxing measure has no limit whatever. There is sure to be a considerable falling-off in attendances owing to this tax. The State Government refrained from imposing an entertainments tax on the lower charges for admission when the Commonwealth was in the field. The State Government then thought the lower charges were high enough. However, when the Commonwealth withdrew, the State Government stepped in as a means of assisting hospitals. The present Government are not satisfied with that, but are going to double the tax. They say they are doing that because they are leaving to the hospitals their collections, which previously went into Consolidated Revenue. But there is no comparison between the two amounts. The Government will receive taxation from upstairs patrons, a section of the audience which never before contributed to State revenue. The people are to pay double what they paid previously. In the circumstances, that is an enormous tax. The Government who came into office on a cry of reduced taxation have introduced no less than eight Bills increasing imposts, and on the Premier's own figures the additional taxation will amount to about £400,000. That is a tremendous additional burden to place on the people. The Premier said there was plenty of money in the Treasury if only it was properly handled.

The Premier: There is not now.

Mr. McCALLUM: The hon. gentleman said it was only due to bad administration that there was not enough money to go round. But here he comes with these additional imposts, even doubling the tax on children attending picture matinees on Wednesday or Saturday afternoon. I should have thought that in these trying times the Premier would endeavour to make provision for the people to have some little amusement and relaxation. He should have refrained from imposing double the previous tax, and on top of that double-banking the Commonwealth tax. We are reaching a stage now when one meets the Commissioner of Taxation wherever one turns. Even before leaving one's home in the morning one is up against him. Wherever one goes, all day long, one encounters the Commissioner of Taxation. Even little children cannot attend a matinee without having to put their hands in their pockets

to satisfy the demands of the present Government. They are introduced to the Commissioner of Taxation, have to shake hands with him, even when attending their little amusements.

The Premier: They do not pay 9d.

Mr. McCALLUM: What do they pay?

The Premier: I do not know. Half price, I suppose. It is a very small charge.

The Attorney General: The children would not be any worse off if they spent their Saturday afternoon in the open.

Mr. McCALLUM: It does not matter whether the entertainment is held in the open or indoors; wherever a charge is made for admission, this tax will be imposed—at a football match, a cricket match, a tennis match, a yachting race. The Commissioner of Taxation is to be encountered at all these functions. The ramifications of our Taxation Department have so extended that I do not believe there is another country in the world with so many imposts. Even children of tender years are to be taxed by this Bill on their trifling amusements. Would it not be better for this State to simplify its taxation methods and adopt a more scientific system which would admit of cheaper collection? The Bill duplicates Commonwealth taxation. We complain of the Commonwealth duplicating State action, but here we duplicate a Federal activity. Every little entertainment that may be organised throughout the State, in connection with which a charge is made for admission, will mean that this tax will have to be paid. It is almost phenomenal to find a Government that told the people taxation should be reduced, after a few months in office, imposing additional taxation amounting to nearly £400,000. As I told the Premier the other evening, he is saying to those interested in providing financial assistance for our hospitals and other charitable institutions, "You can take what is uncertain, in the shape of collections from various directions, and I will take what is certain, and then I will tell Parliament it is a fair exchange." That is a very lopsided arrangement, and most unfair. The people who have to look after the sick are to be given the heart-breaking task of street-corner selling, of battling here and there to raise funds, and of pursuing all the difficult methods of securing their end, and the Premier is taking from them the equivalent

of the assured amount they received in past years.

The Premier: It does not refer to street collections at all.

Mr. McCALLUM: It refers to every effort made on behalf of the hospitals.

The Premier: It refers to the collection of fees from patients, and so on. I am not interfering with street collections.

Mr. McCALLUM: I do not know how the people will stand up to this additional taxation. The complaint of the Premier and his friends during the last election was that the community was overtaxed. After a few months only of office, they seem to be devising every means they can to extract more taxation from the people, even to the extent of £400,000, as the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) has indicated.

Mr. Parker: I thought you said the children would pay most of that!

Mr. Munsie: No, but they will pay some of it.

Mr. McCALLUM: The children will have to pay ½d. or 1d. extra for their entertainment.

Mr. Panton: And there goes their chewing gum!

Mr. McCALLUM: There will be no escape from the taxation; not even the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker) will be able to escape it.

Mr. Parker: Why should I escape, if I am foolish enough to go to a picture show?

Mr. McCALLUM: Perhaps the hon. member has other interests, but many people find their enjoyment at picture shows. Here is a Government elected on the plea of reduced taxation, and yet they have increased taxation while they have been in office.

The Premier: You know that is not the position.

Mr. McCALLUM: What is the use of the Premier denying his own figures?

The Premier: I have to make good the deficit I found at the Treasury, instead of a credit balance.

Mr. McCALLUM: No matter what the Premier was told about the finances, he would not believe us. He contradicted and denied. He told the people there was plenty of money in the Treasury, so long as there was good management. Here is the evidence of the Government's good management! We have £400,000 extra taxation imposed in a few months, and the State going further into debt all the while. Unemployment is

increasing everywhere, and, according to the latest figures published yesterday, the expenditure on relief now is at the rate of £350,000 a year. That is where the money is going from the State coffers. I do not know that at any previous stage in the history of the State, expenditure under that heading reached more than £50,000. However, this is only one of the many instances we have to complain of in which the Government have departed from their electioneering promises. It is as well that the people should know what has happened, so that they will appreciate how much reliance can be placed on the words of hon. members opposite when promises are made on the hustings.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [5.8]: The Bill provides for an amendment of the entertainments tax. The chief entertainment of the Government to-day seems to be the devising of schemes for the imposition of new taxation. That suggests that the Government have fallen into line with the high tariffists. They have taxed everything, and the proposal now under discussion amounts almost to prohibition. Just as the Federal tariff had the effect of prohibiting the importation of some classes of goods to Australia, so this increased taxation will tend to prohibit the holding of entertainments.

The Minister for Works: We can do without entertainments.

Mr. MILLINGTON: People who endeavour to take a little enjoyment in life are not of the gloomy type that stay at home. Such people get around and patronise trams and other facilities, and thus the Bill means that people who are of use to the community, seeing that they circulate their money, are to be singled out for further taxation. I am afraid people will be in a maze. Because of the variety of taxes imposed, people seem to have become accustomed to this sort of thing. The Premier has got them into such a frame of mind that they will submit to anything. Each day people seem to look around to ascertain what new schemes for taxing them have been devised. I am afraid that the Premier will be known in future, not as a fine, breezy man of the world, but as a kill-joy and a disciple of gloom. In the past entertainments have been taxed fairly heavily, and the Government are now enter-

ing into competition with the Federal Government in their effort to devise new schemes for taxation purposes. While it is sought to duplicate the Federal tax, it has to be remembered that we can reach a certain stage at which, instead of collecting the estimated tax, the prohibitive effect of the impositions will diminish anticipated returns. I understand that in times gone by it was considered that charges up to 2s. 6d. represented the State's sphere of taxation. Now it seems that there are no rules in the game, and just as the Federal Government in the past entrenched on what was considered the proper realm for State taxation, now the State Government are entrenching upon the ground ordinarily regarded as the sphere for Federal taxation.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Is there any reason why the State should stand down for the Commonwealth?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The people are tired of protesting. I do not know whether this was an issue at the recent election, but I do not think the Premier can say that he had a mandate from the people to impose the taxation he has placed before us. I do not think he would have the temerity to suggest anything of the sort.

Hon. M. F. Troy: He always said taxation was too high and should be reduced.

Mr. MILLINGTON: He has been reminded of that so often that I did not wish to put it so bluntly.

Mr. Parker: Do leaders get mandates?

Mr. MILLINGTON: A leader that desires one will invent it.

Mr. Willcock: A leader generally announces his policy and asks the people to elect him on it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: In the past, we have heard a lot about taxation imposing difficulties upon industry. The fact remains that to date the incidence of the income tax has always been well considered and the exemptions were fully justified. Now we find that people who were justly exempt from such imposts, have to pay additional taxation in a dozen and one different ways. Such taxes, apart even from the financial point of view, will certainly prove most annoying, because of the variety of directions from which people will be hit. As the Treasurer requires money, would it not be better for him to increase the collections under the ordinary headings? People now have to pay an income tax, a land tax, in many instances, numerous Federal taxes,

and the added impositions due to the high tariff imposed by the Commonwealth Government. On top of all these, little tiddly-winking annoying taxes are being invented by the State Government. Nowadays, no one can possibly keep track of all the taxes and assess definitely his liabilities. At this rate, people who at present seek to get a little enjoyment out of life, will have to stay at home and amuse themselves there, because it will be too expensive for them to go out at all. I am rather suspicious of the Bill because I find certain persons taking exception to the money spent on pleasure by the people of this State. I do not know whether this is intended to be a prohibitive measure, with the idea of decreasing the entertainments and pleasures that people enjoy, but it will certainly have that effect. And it is not a tax that will be paid uniformly. Only the other day I had before me a witness, the manager of one of the biggest businesses in Perth, who told us—I think he claimed it as righteousness—that he never attended a picture show. Therefore the Bill will not necessarily hit the people who are able to pay, but will hit instead the people who quite legitimately endeavour to get a little cheap and innocent entertainment. I do not know how much further the Government desire to go. Since the Treasurer visited the Eastern States and got into contact with other gloomy Treasurers, he seems to have been inspired with the idea of spreading as much gloom as he possibly can. As the member for South Fremantle said, in future the Premier will be known, not as the Premier of Western Australia, but as the taxing master of Western Australia. My objection to this tax is the manner in which it has gone beyond the old rate. Even 9d. tickets are now to be taxed.

The Premier: Just the same as the old Schedule.

