

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is solid ground for believing that the experiments regarding the coking of Collie coal will also succeed. If they do, Western Australia will have taken a very great step along the road of industrial progress, because if Collie coal can be coked and sold at a reasonable price, then our industrial establishments will be greatly benefited and their security will be made so much greater than is the case while they have to depend upon the non-dependable source of supply in New South Wales. I pay a very high tribute to the work of Mr. Fox in this field. He came here some three or four years ago and was practically unknown in this State. He had a hard battle to fight in the early stages, because all the established opinion here for many years was against his idea, the widely-held belief being that gas could not be produced from Collie coal and that certainly Collie coal could not be coked. The Government was convinced by the ideas which Mr. Fox put before it and by the case which he was able to build up from time to time, and therefore decided that the information he had given us, he being an engineer of high standing, was of sufficient importance to warrant our risking a few thousand pounds for experimental purposes. We therefore backed him financially and have had no cause to regret our action up to date. As I said a few moments ago, we have very good ground for believing that the experiments he has been conducting and upon which he is still engaged will prove to be completely successful.

Mr. Triat: Hear, hear!

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.9 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1946.

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

QUESTIONS.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

As to Estimated Cost of Referendum.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

1, Has the Government obtained an estimate of the cost of the proposed referendum concerning the Legislative Council?

2, If not, why not?

3, If it has, what is the estimated cost and how is the estimate arrived at?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, No.

2, Because the cost can be estimated on the expenditure incurred at a general election or the Local Option Poll held in April, 1921.

3, See answer to No. 2.

MINE WORKERS' RELIEF FUND.

As to Benefits Paid to Pensioners.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS asked the Chief Secretary: Considering the fact that under the present Commonwealth scheme pensioners may, in addition to their pension, receive up to £1 per week as against 12s. 6d. per week previously,

1, What is the position of the beneficiaries under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund who, at present, receive 12s. 6d. (or less) per week above the 32s. 6d. per week Commonwealth pension?

2, Has the chairman of the fund received instructions to increase payments to the beneficiaries by 7s. 6d. per week? If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1 and 2, In cases of beneficiaries of the fund coming within the scope of Scale I, Second Schedule of the Act who are receiving a reduced benefit where Regulation 45 applies, the board is increasing Fund benefits by 7s. 6d. per week in each case up to the maximum income allowable under the amended Pensions Act.

A regulation is also now being prepared amending Scale I. of the Second Schedule to authorise a similar increase in case of widows over 60 years of age.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East) [4.35]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.36]: Last night, when this Bill was in the Committee stage, I submitted an amendment which I intended to have the effect of preventing municipalities from becoming trading concerns. The Chairman of Committees suggested another way of dealing with the amendment and unfortunately, and quite inadvertently, a certain amount of confusion resulted. I asked the sponsor of the Bill to report progress, or rather, suggested that he ask that progress be reported and leave asked to sit again. However, Mr. Wood preferred not to do that, and I therefore feel that I am justified in making some comment at this stage. I asked a question of Mr. Wood. The question was, "What usage of bricks would be likely by the York Municipality for municipal purposes?"; and his reply was, "Very few bricks".

Hon. G. B. Wood: I said I did not know.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Very well, let us take that point. If that is the case—and he suggests it is—the York Municipality is going into this with its eyes wide open to trading. The members of the municipal council hope to establish brickworks and make bricks for sale. Mr. Wood has suggested there is a house shortage in York, but the

extent of that shortage has not been revealed. Does Mr. Wood think that 50 houses would be required? The hon. member does not know.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Who said I did not?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Well, can the hon. member tell me?

Hon. G. B. Wood: I will give the answer in my reply. I do not want to carry on a conversation with the hon. member.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: To be generous, let us say 100 houses will be required. To be more generous still, let us say 200.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Let us say 500!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: No, 200 will do. York has a population of 1,750—900 males and 850 females, or so the "Year Book" tells me; so I think that 200 houses would be a complete over-statement. However, for the purpose of this discussion, we will make it 200.

Hon. G. B. Wood: I will agree with that.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Not more than 100 of those would be of brick. Is that so?

Hon. G. B. Wood: It would depend on the supply of bricks.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The great majority of houses in the country are built of wood and asbestos, so we will take the requirements as 100 brick houses. I discussed with some brickmakers today what type of plant a municipality would be likely to invest in and it was suggested that one of the most likely types would be that in use in several places in the hill country near Perth. It is a comparatively small square brick kiln, and not the larger Hoffman type which costs thousands of pounds. This type would cost only hundreds of pounds. It has a capacity of 30,000 bricks per week. The only way to make bricks economically is by a continuous process, and I am given to understand that it takes three weeks to process a brick. Therefore in order to have a continuous process it would be necessary to invest in three kilns, each with a capacity of 30,000 bricks, which would give an output of 30,000 bricks per week.

The requirements for a house such as are being built by the Workers' Homes Board, with two bedrooms and the other usual rooms are from 20,000 to 25,000 bricks. The requirements of the municipality would be small. Bricks might be wanted for chimneys

in wooden houses, so we will say that 25,000 bricks would be wanted for a house each week and 5,000 for municipal or other requirements. This plant could produce economically 30,000 bricks per week, which would be sufficient for one house per week together with municipal requirements and any odds and ends.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Which plant?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: That which I am advised would be most likely to be used by a municipality.

Hon. G. B. Wood: You know more than I do about what they would be likely to use. They do not know what plant they will want.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The plant to which I refer has been suggested as the type in which it is likely that a small concern would be interested, and I am basing my argument and assumptions on that. I suggest that in two years' time the housing shortage may be overtaken, and therefore in two years' time the municipality would have an investment of ratepayers' money, and it would not be a very good investment.

Hon. G. B. Wood: How much did you say the plant would cost?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I did not say exactly how much. I said several hundred pounds. At the end of two years the shortage of houses would be overtaken and the municipality would have a perfectly good brickmaking plant, capable of turning out 30,000 bricks per week, while its possible requirements would be something under 5,000 bricks per week. It would then be faced with the marketing of 20,000 or 25,000 bricks per week.

Hon. G. B. Wood: What about selling the plant?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I do not know that there would be many buyers available in two years' time. It is probable that by then the housing shortage in many districts will have been overcome. Here we would have a municipality with a white elephant on its hands, with a surplus of 20,000 bricks which would have to be thrown on the open market. Otherwise the plant would have to be closed down and there would be a capital investment of ratepayers' money earning nothing.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I presume the hon. member is speaking on the third read-

ing of the Bill. Details are usually dealt with in Committee.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I am trying to explain the difficulty into which I got last night, and my reasons for wanting those amendments made. I trust I will be allowed to finish, as I will not take many minutes. The market available for bricks would be largely in the metropolitan area and I cannot see that it would be possible for bricks made at York to be marketed economically in the metropolitan district in competition with bricks made in that district. If I were a ratepayer of the municipality of York I would ask the Mayor and councillors four pertinent questions. They would be, one, the cost of the plant; two, the productive capacity of the plant; three, the cost of the product and, four, the absorptive capacity of York and its surrounding districts. If the answers could be given to those four questions we would have a fairly complete picture of the investment, and I do not think it would be a very pretty picture. If this Bill is passed it will greatly encourage municipalities to make unwise investments of ratepayers' money. For that reason I intend to vote against the third reading.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.46]: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that we have been discussing the intentions of the municipality of York, and I would point out to the sponsor of the Bill that Mr. Dimmitt was very generous when he said that York had a population of 1,700. In the pocket "Year Book" for 1945, which was sent to each member by the Chief Secretary, we find that York is shown as having a population of 1,200, and it has 319 houses.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Your figures do not appear correct to me. I am stating a fact.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Mr. Wood says that he stated a fact. I am also stating a fact which is published over the name of the Hon. William Henry Kitson, Chief Secretary. In the circumstances, and with all due respect to Mr. Wood, I prefer on this occasion to believe the written word rather than accept his figure. We are dealing with a measure that proposes not only to grant the municipality of York this right—

Hon. W. R. Hall: But to other municipalities as well?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, York is not the only municipality concerned. I support the remarks made by Mr. Dimmitt because I am doubtful whether from a business point of view this right should be granted. However, if the measure becomes law the responsibility will rest on the members of the municipal councils concerned. If there are 319 dwellings in York I think Mr. Dimmitt was most generous when he allowed for such a large increase in the number of houses there.

