Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: But the hon. member would deprive them of the profit. If there is to be grabbing and paying out all the time, the profits will not be available to keep the industry alive. No Government would ever undertake the opening of a mine such as that at Bullfinch; it would not indulge in the gamble as private enterprise is prepared to do. Neither would any Government have undertaken the mining at Norseman. Those are thriving towns, and they have been built up on profits obtained from mining and put back into the industry. No Government could do that. The companies must be allowed to make profits in order that they might be able to carry on. Lancefield was a thriving town at one time because money was available to invest and showed a likelihood of giving a reasonable profit. Remove that chance of receiving a good reward for the gamble, and there will not be investment in the future.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: The only thing we disagree on is the responsibility of the mining industry, or the manufacturer, to the workers generally.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I trust that the hon. member will not show such a lack of knowledge of the subject as to imply that the mining companies do not show a responsibility to the workers. I doubt whether any other industry or group of employers shows such a great sense of responsibility to its employees as does the mining industry.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You are saying, in effect, that we should not grant the workers this compensation.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: On the contrary, I am advocating the provision of a reasonable increase. The only thing I am challenging is something which I believe might be unreasonable, which the industry cannot bear, and which will have a detrimental effect on the advancement of the industry. If the hon. member could assure me that the price of gold on the open market would jump from 56 to 60 dollars an ounce tomorrow, I would be with him all the way.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I think it will.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: But I would not be prepared to invest what little money I have on that assurance. I repeat that I hope members will give very serious consideration to the Bill and treat it reasonably, bearing in mind that we who are interested in the goldmining industry feel gravely concerned. We realise the responsibility of the industry to cover the worker and give him reasonable compensation, but it must be reasonable to both sides. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. McI. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 11th November, 1953.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTIONS.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Rate Concession to Pensioners.

Mr. BOVELL asked the Treasurer:

As recent increases in water rates in the metropolitan area and country districts have caused old-age, invalid and war pensioners who reside in and own their homes, considerable financial embarrassment, will he grant special rebate concessions to those pensioners?

The TREASURER replied:

Power does not exist under which special rebate concessions in connection with water rates may be granted to pensioners.

However, invalid and old-age pensioners and pensioners under the Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Act may obtain relief by claiming exemption from payment of rates under the provisions of existing legislation, in which case the deferred rates accumulate and become a first charge on the property.

HARBOURS.

As to Construction of No. 10 Berth, Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) When is the department going on with the construction of No. 10 berth, Fremantle harbour?

(2) How long is it estimated to take to complete the work?

(3) What is the estimated cost?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Preliminary work has been commenced but authorised funds are limited.

(2) Date of completion will be controlled largely by the availability of funds. If sufficient funds were available work could be completed in two to two and half years.

(3) £900,000.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Expenditure for Access Roads.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is the War Service Land Settlement Board empowered to expend from its funds moneys necessary to provide road access from repurchased properties subdivided for war service settlers?

(2) If so, is there any limit to the expenditure allowed, and are there any conditions precedent to approval of expenditure, and if so, what are they?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The Land Settlement Board has no funds provided by the Commonwealth for the provision of roads.

ROYAL VISIT.

As to Holiday Arrangements.

Mr. BOVELL asked the Premier:

(1) Will he inform the House of full details of the proposed holiday arrangements for the Royal tour during March, 1954, with special reference to the country districts of Kalgoorlie, Northam, York, Albany and Busselton?

(2) What action is necessary by local and other authorities adjacent to towns mentioned in No. (1) to secure the most suitable day proclaimed a public holiday?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) A Bill will be introduced giving the Governor power to proclaim a holiday. The holiday in the metropolitan area will be observed on Monday, the 29th March. Local authorities adjacent to towns in the Royal itinerary will be given the option of having the holiday on the day of the visit to the town concerned, or on the 29th March.

(2) Local authorities should communicate with the Premier's Department advising their choice.

SWAN RIVER.

As to Deposit of Noxious Wastes.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Works:

Will he favour the House, during the debate on the Estimates, with a review of the position regarding the Swan River with reference to noxious wastes?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

STREET DISTURBANCE.

As to Police Court Penalties.

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) Did he observe in "The West Australian" under date Thursday, the 5th November last, an account of the trial of five men who were involved in a disturbance in Newcastle-st., Perth, on the 24th October last?

(2) As four of the men were convicted and fined, and the other who pleaded guilty to the charge of assaulting a constable in the disturbance was released without a conviction being recorded, will he give the reason why the fifth man did not receive similar treatment to the others?

(3) If the Press report of the trial was correct, does he not consider that the inclination of the "basher" will be that members of the Police Force can be assaulted without fear of any punishment being inflicted for the offence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The evidence disclosed that the fifth man was not directly involved in the brawl. He was driving past after the disturbance commenced and alighted from his car to remonstrate with a constable concerning the constable's handling of one of the men involved, who had a gash on his head. Although the fifth man is alleged to have struck the constable, it was admitted that it was an extremely light blow. He went away but returned to make a complaint to the Police sergeant regarding the constable. The constable stated that he wanted to charge the man, who was then arrested.

The magistrate has stressed that the man was not engaged in the disturbance. He has an excellent record and was well spoken of in court by the manager of an insurance company.

(3) No. The facts do not disclose any intention of "basher" methods on the part of the person referred to.

HOSPITALS.

As to Installation of Lift, Bunbury.

Mr. GUTHRIE asked the Minister for Health:

Will he inform the House what is the present position with regard to the installation of a lift at the Bunbury hospital?

The MINISTER replied:

The project is still under consideration.

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Rocky Gully Bus Service.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Transport:

Referring to a question on the 24th September, what decision has been reached regarding the proposed extension of the bus service from Rocky Gully to Albany via Mt. Barker?

The MINISTER replied:

The bus service from Rocky Gully to Mt. Barker on Thursdays is being extended to Albany for a trial period commencing next month.

(b) As to Freight Capacity and Overtime Work.

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he still satisfied that the railways can handle the 1953-54 harvest and superphosphate transport to the 28th February, 1954, having regard to railway leave commitments between now and that date?

(2) If so, will it necessitate the working of considerable overtime by railway workers?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Some overtime will be necessary. Overtime is necessary generally during the wheat and super seasons.