Mr. MILLINGTON: But the tax has been increased from 1d. to 2d. On a percentage basis, it is an enormous impost—2d. tax on a 9d. ticket. It is a serious tax on the people looking for cheap entertainment, the people who cannot afford to go to the races or indulge in the pleasures of motoring. Surely they are entitled to an innocent entertainment provided at a cheap rate. It seems that even those cheaper entertainments are to be taxed to such an extent that the prices of admission will be positively prohibitive to many. And if this

tax has the effect of keeping people at home, the Government will suffer in more ways than merely by the loss of taxation from entertainment. For in numerous directions the spending public provide revenue by furnishing income for business people; and, having done their duty as good spenders, they are now to be taxed even for such entertainments as we are considering. It would have been preferable for the Government to impose an additional rate of income tax, for then the people would not have had all these irritating outside taxes to pay. People have enough to pay now without being harassed by this additional and duplicated taxation. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) read out all the new taxation, but for my part I cannot keep account of the taxes, not even those imposed by the Federal Government. People are in a maze with all this new taxation, whereas in times past they knew exactly what they had to pay. I recognise the need for additional revenue, but what I object to is the manner in which it is being collected through irritating duplications.

The Premier: You would object to anything.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I hope the Treasurer has now exhausted the varieties of taxation.

The Premier: No, there is still the motor car left.

Mr. McCallum: You have materially increased the taxation on trucks and buses.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Premier will drive all the people off the roads, and we shall have the streets empty at night.

Mr. Kenneally: There will be no need to ring the curfew.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Premier will be known as the kill-joy Premier and the prophet of gloom in Western Australia. However, this appears to be his final effort. I believe he has now exhausted his ingenuity. He has taxed the youngsters attending picture shows to the extent of 2d. I will oppose the second reading.

MR. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.21]: The Premier should have exercised greater foresight in regard to his taxation proposals, should have recognised that there is a day coming when the people who will then be building up public opinion of the political party he represents should at least have a favourable eye towards that party. But this Bill will set up a strong resentment

in all present-day children, and they will remember it for years. To-day, having been given a shilling as weekly pocket money, a child goes to the pictures for 9d., paying 1d. for the tram, reserving 1d. for the homeward journey, and indulging in a penny lick while at the pictures. That is the weekly budget of entertainment of thousands of children in the metropolitan area. But because of this Bill and its new taxation, the 1s. will become 10d.

The Premier: And they will have to walk.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, they will have to walk into the city or walk home, whichever suits them, and they will have to go without their penny licks. So they will be utterly dissatisfied, and I expect their parents will explain to them that it is all the fault of the Government. The Premier would be well advised to cut out this taxation on tickets of less than 1s., so that the children shall not feel resentful against the Government, as undoubtedly they will do when this Bill comes into operation.

The Premier: They pay the tax under your Act.

Mr. WILLCOCK: They do not have to walk instead of riding in a tram, nor do they have to deprive themselves of their penny licks. There were no pictures when the Premier was a child, but still he ought to have sufficient imagination to put himself in the position of the children of to-day. Suppose he went to the pictures, having to walk a long distance in to the city, and the same long distance home again, and do this without the satisfaction of a penny lick. What would he think of the Government responsible for his childish hardships?

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.24]: I feel it my duty to oppose this tax because it will hit very severely some of the organisations in my electorate controlling picture shows with the object of providing funds to assist those who are ill or have sustained injury in the mines. Probably the Premier is not aware that the unions have taken on this enterprise ever since Meekatharra was a town of any consequence, and that the profits from the local picture show go to sick and injured miners, or to defray funeral expenses. For long past that picture show has had a hard struggle in consequence of the declining population of the district, and it is now on the border line between

profit and loss. To that picture show children under 14 years of age are admitted free. That gives a married man and his wife a chance to go to the pictures and take their children once a week. Without that concession it would be utterly impossible for a married man with a family in Meekatharra to take his children to a picture show. If the Bill becomes law the tax paid on the tickets will be increased, with the result that the price of admission will go up and so it will be impossible for the picture show to continue.

The Premier: What is the price of admission now? Sixpence?

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no picture show outback where the price of admission is only 6d.

The Premier: In Northam it is only 6d.

Mr. MARSHALL: The admission to the show at Meekatharra is, I think, 1s. 6d. It is one of the cheapest picture shows to be found in outback districts of Western Australia. At Wiluna the admission to the local picture show is 2s. 6d., and there is no free admission for children under the age of 14. In Committee I propose to move an amendment the nature of which I cannot yet give, for I have not had an opportunity to go closely through the Bill. It really is difficult to keep count of all the State taxation.

The Premier: What about the Federal taxes on tea and petrol?

Mr. MARSHALL: They only serve to make this worse. This is aggravated by the State following suit, or by both Governments running neck and neck. It is difficult to say which is the more ferocious and the more rapid in its movements to increase taxation. I would probably not have continued the debate any longer but for the utterances of the Premier before he reached that high office, when he indulged in remarks about the awful extravagance and the necessity for reducing taxation. His is such a reversal of form. Before ever he had any conception that a miracle would happen and that he would occupy the position of Premier and Treasurer, he argued that it was all a matter of proper management, that if we could conduct our affairs in a statesmanlike manner we would have no fear of increased taxation. He suggested that if he became Leader of the Government we could look forward to a reduction in taxation. We are still looking for a measure that in the

slightest degree resembles a reduction in this direction, but we have no difficulty in finding many which are increasing the burdens upon the people. This particular form of taxation is wrong in principle. When the measure is applied, those who seek for admission to a picture show or other entertainment will be saddled with the responsibility of paying this tax. It is coming rather low down on the ladder when we start on the children. No matter where the tax applies it will be paid by the patrons of all entertainments. That is wrong. The very people from whom we desire to extract a little are to go scot-free.

The Premier: You think the people who do not go should pay.

Mr. MARSHALL: No.

The Premier: It sounds very like it.

Mr. MARSHALL: Those who make a profit out of the entertainment should pay a proportion of the tax, but that is not provided for. If the Premier had revolutionised the system of entertainment taxation and had charged on the basis of a percentage of the gross takings, he would have compelled the proprietor of the show to disgorge a little.

Mr. Withers: Mr. Bruce failed on that principle.

Mr. MARSHALL: He failed on a good one. I give credit to anyone who would advocate such a thing, for it is the only fair way to impose the tax. Patrons of entertainments should not be at the mercy of the producers. The Premier would be well advised to adjourn the debate and bring down a Bill on the basis I suggest. He would get the same amount as he will by the present suggestion. It is unfair to expect patrons to pay this tax. Relaxation is as necessary to the human being as food, and to tax one's amusements is to tax a necessity. I do not say this is not abused at times; some people probably patronise picture shows, dances, etc., more than they should. I am reminded of the famous politician who quoted the following words: "Like quince in an apple pie, it is good."

The Premier: The apple pie is good.

Mr. MARSHALL: I think it was the flavour of the quince that was good in that case. We should tax not only those who patronise entertainments, but insist upon those who conduct these things disgorging some of the profits they make.

The Premier: They probably will do so.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not under this Bill. The tax will be paid by the patrons. My chief complaint is that the Bill will materially affect those organisations which are conducting entertainments for philanthropic or charitable purposes. I well remember the remarks of the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) on the occasion when the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) was introducing his measure. The hon. member was very vigorous on behalf of those entertainments that were conducted to raise money for agricultural halls. I feel sure he will not fail us on this occasion, and that we shall hear him at his best. Whatever injustice was done by the late Government in imposing the tax, the hon. member must find some fault with the proposal now before the House. I am sure that many halls in his district have not yet been paid for, and this tax will greatly hinder the raising of the necessary funds. Probably the worst feature of the Bill is the proposal by the Government to utilise the funds raised for a purpose other than that for which this tax was first introduced.

The Minister for Lands: That refers to the Bill you passed yesterday.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not concerned about that.

The Minister for Lands: That is where the alteration occurred.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not at all. Clause 3 of this Bill shows what will happen. Instead of the money being applied to the relief of hospitals, charities and philanthropic movements, the Treasurer proposes to take all the revenue to be derived from it into Consolidated Revenue. The clause is very explicit on that point. Every penny he derives will go into the Treasury. This means that our hospitals will be deprived of the use of this money and will be left to languish. It gives me great concern to know how the institutions outback will be maintained in the future. The Premier is following the same rule as the Federal Government when they brought down the tariff. He claimed that the Commonwealth authorities were tariff mad. If I were to throw back upon the Premier his own statement, I would not be far out, for he is taxation mad.

The Premier: No one would believe you if you did.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Premier cannot deny that we have been discussing taxation measures for two days, and that many more days will follow on the same topic. That is entirely contrary to the statements he made on the hustings. Not satisfied with imposing a tax for the relief of hospitals and charitable institutions, he proceeds to take the money into Consolidated Revenue. That is unfair and unjust. I hope in Committee that will be prevented, and that the money will be diverted to the use for which it was originally intended. When in Committee I shall move in that direction.

The Premier: You cannot pick out each centre and fit in what is required for each centre.

Mr. MARSHALL: If I moved an amendment to exclude Northam, would the Premier agree to it?

The Premier: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: The shows there must be very cheap. I suppose people use the old sliding machine that was in operation many years ago. No cheap entertainments are available to-day. Some time ago I experienced a revelation of the prices charged for entertainments. When an elaborate advertisement came out dealing with a certain picture show a friend of mine invited me to accompany him. I said I did not like pictures, but as I had not seen one for six years I was induced to accept the invitation. I then learned that my friend had been charged 4s. 4d. for each of us. I could almost have insulted him for being so stupid.

Mr. Parker: Did you have a penny lick?