The PRESIDENT: Order! This Bill applies to any municipality, not to York only.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I oppose the provision contained in the Bill to permit local authorities to impose rates on the ratepayers of municipalities for the purpose of entering into the trading field. I will therefore vote against the third reading of the Bill.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South) [4.50]: After listening to the last two speakers one would be led to believe that, if the Bill were passed, it would be obligatory on municipalities to instal brickworks. As a member of a municipal council and a member of the works committee of the council, I might inform members that we have four men on that committee who would have to consider whether we would erect a brick kiln in Kalgoorlie. Figures would have to be presented to show whether it would be a payable proposition and, if we made a recommendation, it would have to go before the full council for decision by the 13 members of that body. The matter would be dealt with by 13 men representing all walks of life and if they thought fit to instal a brick kiln, it would be because they considered it would be a paying concern. They certainly would not squander the ratepayers' money. Mr. Dimmitt spoke about an output of 30,000 or 33,000 bricks a week for three kilns. I think one kiln would be quite sufficient. If 30,000 bricks were produced from one kiln, a second batch could then be put into the same kiln. However, I cannot see why we should worry about that aspect. The passing of the Bill will merely give municipalities power if they so desire to instal brickworks.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [4.53]: I do not feel very much concern about how many ratepayers there might be in the

municipality in question. What matters is that the people elected to local governing authorities, whether they be municipalities or road boards, should be given all the power that Parliament deems fit for them to have. I consider that they should be given the greatest possible power. The fact that so many electors voted last Saturday does not help one bit, because they might have been in York to attend a race meeting or some fixture of that sort. Mr. Wood was on much firmer ground when he said that he had been requested by the York Municipal Council to sponsor the Bill. Being in favour of decentralisation, as I had occasion to remark on another measure, I think we ought to give local authorities all possible power to enable them to carry out their work. I shall support the third reading.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East—in reply) [4.55]: I do not intend to delay the House because members gave their decision last night and I do not expect them to alter it today. The reason why I did not approve of progress being reported was that Mr. Dimmitt's amendment sought to remove the backbone from the Bill. Regarding the figures quoted by Mr. Thomson, I made a statement that 950 people voted at York last Saturday. There were several boxes around York not in that count. How the hon. member got a total of only 1,250 people as the population of York, I do not know.

Hon. A. Thomson: Then the figures issued by the Chief Secretary's department must be wrong.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—TOTALISATOR DUTY ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read for first time.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.56]:

I desire to say a few words on the Bill because it will afford me an opportunity to refer to the position regarding nurses and also to express my full support of the remarks made by Dr. Hislop yesterday when speaking on the second reading. It seems essential that if we are going to authorise people to become nurses for the purpose of nursing T.B. patients, they should be given every facility and inducement to complete their training and become fully qualified.

Everyone is aware of the unfortunate position existing at present. A very serious shortage of nurses has occurred, and that is the reason for the introduction of the Bill. I wish to refer to the state of affairs that exists in our hospitals, which will have to be dealt with promptly, even in spite of the pressure arising from the shortage of nurses. When the girls start in the wards, they have to go all out during the whole period they are on duty, and frequently they have to work some overtime in order to complete their jobs. In addition to having to go all out while on duty, they have to concentrate on a number of lectures which it is necessary for them to attend and the notes which they must prepare in order to pass their examinations. The pressure on the girls has been so heavy that more than one has found it necessary to pull out. They could not continue to carry on under the pressure of attending lectures and doing their duties in the wards.

The Honorary Minister: Are you now speaking of Kalgoorlie Hospital?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. Because of this pressure, the shortage of nurses is really being increased. Something might be done in the way of giving the girls a certain amount of relief to permit of preparation for their examinations, whereby they get their certificates, rather than expect them to undertake all this work which is concentrated in the last 12 months of their training. I am bringing this matter under the notice of the Minister in order that he

may take it up with the department with a view to seeing whether some assistance cannot be afforded to enable these girls to complete their work. Otherwise, girls who have done three years' training and are in their fourth year will give up because they cannot carry on under prevailing conditions, and we shall be losing the services of those girls, who are almost qualified so far as the practical work is concerned. I mention this while expressing my support of the remarks of Dr. Hislop.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East)

[5.0]: I listened with great interest to the second reading speech of the Honorary Minister and also to the advice tendered by Dr. Hislop. We are indeed fortunate in matters of this kind to have the experience of so qualified a member as Dr. Hislop. His advice is most valuable. I support the Bill because it is an endeavour to improve a very difficult position but, like Dr. Hislop, I hope some provision will be made to enable these women who will be taking up the nursing of T.B. cases to complete their general training. I do not think the definition is a very nice one, that of tuberculosis nurses, and it seems that they are to be sisters only so far as tuberculosis is concerned. Nevertheless these women are serving a very useful purpose, and I hope that as a result of this Bill the strain on the nursing staff generally will be relieved. Apparently it has been proved by experience that no girl should become a trainee in a hospital specialising in T.B. cases until she has reached the age of 21.

In years gone by it was rather a sore point with parents when they found that their daughters were sent first of all to Wooroloo, of all places, to undergo a certain amount of training. I have not the technical knowledge possessed by Dr. Hislop on this matter but I do know that tuberculosis is a very insidious disease. I know a little about it so far as certain members of my family are concerned, and I therefore feel deeply sympathetic towards those who are sufferers from the disease. I trust some provision will be made for the nurses along the lines indicated, that this measure will be looked upon purely as a temporary one, and that those women over 21 years of age who undertake this important task will be enabled to become fully qualified nurses. I endorse the remarks of Mr. Seddon. Everyone in

the country districts knows the difficulty of the position there through the shortage of staffs at country hospitals. That has been a big worry to the department as well as to local committees. I hope that as a result of the improved conditions quite a number of those who at one time were looking towards nursing as a profession will now endeavour to enter it and that shortly the difficulty we are facing today may be minimised.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.4]: I should like to direct the attention of the Honorary Minister to something that has needed attention for a long time. It is some years since many members of Parliament in this State commenced complaining about the chronic shortage of nurses. Those of us who are not very conversant with the requirements on the part of trainees in the nursing profession do not possess that knowledge that I think we should possess. I had not the opportunity to hear Dr. Hislop's speech last night, but whilst he will not have the opportunity to reply to my remarks, the Honorary Minister will be able to do so. I know what I am about to say is a fact, and it does not reflect any credit on the board which is responsible for supervising the issue of regulations that apply to trainees. I refer to the fact that a trainee nurse, when she has her time off, is compelled to return to the hospital to attend lectures. That may be all right for a trainee who has her home in the metropolitan area, but even for that trainee to travel from, say Guildford, back to the hospital to attend a lecture at 6 p.m. for half an hour, is not reasonable.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I hope the Minister will look into this matter. Of what use is it to lament about the chronic shortage of nurses, which is having such a dire effect throughout the length and breadth of the State? We must concern ourselves with affairs as they are in Western Australia.

The Honorary Minister: Are you talking about Perth or Fremantle?

Hon. C. B. Williams: About the nursing fraternity.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: This applies throughout the State. I am, to a certain extent, familiar with some of the provisions that apply to trainees in the metropolitan

area. My reference is to one particular hospital that is recognised as a training centre, and what I have stated about attendance at lectures is correct.

The Honorary Minister: To which hospital are you referring?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: To the Children's Hospital. My daughter is training there and has to attend lectures at 6 p.m. for half an hour. I do not know whether that appertains at the Royal Perth Hospital. We want a good class of trainee, the very best we can get. I do not think it is right and proper that the girls should be obliged to come back from a dip at Cottesloe or an outing anywhere else to attend lectures on the days when they have their time off. I support the second reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—in reply) [5.10]: The criticism offered by Mr. E. H. H. Hall can be quickly answered. I do not know what happens at the Children's Hospital, but I should say that if trainees are compelled to attend lectures at 6 p.m. that is arranged for the convenience of the specialist or lecturing doctor to fit in with his own practice. It must be remembered that hospitals even now, and more so during the war, are hard pushed to secure any honorary staff, and hard pushed to get any doctors in the institutions at all. It is the first time I have heard of this particular phase, but I should say that my explanation would be the correct one.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It also happens at Fremantle, I think.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It would happen with reference to the honorary staffs as well. These doctors give lectures free of charge and have to fit them in with their own arrangements and with their own practices, as well as the affairs at the hospital. It is not the general practice, I understand. With regard to Kalgoorlie I point out that I have been connected with hospitals for about 22 years, and in my experience the biggest trouble with regard to nurses leaving is that many of them get married before they have finished their training. That applies today. It must be remembered that the shortage of nurses is not peculiar either to Western Australia or to Australia. There is a similar shortage in Great Britain. Despite the fact

that the conditions are better, the pay is better, and the hours are shorter, there is still a lack of nurses.

In the old days when hours were long and the conditions were not to be compared with what they are today we used to have a long list of young women waiting for the opportunity to become trained. That was especially so in the 20 years before the war. I have been chairman of the Fremantle Hospital Board for many years. Before the war there was no trouble about getting nurses despite the bad conditions that obtained. There was always a long list of young women who were qualified from the point of view of education and were desirous of becoming trainees. I would be surprised to learn that either at Kalgoorlie or any other hospital the administration is losing nurses because of their inability to stand the strain.