(c) As to Homes for Employees.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) As it is estimated that 250 railway employees in the metropolitan area are waiting on allocations of tenancy homes from the estates section of the Railway Accounts Branch, will he state—

(a) the number of houses available for tenants;

(b) the number of houses in course of erection;

(c) the number of prefab houses in storage;

(d) the anticipated number of houses to be erected for railway employees in the metropolitan area during the current year?

(2) In view of the distressing housing conditions of 64 railway families, will he consider converting the delicensed hotel in Great Eastern Highway, Midland Junction, into flats to ease the position?

(3) Will he confer with the Minister for Housing with the view to erecting houses on Reserve 2101? Greenmount?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Three hundred and thirty-five departmental houses in metropolitan area.

(b) Twenty-nine in metropolitan area with a further 29 still the subject of discussion as between country and metropolitan location.

(c) One hundred and eighty-three.

(d) For the balance of the current financial year, the building programme will be limited to that shown in (b) above, due to financial limitations.

(2) Funds are not available for this purpose.

(3) The Railway Commission has ample building space on the Wexcombe estate for railway housing, and is proceeding with this project. The Greenmount reserve was investigated about two years ago, but was rejected for housing on the report of the Public Health Department and because of water supply difficulties.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND MINING COMPANY.

As to Government Assistance.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) Since making the advance of £3,000 (covered by hire purchase agreement) to the Northern Development Mining Coy. Pty. Ltd., which was referred to in answers to my questions on the 9th September, 1953, has the Government given any further financial assistance of any kind to this company?

(2) If so, what amount, when, and for what purposes?

(3) What amount is now owing by the company to the Government?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) and (2) No.

(3) £3,000.

HEALTH.

As to Departmental Control of Benefit Fund.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has the Health or Medical Department any control over the administrative activities of the Hospital Benefit Fund the office of which is situated at Hay-st., Perth?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, what is the extent of such control?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) No.

PARLIAMENTARY BILLS.

As to Copies for Members' Constituents.

Mr. NALDER (without notice) asked the Premier:

Has it been the accepted practice in the past for members, on request, to obtain extra copies of Bills to forward to interested parties in their electorates? If so, will he make available extra copies of the Aborigines' Welfare Bill which was introduced by the Minister for Native Welfare last night?

The PREMIER replied:

I will endeavour to have additional copies made available.

REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY.

As to State Government Representation.

Mr. MAY (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Was the State Government represented at the ceremony held this morning at the State war memorial?

(2) If so, was a wreath laid at the memorial on behalf of the people of this State?

(3) Is he aware that no mention was made of this in this evening's issue of the "Daily News," although the R.S.L. and the three services were mentioned?

(4) Does the Premier feel that this was an oversight on the part of the paper concerned?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) The Chief Secretary, Hon. G. Fraser, represented the Government, and laid a wreath at the memorial on its behalf.

(3) and (4) I have no knowledge of the reason that caused the newspaper not to publish that information.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1, Bulk Handling Act Amendment, (No. 1).
Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

2, Upper Darling Range Railway Lands Revestment.
Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

3, Cattle Industry Compensation.
Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

4, Police Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Police.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.

2, Public Trustee Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. Brady in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 3, page 2: Delete all the words after the word "by" in line 9 and substitute therefor the following words:—

> deleting subsection (2) and substituting therefor the following:—
>
> (2) The Company, if its first directors are not appointed by the articles, shall within a period of twenty-eight days from the appointment of the first directors of the company send to the Registrar a return in the prescribed form containing the particulars specified in the said register.
>
> Provided that where the said return relates to the appointment of a director not resident in the Commonwealth of Australia, the period within which the said return is to be sent shall be three months from the date of the appointment.

Mr. BRADY: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

I consider the amendment is an improvement on the provision I wished to have inserted in the Act.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 7, page 3: Delete the words "a person named in the articles as" in lines 14 and 15.

Mr. BRADY: This is also an improvement on the original wording. It deletes a few redundant words. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Proposed Extension Scheme.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [4.50]: I move—

> That this House requests the Government to go on with the outward extension to the south scheme instead of the up-river scheme for the Fremantle harbour.

I think everyone will agree with me that the question of where the present rail bridge should or should not go, and where the harbour should or should not go, boils down to two or three propositions. One is the erecting of a new bridge at Point Brown, which means going upstream roughly 880 yards, which would give 11 new berths, or a total of 30 berths. Another is the erecting of a rail bridge adjacent to the present one, which would provide for five new berths, making a total of 24, and would mean that the harbour would go upriver for roughly 440 yards.

The third is the construction of a new bridge upstream close to the present rail bridge, making two extra berths, or 21 in all, and the last proposition, which I think is the best, is the construction of a new berth, No. 10, in the present harbour. This is necessary, and the Minister said tonight it would be about 2½ years before it would be completed. That would give us a total of 19 berths. We would then go outside to the south with the new outer harbour.

I moved a similar motion to this some time ago, and it was not successful. It was defeated by two or three votes, and this time I am hoping the motion will win by two or three votes. Col. Tydeman in his report stated—

> If the harbour extension goes upstream, insoluble difficulties will be left to posterity.

He also said that port extension was better seaward than upstream. He pointed out that the seaward extension was more to the advantage of the town planner, and also that one accident to a tanker inside the harbour would put the port out of commission for years. On that matter, Col. Tydeman said—his then remarks might need a little alteration now that the oil berths are going to Cockburn Sound, which is what I recommended some time ago—that the seaward extension provided all the requirements of upstream schemes, which have insufficient land for unrestricted layout.

Whilst I did not previously recommend that the outer harbour should go to Cockburn Sound, I did recommend that the oil berths should be there. I see the ex-Minister for Works smiling, but he knows that is perfectly true. Col. Tydeman also said—

> Upstream development is more expensive than seawards development when the whole scheme is considered, but in the initial stages it is cheaper.

Again, he said—

> A site for a rail bridge beside the adjacent road bridge is a possibility from the railway viewpoint. Such a scheme is indicated in the appendix. But there are disadvantages with a 12-chain curve and a bad gradient of 1 in 60 in the southern approach to the bridge, and it would be inconvenient and inefficient.