Mr. MARSHALL: Had the hon. member been there I should have had a good lick. I cannot in the circumstances allow this Bill to go through without a protest. The people in Meekatharra who have patronised their local entertainments will be hampered and absolutely prohibited from attending with the same regularity as heretofore. Furthermore they are likely to lose the privilege of their children under a certain age being admitted free. This tax will wipe out that concession. It is most unfair to tax those people who are far removed from city attractions and the pleasure resorts such as the beaches, where they can go free of charge, because those whose cause I am espousing cannot possibly avail themselves of all those privileges. In Committee I propose to move an amendment to overcome

the difficulty, providing for the exclusion of such picture shows as I have referred to. I am disappointed in the Premier. I appreciate his keen desire to balance the budget, but I am afraid his efforts will not be either successful or comfortable. They will somewhat resemble the effort to use a six-furrow plough in a parlour. I see no possibility of the Premier fulfilling his promise, although he is making a bold bid to do so. He is exploiting every avenue for the raising of money except that section of the community which can better afford to bear the burden. I refer to the section of the community which he is fostering so well. We have to look after the other side. I want to protect those people who have no means of availing themselves of forms of amusement that can be enjoyed for nothing by people who live in the city. Those on the Murchison cannot get access to those pleasure resorts. They are bound by their geographical position to one weekly entertainment, under less pleasant circumstances and provided by far more crude methods than we see in the city. On the other hand people who live in the city make use of the pleasure resorts without paying any tax whatever. Those who live in the outback districts are rendering a valuable service to the State, but they are to be compelled to pay this tax upon their amusements in order to bolster up Consolidated Revenue. I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [5.45]: So much has been said in opposition to the Bill that little more can be added to the arguments that have been used against it. The Premier has fallen down on his job in respect of the promises he made to the electors. If we are to have taxation for the purpose of balancing the Budget, why does not the Premier come down with a bold taxing policy so that all may be brought within its scope in an equitable way? I do not suppose that in the history of the whole of Australia, or in fact in any country of the world, we have seen such an exhibition of government as has been our lot during the past six months. Appeals have had to be made by charitable institutions through the medium of sweeps and by local governing bodies in every direction for the purpose of raising funds. This has been nothing else but taxation of the people, and a section of the people at that. It was the Premier's

duty to come forward with a bold policy of taxation so that all those who could afford to pay would be made to pay.

Mr. Brown: And you opposed the Hospital Fund Bill.

Mr. WITHERS: Why not bring down a comprehensive taxation measure instead of week after week submitting Bills to tax all sorts of small things. One does not know where this kind of thing is going to end. And it will be extremely difficult as one hon. member pointed out for an individual to make up his assessment. Again, the Premier by the means he is adopting is only taxing a certain section of the community. Other sections who are more fortunately situated are permitted to escape taxation. There are many who can afford to pay £5 or £10 to join a golf club and £2 10s. or more to join a tennis club who pay nothing additional by way of taxation. True, they pay out a lot of money, but that is of no benefit to the Government. It is from sources such as these that we should be deriving taxation. It seems that the only object in view is to tax the underpaid person so that the Premier will be able to show that the people of this country can live on less than they are getting. The Premier should be straightforward enough to admit that things are not as they were when he made all kinds of promises on the hustings, and that having found that the section that he thought would stick to him cannot assist him, he should be candid and admit it. As the member for Murchison has pointed out, the proprietors of picture shows will not pay this tax nor any quota of it. We have a vivid recollection of what happened in the Federal sphere when Mr. Bruce declared his intention of taxing promoters of picture shows. The wires were running hot throughout that time and we know the part that the picture combine played right through the last Federal campaign. The present Government should remember that it was largely due to what the Bruce Government proposed to do that led to their defeat. The Premier should know that everyone should be taxed and not a section only. Neither should we be doing what the Premier has been doing during the last few months. When he was Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier on more than one occasion accused the Government of continually submitting pettifogging Bills to Parliament. I do not think we have ever had so many pettifogging Bills as have been introduced by the

Premier since the present session began. Already there have been 44 on the Notice Paper and six more are to come, making a total of 50. The Premier is certainly trying to establish a record for the number of Bills produced during a session of Parliament. He may tell us that he was obliged to upset a good deal of the legislation that was brought in by the previous Government, but it will be very hard for anyone to believe that. The fact that the Bill proposes to tax one section of the community is the principal reason why I intend to oppose the second reading.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	..	17

Majority for 5

AYES.

Mr. Angelo
Mr. Barnard
Mr. Brown
Mr. Davy
Mr. Doney
Mr. Griffiths
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Latham
Mr. Lindsay
Mr. H. W. Mann
Mr. J. I. Mann

Mr. McLarty
Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Parker
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Plesse
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Sampson
Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Wells
Mr. North

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Corboy
Mr. Cunningham
Mr. Hegney
Mr. Kenneally
Mr. Lutey
Mr. Marshall
Mr. McCallum
Mr. Millington
Mr. Munroe

Mr. Panton
Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Troy
Mr. Walker
Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

PAIRS:

AYES.
Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. J. M. Smith

NOES.
Miss Holman
Mr. Lamond
Mr. Coverley

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

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

Mr. McCALLUM: I move an amendment—

That "twopence" be struck out and "one penny" inserted in lieu.

The least we can do is to allow the position to remain as it stands. It is proposed to charge 2d. on prices of admission between 9d. and 1s. At the present time the tax is 1d.

The Minister for Lands: Children can get in for 6d.

Mr. McCALLUM: Where?

The Minister for Lands: In the city.

Mr. McCALLUM: No such thing. Let the hon. member try it. There is no picture show in the city where children are admitted for 6d. A child cannot get into a city picture theatre for 6d.

Mr. Parker: Yes, on Saturday mornings children are admitted for 6d.

Mr. McCALLUM: But that is no guide as to what happens usually. Children are not free to go to the morning sessions during the week, and on Saturday mornings their mothers cannot spare the time to get them away. Usually children pay 9d., and in the past the tax on ninepenny tickets has been 1d. The Government should consider the retaining of the lower rate. They are doubling all the other rates, and that on top of the Commonwealth charges. The Premier has no mandate from the people to place additional taxation on the cheaper forms of entertainment.

Mr. HEGNEY: I will support the amendment. In my electorate we get one picture show each week. Under the clause many people working in industry all the week will no longer be able to take their children to the pictures on Saturday evenings. Bayswater is an entirely industrial suburb. There is one picture show per week, and those men fortunate enough to be still in work take their wives and children to that show on Saturday nights. The clause will put a heavy impost on them and might even constrain them to stay away. So, too, at Belmont and Rivervale mothers and fathers unable to bring their children to the city for entertainment take them to the weekly picture show. The Premier is going to stop all that sort of thing. I will support the amendment, as even members on the Government side should do.

Mr. SAMPSON: We would be justified in asking the Premier to strike out the words "not less than ninepence, and not exceeding one shilling" and so leave the

incidence of the tax to fall upon any amount over 1s. Picture shows in country districts have had a very thin time and should be exempt from tax. In Kalamunda the showing of pictures had to be abandoned, and the same position has been reached at Toodyay, Narembeen and Meekering.

The Minister for Lands: The people cannot afford it now.

Mr. SAMPSON: Exactly; and with this increased taxation it will be more difficult still. My suggested amendment would not seriously reduce the amount expected from the tax.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: By interjection I stated that there were in the city certain theatres where children could gain admission for 6d. I have since rung up the Majestic Theatre, and been informed that every day in the week until 5 p.m. the charge for children is 6d. I rang also the Grand Theatre and was told that every day in the week until 6 p.m. the charge for children is 6d.

Mr. Kenneally: But they have to be at school in the afternoon.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is nothing to prevent them from going to the theatre on Saturday afternoon. In most of the suburban picture shows, Friday nights are sixpenny nights. The member for Swan told us that certain picture shows in country districts had had to close down. That has been due to the shortage of money in those districts. I do not know any country district where admission to the pictures is less than 1s., so I suggest that the hon. member would not, by his proposed amendment, confer any benefit on the children in country districts. I have gone to picture shows in various parts of the country and have had to pay half a crown.

Mr. PANTON: I hope the Premier will agree to the amendment.

The Premier: We would not have brought down the Bill had we not required the tax.

Mr. PANTON: In almost every suburb the picture shows have special nights for children.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister said he had made inquiries and found that my statement that children were not admitted

to picture shows for 6d. was incorrect, and he named two shows.

The Minister for Lands: I had not time to ring up the others.

Mr. McCALLUM: The two he mentioned show second-hand pictures.

The Minister for Lands: Would you like to know that everyone issues 6d. tickets?

Mr. McCALLUM: For morning sessions. The Minister has quoted exceptional instances.

The Minister for Lands: Every one issues 6d. tickets for seats down below at some period of the day.

Mr. McCALLUM: When the children cannot attend.

The Minister for Lands: What about Saturday morning? You are generally accurate, but you are not this time.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister conveyed a wrong impression in that he did not say the films shown at those places had previously been exhibited in Perth and done the rounds of the suburbs. The working man cannot afford to pay a 2d. tax for himself and his family.

Mr. MARSHALL: I support the amendment. The increase will fall unjustly on the section of the community least able to bear it. The Premier should be satisfied with the additional revenue he will get by taxing tickets of 2s. 6d. and upwards, and should not increase the existing rates. A tax of 1d. on a 9d. ticket is sufficient, particularly when the means of people are restricted and they have to look at every penny before spending it.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	23
				—
Majority against				8
				—

AYES.

Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munsie	

(Teller.)

NOMS.

Mr. Anglo	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Barnard	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Parker
Mr. Davy	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Doney	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Keenan	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Wells
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. North
Mr. J. I. Mann	(Teller.)

PAIRS:

AYES.	NOMS.
Miss Holman	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Scaddan

Amendment thus negated.

Mr. MARSHALL: I enter a final protest against the clause. The Premier has made a departure by taxing tickets of 2s. 6d. and upwards, thus running neck and neck with the Commonwealth Government to grab a little more from people seeking amusement. The Premier seems desirous of preventing any section of the community from enjoying a little pleasure. For a whole week we have been considering measures to impose further financial obligations on the people that they can ill-afford to bear. There will be rivalry between the Federal and State Governments to see which will secure the most from taxation. The people of the country will sink with the burden that will be piled upon them. I protest against the introduction of all these taxation measures.

Clause put and passed.