Hon. H. Seddon: The trouble has been that the lectures have all been concentrated at a particular period because there have not been sufficient doctors to give those lectures.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That would be one explanation. As I have said, the shortage of women is not peculiar to hospitals or to the nursing profession itself. It is difficult to ascertain why that is so. Many men are walking around the streets of Perth today in shoddy clothes because it is not possible to man the tailoring establishments and clothing factories with female labour. There is a big shortage of women in trades all over the State and the Commonwealth, as well as in the Old Country. What they are doing I do not know, but doubtless time will overcome that difficulty. It is a fact that skilled women workers are in short supply throughout the Commonwealth and the Old Country. I was very surprised at the criticism of Dr. Hislop. It was obviously a hurried criticism. I was one member of this House who expected to receive solid support of the Bill from the hon. member.

Hon. A. Thomson: He supported the second reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But he put some hefty kicks into his remarks.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: I will put in some more yet.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I was expecting Dr. Hislop's unqualified support. He knows as well as I do the very fine work that

Dr. Henzell has done at the Wooroloo Sanatorium.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Blessed is he who expecteth nothing!

The HONORARY MINISTER: This Bill is not intended to solve the problem of the State-wide nursing shortage, but to enable the Nurses' Registration Board to provide for the registration of nurses who elect for a time, or more permanently, to specialise in the treatment of nursing tuberculous cases. Every encouragement should be given by public men to those who are prepared to take up this work. It must not be forgotten that it is only recently that the age of trainee nurses was dropped from 21 to 18. That was due to the pressure of parents and those who were anxious to enter the profession. Later on, owing to the shortage during the war and the enlistment of many thousands of splendid girls in the Army and so forth for various duties, the position became worse.

I cannot understand why Dr. Hislop should stigmatise nursing at the Wooroloo Sanatorium as a "dead end." It is not a dead end in any sense, and no one who enters the profession can say that it is a dead end. If nurses get married when they have finished their training and go through the full examination they are still not at a dead end. Wherever they go they are a definite asset to any of the people of the locality in which they reside. In small country areas the presence of a nurse who has married and left the profession is a great asset to the district. When girls volunteer to go to the Wooroloo Sanatorium knowing what they have to face and subsequently get married and leave the profession, they will still have rendered great service to humanity and deserve the highest credit and encouragement. They will have gained knowledge that will be of great assistance wherever they reside, whether they leave the profession to marry or remain single. I should imagine that the greater education enjoyed by people in the matter of precautions to prevent the spread of tuberculosis, the greater will be the advantage to the community.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Is there to be any reciprocity with the Eastern States, so far as these nurses are concerned?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Eastern States may not be in the position that confronts us in this State. This Bill is brought down to meet a special emergency.

We cannot get sufficient nurses to staff the Wooroloo Sanatorium. There are numbers of assistant nurses throughout the country who may be eager to take on this job.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Can you get men to do it?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the hon. member had been here yesterday he would have heard that the authorities tried to get some male orderlies to take the place of the girls. Furthermore, one member of the medical profession in particular has played a leading part in setting an example to hospital boards. I refer to the ex-superintendent of the Fremantle Hospital who was there during the war years. He was called upon to do this job and he carried it out as a public duty and not to make money. From the time he went to the hospital as medical superintendent he stressed the need for constant examination of the girls against this dread disease. He deserves a lot of credit for that, and he did not get much support from other people. Dr. Hislop will bear that out.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: The department gave him very little support.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It did not stop him in any way. The girls at the Fremantle Hospital are undergoing regular examination, by x-ray, for T.B. I will always feel grateful to Dr. Aberdeen for leading the way in this matter in Western Australia. The fact is that the Wooroloo Sanatorium is in trouble and it is expected that a number of volunteers will offer for this work. If they choose to study to enter the nursing profession—if they have not attained the necessary educational standard—they will be given every encouragement to do so and facilities will be made available to them.

Hon. A. Thomson: So they can still go on.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, if they so desire. Many will come in possessing the educational qualifications and will be able to go right through if they wish to do so.

Hon. A. Thomson: The Bill rather infers that they will remain as tuberculosis nurses.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have the authority of the Commissioner of Public Health who said, in a note to me today—

It is the intention of the Government, with the assistance of the Education Department,

to provide these girls, during their training, with opportunities to improve their general education so that they may later, if they wish, qualify for training as general nurses in accordance with the regulations of the Nurses Registration Board.

Hon. A. Thomson: I am glad to hear that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not quite understand what Dr. Hislop meant when he said that the present need is for a State nursing service. We have such a service, but we want to extend it. It is not necessary, Dr. Cook points out, for the machinery under which the training is to be effected to be incorporated in the Bill. This machinery, as in every branch of nursing, will be framed by the Nurses' Registration Board from time to time in regulations which will be tabled in the House for criticism by members. I know that every member will vote for the Bill because I know they all realise the actual position in regard to the nurses and the danger at the Wooroloo Sanatorium. As a safeguard for nurses entering this institution, the Minister for Health has directed, whether this Bill passes the House or not, that—

(a) No trainee will commence service at Wooroloo unless she has given a positive Mantoux reaction and has been shown by x-ray examination to be free from tuberculosis.

(b) No trainee, other than a tuberculosis trainee, will, except in special circumstances, serve at Wooroloo until she has completed two years of her general training.

(c) Except under special circumstances, no trainee will serve more than three months at Wooroloo.

Those precautions are good. There may be members who, like myself, do not know the meaning of the Mantoux reaction. The Mantoux test is a skin reaction which indicates that the subject tested has developed a resistance to infection by tuberculosis. I can assure members that the department and Dr. Henzell, and I think Dr. Hislop too, realise the necessity for taking every precaution. I confidently expect that the Bill will pass the second reading without a division.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. H. Seddon in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 5:

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would like an explanation of what is meant by the proposed new Subsection (5c). I do not quite understand the need for this. It is intended, I believe, that no trainee shall attend for training under this heading as a tuberculosis nurse until she has reached the age of 21. The only person aged 21 who could have done the prescribed training would be a nurse who entered ordinary routine nursing training and had done some time at Wooroloo. She would not need to have any qualification to be a tuberculosis nurse. Is this paragraph intended to cover those who have been nursing at Wooroloo as nursing assistants? It must be a purely temporary measure if that is so. There is not much harm in that, although I think it could have been done in a much better way.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think the explanation given by Dr. Hislop is the correct one. Obviously, there would be a number of girls who commenced at the age of 18 or 19 and they would, if they could pass the examination, be entitled to be registered as tuberculosis nurses. I think this is put in especially for that class of girl.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: I still think it is very badly worded.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The last paragraph covers that.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not know that the assistant nurse could come under the first paragraph because no training has been laid down for assistant nurses in the last five years. Wooroloo was a training school for the whole field of general nursing so that an assistant nurse at Wooroloo would be in the same position as an untrained probationer at any private hospital. Such girls would not have had any training in tuberculosis nursing, and they cannot possibly come under this heading. We should make provision so that those now nursing at Wooroloo, and who have been nursing there for a certain period, shall be accepted

as tuberculosis nurses. This is so loosely worded that such people might not be included.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot be expected to give, offhand, an explanation. I understand that this is to cover those girls who joined up at 18 at Wooroloo, and who later went into the country and then returned. Mr. Parker's interjection as to the last paragraph does not apply. If Dr. Hislop wants a fuller explanation, we can report progress and I can give it to him tomorrow.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would like an explanation because, in my opinion, there has been no course of training. What is wanted is a simple clause to say that a nurse who has already done a certain length of time at Wooroloo can be accepted under this heading as a tuberculosis nurse. But this clause does not let her in because she will not have done the prescribed course of training for a period of two years.

Hon. L. Craig: A girl may be doing her course now.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not think there is any course laid down. This provides that the girl must do a course of training for two years. I suggest that what is really wanted is provision to take in girls whom the authorities think it would be fair to admit at this stage, because of the work they have already done at Wooroloo.

The Honorary Minister: That is so.

Hon. G. FRASER: Apparently Dr. Hislop thinks that this provision applies only to the girls who are at Wooroloo at present. As a matter of fact, the Bill provides for the future and the conditions set out apply to those who will go there for their two-year training period. When the Bill becomes an Act if a girl is admitted to Wooroloo for two years' training—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: As a tuberculosis nurse; but she has had no training at all.

Hon. G. FRASER: But at the end of two years she will have received her training.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But the girl cannot be admitted under 21 years of age.