Col. Tydeman and Mr. Dumas requested Sir Alexander Gibb to bring down a report and propose a scheme for a bridge to be placed adjacent to the present traffic bridge. If that request had never been made, we would never have had a report to put a bridge there.

I shall point out later that Col. Tydeman strongly recommended against this, and also, reading between the lines, we find that Sir Alexander Gibb was not in favour of it, although he brought his report down, as requested, as it was his job to do. In effect, he said, "There you are. You asked for it, and now you have it. You can do what you like with it."

Mr. Meyer, in his report, said—

> If the harbour is extended upstream there will be occasion for special precautions against physical pollution finding its way into Freshwater Bay.

I tell the member for Nedlands that if the authorities persist in going upstream, not only will Freshwater Bay become pretty smelly, but we shall have a smelly Nedlands, too. It used to be "Naughty Nedlands" once. If the harbour goes upstream, it will be "Smelly Nedlands," so I hope the member for Nedlands will take notice of what I say, and see that this does not occur.

Mr. Oldfield: It is still naughty. It has the pool, you know.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It has improved. It is no longer known as "Naughty Nedlands." A lot of the nice people live there now. Sir Alexander Gibb, in his previous report, pointed out that it would be preferable to go on with the outer harbour idea. I do not put myself up as an engineer, but one does not need to be an engineer because there are no engineering problems in either of the schemes, unless it be this, that it was proposed to put a bridge where it was not known whether there was a bottom or not.

When it comes to the point of putting a bridge there and it is found there is no suitable bottom, I suppose the Treasurer will be asked to find, perhaps, another £500,000. I have previously told the House that, when a dock was to be constructed, an engineer was sent for, and when he was asked, "Can you build a dock there?"

he said, "An engineer can build a dock anywhere, provided you give him enough money."

It is proposed now to build a temporary bridge at a cost of about £1,630,000, which does not include any resumptions of land; and that is providing there is a bottom, but that is not known. When I spoke on the scheme last time, the then Minister said, "We think there is something in what the member for Fremantle says, but we cannot assess it until we get the report of Sir Alexander Gibb." We have that report, and also the bill for it, but we have not got the bottom. He points out that certain things can be done, provided the bottom is there.

Further, Col. Tydeman said that before anything could be done we had to prove a bottom was there, and it would take something like two years to do the necessary boring. It will be a pretty long time before we finish this job of work.

Hon. L. Thorn: What are the reasons for having a bottom?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: We cannot stand a bridge on air.

Hon. L Thorn: It is something for it to sit on.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There has to be something to put the piles into. They cannot stand on water or air. Parliamentarians are also laymen and cannot be blamed if they make a mistake in ignorance, but if they make it with their eyes wide open, after having been warned of the dangers, they stand condemned for all time by this generation and those yet to come. We have been warned about what will happen if we go here, and what will not happen if we go there. In these circumstances, it is not much trouble for laymen to come to a decision.

We have the reports of four or five engineers in which everything is pointed out to us, and we now have to decide which scheme we shall adopt. Posterity will never be able to say that the 1953 member for Fremantle let it down, because he will do his best. I do not know what his best will be, but I am hoping for the best. He will do something with his eyes open, after having been told that it would be a tragic blunder and a catastrophe if the harbour were allowed to go upstream. This is why I shall try to explain to the House why the engineers have said it should go outside.

Firstly, let me quote from paragraph 186 on page 87, Vol. 2, of Col. Tydeman's report. It states:—

> Although port extension schemes beyond the Outer Harbour on the exposed coast are unsuitable on the grounds of distance from the existing trade centre, they are an engineering possibility. Such schemes would not have natural primary protection from rough westerly weather, as is afforded to the Outer Harbour by reefs and islands. This would have to be provided artificially, and the immense capital cost expended on such massive marine structures, i.e., breakwaters, etc., would militate against such port extension projects.

That is the port extension down Rockingham way and is not the actual outer harbour scheme. He goes on—

> Schemes within the Outer Harbour would be lightened financially by Nature's existing provision of islands and reefs. Partially protected deep water exists naturally and is capable of expansion by dredging. Such dredged material might be utilised for reclamation to produce port land and land also for township or commercial development, the latter contributing towards lightening the financial burden.
>
> Schemes within the Inner Harbour involve costly and difficult problems of cross-river communications; Nature has provided but shallow waterways which would involve considerable cost of deepening and straightening; and land resumptions of surrounding township and commercial areas might prove expensive.
>
> Upriver schemes must not be cramped in outlook. Adequate land for efficient berth and port operation must be included. Existing berths operate with restricted land at consequent low efficiency. In such condition, greater capital cost per ton of cargo moved is involved.

He is speaking there of the present harbour. He continues—

> Similar layout must not be repeated further upstream.

I hope members listened to that portion of his report. Now we come to paragraph 187 on the same page. It states—

> Choice of site—Sites for port extension range from locations at exposed coasts far from Fremantle to areas near the existing port. Salient features of such sites are as follows:—

Site.	Land.	Land Approaches.	Harbour Works.	Trade Centre.
(a) Exposed coast	Unlimited	Easy	Expensive	Too far away
(b) Outer Harbour	Unlimited	Easy	Cheaper	Suitable for future
(c) Inner Harbour	Restricted	Difficult	Cheaper	Adjacent

Members should notice that under the outer harbour scheme, he has mentioned that there is unlimited land available, land approaches are easy and the trade centre is suitable for the future. I do not think any engineer should recommend a scheme where the adjacent land is restricted; and

with the inner harbour scheme he says that the land is restricted and the land approaches are difficult. He goes on—

> Thus, assuming engineering possibility in all cases, the problem of choice of site for immediate future extension resolves itself to one of an Outer Harbour site near (i.e., seawards of) the existing port, or to an Inner Harbour site, and the decision of either or both for future development will revolve mainly on considerations of costs of works, of land available, and of developability of the site.
>
> The essential requirement of protected deep water for ships includes many important considerations. The site for a port or port extensions must allow safe approach of the ship to the port from the open ocean. Approaches to the port must be of sufficient width, depth and capable of easy identification day or night to allow safe navigation at all times. The actual entrance or entrances to the port must be navigable with or without the assistance of tugs, and of sufficient width and depth, taken into consideration with local weather and marine characteristics, for the purpose.