New clause:

Mr. MARSHALL: I move—

That a new clause be added to stand as Clause 3:—"Provided that no tax shall be payable under this Act where the entertainment is held to provide funds for patriotic, charitable, and philanthropic purposes."

I am speaking on behalf of organisations such as that in Meekatharra, which is run purely for the raising of money for the local institutions and to provide cheap amusement once a week for the children. It will be easy for the Treasurer to forego some of his tax to help an enterprise of that nature. He has already gone beyond anything contemplated in previous days by taxing any sum over 2s. 6d. He could well concede this to the organisations I speak of, because the money raised goes towards the relief of poverty and sickness.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: According to Subsection 7 of Section 46 of the Constitution Act, Bills amending taxation should deal with the imposition of the tax, and no provision dealing with any other matter shall have effect. I therefore suggest the hon. member's proposal is out of order. This is purely a taxing Bill. He lost his opportunity of moving such a clause when the Assessment Bill was before the Committee last night.

The CHAIRMAN: I was waiting for the hon. member to cease speaking to inform him that I could not accept the new clause in its present form. I must rule it out of order.

The PREMIER: I would point out to the hon. member that the amendment he is seeking to make is already provided for under the Assessment Act.

Mr. Marshall: With reservations.

The PREMIER: There is only a reservation covering 50 per cent. of the gross takings. Surely that is sufficient to meet the hon. member's requirements.

Mr. Marshall: I accept the Chairman's ruling.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—HOUSING TRUST.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [7.50]: I have no grave objection to the Bill except as to its length. The Minister for Lands informed us that owing to the pedantic objections of the Attorney General to Bills providing for the making of regulations, many things that could be dealt with by that means are inserted in this measure. The experience the Attorney General has had this session will doubtless assist him in overcoming some of his objections to the making of regulations in this way. Because of its length, it takes an hour to wade through the Bill to get the strength of it. I agree that if the measure had given power to make regulations we might have wasted a quarter of an hour on this side of the House twitting the Attorney General upon the subject. We are at all

events saved that delay. The principles contained in the Bill are laudable enough. One is for the purpose of providing for indigent people who, through misfortune or other circumstances, have reached the position of deserving charity.

The Premier: No.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. They are to be helped and encouraged in every way possible in their adverse circumstances. Owing to the wide interpretation given to eligible persons, this will include many thousands of people in the State. The interpretation says that "eligible persons" means anyone who would be desirous of getting a home but has no reasonable prospect of doing so. I suppose between 40,000 and 50,000 people in the State have no reasonable prospect of getting a home. Under this definition they would be considered competent to apply for a home, and would probably do so. I know of many who are waiting for the Bill to pass, as they are anxious to make application to secure one of these cheap homes. So far only 300 or 400 people have applied, because the publicity given to the scheme comprises only a couple of statements made in the Press by the Premier.

The Premier: Only about 80 houses can be erected.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is probable, and yet thousands of people are encouraged to make application.

The Premier: No, they are not.

The Minister for Lands: We could not entertain all the applicants. The matter is to be left to the trust.

The Premier: There may be a man who has a wife and a large family, and those people would have no chance of getting their own home.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Bill does not say anything about peculiar circumstances such as that. It merely says that the person who thinks he has not much prospect of getting a house can apply for one.

The Premier: You would wish that sort of person to be an applicant.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. I would, however, prefer that the Bill dealt with one subject only. If we desired to deal with the other class of people, we could do so by amending existing legislation. We have the Workers' Homes Act, and we could amend that to provide that in certain cir-

cumstances people who could not obtain homes for themselves could make application to the board for them. The portion of the Bill dealing with the purchasing of these cottages could go into the Workers' Homes Act, and the board could be allowed to deal with the matter. Two very estimable gentlemen have agreed to act as members of the trust. I am sure they are actuated by the highest ideals and philanthropic motives. They should not be called upon to deal with thousands of applicants.

The Premier: There is no chance of that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Minister for Lands told us that 342 applications had already been received, and yet only two statements have been made in the Press upon the subject. When the Bill becomes an Act and people understand what can be obtained under it, there will be no limit to the number of applications. The gentlemen who have offered their services as members of the trust should not be inundated, as undoubtedly they will be.

The Premier: They approved of the draft of the Bill.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am not objecting to the Bill, but I think we could safely and easily have left in it only that portion which deals with persons who are going to become life tenants. Only about 80 cottages are to be built.

The Premier: That is all, with the money we have.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Some of them may cost £230 or £240, and it may be possible to squeeze another ten out of the fund. Surely there are more than 80 people in the State who would be eligible to become life tenants, without making provision for another set of persons. We could probably find 1,000 people who would be absolutely eligible to become life tenants, apart altogether from those who have no immediate prospect of getting a home of their own. The Bill includes those who are unable to become possessed of a home of their own. That is a tremendously wide definition.

The Premier: It is only as wide as the £20,000 will make it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am not criticising that. Within the scope of the Bill we have considerably more than 80 persons in the State who could take advantage of its provisions with respect to life tenancy. I am afraid no money will be left to cover the second portion of the Bill. We are, there-

fore, burdening it with provisions which could be dealt with more properly, if we had the money, by amending the Workers' Homes Act.

The Minister for Lands: The money may be added to at any time.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, and probably would be added to if the Minister had confined the Bill to indigent and distressed people who have met with misfortune. I do not expect that anyone, however charitable he may be, would give money to a fund for the building of houses for people in ordinarily bad circumstances, such as a person who is in receipt of £1 a week and cannot afford a house of his own.

The Premier: It is a terrible thing to try to do anything for anyone.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I think I have made myself sufficiently plain to show that I am not actively opposing the principles of the Bill.

The Premier: I thought you were.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Premier does not understand me any more than we sometimes understand him when he is mumbling something about—

The Premier: Now you are impertinent.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I do not wish my attitude on the Bill to be misrepresented. All I suggested was that while the first part of the Bill was excellent—

The Premier: It is impossible to do anything right.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The first part of the Bill is excellent; and the second part is good, but it is in the wrong place.

Mr. Angelo: We are getting on. Half the Bill is right.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The whole of the Bill is right, but the second part of it could more appropriately be inserted in the Workers' Homes Act. Unfortunately there are in this State considerably more than a hundred people who would be anxious to obtain homes under life tenancy. Therefore we should not encourage anyone else to apply under the Bill, because there will be no money available for other cases. If the trust go on with the work promptly, building houses for people who otherwise could not secure them we might have the wife of a man who had met with an accident and was disabled from work, and who had a number of children, putting in an application and being told that all the money was gone. The scheme is too good for the money

available under it to be so expended as to give homes to persons under such a wide definition, persons who could not get homes otherwise. I dare say there are in Western Australia fully a thousand widows who have been left without much money, have several children, and are working themselves. The State Children Department would have on their records fully a thousand widows who would all be greatly benefited if they could obtain a home under the first part of the Bill. It would be of great advantage to them and also to their children. Unfortunately, the funds available will not permit of more than 80 to 100 houses being built. Yet the second part of the Bill invites people not nearly so deserving to apply for houses.

Mr. Angelo: Will not the trust look after that aspect?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes; but the provisions of the measure may not become generally known during the next few weeks. Suppose the trust spent some of the money on entirely deserving cases, and the rest of it on cases not so deserving. Then there might come along another batch of thoroughly deserving applicants, who could only be told that the funds had all been spent. I commend the Government absolutely for having enunciated and inaugurated the scheme. The Premier had a brain wave when he decided to make available to this trust the £15,000 given to him for the relief of unemployment. No one will quarrel with the hon. gentleman for that allocation.

The Premier: It provides work.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. I take no exception whatever to it. However, numerous people would take advantage of the life tenancy part of the Bill, and we need not trouble about the second part of the Bill at all.

Mr. Angelo: Do you suggest that the second part of the Bill be left in abeyance until more money is available?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Then we shall never get the second part passed. Let us put it through now, even if we do not put it into operation immediately.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It would be a pity to insert those provisions here when—

The Premier: The hon. member misunderstands the idea.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I know the idea; but if we give favourable consideration to all

the persons entitled to come under the first part of the Bill, we shall not for years to come have money for cases under the second part. The Minister for Lands said last night that, the scheme being so excellent, possibly people of charitable disposition would follow the splendid example of Mr. and Mrs. McNess and supply funds for this purpose. If the measure were restricted to the relief of indigent persons, under the first part of the Bill, I could understand people giving or bequeathing money to the trust. At Geraldton during the last ten years there have been four or five houses built for widows out of money collected from charitably disposed persons. Committees have been got together, and all sorts of schemes have been devised to raise funds, with the result that houses have been built for widows with children. Such people would take advantage of the Bill and would make application to the trust, who would allow a local committee to deal with the matter. Charitably disposed persons in the country are constantly getting up entertainments in aid of the Children's Hospital and similar institutions. In a country town if a bread winner is cut off and the widow is left with children, there is immediately a scheme for raising money; and in such circumstances money would be raised to be paid into the trust under this Bill. Then the matter would be dealt with in a more satisfactory manner than it would be if left to a couple of trustees in the town, who might remove from the place within a few months. People holding important positions in country towns to-day may within 18 months or two years go to some other centre. It is wrong to impose all this work on people like Colonel Collett and Mr. Carson, who are busy men in their respective spheres. Colonel Collett already has many interests outside his own business, and can have very little time to spare. If he is to deal with the thousands of applications which will result from the passing of the Bill, too much will be put on him. He would not have the time for all that work, and the matter would fall into desuetude. I do not object to the passing of the second part of the Bill, but there is no occasion for it. If the trustees carry out their job, there will be no money left for applicants under the second part.

The Premier: A young widow with young children might obtain possession of a home,

and after a time she might desire to acquire the place for her children.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Then the trustees could sell the house outright to her, and the money could be returned to the trust to be used for another widow or some other distressed person.