Hon. G. FRASER: It does not matter if the age is 41 years. The Bill lays down conditions under which girls will be admitted in future as tuberculosis nurses. To deal

with the position which Dr. Hislop has in mind regarding the girls already there, a new clause could be inserted.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Will the Honorary Minister explain the meaning of the words, "provided that no trainee shall be accepted for training"? What is a trainee?

The Honorary Minister: A trainee is a girl who has volunteered first and then goes on the staff.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Does it mean that no person shall be accepted in a hospital specialising in the treatment of tuberculosis unless she is 21 years of age?

The Honorary Minister: Yes.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Then would it not be better to refer to any "person" and not to any "trainee"?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think it better to pass the clause as it stands and I will get an official explanation of the position. If necessary, the Bill can be re-committed to deal further with the matter.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Would it not be better to get the explanation first?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If members desire me to report progress first, I will agree to that course. I am sure a clear explanation will be forthcoming tomorrow.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think it would be wiser to report progress at this stage. As it stands the clause is not clear. It is obvious what is meant. I think the clause should be examined thoroughly and put on a proper basis.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Dr. Hislop knows that girls who go to country hospitals and finish their training at Kalgoorlie usually start at Wooroloo where they work for, I think, six months. There is another section of girls—the position was more apparent during the war years—who worked particularly in country hospitals, not as nurses but as assistant nurses. Such a girl was a new chum and the only training she had was that which she received in the country hospital. The Bill will give those girls an opportunity. A girl who has been for six months at Wooroloo and has gone to a country hospital where she has served for two years will be able to qualify as a nurse, not as a trainee, in the hospital.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It seems to me that the proviso will not prevent a girl going to Wooroloo to nurse so long as she is not a trainee. She can be under 21 years of age so long as she is not a trainee.

Hon. G. FRASER: I take a different point of view. Previously a girl could go to Wooroloo as a trainee before she was 21 years of age but once the Bill is passed only those who are 21 years of age can be admitted as trainees there. It appears to me that some members are trying to cloud the issue whereas the position is quite clear. It is easy to raise legal quibbles. Such quibbles can be taken to the High Court and difficulties created.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It should not be so. We should not pass legislation enabling that to be done.

Hon. G. FRASER: In this instance the position is perfectly clear and there does not seem any necessity to delay the Committee stage.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I think it is a pity that this simple measure cannot be passed in its present form. Much has been said to cloud what is really a very simple issue. As I read it, the position is that the age limit prescribed in the Bill will not apply to the present trainees at Wooroloo. After the legislation becomes operative the age limit will apply to others.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Where does that come in?

The Honorary Minister: That is set out in the last paragraph.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: In future any girl who goes to Wooroloo as a trainee must be 21 years of age. That is quite clear. The age limit will not apply to those already at that institution. Once the legislation becomes operative any girl who is accepted for training in a hospital specialising in tuberculosis must have attained the age of 21 years.

The Honorary Minister: That is the position.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That is what is wanted, but that is not what is provided.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The point is that every girl nursing at Wooroloo now, even if she is 18 years of age, provided that she has been x-rayed and her resistance has been established, will be entitled, by right

of service, to stop there. She can leave if she so desires. The last paragraph expressly exempts her from the application of the age limit.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What is to stop a girl going there even though she is under 21 years of age?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is set out in the proviso.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But the girl who goes there is not a trainee, seeing that she has not started her training!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Once a girl goes there and is put on the staff she is a trainee.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Where is that set out in the Bill?

The HONORARY MINISTER: But that is the practice.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: We ought to pass only Bills that are so framed that any one can understand their provisions. I know what is intended, and it would be quite a simple matter to re-draft the proposed new subsection so that there could not be any argument.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It seems to me that some members are trying to cloud what is really a very simple issue. We all understand that once a person enters the hospital and joins the staff she is a trainee.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But only when she gets in.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The proviso sets out that no trainee shall be accepted for training in a hospital specialising in tuberculosis until she has attained the age of 21 years. The next paragraph goes on to exempt trainees who are at Wooroloo at present.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Strangely enough, the proviso does not deal with trainees but only with persons.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It says, "Provided no trainee" and so on. I cannot conceive of anything more simple and I cannot imagine that any draftsman could make it clearer.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I have listened with great interest to this debate. The Honorary Minister moved to report progress but one member got up and said, "Before you do

that let me say" and then went on to talk. The debate has continued, and yet the Honorary Minister is satisfied that the position requires clarification.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: On a point of order, may I ask who is the Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is mistaken. The Honorary Minister was about to move that progress be reported.

The HONORARY MINISTER: After hearing two prominent lawyers argue on the provisions of this Bill, and also after hearing Dr. Hislop's views on it, I regret that Mr. Bolton was not present earlier, because I feel I would have had his support as a gentleman with great knowledge of hospitals. I propose to let the Bill go forward.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 7, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—MARKETING OF BARLEY (No. 2).

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [5.47]: I feel sure this measure will pass the second reading, but members who have studied the notice paper will have observed quite a number of amendments, mainly dealing with the constitution of the board. I do not think it necessary for me to speak at length in replying to the debate, but I desire to emphasise one or two points. First I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Bill has been brought down at the direct request of those interested in the production of barley. They made their representations on the ground of the experience that they had during the war years. In the early stages of the war a Commonwealth-wide barley board was functioning. Apparently, its operations did not suit the Western Australian growers, who eventually secured exemption from it. Later on, a Western Australian board was appointed. The growers are so satisfied with the operations of this board that they desire a continuance of its control.

Unfortunately, the National Security Regulations, under which the board was appointed, will expire at the end of the year; consequently it is necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to control the barley growers in the same way as they have been controlled during the past few years. I believe the Bill represents substantially what the growers require. The actual constitution of the board is, of course, a matter for Committee discussion rather than for debate at the second reading stage; and we can deal with the points raised in that connection when we reach the Committee stage. There are one or two other points I desire to touch upon. I would remind members that the Bill is limited to a period of three years. Therefore, if it passes and becomes law and proves to be unsatisfactory, it will not be continued after that period has expired. On the other hand, should the operations of the board prove satisfactory to those interested, they will naturally make representation for, and expect, a continuance of the Act.

Dealing with other objections to the Bill, Sir Hal Colebatch complained about ministerial control. He said he is opposed to the Bill because it amounts to a continuation of ministerial control, from which he would rather get away. I suggest that in any legislation of this kind it is essential that there be some form of ministerial control. This is a Bill for the control and orderly marketing of a primary product. It is a Bill which gives to a board very far-reaching powers. It also involves financial responsibility on the part of the Government; for instance, the Government has to guarantee a fairly substantial sum of money in order that the board may function. I would also advise the House that the ministerial control provided for in this measure is exactly the same ministerial control as has existed during the past four years and has been quite satisfactory to all concerned. From that point of view there is really no argument, although Sir Hal Colebatch may have some additional reason to submit why we should not allow ministerial control over this legislation. Sir Hal Colebatch also read a letter from a firm of local flourmillers in which they complained that they were not getting representation on the proposed board. In addition, they also complained that they did not get all the barley they would have liked to secure, although they did not state the reasons.

From advice which has been tendered to me by the authorities, I understand that when these flourmillers first decided to come into the business of manufacturing pearl barley, they applied to the board for a supply and were refused; but they were refused because all the barley which the board possessed had already been sold and therefore it was impossible for the board to supply any barley at all. They were advised to make application for a supply of barley in the next season, which they did.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: They stated that in their letter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am merely recounting the facts as I understand them. They applied for a supply of barley next season and later on made application increasing the quantity they desired by about 100 per cent. It was not possible for the board to supply the whole quantity, mainly because the season had been a very disappointing one. They had therefore to be content with a less quantity than that for which they had applied. I am told the Barley Board went out of its way to assist this firm in establishing its business. Notwithstanding that the board could have sold all the barley it possessed for cash, it still allowed this firm to have its percentage. The barley was sold to the firm on terms, and the board actually stored it free of charge. It did everything it possibly could to assist the firm.

According to the letter which Sir Hal Colebatch read, this firm stated it was the only firm manufacturing pearl barley. One would get the impression that it was necessary for the Barley Board to supply all the barley that this firm asked for so that it could maintain not only its local trade, but also its export trade. I suggest to the House that when the quantity of barley is limited, the first requirements to be met are the local requirements. The firm therefore got a very fair deal from the board so far as the quantity supplied to it was concerned. Strange to relate, according to information supplied to me, the firm complained to the board in March of this year that it was experiencing competition by Eastern States interests and it asked the board to take some action to prevent the competition. The board promised to do what it could to assist this local industry. In my

opinion, the firm has had a very fair deal indeed from the board. Sir Hal Colebatch also complained that the firm was not getting representation on the proposed board. Seeing that it is a processor of barley and that the maltsters are too, the fact that the latter will have representation on the board should be quite satisfactory from the point of view of the firm.