Members must know that the present Fremantle harbour does not possess an entrance which enables ships to enter the harbour with or without the assistance of tugs in all weathers. It is a fair-weather port only; it is certainly not a stormy-weather port. We frequently have the spectacle of mailboats being held up for 10 or 12 hours at a time because of stormy weather. We will not have those difficulties if the harbour is extended outside.

Further upstream there is a width of only 900-ft. and we all know that ships are increasing in size all the time. The report of the Harbour Trust Commissioners points out that bigger ships are being built notwithstanding the fact that we were told some time ago that ships of a smaller size would be built. If we are to have a port that can be used only when the weather is good and the tugs are available, and the present harbour is extended 400 or 500 yards further upstream, the position will become even worse. He then continues—

> Thus, any site chosen must:—
> (i) Be near the existing trade centre of Fremantle.
> (ii) Have good road and rail access, i.e., undeveloped flat land.
> (iii) Have ample land for port development.
> (iv) Provide safe ship navigation and entry.
> (v) Have shelter from northwesterly seas and southerly swells.
> (vi) Be free from silt or sand drift.
> (vii) Cater for Swan River flow or flooding.
>
> Schemes for seawards expansion provide all these requirements, but upriver schemes have insufficient land for unrestricted layout.

In view of those requirements, how could anyone decide upon extension of the harbour upstream where there is insufficient land for unrestricted layout? If the harbour is extended outside, all the requirements are available to provide us with a beautiful harbour. So I ask members to take those factors into consideration when making a decision.

Now we come to paragraph 87, page 28 of Volume 2, with reference to a site for a railway bridge. This is important because the Government wrote to Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners and asked them to make a report and requested the firm to draw up a plan for a bridge which was to be sited alongside the present Fremantle traffic bridge. First of all, the Government gave the firm the job of reporting on the project and then said, "We want you to prepare a report and submit a scheme for a bridge to be situated alongside the present traffic bridge." This is what Col. Tydeman had to say about it—

> A site for a rail bridge beside the adjacent road bridge is a possibility from the railway viewpoint (such a scheme is indicated in Appendix 27) but there are disadvantages. With a 12-chain curve and a bad gradient of 1 in 60 southern approach to the bridge, continued use could be permitted of the existing Fremantle yard station, but the main line entry into the port system, and port rail operation, would be inefficient. If a 1 in 100 grade (ruling in the metropolitan area) were introduced it would cause serious disturbance and inconvenience at Fremantle on the south side. Grading would be satisfactory on the north side of the river but a new North Fremantle station and reorganised yard would be necessary, entailing, at its best, inconvenient and inefficient operation to berths and railway alike. The scheme is feasible purely from the engineering side, but not from the operating angle; disturbance of the north side of the river would be considerable and almost as much as the Point Brown scheme.

What is the use of having a scheme that would be inefficient and inconvenient and would be no good from the operating angle? I do not think the Treasurer would relish the thought of paying out money for a scheme such as that. Col. Tydeman goes on—

> The existing rail bridge is a timber structure not suitable for replacement in timber because:—
> (a) Jarrah timbers of the size required for piles are not now readily procurable.

(b) Wheel loads are now greater, and will be still greater in the future, than those for which the existing structure was originally designed.

(c) The existing timber structure blocks free river flow (see Part V, paragraph 102) and causes currents in the harbour navigable waterway which, if eliminated, would result in improvement in handling of existing and future larger ships. Thus piers and clear spans of at least 80-ft. to 100-ft. should be substituted. Spans could be larger, of the truss type upwards of 200-ft., and would give a slight river headroom advantage in being so, but shorter plate girder spans would permit greater economy in gradients to each river bank.

Thus if the bridge is rebuilt, a temporary short-life structure in timber would be neither possible nor desirable; a more permanent long longer-life structure only would be acceptable. This being so, and better rail curves and gradients, and river traffic head-room being required, a permanent structure should be sited upstream, the further towards Point Brown the better.

Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners cannot be blamed for the report they submitted. All through the report they said, "We have given you this report but the bridge should not go any further south than the one mentioned in Scheme C." So members can see that although they submitted the scheme, they were not happy about it.

Now we come to paragraph 6, pages 9 and 10 of Vol. 1, and with reference to cross-river communications, Col. Tydeman had this to say—

> Existing rail and road bridges are sited more than one mile from the Swan River mouth and upstream of existing port facilities. Below these bridges, in the port area, there are no cross-river communications of major character and the large adjacent area of town land which ultimately will develop into highly populated and industrial zones will have no direct cross-river access for growing volumes of road and rail traffic.
>
> As normal development of more intensive conditions eventuates, direct communication by means of continuous highways between these isolated town areas and downstream of existing bridges will become essential, creating familiar and difficult problems faced today by many older ports. Posterity will thus be confronted with what may prove to be insoluble problems resulting in impasse. Cross-river communications, essential nearer the mouth of the river than at present to cater for the developing township, and practicable only in the form of extremely expensive bridges or tunnels of sufficient height or depth respectively to permit navigable passage of ships in the river, may prove economically and/or engineeringly impossible.
>
> If port development takes place upstream, existing rail and road bridges also must be re-sited further upstream. In consequence there will be an even greater extent of intensified township area downstream on both river banks, requiring direct cross-river communications for the greater traffic involved; more high level bridges or tunnels (the only positive communication method that does not obstruct shipping) will be required in consequence. This problem to posterity, of virtually insoluble difficulties of bridges high enough to pass increasingly large ships beneath, or tunnels deep enough to allow gradually deeper navigable dredged depths of water, will thus be intensified by upriver development. High level bridges and tunnels are costly structures running into several millions of pounds.
>
> If port development takes place seawards, away from existing township areas, the bridges will remain sited as they are and cross-river communication problems will remain, but in less concentrated form initially than for upstream development. Other problems, arising from re-siting existing rail and road bridges, as the first initial stage, will thus be avoided.

I think that is another point that should be considered by the House when making its decision on the motion. The next extract I will quote from Col. Tydeman's report is that included in paragraph 34, page 20, Volume 1. It reads—

> By constructing one new berth in the existing inner harbour (on the available site upstream of the bulk wheat plant on the north bank), the total annual port capacity could be increased to about 4,200,000 (s) tons.