The Premier: If the widow occupying the place improved it considerably and the children grew up, it would be only fair to let them acquire it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: In such a case I hope they will be able to do so. The Bill empowers the trustees to dispose of a property in that way, because the money will come back to the trust.

The Attorney General: Is your suggestion that we should wipe out the second part of the Bill?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Such action could be taken by the trustees in any case as regards any property held by them. That is a general power of the trustees under the Bill. If the measure goes through in its present form, it will give rise to a great deal of contention. People will obtain homes under the Bill and then will consider they are entitled to certain things under it. A man able to pay 5s. a week rent will think he is entitled to freedom from rates, like an old-age pensioner. A home may be under one part of the scheme for a time, and then come under another part where no rates are payable, and thereupon revert to the former part. There will be trouble and misconception. I would like the Minister to tell us how many applications have been made under each part of the Bill. I understand that a total of 334 applications has already been received. The two parts of the Bill are entirely dissimilar. How many applications were made by necessitous persons, and how many by people desirous of purchasing homes?

The Premier: I do not know.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The information would be interesting.

The Premier: I will look through the list of houses authorised. There are about £5,000 worth, and they are spread about the country.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The trustees would be unwise to grant applications under the second part of the Bill, because they are sure to have more than enough applicants under the first part to allocate all the money

that will become available. To the accompanying Bill, amending the Land Act, nobody will have the slightest objection, the object being to provide sites for homes for necessitous, indigent and unfortunate people.

The Premier: I assure you that no one but an unfortunate person will get any assistance from this Bill.

Mr. WILLCOCK: From the first part of it?

The Premier: From any part of it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If the second part of the measure is interpreted in a commonsense way, a man with £4 a week and five or six children might say, "I have no possibility of getting a home for myself, and therefore I put in an application." Thereupon the trustees would be quite justified in granting the application. Next week a woman who has lost her breadwinner, perhaps through an accident not connected with his employment, and who has an equal number of children, may submit an application, and she will have to be told that as all the money has been allocated, there is no possibility whatever of providing her with a home. I suggest the trust should not be in a hurry to allocate the money at their disposal, because they will have plenty of scope for the selection of the most deserving from amongst the applications that will be made to them. There is no necessity to rush matters at all.

The Minister for Lands: That is not being done.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Perhaps not. The principles underlying the Bill and its provisions are so good that we would like to retain them, but if all the money available were allocated for homes of which the occupiers would have a life tenure, a few weeks after the money had been allocated other more deserving cases might come under the notice of the trustees, and there would be no money available with which to provide them with homes. If we are dealing only with the first part of the Bill, there could be no possible objection to the amendment of the Land Act, which is to be made to enable this measure to operate. The second part deals with people who may desire to purchase their homes because they cannot procure them in any other way. There is objection to be taken to those provisions, having regard to the amendment to the Land Act. Under present-day conditions, if any such land is to be made

available to the public, it must be disposed of by the Land Board or, if the land is situated in a town, municipality or road board district, it must be sold at public auction. If we are to give away land to indigent people, there will be no objection, but there may be serious objection taken if the board, with the best of motives, are able to allocate blocks to people in more fortunate circumstances. Reference has been made to the attitude of the local authorities at Geraldton with regard to the Bill. The council took exception to the erection of houses under this scheme in the municipality. I do not think any municipality or road board would object to the building of cheap houses for people who had met with misfortune, but if a lot of money is available for the erection of such buildings, many houses of a comparatively low value may be erected in portions of a town where better class houses already exist. Naturally, a municipality or road board might desire to pass a by-law to deal with that phase.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You think it would be an offence to invade a brick area?

Mr WILLCOCK: Not an offence, but it would be undesirable to have houses of different classes in one area. If some benevolent person were to donate a block of land, irrespective of where it was situated, so that a house might be erected on the property for some individual who had met with misfortune, no one would raise any objection, but if an ordinary person were to secure the erection, under Part II. of the Bill, of a small weatherboard house in the circumstances I have suggested, there might be some objection.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You would not suggest earmarking them as paupers' homes, and having them hidden in the background?

Mr. WILLCOCK: No.

The Minister for Lands: I would not pursue that line of argument too far.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Of course I do not mean anything of the sort. As to the attitude of the Geraldton Municipal Council—

The Premier: They are reconsidering their decision.

Mr. WILLCOCK: They have reconsidered it, and they have amended the by-law so as to give the council the right to consider every application on its merits, and practically assure favourable consideration to those who apply for the erection of houses

under the Bill. I do not think there will be any difficulty on that score in future. No local authority would object to cheap houses of a reasonable standard being erected within their boundaries.

The Premier: It is not the house, but its cheapness that has given rise to the objection.

Mr. WILLCOCK: At any rate, I do not think there will be any objection to the erection of houses under the scheme. I would not like to conclude my remarks without paying a tribute to Mr. and Mrs. McNess for their benevolent action in providing money for the unemployed, and to congratulate the Premier on the wise use he is making of the money provided by them. I think we should concentrate upon work of a charitable description, and, therefore, I claim there is no necessity for Part II of the Bill. There are many people who could build satisfactory houses of the type to be seen on the group settlements. A number of those homes were purchased by the Railway Department from the group areas and were re-erected without much additional cost. They are houses that anyone in reasonable circumstances would not object to live in. There is plenty of scope for the work provided for in Part II of the Bill, but I would prefer to see those provisions eliminated from the measure before us and dealt with separately. The Minister for Lands said he hoped other people would be encouraged to endow the scheme with additional funds. I do not think there is anyone in the State who would do that while the Bill is in its present form. On the other hand, I am sure there are many individuals who would band themselves together to provide money to enable houses to be erected for people who deserve the benefits of Part I of the measure. I shall not object to the Bill as a whole, if the Government desire to pass it in its entirety, but I cannot help thinking that the Government will make a mistake if they adhere to that attitude. I do not want it to be said later on that I objected to the provision of cheap homes for the people. I do not object to anything of that sort, but if the Government insist on the Bill as it stands, I hope they will advise the trustees not to consider applications under Part II of the Bill for at least six months, so that they can see how much money is then available for further work. I am sure that each member of this House

could name two or three persons in his electorate who are worthy of consideration under the scheme.

The Premier: They have had ample opportunity to do so.

The Minister for Lands: Every road board and municipal council in the State has been notified regarding this matter.

Mr. WILLCOCK: What is everyone's business is no one's business. However, I think every member of this House could do what I suggest.

The Premier: Unfortunately, that is so.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Government would be wise to concentrate on the first part of the Bill, and then everyone would be in complete agreement with the measure and splendid service could be rendered to the indigent people of the State. I am fearful that really deserving people to whom we could render immense service, may be left lamenting because the money available has been exhausted partly in providing homes for people under Part II of the measure.

The Minister for Lands: You do not suggest that the members of the trust would not do their job properly?

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, but I do suggest that very possibly more deserving applicants than those already dealt with, may be heard from after the trust members have made their allocations. In all seriousness, I suggest to the Government that they withdraw the second part of the Bill. If that were done, we would know exactly where we were, and the Bill would be of immense assistance to many people.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell) [8.26]: The member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) is altogether mistaken in his attitude towards the measure. The trustees will help the most deserving applicants. Surely the hon. member can appreciate the fact that a young woman may have been left a widow with a number of young children. She may be in occupation of one of these houses without the necessity for making any payment for it: but the time may come when she may desire to acquire the home.

Mr. Willcock: Why should she desire to do that, seeing that she has a life tenure of the premises?

The PREMIER: She may desire to make provision for her children. We ought to enable her to do so. Many women,

who have been left without the breadwinner, have brought up their families during their 20 or 30 years of widowhood. Such women would probably have effected considerable improvements to their homes, and they should surely be allowed to acquire the home if they desire to do so. If a woman were able to pay the £250 back in a year or two, we would be able to erect another house for some other poor person. If she could pay back some of the money, we could use it again in connection with the scheme. After all, not more than 80 people will be able to have this chance at the outset.

Mr. Willecock: But that is all provided for in Part I. of the Bill.

The PREMIER: I assure the hon. member that there is no intention to provide a house under the Bill for a man who could secure a home for himself from the Workers' Homes Board for the payment of about 11s. a week. I think we can leave it to the two gentlemen who will act as trustees to see that the measure is administered properly.

Mr. Willecock: Of course; I am not reflecting upon them at all.

The PREMIER: They had a consultation with the Chairman of the Workers' Homes Board, and they drafted the Bill themselves. I think it is a good measure, and every provision is necessary. I can assure the member for Geraldton that those most needing assistance will be provided with homes, and I hope that more money will be added to the £20,000 at our disposal now. I am sorry the amount is not greater, as I know that more than 80 deserving people could be helped with advantage under this scheme. However, there is the limit of £20,000, beyond which we cannot go. The member for Geraldton need have no fear that the houses will be given to other than the most deserving amongst the applicants.

Mr. Willecock: But there may be even more deserving applicants a week or two after the allocations have been made.

The PREMIER: Yes, and week by week for the rest of all time! People will continue to die and leave their families unprovided for. The applications that have accumulated now will tax the full £20,000 available, and there will probably be more to come. I hope the hon. member will not object to the Bill as drafted, because I believe it will meet every possible contingency.

It might happen, of course, that the breadwinner of a family would develop some incurable disease.

Mr. Willecock: He would come under the first part of the Bill.

The PREMIER: That is so. Widows are always prominent amongst distressed people, but other people too will be eligible and entitled to the advantages of the Bill. I have already explained that we might get in one of these houses a young widow with children, and that when the children grew up she might desire to acquire the house. I hope the Bill will be passed as it stands.

MR. H. W. MANN (Perth) [8.32]: I am delighted to see the Bill. For years I have been urging that a measure of this kind should be passed in order that casual workers and men who have to travel about the country should have cheap homes.

Mr. Willecock: They will not come under this Bill.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The first part of the Bill is for people unable to provide homes for themselves at all.