I can see no reason at all why this particular firm, which uses less than 6 per cent. of the total quantity of barley sold in the State, should be entitled to direct representation on the board. I merely mention these facts as a reply to the statements made by Sir Hal Colebatch as the result of the letter which he received from the firm in question. I understand, too, that a suggestion is likely to be made in Committee to exempt certain classes of barley from the operations of the board. That would be a big mistake. I am told on very good authority that it will be exceedingly difficult for the Barley Board, or any other organisation, properly to control barley production in this State, as well as the sale of barley, if any exemption is made of a specific type of barley. I have good reasons for making this statement and will explain them in Committee.

I hope the House will deal with the Bill on the facts. These are, first, that the growers themselves desire to have some method of orderly marketing of their product. They have in the past had rather bitter experiences. In the early stages of the war, as a result of the shipping shortage and the prohibition of the import of barley into the Old Country, I understand the producers found themselves with large quantities on hand. By means of a board of this kind, and especially under the methods which have been adopted by the board at present in existence, that can be avoided to a very large extent. The board at least can see that all growers get a fair deal.

Secondly, I should say, in view of the fact that the growers are well satisfied with the operations of the existing board, which will go out of existence very shortly unless we pass this Bill, we as the second Chamber should be prepared to say, "We will give you the opportunity to carry on for the next three years as you have done in the last three years; and, as the result of our experience of the next three years, we will then determine whether this legislation shall be continued or not." So without going into any

detail at present, I would say that I believe this Bill to be in the best interests of the barley growers of this State; and while I cannot agree to all the amendments foreshadowed, it may be that one or two of them can be accepted. In the main, however, I believe the principles of the Bill are sound and I hope they will not be disturbed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. H. Seddon in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Interpretation:

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of the definition of "barley" after the word "of" the words "two-row" type be inserted.

It appears that under this Bill producers and consumers are primarily interested in the two-row type of barley. But there is another type known as the six-row type which is very different, so different that it might almost be classed as another type of grain. The object of the amendment is to leave the marketing of that type of barley and the skinless and black barley free operation, not subject to a board or any trading restrictions. In 1941-42 over 500,000 bushels of the six-row type were marketed. In 1945-46 the number of bushels marketed had dropped to under 300,000. I understand there is very little six-row type grown in the Eastern States.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: South Australia is a big grower.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That is the information I had, at any rate. I understand that with regard to the marketing of barley, the traders who propose to take a fairly active part in developing that market point out that highly selective methods are applied to the desired type of grain and that there is a very big demand for it overseas. I believe that trading conditions can be stimulated much more under free trading than under the control of a board. A board seems to develop a surplus complex, whereas the individual trader, who naturally has an incentive to increase his own income, is all out to develop trade, which does benefit the pro-

ducers and, in turn, the State. I am only interested from the producers' point of view and in that which will benefit the State.

If we adopt a system that might have the effect of restricting production, it will react to the detriment of the producers. I know that many producers are not in favour of controls, but rather of the removal of restrictions as far as possible. Under a board system of control, they have to apply for permits. They cannot plan for a year to year system of cropping because they would not know far enough ahead exactly what they would be able to do. Barley is a valuable rotation crop, and if the cropping operations were restricted as I understand the Bill would restrict them—and there is no objection to that so far as the two-row type is concerned—it might have the effect of robbing some farmers of an opportunity to utilise the land with a valuable crop rotation and thus to build up a revenue-producing asset for themselves.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am sorry I cannot agree to the amendment. If the Committee agrees to it, we shall limit the activities of the board to the local trade and we shall give to private interests the control of barley for export.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: They could still deal with the two-row type for export.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But the amount of two-row barley grown in this State is only sufficient for local requirements, I believe.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Less.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: So if we agree to the amendment we shall say in effect that we are going to have a board to determine the quota local interests shall have out of two-row barley produced in this State, but leave wide open the export trade to other private traders. That cannot possibly be in the interests of barley producers. If we are going to have a board to control the production of barley and to provide a system of orderly marketing, that board must have control of the whole of the barley produced. In the event of there being a drop in the price of barley and the board not being in control of six-row barley, that could be used in a very detrimental way to the producers of two row barley. After all, it is the value of

the different types of barley that counts. I understand that six-row barley has a very low price compared with two-row barley, so that six-row barley would be an absolute menace to producers of two-row barley. So I suggest we should allow this board to have authority to deal with the production of all the barley in this State whether for local requirements or for export. That is the only way in which the producers can get a satisfactory market. The growers have had experience of this for a few years and are anxious that that experience shall be continued for a further few years, and I do not see why we should object. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I shall support the amendment which, if carried, will make the Bill much less objectionable. I have been trying to discover the purpose of the Bill. I know its purpose is to control the production and sale of barley, but I want to know why it is necessary for this particular industry to be controlled by a board any more than any other industry. From what the Chief Secretary has said, the chief object is to prevent the export of barley that is required for use in Western Australia. There is another way of preventing the export of barley and that is by giving the growers as high a price locally as they could get by exporting. Then they would not want to export. It has been suggested there is another reason for the Bill and that is to restrict the growing of barley to certain people. To my mind that is a very bad policy. I do not see why anybody should be prevented from growing barley if he wishes to do so. If the amendment is carried, it will mean the operations of the board will be confined to that particular type of barley which is most required for local purposes and that, added to the fact that the measure has only three years' life, would make the Bill much less objectionable to me than it is in its present form.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know that I said the main object of the Bill was to prevent the export of barley. I think I pointed out that the object was to control the production and sale of barley whether for export or for local requirements. But I did point out that if we limited this measure to two-row barley

we would be creating a menace to those producers by allowing other types of barley to be free. It seems to me that the amendment is desired mainly in the interests of some private traders who are concerned with the export of barley only, and who are afraid that if they have to come under the control of the board they will not make quite as good a deal as they would if they had a free hand. Sir Hal talks about limiting the growing to a few people.

I understand that prior to the board's coming into operation the production of two-row barley was limited to a few growers and they were determined by other people; namely, by the purchasers of the barley. Apparently that was not quite as satisfactory as it might have been to growers who desired to produce barley but could not sell to those buyers because the buyers were content to let contracts to particular people to the exclusion of others. Under this system of control by a barley board all the growers will have a fair deal. They will get full value for their product, and whether there be a scarcity or a surplus they will receive just what they are entitled to and no grower will get preference. I cannot understand the arguments used by Sir Hal in this regard. I should have thought he would be not only in support of the Bill but also in support of any organisation that was going to control the production and sale of a commodity of this kind, whether it was for export or for local purposes only.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I wish to assure the Committee that I have no interest whatever in this matter, but I do feel that if we extend the control to the entire barley industry we will be setting up a dangerous precedent, continuing into peacetime the restrictions and controls necessitated by the war. If we agree to control for the entire barley industry, what objection are we to offer when attempts are made to extend control to other industries? Let me remind the House of the controls over butter and sugar. In each case import was prohibited and the price to the local consumer was put up to cover the loss on export. I will not admit that in the long run it is much good for any country to export anything at

less than it costs to produce, but the point is that that action did enable us to increase our exports.

The necessity for increasing exports is greater today than ever before. The other day Mr. Chifley said we would have to import at least £100,000,000 worth of good every year. We cannot pay for those goods in pound notes. They can only be paid for in exports and therefore it seems to me that any step that even remotely threatens our export capacity is to be deprecated. Not only is our need for exporting greater than ever before, but the difficulties in the way are greater. We do not know what may come to pass where the Ottawa Agreement is concerned, but we know that Britain's position is such that she will be unable to extend to the Dominions in the future the advantages that she so generously provided in the past. I think it is fatal for us to do anything that might interfere with export. The issue in this case lies with Country Party members. If they choose to join with the Labour Party in continuing this control, the responsibility is theirs.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Sir Hal Colebatch said he was not interested in this measure, but I am interested in it on behalf of the producers of barley. I think the Bill is an effort to give the producers of malting barley in this State, as far as it can be assured to them, a home consumption price. It is no use the producer waiting for the blessed era of free-trade, which might be even better for him than the protection this Bill is designed to give. In the circumstances, I think Mr. Simpson's amendment is a little too wide. I would like to see seed barley excluded from the provisions of the measure. I think Mr. Simpson's proposal leaves the door wide open to such abuses as may destroy the whole purpose of the Bill. The object of excluding barley grown and used for stock-feed and seed purposes can be achieved by an amendment later, when we are dealing with other clauses in the Bill. For that reason I shall vote against the amendment, and I hope the Committee will defeat it, because it would go a long way towards destroying the efficacy of the measure.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I must oppose the amendment. If we are to exempt half the barley production, it will be no use having a board to control the remainder. Much has been said about restricting exports, but there

is nothing in the Bill to prevent the export of any kind of barley. The board, as now constituted—and as I hope it will be constituted in the future—will have an eye to the export of barley. Members of the board have told me that they had it in mind to have barley exported later on. From the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch one would think control of the barley industry was something new. We have orderly marketing boards for dried fruits, potatoes, eggs, wheat and dairy products, and we did not hear this objection from Sir Hal when those boards were mooted. I hope the amendment will be rejected. After all, it was the producers who asked for the control board and their request was based on the experience of the last few years. Since we got away from the Commonwealth board three or four years ago, the producers have had a local board, which has worked very well. The board has collected a considerable amount of money. The Commonwealth board was very objectionable, in my opinion. On the experience of the last few years, the producers want this board and this Bill, with one or two amendments. I hope this amendment will be rejected.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I have not had opportunity to study the Bill but, unlike Sir Hal, who has not the least interest in the measure, I am interested in it, not only on my own behalf but on behalf of barley-growers throughout the State. My own property is in one of the leading barley-growing districts of the State. I feel that Mr. Simpson has the middlemen in mind rather than the growers. Originally, Western Australia was drawn into a barley board run by the Commonwealth, and we fought that tooth and nail because the object was to pool all the barley in the Commonwealth. Mr. Simpson said that very little six-row barley was grown in Australia, but I think that is wrong.