Members should read that in conjunction with paragraph 200 which appears on page 95 of Volume 2 which is as follows:—

> As will be shown later, the port is not fully used, and were more ships and trade available, the existing maximum tonnage of some 1,800,000 (s) tons is capable of increase with improvements to 4,000,000 (s) tons. These tonnages are within the capacity of the entrance channel. Thus if no more than the

> 18 Inner Harbour berths are to be operated, little or no change to the existing channel movement and method of ship changeover need to be contemplated. But if port extensions upriver are visualised providing more berths with a capacity greater than 4,000,000 (s) tons, and involving more ship moves through the entrance each day, the existing entrance channel and its method of operation will need special examination and possible modification. Beyond 8,000,000 (s) tons per year duplication of the entrance will be necessary.

That part of the report shows that if the harbour is to accommodate a total tonnage of over 4,000,000 per year, it will be necessary to make special modifications to the channel entrance. If the department implements its intention to build a harbour upstream, such work will be extremely expensive. The engineers have pointed out that the harbour has already accommodated shipping tonnages totalling more than 4,000,000 tons.

I remember, in 1951, that the total tonnage in the Fremantle harbour did exceed 4,000,000. Following the restrictions imposed on imports, the tonnage coming into the harbour dropped, but that position will not last long; the tonnage today has increased already and is continuing to increase. Some members may say that several ships may berth at Cockburn Sound, but that is highly problematical at present.

Mr. J. Hegney: Whose report is that you are quoting?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I have been quoting from Vols. 1 and 2 of Col. Tydeman's report. As I have already pointed out, in 1950-51 Fremantle harbour handled 3,130,000 tons and in 1952-53 the harbour accommodated 2,829,000 tons; a decrease of 301,000 tons. However, in the near future I can visualise the tonnage handled again increasing to over 4,000,000 and in view of the fact that the Minister has said that the construction of No. 10 berth will take some two and a half years, I am afraid the work will have to be speeded up in order to accommodate the increased shipping in the future.

We know that money is scarce, but we might be able to point out to the Government how it could avoid expenditure in some directions and so spend the money thus saved on the construction of No. 10 berth which is so badly needed. Paragraph 35 of the report, appearing on page 21 of Volume 1 reads as follows:—

> Whatever scheme is adopted must provide sufficient land to operate the berths efficiently, and not repeat the serious restrictions in land area now extant.

On nearly every page Col. Tydeman refers to the restriction of land if the harbour is built upstream, but if it is built seaward there is everything needed for the construction of the harbour. Continuing—

> Development seawards suffers from no restriction of land, would cause lesser problems of cross-river communication, and impose no restriction on the number of berths possible. It thus offers to posterity an area for unlimited port expansion for all time. From the engineering and navigational standpoints seawards development schemes are possible.
>
> Development seawards of the port, unrestricted in the matter of land area, will be more to the advantage of town planners than upstream development in congested and developed areas, and where land resumption and considerable changes would have to take place.
>
> The width of the existing waterway in the port, viz., 1,400 ft. (and the existing narrow, curved hard entrance), limits the general use of the port to ships of about 750 ft. long in favourable wind and current conditions and with full tuggage requirements.

So, with good weather and plenty of tugs the harbour can accommodate ships up to 750ft. in length. Continuing—

> Thus in upstream development, unless this stream width is increased in the existing Inner Harbour or a larger diameter turning basin created at the expense of many of the existing berths, ships of no greater size than at present will ever be able to use the inner port. If seawards expansion takes place, there will be no difficulty in creating immediately a turning circle of sufficient size to admit the largest ships afloat today or likely to exist in the reasonable future. Thus seaward extension has an advantage in the matter of ship size.

I think that is a serious statement. He says, "Unless the stream width is increased in the inner harbour." How can we increase the width of the inner harbour? I do not think that we can push the south quay to one side and I fail to see how the harbour can be widened on the other side either. Col. Tydeman also points out—

> This is not likely to be a matter of immediate importance as there are but few regular ships of 750ft. length calling or likely to call in the near future.

What a beautiful harbour it would be if we knew that we could accommodate the biggest ships afloat and know that they would not be held up for 12 to 14 hours because they could not get out of the enclosed waters in the way that occurs at

present. It is a big disadvantage when mailboats are delayed in the harbour with two or three tugs at their side. I cannot understand why the shipping companies have not complained before this, because it happens not once, but frequently. If there is any sort of a blow the ships cannot get out.

However, here is a proposal for the construction of a port which, when completed, will allow ships to sail in and out as they please, no matter what the weather may be. I think the House should agree to asking the Government to build the harbour seaward and not upstream in view of the existing conditions. I will now quote from paragraph 77, page 21, Volume 2. It reads—

> If future extensions of the port are ever carried seawards, many unfettered sites for graving-docks will become available. There are no bores in these areas. Seaward sites are the most favourable future solution: this is a point in favour of seaward extensions.

I think all members will agree that that is necessary in connection with a large commercial port like Fremantle. We are badly in need of a dock for commercial boats. We know that the navy does not require many land-based docks in these times. I have here the latest report on naval docks. It reads as follows:—

> What the U.S. Navy Wants From Spain.
>
> What the U.S. Navy wants on the Spanish coast is large anchorages,—

The United States navy has for many years been trying to get a large bay for naval anchorages. Continuing the report—

> —not naval bases with extensive shore installations.
>
> After the report that the late Admiral Forest Sherman and Generalissimo Francisco Franco had agreed to open negotiations for the establishment of air and naval bases in Spain, a U.S. naval authority explained to me what America had in mind.
>
> "What we need are large protected fleet anchorages" he said. "We learnt in the last war to get along without the old style fixed bases with all the facilities ashore."
>
> Everything the biggest fleet needs can be put afloat—including the largest drydocks. In the great Pacific anchorages of World War II—Ulithi, Eniwetok, Manus and Leyte Bay—the Allied navy had on shipboard every conceivable facility for supplies, repairs, distilling of water and hospitalisation.
>
> This was something new in naval history. In the old days an axiom among naval stategists was that a fleet should not venture more than a certain distance from homes bases.
>
> Plans had been laid long before the war for the building of floating bases. They were not developed until the war, when the U.S. navy had the money and urgent need for them.
>
> All that is needed to make a fleet at home in the most distant waters is a bay or other deep body of water with land giving protection against the sea.
>
> The anchorage must be pretty large to give room for a modern task force. Each ship, swinging, on its anchor chain in the wind and tide, takes up a circle of 500yds. to 1,000yds. in diameter. A bay or lagoon at least 10 to 15 miles wide is needed.