Mr. Pantou: And there are thousands of them.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Under the second part of the Bill will be provided homes for persons who can pay a very small rent. I do not think it makes much difference whether the Bill be passed as one Bill or as two separate measures.

Mr. Willecock: You would not have the trustees dealing with that class of application.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I do not care who is going to deal with it, so long as it is capably dealt with. For years it has been the desire of every member of the Chamber that a Bill like this should be brought down in order to provide for those people. I remember some eight or nine years ago the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) speaking in this Chamber of a measure of the kind. He had in mind, I think, some land out Coogee way, where cheap houses could be built for casual workers, and where they would always have homes to go to. That is the point that appeals to me. It would be a paupers' measure if we were going to deal merely with the first part of the Bill, and I do not desire to pauperise these people. Let each case be dealt with on its merits. Those who can come under the first part of the Bill can be dealt with under that part. It is unfortunate if

there are more applicants than the money set apart will provide for; but as time goes on more money will be available and further homes will be provided. Let us make provision for the other people as well, in order that they may get roofs over their heads. I trust the Bill will be passed. To me it will not matter if the second part is not put into operation for some time, for it will be there when the money is available. But if it is not passed to-day it may be years before we get another opportunity to pass it.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [8.36]: Like the member for Perth, I welcome the Bill, but I do not think it is going to supply homes for the people to the extent he thinks it will. The people for whom the member for South Fremantle was advocating the provision of homes will not get any homes under this Bill, because there will not be sufficient money for the purpose.

Mr. H. W. Mann: There may not be to-day; but there may be later.

Mr. PANTON: Moreover I do not think the House should pass legislation that will be disappointing to thousands.

Mr. Parker: They are anticipating the money being made available.

Mr. PANTON: I hope the anticipation will be realised, but I am not quite so optimistic as the hon. member. The Minister for Lands has told us that every municipality and road board has been notified of the Bill. I do not know how they could have been notified, for it was only last night that we got the Bill here. But I venture to say that on the Title of the Bill there are thousands of people eligible to participate in its advantages. The Title reads—

An Act to constitute a housing trust and to empower the housing trust to erect and dispose of cottages to persons who otherwise cannot obtain the same.

We all agree that there would be very few people renting houses from landlords if they were able to obtain houses for themselves.

The Minister for Lands: They could come under the Workers' Homes Board.

Mr. PANTON: That is a fallacy. In very few places can a home sufficiently cheap be built which at the same time will comply with the by-laws of the local authorities. In almost all municipalities there have been constituted brick and stone areas. The Minister must know that to build a house which will comply with those regulations means an expenditure of from £850 to £900.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Not under Clause 2.

Mr. PANTON: I am not speaking of Clause 2; I am replying to an interjection by the Minister. The necessity for complying with those regulations, even under the Workers' Homes Board, makes it impossible for a man on the basic wage to keep a home going. So to say that a man who will come under Part II. of the Bill can go to the Workers' Homes Board, is only a fallacy. As for the applicants who will come under Part I. of the Bill, I could go to the Maylands Institute for the Blind and there find 40 deserving men each entitled to a home. I know of no section of the community suffering greater disabilities than do the blind. As one interested in the Institute for the Blind I can say that one of our difficulties is to find homes for those people. Unfortunately landlords do not care about having the blind as tenants of their houses. If the Bill becomes law, I hope those sufferers will be given a fair opportunity under it. There are in that institute at least three blind men whose wives also are blind. In my view such couples should have preference over everybody else. With the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) I hope the trust will go slowly; for they will have thousands of applications, and if there are only 80 houses to be built there will be very many disappointed applicants. I myself have been signing applications for some time past, although I did not know the details of the Bill. Incidentally it does not seem fair that everybody but members of the House should know all about a Bill before it reaches us here. As to the proposed trust, I am surprised that so busy a man as Colonel Collett, if he has seen a draft of the Bill should be prepared to go on with it.

Mr. H. W. Mann: He is a very thorough man, and if he takes on a job he will do it.

Mr. PANTON: I know that. It is that which makes me wonder that he should have undertaken a big job of this sort. The appointed functions of the trust occupy a whole page of the Bill. I think Colonel Collett and his colleague, Mr. Carson, will have their time pretty well occupied. If it were only a case of going through the applications, if those two gentlemen were appointed an advisory trust to deal with the applications, it would be a very different matter. The Minister has indicated that he desires to get away from the departmental

character or phase of the Workers' Homes Board. I agree with him in that. The administration of the Bill will require a sympathetic trust, and I believe the Minister has secured all the necessary sympathy in the two gentlemen appointed to the trust. If the only business for those two gentlemen consisted in segregating the applications, I could understand it. But that is not the case. Here is a whole page of the Bill occupied with the functions of the trust. The Speaker would not allow me to read it out.

The Minister for Lands: You will get a chance presently.

Mr. PANTON: If it were only a matter of going through the applications, the whole job could be undertaken by the Workers' Homes Board. It will be the duty of the members of the trust to read through the applications and determine the most deserving cases. After that those two gentlemen should not be expected to run around the country buying land.

The Minister for Lands: They will not be.

Mr. PANTON: Then why is it in the Bill? That is to be one of the functions of the trust. If it is not to be one of the functions of the trust, why should we be asked to pass it in the Bill?

Mr. H. W. Mann: They will merely supervise. They will not have to run around the country.

Mr. PANTON: To prevent the cost mounting up, somebody else is going to do it? If it is going to be done properly, those two gentlemen will have their time cut out to supervise somebody else doing it. The Workers' Homes Board are doing the work capably.

The Minister for Lands: I told you they were going to do the administrative work.

Mr. PANTON: If that is so, let us say so in the Bill. If they are going to do the administrative work—

The Minister for Lands: No, they are not going to do the administrative part.

Mr. PANTON: Well what does the Minister mean?

The Minister for Lands: I am beginning to think we should never have introduced the Bill.

Mr. PANTON: I do not know what is coming over Ministers. First the Premier gets cross about it, and now the Minister for Lands.

The Minister for Lands: You should be fair.

Mr. PANTON: What have I said that was unfair? The Bill distinctly sets out the functions of the trust in paragraphs from (a) right down to (h).

Mr. H. W. Mann: You are on the board of the Perth Hospital, but you do not control it.

Mr. PANTON: My colleagues and I control it.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You have a secretary and a staff.

Mr. PANTON: The Hospitals Act does not say that the board shall do certain things and hand them over to somebody else. The trust will not have a secretary and a staff.

Mr. H. W. Mann: The Workers' Homes Board will do the work.

Mr. PANTON: Now we have it from the member for Perth that the functions of the trust will be carried out by the Workers' Homes Board.

The Minister for Lands: They will supervise the work.

Mr. PANTON: This is a new departure. Two gentlemen in an honorary capacity are to supervise a staff of highly paid officers.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Just as you do at the hospital.

Mr. PANTON: I attend the hospital two or three times a month for board meetings. It is not part of my duty to attend to the thousands of applications for admission to the hospital. That is not part of the Hospital Board's function. The applications under this measure will be part of the functions of the trust.

The Minister for Lands: It will be the function of the trust to make the selection.

Mr. PANTON: That is the difference between the Hospital Board and the trust. If we are going to pass legislation of this kind, we should set out clearly what is intended. We should not make it appear that the trust will do something, and then say they are not going to do anything of the sort. Why not be fair to the trust and say, "All we want is two sympathetic gentlemen"—the Government could not have selected two more sympathetic gentlemen—"and what you have to do is to determine those of the applications you consider to be the most deserving. That done, your work will be finished, and the officials who have experience and are paid to do such work will build the houses and carry on the adminis-

tration." There is nothing hostile in my criticism, nothing to make the good-tempered Minister for Lands cross. I am afraid he is getting worried. I shall try to get inserted in the Bill a sufficient number of clauses to show applicants and the people who are to administer the measure just what they will have to do. I shall not be a party to any measure setting forth that certain people shall do certain things they are not intended to do but that are to be done by somebody else.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.48]: Any comment I may make will be offered with the most friendly motives.

Mr. H. W. Mann: It will be kindly said.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, and kindly meant. The object of the Bill is a most laudable one, and the Government who have introduced it and the benefactors who have made it possible deserve commendation. At the same time I have a strong objection to duplicating control. There is always a danger associated with the setting up of new departments and administrations. When we have dual administration the result is difficulty. Pitfalls are always associated with dual control. The Minister has given us assurances, but I fail to see that they will alter the position of the trust or of the Workers' Homes Board, who will be associated with the administration of this measure. I should like the Minister to give particular attention to the functions of the trust set out in Part II. of the Bill. If those functions are not to be adhered to, why are they specifically stated in the Bill? With the member for Leederville (Mr. Pantou) I believe that the trust could deal with the applications sympathetically. They would certainly appreciate the spirit of the Bill, particularly the two gentlemen who have been chosen, but for the administrative part of the work, involving the acquirement of land, the building of homes and dealing with contractors and tenants, departmental officers of considerable experience are required, experts who, over a period of years, have gained knowledge of those activities and built up a reputation for careful and capable administration. I remember the difficulty that arose when a new Federal department was created for the war service homes. The administration of the war service homes has been much better since it was entrusted to the Workers' Homes Board. I am anxious

that the measure should provide for what is intended, plus a capable administration. I am satisfied that the Minister desires the same things. Administrators have to be trained. Men who have had no experience of administration would be beset with endless difficulties. The Workers' Homes Board have experience of land purchasing extending over a number of years. Yet a function of the trust will be to purchase, with the approval of the Minister, fee simple in land or lands, etc. Other functions of the trust are to sell cottages and to enforce agreements. I do not believe that is intended by the Government, though it is certainly stipulated in the Bill amongst the duties of the trust. I can quite conceive the value of the trust to deal sympathetically with applicants and to make the necessary choice, but when it comes to exercising the functions I have mentioned, we should remember that the scope of the measure is not confined to the metropolitan area. Land would have to be purchased in various parts of the State. The Workers' Homes Board have officials accustomed to purchasing land and dealing with tenants throughout the State. In spite of the fact that we have that satisfactory administration in existence, it is proposed to duplicate the powers by vesting them in the trust. By all means let the trust deal with the applicants. That is work such as the Workers' Homes Board have not been required to undertake. It would have to be done sympathetically, and the two gentlemen who have been mentioned would be able to do it satisfactorily. But why place upon them the responsibility of purchasing land? Have they had experience of purchasing land? Are they as good judges of land, and do they know as much about building sites and values as the Workers' Homes Board? It can be claimed that the board are experts in that part of the business. The measure should be drafted so that the trust may exercise the functions that they could exercise better than the board, but the board should be permitted to carry out the work for which they have shown capability. I hope the criticism from this side of the House will not be regarded as unfriendly. It is offered with a view to improving the administration of the measure. Our experience of new boards and new departments has usually been that they make blunders, and so far as possible we should avoid any risk of that. In the Work-

ers' Homes Board we have an expert department, and should make use of its officials to the fullest extent. We should not have a new department.