In those days, millions of bushels of six-row barley were exported to the Continent where it was malted for beer, while in Australia 90 per cent. of the barley malted is two-row barley. Our trouble was that, with the drawing in of all the barley in the Commonwealth, the production in South Australia was huge when compared with ours, and the export price of all barley was reduced to about 2s. 10d. per bushel. Mr. Wood was associated with me at that time. I went to

Canberra on behalf of the barley-growers, in order to fight that measure. Mr. Cameron, the then Minister for Commerce, allowed me to travel with him from Melbourne to Canberra, together with the late Mr. Gregory, and we put up as good a fight as we could. We were met by Mr. Tomlinson and other members of the Australian Barley Board, who asked, if Western Australia did not want to come into the pool with barley, why should we not stand alone with wheat, and, of course, that did not suit us. In the end, we managed to dissociate ourselves from the Australian Barley Board. Since the institution of the present board we have had what I consider reasonable prices for our barley.

Hon. G. B. Wood: We got 1s. 6d. per bushel more immediately.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: We got nearly as much in our first payment as we had previously in the total payments. I think the barley-grower is getting a fair return today. Barely sufficient two-row or malting or Chevalier barley is grown in this State for the requirements of maltsters. Each year they have to import from South Australia sufficient to meet the shortage. I grow an average of 400 acres of barley per year and I say barley cannot be grown just anywhere or rotated with other crops. There are certain lands suitable for barley, and barley only, and one is wasting money, seed and super, trying to grow it on other land. In those days, the maltsters paid us about 3s. or 3s. 6d. for all the two-row barley they could get in Western Australia, and they paid about 6s. for the barley they bought in South Australia to make good the shortage. That is what we fought against, and that is why the barley-growers want this Bill. I cannot see any need for the amendment, which I definitely oppose.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I thank Mr. Bolton for his lucid explanation. I point out to Sir Hal Colebatch that there is nothing in the Bill to threaten the export of barley from this State.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: That is a matter of opinion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Not at all. It is the policy of the board to encourage the growing of barley in suitable areas with the idea of building up an export trade. Mr. Simpson advocates that the board should

deal with two-row barley, leaving the export trade to private interests who would make a profit on it.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Not in regard to two-row barley.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Bolton has pointed out that we do not produce sufficient two-row barley to meet local needs.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Kalgoorlie gets some from South Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The production of barley is about 900,000 bushels and the requirements of two-row barley total about 350,000 bushels a year. If the margin between those figures is the quantity to be exported, Mr. Simpson would have agents buying at their own price from the farmers.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: The two-row barley would be purely the responsibility of the board.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If any two-row barley were exported, an additional quantity would have to be imported. Why should not the board have the right to export the barley and give the growers the benefit of the higher price; in other words, give the growers the profit that private interests would make by exporting the barley? The amendment would limit the board to the local trade in two-row barley and leave to private interests the export trade in any sort of barley, and the grower would not receive the full benefit that he should get.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Constitution of board.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (2) the word "six" be struck out and the word "seven" inserted in lieu.

The object is to increase the strength of the board to seven. The growers who provide the whole of the trade should have greater representation and certainly should have a majority on the board. With a board of seven, four should be elected by the growers, thus giving them the control to which they are entitled.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I strongly oppose the amendment. The Bill provides for a board of six, including three who shall

be representatives of the growers, and an independent chairman. This will give growers a preponderance of the representation. The desire of growers to have absolute control is understandable, but the Government cannot accept the proposal. The present board consists of six, whose members were not elected but were appointed by the Minister, and growers' representatives in this Chamber agree that they have given satisfaction.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (3) (a) the word "two" be struck out and the word "three" inserted in lieu.

This will not increase the producers' representation, but will mean that all producer-representatives will be elected by the producers. I cannot see why the Minister desires power to nominate one of the producer-representatives. Apparently he does not trust the producers to elect three desirable representatives. I cannot see any danger in the producers electing their own representatives as the Minister would have the right of veto.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My reply to Mr. Wood is somewhat similar to the one I gave Mr. Hamersley. The Minister is not prepared to accept the amendment. Experience has shown that the growers have had no cause to complain of the representation on the present board. While, generally speaking, we agree with the principle of electing representatives, we sometimes find that the elected ones are perhaps not the best persons to carry out the duties, and I say that without being critical of any individual. The Government is accepting financial liability under the measure and the argument used by the Minister should be heeded.

The CHAIRMAN: There is also an amendment on the notice paper in the name of Mr. Hamersley, who wishes to insert the word "four" in lieu of "two".

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I imagine that Mr. Hamersley will not proceed with his amendment seeing that it was based on the idea of increasing the strength of the board to seven.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I do not propose to move my amendment, but will support the amendment moved by Mr. Wood.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: If the word is deleted it will affect paragraph (b).

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is my intention to seek the deletion of that paragraph if my amendment is carried.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The Chief Secretary would not have much cause to complain if the amendment were carried, that the Minister would be shorn of any great power in respect of the Bill. There are three other people to be appointed to the board and to be nominated by the Minister, excluding the chairman. So he will have reasonable scope to exercise his powers of selection. The Bill has been asked for by the producers and it is designed largely in their interests. It is not too much to ask that the three producer-representatives be elected by the producers.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may not be too much to ask, but I cannot agree to it. The Bill also provides that the chairman, who is not to be associated in any way with the production of barley, will have a deliberative vote only, so that at an ordinary meeting the growers will be three to two. If the chairman exercises his deliberative vote, making the voting three all, then the question will pass in the negative. The Minister is desirous of meeting the growers' wishes, but this is one that he cannot accept. I am anxious to see the growers have the benefit of this Bill. I ask Mr. Wood not to press this amendment.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I do press it. Does the Chief Secretary not trust the producers to elect good men? The Minister will still have the right to appoint three people to the board.

The Chief Secretary: But they will not be representing the producers.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: That is so. Surely the producers have a prior right. They produce the barley. I do not like the sort of implied threat made by the Chief Secretary that we might not get away with the amendment if we insist on it. I believe the Minister in control of the measure will agree to it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I have seen the maltsters, the brewers and some of the growers about this measure. A week ago I was pretty strongly opposed to the Bill, but everyone interested wanted it and so I became convinced that they should have it. Everyone mixed up with the board is satisfied with it as constituted.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Have you seen the producers?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Whom did you see?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Tell me one producer who is not satisfied with the producers' representatives on the board.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Craig will please address the Chair.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The producers are well treated here. They are the only people concerned who will have the right to elect their representatives. The maltsters and the brewers do count a little in the organisation. They are the buyers and without them the barley would not be much good. An independent chairman is to be appointed and that, in effect, gives the producers a majority on the board. The producers cannot have the whole lot.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: We are not asking for it. Under the Bill the Minister is to appoint four members of the board.