I think that that will be a great consolation to the member for Albany because I know that he is of the opinion that he has just the ideal harbour for a big naval anchorage in the outer harbour at Albany and one of these days I can visualise our naval authorities approaching him and saying, "This is an ideal harbour and we will make an anchorage here."

Mr. Hill: I am glad you realise that now.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Returning to Col. Tydeman's report I will now quote paragraph 83, page 26, Vol. 2. It is as follows:—

> Some ports overcome the problem partially by means of bridges with opening spans of ferries systems, intermittent to ships and road traffic alike, and unsatisfactory to all. Some ports are forced to install expensive high level bridges or tunnels giving positive movement to ships and road traffic. Again, high level bridges or tunnels may not even be possible or acceptable.
>
> Thus a problem will arise ultimately to provide at Fremantle a suitable river crossing, downstream of the existing low-level bridge, which will permit the passage of ships and land transport at the same time.
>
> If a new Fremantle station site is ever contemplated in the future (making available to the port the land now used as the railway yard and station site), probably giving better rail access to the Robbs Jetty main line southwards, a new rail bridge site upstream of the existing road bridge might become necessary. This bridge would not be likely to affect port problems further downstream.

Now I come to paragraph 85, which reads—

> There are many instances past and present where problems of cross-river communication versus port develop-

ment have reached an impasse. In the Port of London, the necessity of maintaining continuously usable navigable waterways in the past has brought about the construction of many cross-river tunnels for rail, road and conduit traffic. The depth of these was governed by economic and engineering considerations of the past. Today these structures restrict deepening of the river beyond certain limits, and will continue to restrict navigational development until their useful life has been served. The cost of such tunnels is high, the Liverpool four-lane traffic tunnel under the River Mersey, for example, cost about £5,500,000 sterling. Today, on the River Tyne, a tunnel is being proposed as essential for cross-river land traffic to meet present and future town conditions, but is only possible, from the engineering aspect, of being constructed at a certain depth. This depth will restrict further deepening of the navigable channel for port improvement, and the Port authorities are strenuously opposing the scheme. Thus, if cross-river communications are not considered in all aspects, particularly for the future, the provision of costly permanent cross-river structures may be handing to posterity costly, difficult, and perhaps insoluble problems.

Then we find that paragraph 94, page 32 reads—

> Maximum Inner Harbour currents are no more than one knot at present and ships are handled without difficulty. Ports with considerable channel currents of upwards of four knots, elsewhere, have easily overcome the problem. Later it is pointed out (paragraph 278 Part XIII.) that river straightening, possibly with upriver port extension work, will create improved crosscurrent conditions in the Inner Harbour.

I next refer to paragraph 97, a portion of which reads—

> (ii) Removing the original river bar has not caused the river to silt or scour, neither has it made appreciable changes in the water or flooding levels at Perth.

Then there is a paragraph 278, which reads—

> The deepened and straightened river, of 900 feet minimum width, is in more direct line between Rocky Bay and the Inner Harbour, thus straightening the river more than previously suggested (see Appendix 3). There are several advantages in doing this. The existing Inner Harbour swirling currents (see also Appendix 3), which though not pronouncedly adverse are not advantageous to ship manoeuvring or navigation, will be partly eliminated; and water, particularly flood waters, will flow in more regular parallel manner through the port: this will assist in the moving and berthing of ships, and will lessen local scour and silt deposition. The adverse nature of the circular currents in the existing waterway will also be assisted.

I refer next to paragraph 210, on page 104, reading—

> Two berths, A and B, at the South Quay, are stated to be untenable for two months of the year to certain classes of ships only, due to swell and surge entering the Inner Harbour entrance in stormy weather. This permits of a maximum efficiency of 98 per cent. and is represented in the 26.4 per cent. figure. Its effect will not be felt until Fremantle becomes a full and busy port. Improvement can be effected to these two berths if required, by considerable expenditure in extending the existing breakwaters. Seeing that the return will be a very small increase in efficiency it is unlikely that such expenditure would be embarked on in that particlular form. Seaward extension schemes in the future, however, if decided upon, could be adaptable for providing adequate protection for these two berths.

So at present there is the spectacle of two berths, which, during the rough months of the year, are practicably unusable. Col. Tydeman points out that improvement can be effected at considerable expense in extending the existing breakwaters. If it is decided to extend seaward, they will not have to wait for the improvement to these two berths. These berths during certain times of the year can be protected, and a No. 10 berth, together with these two brought into operation for the whole year, will add three more berths to Fremantle harbour for the whole year.

The only way to do that is to go outside, otherwise there would be a considerable expenditure in extending the existing breakwaters. I cannot see anybody extending the breakwaters just to protect two berths that are untenable for part of the year. Next I shall refer to paragraph 120, on page 48, which reads—

> The existing waterway of 1,400ft. maximum, used as a turning basin for swinging ships, has only a net width of 1,100 ft. when ships are berthed at the North and South Quays. This is suitable for:—
>
> (a) 750ft. ships in calm quiescent water and wind conditions with little current, and with adequate tuggage.
>
> (b) 550ft. ships in river flood conditions or with much wind, and with adequate tuggage.

If North and South Berths were clear or cleared of ships for the purpose of handling a large ship the sizes above could be increased to about 800ft. and 625ft. respectively. For very special occasions, dependent on favourable weather, these lengths might be slightly bettered; for regular callers, however, they are maximum.

The Inner Harbour curved entrance, only 450ft. wide, is not suitable in the normal course for ships of more than 750ft. long. Ships of this length when leaving South Quay berths are limited to berths far enough from the curved entrance channel to enable them to negotiate it under weigh, and when entering have to do so at such speed that the Inner Harbour waterway is barely long enough.