The Minister for Lands: You evidently were not present last night when I moved the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MILLINGTON: But I have read the Bill.

The Minister for Lands: I explained last night what the organisation would be.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Minister's explanation was good but the drafting of the Bill is bad. If the Minister proposes to give the Workers' Homes Board the responsibility of purchasing the land, why say that it shall be the function of the trust and set it out under the duties of the trust? If he proposes—as I presume he does—that the board shall sell the cottages, why not say so? Why say that the trust shall sell them?

The Minister for Lands: Cannot they have an agent?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Even so, the Bill sets forth what the agent shall do, if the Minister calls the Workers' Homes Board the agent of the trust. When the members of the trust read the measure, I can imagine their saying to the board, "We shall allot the particular duties. The trust will purchase all the land." The board will ask, "Why?" The trust will reply, "We are ordered to do so; it is part of our duty and we are not going to evade it. Therefore we shall purchase the land." Despite all the experience of the Workers' Homes Board, the trust would not be likely to hand over the duty of purchasing the land. The Bill ought to be redrafted. I do not wish to cause difficulty between members of the trust and the board, who will have to work amicably together, but I do want it set out definitely what functions the trust shall exercise and what functions the board shall exercise. We should not impose upon the trust the responsibility of purchasing land and then say we intend the board to do it. If the board are to do it, why not say so? If that were done, applicants would know whom to go to; otherwise they will be approaching the trust with requests for them to purchase land, sell cottages and enforce agreements. Obviously, it is intended that the existing department should do that work. I presume that the Government do not intend to build up another department.

The Minister for Lands: Why stonewall the measure?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The trust must be relieved of all detail work. When the Minister has calmed down and further considered the measure, I am sure he will realise that it will be the Workers' Homes Board who will purchase the land, sell the cottages and enforce the agreements. If that is so, I have no objection to the Bill. I offer this comment in the most friendly manner possible. I congratulate the Government on bringing down a measure the object of which is so laudable. I also congratulate the Minister on the manner in which he is disposed to receive advice. Since we are scattering the incense of congratulation, I congratulate all who have been associated with the measure.

Mr. Panton called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I have nearly completed my remarks. In Committee I believe the Minister will be prepared to reconsider the functions of the trust, in the interests of the trust. The gentlemen who comprise the trust are prepared to devote their time to the work and make available their abilities to it. They will require a great amount of tact in handling these various matters. It is very misleading for them to have the functions specified as their duties set out in the Bill. All we desire is that this should be put right. There will then be no conflict of opinion and the board and the trust will work together amicably, and administer in a really successful way a very fine Bill, such as it will be after we have licked it into shape.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [9.3]: I notice that the member for Mount Hawthorn (Mr. Millington) referred in somewhat slighting terms—

Mr. Millington: Not slighting; that is where you are wrong.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: To the list of functions of the trust, but carefully avoided referring to function (f).

Mr. Millington: I did not know I was permitted to do so.

Mr. Panton: Neither is the Attorney General.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He referred to the absurdity of the trust selling cottages, purchasing land, and enforcing agreements, but he did not refer to the absurdity of the trust demolishing buildings.

Mr. Millington: That is worse.

Mr. Pantou: So it is.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is so much worse as to show the absurdity of the criticism. This list of functions is not intended to represent those things the two trustees are going to do personally. It is a list of the powers which a body corporate consisting of two trustees, called the trust in the Bill, shall be able to do, either of their own part, or through agents. If the hon. member felt disposed to will his property in certain directions, say, for the same kind of purpose for which this Bill is brought down and creates a trust, he would have to give to trustees to be appointed under that will certain powers or functions. Such functions might include at least these things, but he would not expect the trustees, who may be a couple of his friends—

Mr. Pantou: The Attorney General knows we do not expect anything of the kind either. We are not stupid enough to think these two gentlemen are going to pull down houses, or erect them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Or sell them.

Mr. Pantou: Or sell them. They are going to get someone else to do that. All we want is that they shall get the credit for it in the Bill.

Mr. Millington: It is ridiculous to set it out in the Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: What is the value of the criticism?

Mr. Millington: It is included in their duties, and these are misleading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Who will be misled?

Mr. Pantou: The public generally, if you like.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In this Bill we are not concerned with the public. The Government are concerned with seeing to it that, with the funds available, the foundations for which have been created by a public benefactor, it will be possible to administer the Act faithfully and economically.

Mr. Pantou: We say the Workers' Homes Board can do this very nicely.

Mr. Millington: You set out later on what the Workers' Homes Board will do.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not claim that the Bill is a model of draftmanship. No Bill that comes before us ever is.

Mr. Pantou: That is so. There is no reason why the Minister should get cross because we say so. Look at your colleague! Look at his face!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No one is getting cross. I am sure no member of the Government would resent in any way any suggestions for the improvement of the measure.

Mr. Pantou: I am pleased to hear that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Any more than they would for the improvement of any other Bill. I suggest that some of the criticism has not been of a very practicable nature. When it is said that Clause 5 is absurd, because the functions of the trust shall include the purchasing of land, and the selling of cottages, and no mention is made of the demolition of cottages, I say rather does it show that the criticism is offered in a slightly jocular frame of mind.

Mr. Millington: Because immediately after, you set out the duties of the Workers' Homes Board; so there is a distinction.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No. The functions of the trust are contained in certain statutory powers similar to those that are given to statutory corporations. Whom they will use to discharge these duties remains to be seen. It will rest within their discretion. They are likely, I should imagine, to follow the desires of the Government in the matter. No sensible Government would, in the case of a body corporate created to handle this trust fund, do other than use Government functionaries who are skilled in these particular operations.

Mr. Millington: That would be satisfactory if the Bill would only say so. Your explanation is excellent.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member used that expression before.

Mr. Millington: Yes, and what is wrong with it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the hon. member would suggest some reasonably succinct amendment to the Bill—

Mr. Millington: I do not think it would be received by the Minister in too friendly a spirit.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think it would.

Mr. Millington: I have conceived that impression.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member is wrong. I have not heard of the Minister receiving any suggestion offered in the right tone and at the right moment in any but the most friendly spirit.

Mr. Millington: I will try to modulate my tone.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let the hon. member put his tongue right.

Mr. Millington: That will be done in Committee.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then let us get into Committee as soon as possible.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York—in reply [9.8]: I wish to reply to certain remarks made by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock). The intention is to give housing to the most deserving cases. The hon. member desires that the measure shall cover only life tenancy. There are many people who decline to apply to the Commonwealth for old age pension because they look upon that pension as a charity. They are quite deserving cases, and ought to be receiving that help. We provide that if these people like to pay £1 1s. 8d. a month they can have one of these cottages. They will not be accepting any charity. They will be buying the dwellings, paying rates and taxes and insurance as well. There are many men and women the hon. member would be proud to help, who would be deprived of that help if the Bill were limited to life tenancies. I appeal to him to give the matter that much consideration. It is not intended that people who are qualified to obtain homes from the Workers' Homes Board should come under the Bill. That is why so much of this work has been kept separate from the board. Members should give consideration to those people in necessitous circumstances, who do not desire to be branded as paupers and as receiving charity.

Mr. Panton: You are not suggesting that we said that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. There are persons sensitive enough to feel that if they went into a life tenancy of one of these cottages they would be branded by their neighbours as paupers. That is one

reason why so many eligible people do not apply for the old age pension, people who probably deserve it more than those who are already receiving it. I am sure the capital will not be restricted to £20,000. I believe many public spirited persons will be prepared to add to the fund as time goes on, and that the capital will gradually grow. I am also sure that the portion of the Bill which deals with the fee simple of properties will not be a bar to the carrying out of its most worthy object. If we deal only with those who are entitled to life tenancies we shall be restricted, on the capital we have to 80 cottages for all time. If on the other hand, persons, who take the cottages in fee simple, make repayments we shall be able to provide additional homes in the future. We are entitled to do that. I also believe we can rely on the trust that has been appointed to give preference to those cases which the hon. member desires should be dealt with exclusively in the Bill. This is not a new departure. There is already provision in the Land Act for the setting aside of land for workers' homes without such land being offered at auction.

Mr. McCallum: That is, dedicated to the board.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As this land will be vested in the trust, it is essential that the members of it should have the same power as the Workers' Homes Board have. We do not want it to be vested in the board, but in the trustees. That is the reason for embodying this provision in the Bill. Houses of this character should be built anywhere, so long as they are not dangerous to the public because of the material of which they are constructed. I do not favour the idea of only certain types of cottages being built. I do not like class distinctions, and am not going to encourage them.

Mr. Panton: We are agreed on one thing.

Mr. Willcock: You have the House with you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I may have misunderstood the hon. member. I thought he said there was an objection to the Bill on account of that.

Mr. Willcock: I said some people had objected.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We should not encourage it in this House.