Hon. L. CRAIG: But do not forget that the producers are the only ones who have the right to elect two representatives. The board has worked all right in the past. I oppose the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	..	7
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	4
					—

AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. Bennetts
Hon. W. R. Hall	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. F. R. Welsh	Hon. G. W. Miles

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is obvious that paragraph (b) should be deleted. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (b) be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The principle already adopted should be applicable to all persons appointed to the board. I agree with Sir Hal Colebatch that an era is dawning in which the Minister is considered to be more capable than any nominated board or person. We are reaching a stage at which the Minister is all-powerful and no individual is regarded as having any commonsense at all. It is high time that we called a stop to this tendency. I am attempting to call a stop to it in other ways. I believe the Minister is no more capable of nominating a representative of the maltsters than are the maltsters themselves. The Bill would be greatly improved if those concerned in an industry were allowed to nominate their own representatives. The Committee would be justified in deleting the reference to the Minister and in this instance substituting one relating to the maltsters. I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (c) the word "Minister" be struck out and the word "maltsters" inserted in lieu.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I can quite understand Dr. Hislop's attitude. He is running true to form. I believe him when he says he is going to try to put a stop to a lot more things. Let him try! I oppose the amendment and in doing so am acting in the best interests of the growers.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	12

Majority against 5

AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. A. Dismitt	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. E. H. H. Hall
	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. F. R. Welsh	Hon. G. W. Miles

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The Committee must, if honest to itself, realise that if the growers and producers desire that they

should take away from the Minister the power of appointment of their representatives, the same principle should apply to other interests in the industry. There is no equity or justice in stating we shall have the right to nominate their representatives vested in the producers themselves but that the Minister shall have the right to nominate the representatives of other interests in the industry. There is perfect equity and justice in my statement. If the producers require to nominate their own representatives, they must agree that others may do likewise. I formally move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (d) the word "Minister" be struck out and the word "brewers" inserted in lieu.

We are fast reaching the stage when a dictatorship will prevail throughout the whole of the political situation. It is not possible to suggest that in a Bill of this description we shall have a majority of the board appointed by the Minister. We must surely allow those engaged in the industry themselves to have a reasonable opportunity to elect representatives to the board. We are fast losing any sense of democracy and cultivating a sense of petty dictatorship. If there is any sense or justice in those who voted for the producers controlling the nomination of their representatives, surely they must allow other sections of the industry the right to elect their representatives.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I just as formally oppose the amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	12

Majority against 5

AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. A. Dismitt	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. V. Hamersley
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. H. Tuckey
	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. F. R. Welsh	Hon. G. W. Miles

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of paragraph (e) after the word "barley" the words "or a person interested in the selling, malting or processing of barley" be inserted.

In my opinion, all persons interested in barley should be excluded from a position on the board.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I raise no objection to the amendment.

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

Clauses 7 to 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Term of office:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of Subclause (2) the word "two" be struck out and the word "three" inserted in lieu.

This is a consequential amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot agree that the amendment is consequential but I raise no objection to it.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That the proviso to Subclause (2) be struck out and the following proviso inserted in lieu:—"Provided that of the first three elective members first elected after the passing of this Act one of them shall hold office for one year only; one for two years and the other for three years. The elective member to retire first shall be that one who received the lowest number of votes at the election. The elective member to retire second shall be the member who received the second lowest number of votes. If there were no ballot or in the event of a tie in the election they shall determine by lot which one of them shall retire first and second."

This also is more or less in the nature of a consequential amendment.

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

Clause 12—Casual vacancies:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause (1) after the word "Board" the words "not being an elective member" be inserted.

The amendment is self-explanatory.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. If carried, the Minister would not have the authority to appoint a deputy. We consider the Minister should have the right to appoint the deputy, whether the member is an elective or nominated member.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 13 to 17—agreed to.

Clause 18—Officers of board:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (1) be struck out. The board should appoint its own manager.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I agree that the board and not the Minister should have the power to appoint a manager and I raise no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (2) after the word "appoint" the words "a manager to be the chief executive officer of the board" be inserted.

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

Clause 19—agreed to.

Clause 20—Power to control production for sale of barley:

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of Subclause (2) the words "any directions" be struck out and the words "the approval" inserted in lieu.

As the Bill is printed, the board would apparently be subject to the direction of the Minister to a degree that I think would reduce its members very largely to the position of factotums to the Minister. I doubt whether that was the original intention. On the other hand, if they operate with the approval of the Minister, I do not think there could be any legitimate objection to the provision.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know whether there is very much difference between the words the hon. member desires to strike out and those he wishes to insert in lieu. I think we would reach the same position in either case, whether we used the

word "directions" or "approval". There may be some legal difference which at the moment I cannot see. I prefer the words in the Bill and if the hon. member insists on his amendment I am afraid I must oppose it.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: "Approval" sounds a good deal better.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think so. The words in the Bill have a more specific meaning.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think that from Mr. Roche's point of view the word "directions" is probably better. The Minister may approve, subject to some minor alteration; that is what the word "direction" means. If we insert the word "approval", he may not approve at all. I take it that the Minister will obtain advice from the board and will say, "Yes, I approve subject to so and so"; which is a direction. He gives approval but directs that some alteration shall be made. If the word "approval" is inserted he may say "I approve" or "I do not approve." The word "approval" will not give the latitude that the word "directions" gives.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I ask the Committee to carry the amendment. To my mind the word "directions" means instruction, whereas if we use the word "approval" the board will have the opportunity to recommend to the Minister or to ask for his approval. As the Bill is worded, it provides that the direction or the instruction of this board shall lie largely in the hands of the Minister. If that is followed out to its logical conclusion, one might well ask, "What is the need for the board?" Mr. Craig assumes certain things may happen, but they are pure assumptions and are not contained in the Bill.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It appears that the board will arrive at a decision and the Minister will approve; but if we use the word "directions," it seems to me that the Minister will direct the board to arrive at a decision, that he shall instruct its members to do so. I much prefer the amendment.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I have looked up the word "direction" in the dictionary. Its meaning is "Instruction in what manner to proceed." That means that the Minister will direct the board in what manner it shall proceed. We do not wish that. We wish the board to make decisions and the Minister to approve or otherwise.

Hon. L. CRAIG: If the hon. member will read half a line further he will find the words "the board may, at its discretion."

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Subject to the direction of the Minister.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, and at the discretion of the board. I think "directions" is the better of the two words.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not had an opportunity to study the amendment, but I am inclined to agree with Mr. Craig's interpretation of the clause and of the amendment. I think that the word "directions" was deliberately inserted in the Bill in order to give the Minister that right. I must stand by the clause.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	12
Noes	....	....	....	....	7
					—
Majority for	....	....	....	....	5
					—

AYES.	
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. H. S. W. Parker (Teller.)

NOES.	
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. R. Hall (Teller.)
Hon. E. H. Gray	

PAIRS.	
AYES.	NOES.
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. F. R. Welsh	Hon. C. B. Williams

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause (6) the following proviso be added:—"Provided that this subsection shall not apply to the sale of barley for stock feed or seed purposes as between one farmer and another."

The idea is to enable one farmer who has a surplus to dispose of it, if it is for stock feed or seed purposes only, to a neighbouring farmer. It will not allow merchants to come into the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out that it is scarcely fair to the Minister for amendments to be sent up in this way instead of being put on the notice paper. I hope that the practice will not continue.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am sorry I have to oppose this amendment. If agreed to, it would be rather dangerous to the growers if the board is to operate successfully. It may be that there is a grower at one end of the State desirous of selling seed barley to a grower at another end of the State. In order to do so, he brings in a third party who may be an agent and in that way creates difficulties and embarrassments for the board, which has to police the Act. I think the board at present provides for the contingencies that Mr. Loton has in mind. It gives a permit to a farmer who desires to sell to another in his own district, within a certain radius, and I believe the radius is 15 miles. That is done so that the farmer may dispose of his surplus barley without sending it to the metropolitan area. If the hon. member means what he says in his amendment, I feel sure he will not object to such a limitation.

Hon. A. L. Loton: I have no objection at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Amendments are being submitted without being placed on the notice paper, but I do not want to make that an excuse for not agreeing to this amendment. A farmer wishing to dispose of barley to a neighbour can do so, but it is necessary first to obtain the approval of the board.

Hon. A. Thomson: Is that provided for in this Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In paragraph (c) of subclause (4) of Clause 22 the provision is "barley sold or delivered to any person with the written approval of the board."