Further down he goes on to say—

If regular calling ships of greater length than 750ft. are contemplated, either seawards extension of the port will be essential for providing larger turning circles, or the entrance channel must be widened at great cost, and the Inner Harbour amended to accommodate a larger turning circle, at considerable expense and the loss of three berths.

On the one hand we are told that ships are getting larger, and on the other, according to this report, in order to accommodate ships longer than 750ft., seaward extension of the port is essential. Paragraph 135 on page 56 reads—

The secondary protection of the breakwaters and the primary protection of the outer reefs and islands offer complete Inner Harbour protection, except for westerly swell created by the six mile stretch from the reefs, and for north-west heavy waves deflected round the end of the main breakwater, which make a clear run up the Inner Harbour entrance and, by deflection again, up the main inner channel. This swell has the effect of preventing usage of berths A and B on the south bank adjacent to the Inner Harbour entrance for about two months of the year. Future seawards extension schemes could incorporate features to protect the existing entrance from these occasional adverse swells.

Paragraph 137 which reads—

Two privately owned tugs are available, under arrangement with the Trust, for use in connection with normal movements of ships. These tugs are "Uco," 208 N.H.P. and "Wyola," 179 N.H.P. In addition the port owns one smaller "Tanac" tug. They are not adequate to deal with all classes of ships in all weathers now. Although ships of over 600ft. in length constitute a very small percentage of vessels using the port, and contribute but little revenue, nevertheless the port must be equipped to handle them if it is to retain its first-class status. More of this class of ship will use the port in the future, and if to keep to regular schedules will require to berth and leave irrespective of most weather conditions. At least one large tug should be added to those already serving the port. This, however, is not an urgent necessity but should be kept under active review in the future.

Then there is paragraph 164, which reads—

If port extensions are ever undertaken seawards where there will be more space, special more remote oil berths near the entrance can be allocated for tankers, without endangering port structures, cargoes, and shipping at present.

Next I quote paragraph 166—

The use of one berth for the discharge of inflammable oils in an enclosed waterway and constructed port area, containing many ships and much valuable cargo and port property, as is now the practice at No. 1 Berth, North Quay, is dangerous. There is no alternative except anchoring tankers in Gage Roads at bouys and pumping the oil ashore via submerged pipe lines. This is common practice elsewhere, but has disadvantages of fair weather operation, and of not having the more convenient use of an alongside berth.

It is not suggested that this method should be adopted at Fremantle, except that such arrangement might prove to be a necessity for all-round safety of shipping, cargoes and ports during any future war. One accident to a tanker just inside the entrance to a port might put the port out of commission for years.

Risk of admittance of tankers within the inner harbour can be minimised by getting them into and out of the port as quickly as possible, i.e., by fastest discharge....

The use of No. 1 berth for inflammable oils will have to continue until distant future seaward extension of the port takes place and a more remote isolated berth can be allocated for the purpose.

Although warnings have been issued time and again, year after year, no notice has been taken of them. I recall the warnings that were given about the condition of the Fremantle bridge. No notice was taken of those warnings, but the day came when we just missed experiencing one of the most terrible accidents. The bridge gave way just after a train-load

of school children had passed over it. What happened? Those responsible practically laughed about it.

Now I must speak of the present danger. Not long ago the engines of a boat failed and the pilot dropped both anchors and finished up within five feet of a tanker. Had the tanker been hit, I do not know where Fremantle would have been today. We know what happened to the "Panamanian". Had a tanker been there at the time, the port would have gone. I have been speaking for years of the need for something to be done to safeguard against this awful danger threatening Fremantle almost every hour of the day. If such an accident happened, I would rather be on the Goldfields at the time than anywhere near the port.

There needs to be only one collision for a dire calamity to occur. If it did occur, I suppose people would say, "Who'd have thought it?" Yet they have been warned over and over again, but the warnings have been ignored and nothing has been done. I hope that something will be done quickly. One step that should be taken is to keep the tankers outside the harbour, even if they have to go down to the Anglo-Iranian Coy's wharf, irrespective of whether they belong to that company or not. Surely some arrangement could be made whereby the oil could be handled in safety instead of risking the town of Fremantle being blown up! Accidents of this sort have happened elsewhere and could happen here, but only one accident would be necessary to obliterate the town.

I now wish to quote from paragraph 178 which contains a comparison of the schemes. Col. Tydeman said—

> In comparing the Buchanan and Stileman schemes it was stated:—
>
> > In a broad outline both schemes are of old standing and each has its strong supporters. The up-river or inner harbour project is attractive on first examination, but the more it is studied, the less attractive it becomes.

That is what Sir Alexander Gibb said, "The more it is studied, the less attractive it becomes."

> Cross-river communication for rail and road traffic somewhere in the vicinity of the existing bridges cannot be dispensed with without great inconvenience, and the introduction of opening spans to permit of the passage of vessels to an inner harbour would cause delays and would obviously interfere with the freedom of working the ships in the harbour as well as with traffic on the road and railway and could not fail to result in dislocation to both.

Can anyone understand Sir Alexander Gibb making a statement like that? Now that we have his report, the only explanation I can suggest was that he was requested to do it. There can be no other explanation. In 1929 he had this to say under the heading "Proposed Extension to Seaward of Existing Harbour"—

> If all further extensions could be made in this direction, namely, on the north or south foreshores outside and seaward of the present harbour, it would avoid interference with the existing bridges over the harbour and the necessity of extensive alterations of railways. The ground on which the wharves would be built is better than in the upper harbour; the railway connections can be provided at a minimum expense, and the whole working of the harbour would be centralised in a compact area, which is a consideration of the greatest importance. There would be the disadvantage that the site would be somewhat more exposed to wind than an inner harbour, but with the protection of a windscreen, we are of the opinion that the inconvenience would not be very serious.