Mr. Willcock: But you have received the objection.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: When members say that workers' homes would not be available, my reply is that where these cottages could be built, workers' homes could be built, even if it should be necessary to amend other measures for that purpose. If an amending Bill is brought down, I hope it will have a better reception than this Bill has been given. A misunderstanding has occurred as to the Workers' Homes Board being agents for the trustees. No administrative costs whatever will be charged against the capital of £25,000. Those costs will be borne by the State. We have no intention of starting another department. So far as capital funds are concerned, this will be the most cheaply administered trust in the State. The organisation of the Workers' Homes Board will be used to select sites for cottages, to supervise the building of cottages, to collect any rent or purchase money payable, to insure the cottages, and to keep them in decent repair. In the Committee stage the Bill can be improved if it is not exactly to the liking of hon. members. I do not believe there will be any objection to Clause 5 after it has been carefully examined. The speech of the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton) left on my mind an impression that he thought the trustees had not been consulted.

Mr. Panton: I did not say that. I said that if they had been consulted, I was surprised at Colonel Collett taking all that work on.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That leaves the impression that Colonel Collett had not seen the Bill.

Mr. Panton: You have a brilliant imagination to-night.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The trustees have seen this legislation, and have interested themselves in the drafting of it. They have inserted in the Bill pretty well everything they could think of. The measure is so comprehensive because hon. members opposite are constantly chastising the legal member of the Cabinet for doing legislative work by regulation. This could have been a very simple Bill indeed. I hope hon. members will not lose sight of the worthy object of the measure. I think the House should record its appreciation of the benevolent action of Mr. and Mrs. McNess in starting a scheme to assist those who are unable to help themselves. It is to be hoped that Mr. and Mrs. McNess will be the fore-

runners of many public-spirited people interesting themselves in the same direction.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Functions of the trust:

Mr. MILLINGTON: It is fully recognised that the Workers' Homes Board, in addition to otherwise assisting the trust, will do all the technical work of the trust. Various specific functions are to be carried out by the board for the trust. On the second reading it was suggested that the trust must have certain powers. However, although the functions are those of the trust, the work is to be done by the board. The Workers' Homes Board will do this work.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, on behalf of the trust.

Mr. MILLINGTON: But the clause does not say that. The power of the trust runs right through the Bill. The word "function" implies work, and we know that the things mentioned in this clause are not the work of the Workers' Homes Board.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: In order to meet the point which has been raised, I move an amendment—

That in line 1 the words "The functions of the trust shall be" be struck out, and "The trust shall have power" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. McCALLUM: Criticism on the Bill has been directed to the point that the right body to exercise the activities under the measure is the Workers' Homes Board. I fail to discover in the Bill anything empowering the trust to appoint agents or delegates; that is, unless the incorporation of the trust gives such a power. The Main Roads Act contains a section giving power to delegate, and that is the right way to do it. A separate organisation need not be set up.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Though I do not wish to anticipate, I rather think Clause 6 does what the hon. member desires. It provides that a number of functions shall be performed by various Government departments free of charge to the trust.

Mr. Millington: No, because you include certain matters, and what is not mentioned, is regarded as excluded.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the clause covers everything necessary.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Accounts of the trust to be kept by the Workers' Homes Board:

Mr. McCALLUM: This clause seems to contradict what the Minister for Lands told us regarding Clause 5. It specifically sets out that the Workers' Homes Board shall keep the accounts. Of course, I agree that, by inference, Clause 5 may enable the trust to delegate its powers, but the position is not clear. Unless the position is safeguarded, there may be an attempt to build up an organisation.

The Premier: It will not be done in this instance.

Mr. McCALLUM: I hope not, but those of us who have had administrative experience, know how departments try to get behind the decisions of Ministers with a view to creating a large staff. In the interests of the Minister himself, I think it would be as well to make absolutely clear the position regarding the delegation of powers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This clause will prevent a separate set of accounts being kept, and the work will be done by the Workers' Homes Board.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 26—agreed to.

Clause 27—Retrospective clause:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Before the clause is passed, I wish to inform the member for South Fremantle that I shall go into the question regarding the delegation of powers, and if I find it necessary, I shall have a clause drafted and inserted in the Bill, when it is dealt with in another place.

Mr. Panton: They will probably put in a lot themselves.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn [9.40]: The phase of the Bill that concerns the House is that it contains provisions that are defensible on account of the object in view, but which would otherwise not be acceptable. Its specific purpose is to enable the Government to make land available to the Housing Trust without the necessity for putting that land up to public auction.

The Minister for Lands: We might have competition if we auctioned the land because people might desire to keep the houses away from the vicinity.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, and the Government require the power set out on this account. The Land Act would prevent anything of the sort being done. The Bill provides the necessary power for the specific purpose, and that power cannot be exercised apart from that consideration. Unless the Bill were agreed to, the Government might be forced to put up land at public auction and it might be bought by someone else, which would prevent the Government from making the property available for a very desirable object.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate and reported without amendment.

BILL—UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [9.45]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Bill to be passed through all stages at this sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House and I find there is not a quorum present.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th November.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [9.47]: The Bill really confirms arrangements made by the previous Government, and endorsed by the present Government, to allow the University to go on with certain work. Practically, the sum total of the Bill is that the University is to lend the Government money to go on with their own building, and the Government undertake to repay that money by instalments with interest over 30 years. In addition, there is a provision that the probate tax on the bequest of the late Sir Winthrop Hackett shall be refunded to the University. That was agreed to by our Government, and endorsed by the present Government. So altogether the Bill makes provision for £85,000 to be available, of which £25,000 represents the tax on the Hackett bequest, while the Government undertake to find £60,000 for the physics, chemistry, and agricultural science buildings when the money is available. The University authorities are able to raise that money on their own securities, and the Bill is to allow them to do so in order that they may push on with the work. I am pleased to have been able to help the Premier to suspend the Standing Orders so that the Bill might go through to-night. Unless it be passed without delay, the Senate of the University will find a difficulty in carrying on the work, which, I may say, will afford a good deal of employment. I will support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT
AMENDMENT.***Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [9.49]: This is one of the Bills to deal with the emergency that has arisen owing to the stringent financial position and the wide extent of unemployment. There is at least one precedent for it, which occurred during war time, when a similar situation was created. The Bill is on the lines of the measure we passed last night to afford to certain people relief in respect of rent. This is to afford relief to those who unfortunately are out of work and find it impossible to maintain their subscriptions to friendly societies. The Bill provides that they shall still remain financial with their various lodges. Many of those persons have been paying in over a number of years, and so have a substantial amount of vested interests. It would be a great pity if, owing to their being unemployed, they were to lose all those interests to which they have been subscribing for many years. It would mean that if they were to fall sick neither they nor their families would be able to get medical attendance. The only doubt I have about the Bill is as to the position of those people when it becomes necessary for them to meet their liabilities, which will be heaping up all the time. I can see the possibility of the load being too heavy for them to carry. It will be remembered that I raised the same point last night on the Tenants, Purchasers and Mortgagors' Relief Bill. But only by the consent of the lodge itself can this relief be granted. Each case has to be dealt with on its merits, and before the relief can be granted it has to be scrutinised by the Registrar, who is also the Government Actuary, and a very careful gentleman.

Mr. Hegney: A very conservative gentleman.

MR. McCALLUM: Yes. When we leave it to his approval there is not much likelihood of anybody overrunning the constable. He is there to see that everything is on the safe side. There is no fear at all of the organisations being financially embarrassed, or even becoming financially insecure; I am positive the Government Actuary can be relied upon to see to all that. The Bill provides that only a certain percentage of lodge

members can secure this relief. I am confident the members of the lodges can be trusted to see that those whom they recommend to the Government Actuary will be most deserving. It practically means leaving it in the hands of their managing committee to select from amongst their members those finding it impossible to keep their payments going. The lodge will undertake to carry them and to levy upon themselves to keep the funds intact, so that those requiring assistance may be carried on until such time as they are again in work, and not be allowed to suffer any disability in the meantime. As I say, it must all have the approval of the Government Actuary. It is one of the emergency measures rendered necessary by the financial situation, and I am afraid we shall have to pass one or two others as time goes on. However, I hope the position will not become worse and so compel us to give consideration to further legislation of this sort. As I have said, there is about the measure only one risky thing, namely, the possibility of the liability proving too heavy. Fortunately, the lodges are convinced that it will not be too heavy. They had experience in war time and they got through all right, so I think we can safely leave it to them. I have no objection to the Bill; indeed I am glad the Minister has brought it down, for in a number of cases it will afford considerable relief. I will support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Provision for payment of contributions of members entitled to benefit of suspension and for adjustment of financial position of societies:

Mr. HEGNEY: Paragraph (b) will mean that single men who are members of friendly societies will be excluded from the benefit. A single man might have been contributing to a benefit society for 20 years on the same basis as a married man and he is entitled to the same benefits as a married man. If he, through unemployment, were unable to pay his contributions, the principle should apply to him.

Mr. McCallum: He has only to get married and he will get the benefit.

Mr. HEGNEY: There is no reason why single men should be excluded. The committee of management would deal with applications on their merits. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "any," in line 2 of paragraph (b), be struck out with a view to inserting other words.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The intention of the Bill is that a single man shall not be entitled to the benefit unless some person is dependent on him. A society would be placing a considerable burden on its funds if single men were included. The Bill has been framed in conference with the secretaries of all the societies, who have determined exactly the limit to which they can go. We should not increase that burden. I ask the hon. member to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. McCALLUM: At first I thought it was wrong to draw a distinction between married and single members, but on making inquiries I learnt that the secretaries had fully considered the matter and that the societies were going as far as they could by extending the benefit to married men. They take single men with dependants, but to ask a lodge to extend the medical fund obligations to single men without dependants is asking it to go further than the officers can recommend. Seeing that it is the matured consideration of all the lodges, that this should be the limit, I think it is best we should abide by that recommendation.

Mr. Hegney: If that is the position I am prepared to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 8—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.