Hon. A. Thomson: But you mentioned its being within the district or area.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The board sees the danger to the producer of barley, and I suggest that, while we do not want to place any barrier against one farmer selling to another, the growers must, in their own interests, take the precaution of seeing that there is a limitation. If the limitation I have suggested is accepted, it will not embarrass either the farmer or the board. If Mr. Loton desires to persist with his amendment I ask him to agree to the addition of words to that effect.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Fifteen miles is not very far.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If we go beyond that we will get into deep water.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Could we not make the provision "within the one district"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member should know more about it than I do, but as soon as the farmer uses the railway he will get into difficulties in this matter. I suggest that Mr. Loton should accept the practice of the board at present, which apparently has been satisfactory, and should agree to the limitation of 15 miles. Otherwise I must oppose the amendment.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The amendment is designed to overcome the objection to bringing all barley, feed barley as well as malting barley, under the too restrictive control of the board. Earlier in the evening Mr. Simpson moved an amendment that had a somewhat similar purpose. Considerable powers have been given to the board, which is composed, 50 per cent., of growers of malting barley, and I think there should be some easing of restrictions on those growing barley for stock feed, who have no intention of putting it through any channel for use in malting. Wheat was fairly cheap as a stock feed, especially for pig raisers, but it is becoming dearer and more difficult to obtain, and farmers are turning more and more to feed barley. Under the provisions of the Bill at present a man who wishes to sell ten or 100 bags of barley is brought under the control of the board. I think the Committee is being asked to pass legislation that is too restrictive. I have no complaint about the producers of malting barley having that market reserved to them, but I think the Minister should be prepared to accept the amendment in order that growers of stock feed barley may be able to handle it under more liberal conditions. After all, the danger of such barley being used for malting is not great, and through the maltsters and merchants it should not be difficult to police.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I think Mr. Loton should accept the suggestion of the Chief Secretary as to the limitation of 15 miles. If a producer wants to send 100 bags of barley to a place 50 miles away, I do not think the board is likely to refuse permission.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not particularly interested in the amendment except from the point of view of the grower. From information given me, I think the growers will be making a mistake if they endeavour to secure the amendment submitted by Mr. Loton. I have asked Mr. Loton to agree to a limitation of 15 miles, and if a farmer desires to sell to another 150 miles away he will still have the right, under Clause 22, to apply to the board for permission. Seeing that the growers have been so satisfied with the board over the last two or three years, I cannot understand why their representatives should wish to embarrass the board in this way.

Hon. A. L. Loton: I think the Minister is painting a gloomy picture, but I am prepared to accept his suggestion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will require the addition of some words.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I shall accept the Chief Secretary's suggestion and ask leave to add the words "within a radius of 15 miles" at the end of my amendment.

Leave given.

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

Clause 21—agreed to.

Clause 22—Duty to sell and deliver barley to board:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: The barley growers' executive feels that there should be some right of appeal if barley is rejected by the board. It thinks there should be an appeal to an officer of the Department of Agriculture. There is a difference of opinion as to what is good barley. I took a sample of barley to the Union Malting Works, and the expert said that it was beautiful barley ruined; that it was skinned, and therefore no good, but when the trucks were sent to Perth I received top price for it. If the board said the barley was to be docked or rejected altogether the growers should have the right of appeal in order to see whether the board was right or wrong. I move an amendment—

That a new subclause be inserted as follows:—“(4) A producer shall have the right to appeal to an officer of the Department of Agriculture (appointed for the purpose) for a ruling on the quality of his barley if the board determines such barley is not of merchantable quality.”

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot agree to the amendment. As I understand it, the board will appoint appraisers for this work and will appoint the best men available. Should there be many complaints about the work of those appraisers it would be the duty of the board to discover the reason and, if necessary, to terminate the engagement of the man or men concerned. If agreed to, the amendment would mean that an officer of the Department of Agriculture would be asked to make a determination. Mr. Wood has pointed out the difference of opinion between experts as to the quality of barley, and it would create an anomalous position if an officer of the department were asked to overrule the decision of officers of the board. Unless provision were put in the Bill that, in the event of an appeal being upheld, the board should accept that decision, the amendment would be futile. It is no use appealing to somebody else unless it is laid down that the party appealed against shall accept the decision. No self-respecting board would like to be placed in that position. I cannot see the difficulties envisaged by Mr. Wood, and I cannot accept the amendment.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: This amendment has been moved at the request of the barley executive on which there are three members of the present board, so apparently they consider it desirable. In the appraising of wool, an umpire may be called in, and I think an appeal in this case is necessary.

The Chief Secretary: Let the board solve that problem.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: If the Minister takes that attitude, I will not press the amendment, but ask leave to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 23 to 41, Title—agreed to

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.20]: It is undesirable for the State to embark on any competitive enter-

prise or enterprises unless there is some valid criticism of the services and the efficiency of those services that are made available by existing interests. To the best of my knowledge, no such criticism, valid or otherwise, has been levelled against the facilities for insurance in this State. The extension of any existing Government enterprise can be justified only if it will provide greater benefits than are being made available and at comparable cost or, alternatively, if the Government seeks to set up opposition to a monopoly.

It cannot truly be said that there is any monopoly existing in the insurance business in Western Australia. As a matter of fact, insurance is a highly competitive business. In open competition are the associated companies, the non-associated companies, the tariff companies, the non-tariff companies, the mutual life companies, and the non-associated underwriters' group. In addition to these, there is, of course, the Government Insurance Office, which is able to effect insurance in workers' compensation, every type of insurance for motor vehicles, insurance in all classes for local governing bodies, and all insurance connected with Government property and State undertakings.

Following on the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch on another Bill, I can support him in saying it is doubtful whether the efficiency of any Government department can ever enable it to compete with private institutions. Open competition between the independent insurance companies ensures both a minimum of cost and a maximum of efficiency. Most insurance, but more particularly life assurance, is not bought. In saying that, I mean that people do not go up to the counter and ask to assure their lives. Generally speaking, life assurance has to be sold, with the attendant expense of selling. The setting up of a life department in the State office would be anything but an inexpensive business. Then there would be the necessity of establishing actuarial reserves, and this would mean that for a number of years at least there would be no possibility of any bonuses being declared by the life department of the State office, unless, of course, the Government subsidised the office. Should the Government do that, it would be a matter of the general taxpayer meeting this expense for the benefit of the

comparatively few people who would be holding life policies in the Government office.

An interesting example of this is presented by the New South Wales life office. The New South Wales Government Insurance Office established a life branch as late as 1943, and, as far as I can ascertain, no valuation has ever been made public of the business done by the office. The State office of New South Wales guaranteed a one per cent. bonus to all policy-holders on the value of the sum assured, and to meet this obligation, the New South Wales Government had to subsidise the life department to the extent of £50,000 and, in addition, the life department had to borrow another £50,000 from the general department. These are very large sums of money, considering the short period in which this office has been in existence.

There are two other Government life assurance offices with which we may make comparisons—the Queensland office and the New Zealand office. The Government offices in Queensland and New Zealand have been established for a very long time, but there the experience has been, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, that life assurance has to be sold. Their method follows largely that of the mutual life companies and private life companies, but even by adopting the expedient of appointing public servants as canvassers and agents at a remuneration lower than the fees paid to employees of mutual and private life companies, they have not been able to keep their expenses lower. They have found that even with this advantage and with the other advantages accruing to Government instrumentalities, such as the non-payment of income tax, municipal rates and other charges, they are only just able to keep their costs of obtaining new business at about the same level as that of the mutual and private companies.

Bills such as this one to extend the operations of the State Government Insurance Office continue to come before the House with monotonous regularity in the hope, no doubt, of breaking down our opposition. By this process of attrition, the Government has been successful in breaking down a lot of opposition. So far as this Bill is concerned, I hope the House will stand firm and not permit the Government to extend the

operations of the State Insurance Office along the lines proposed. I oppose the second reading.

On motion by Hon. G. Fraser, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.29 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1946.

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

QUESTIONS.

ROAD FUNDS.

As to State's Share of Petrol Tax, Etc.

Mr. RODOREDA asked the Premier:

1, What amounts on account of road funds have been received from the Commonwealth Government, being this State's share of petrol tax for each of the years 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945 and 1946?

2, What amounts were expended for each of the above years?

3, What was the balance to credit of road funds at the 30th June, 1946?

The PREMIER replied:

1, Year ended 30/6/42, amount £403,720; 30/6/43, £302,420; 30/6/44, £334,017; 30/6/45, £399,435; 30/6/46, £594,787.

2, 30/6/42, £271,029; 30/6/43, £204,016; 30/6/44, £216,343; 30/6/45, £314,227; 30/6/46, £364,255.

3, £899,888.

GOLDMINING.

As to Use of Bulldozers and Provision of Boring Plants.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Mines:

1, Has consideration been given by the Mines Department to the possibilities in the use of bulldozers in assisting prospectors to discover new gold-bearing reefs or payable lodes?

2, If already tried, with what results?

3, How many portable boring plants, of recent approved pattern, has the Government in operation in boring for gold?

4, What depth are these plants designed to bore?

5, On what basis are the plants operating?

The MINISTER replied:

1, and 2, Not to date.

3, Six mobile boring plants have been ordered from the manufacturers, who advise some delay in completion owing to shortage of channel iron and castings. The first is expected in approximately four weeks' time.

4, Approximately 150 feet.

5, It is intended to loan them to approved applicants.

6, I have also approached the Commonwealth Government with a request that it makes available for purchase by this Department from Army stocks four heavy portable compressor and drill units. A decision is being awaited.

MT. BARKER HOSPITAL.

As to Staff for Re-opening.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Health:

1, Has the staff been found that is necessary to enable the hospital at Mt. Barker to re-open?

2, If so, when will it be available?

3, If not, are urgent steps being taken to provide it in view of the urgency of condi-