Consequently I ask, "What are we going to do?" We are told that the more the inner harbour project is studied, the less attractive it becomes. Now, in a £32,000 report, we are told to make provision alongside the traffic bridge. How can those statements be reconciled? It is a case of one thing one day and something else the next day. In paragraph 181 of the Tydeman report it is stated—

> Costs todays of these schemes are roughly three times as originally estimated. This is due mainly to various important items apparently having been omitted in the original estimates, and to the considerable increase in cost of materials and labour over the last 25 years.
>
> From these figures the following inferences may be drawn:—
>
> (a) Upstream development is more expensive than seawards development when the whole scheme is considered, but in initial stages is cheaper and therefore preferable.
>
> (b) There is no difference in the costs per berth between Stileman and Gibb schemes, but Stileman's seawards layout is the more economical of the two.
>
> (c) There is virtually no difference in cost between major upstream development (Buchanan scheme) and major seawards development.

There we have the statement that there would be virtually no difference in the cost between major upstream development and

major seaward development, and Mr. Meyer informed us that the provision for 11 berths would compare favourably with upstream development. In paragraph 292 of the Tydeman report the following appears under the heading "Defence Planning"—

> No steps have been taken whatsoever in the proposed ultimate development scheme to incorporate any measure of defence.
>
> A port is always vulnerable in war time, either from land, sea or air. There are many lessons gained from the recent war, but their usefulness of incorporation is only apparent in war time and they may serve to cause inefficiencies in peace time port operation.
>
> Obvious matters are those such as having one narrow entrance, the blockage of which by peacetime accident or war incident could put the port out of action for months or years; or of encircling the port with inflammable oil tank farms on high ground from which flaming oil could flow gravitationally to ships in the port. Other matters are the introduction of naval facilities into a commercial port, or siting a large target such as a drydock adjacent to commercial berths.

I have read that paragraph because some time ago a statement was made that the Government intended to adopt the upriver scheme of extension, utilising this little narrow strip of water only 900 ft. wide. Any navy that did so would be seeking to commit suicide.

Mr. Moir: Would you prefer to go to Albany?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If the desire was to have an enlarged anchorage, perhaps that would be the solution. Paragraph 191 is most important—

> If the existing railway bridge is removed and re-sited near the present road bridge, seven more berths only can be constructed (see Appendix 27). If both road and rail bridges are re-sited at Point Brown, 11 more berths are possible (see Appendix 23). This latter can be considered as a practical maximum of upriver development. On the other hand, seawards extension is unlimited in area, as well as offering favourable land transport approaches. Thus, disregarding capital cost, extension seawards in the vicinity of the Swan River mouth is the most rational, providing not only for immediate needs, but unlimited adequate space for the port requirements of posterity.

In the face of that, how can anyone advocate upriver extension as against seaward extension? Seaward extension would provide unlimited area as well as all the conditions favourable to land transport and is the more rational of the two schemes. I hope we shall adopt the more rational scheme for to carry the extension upstream would not be at all rational.

Mr. Hutchinson: Would not there be a possibility of delay to vessels and damage to constructional work by adopting the outside scheme?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Paragraph 277 reads—

> The ultimate development scheme now proposed is flexible enough to take into consideration many important factors of policy including—
>
> (a) The need for improving the existing facilities before providing new berths, and requiring more land mainly for improved rail facilities. This necessitates the use of land which, to avoid the dislocation and expense of resumption, is best created on undeveloped foreshore.
>
> (b) The possibility that decision may be made in favour of seawards extension either before or after, or instead of, up-river extension.
>
> (c) The possibility of decision in favour of either seawards extension north or south of the river, or both together, or neither.
>
> (d) That although railways consider the hinterland rail approach will be north of the river, it may in future be from the south, or both.
>
> Port development on the lines of the ultimate scheme, either separately north or south of the Swan River, or both together, is possible as dictated by considerations of trade centre, township development, municipal or political reasons.

There he says in effect, "Which would you like? You may have either. Please yourselves which you have." I consider that we should have the more rational one, namely the outside scheme.

Paragraph 291 is also very important. It states—

> Construction of any of the initial or later stages of the comprehensive ultimate development scheme should not present any difficulties other than routine problems normal to such heavy marine civil engineering work.
>
> Before any constructions are undertaken, or even detailed drawings or estimates prepared, bores must be taken extensively over the areas concerned to check accurately information already to hand. Since these bores may take anything from one to

two or more years to obtain in detail, this work must be planned well ahead of programme dates.

There we are told that before any construction can be undertaken or estimates prepared, it will be necessary to have bores put down and surveys made and this may take one, two or more years, and the work must be planned well ahead. We are a long way from getting anything done, according to that.

Hon. C. F. J. North: Where would you put the bridge?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Alongside where it is now, and we would then be able still to use the North Fremantle railway station and would not cut North Fremantle to pieces. It would be just as well put there as anywhere else. He evidently had that in mind, but did not decide on that scheme.

We will now have a look at Mr. Meyer's report. He first disagreed with Col. Tydeman's report regarding the multi-storied sheds and so on, but he agreed with going as far as Point Brown, and spoke highly of outside extension. In the last paragraph on page 5 of his report, he said—

> In any event, whether the pilot plan for the outer harbour development be that offered by me or some other, I strongly urge that outer harbour development should be on the south side rather than on the north. If this issue can be resolved now and in favour of south side development, any well balanced plan of development will involve a considerable work of reclamation between the fish haven and, say, Robb's Jetty, and it appeals to me that that is a work that might advantageously be embarked upon in the comparatively near future.

The Minister told me yesterday that he had one dredge ready. I do not know whether he desires to use that dredge on this work; but if so, he could make a start immediately, otherwise, we would have to get something else for the job. Mr. Meyer's recommendation is favourable there. On page 6 he said—

> Such an outer harbour as I have proposed would be a good harbour. It would have a common entrance with the inner harbour which would be kept open and clear by the ebb flow of the river, and would be reasonably comfortable for vessels berthed therein from whatever quarter the weather might come. Whilst, on a rough estimate based on the unit figures employed by Mr. Tydeman, the cost—berth for berth—of an 11-berth instalment would compare quite favourably with the cost of the upstream development.

So, according to him, if we have 11 berths upstream or outside, either proposition would compare favourably with the other. I come now to Sir Alexander Gibb's report. He says—

> Col. F. W. E. Tydeman, General Manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and Co-ordinating Engineer, wrote on the 6th May, 1952, instructing us to prepare a report and estimate for a modified 7-berth development scheme, as an alternative to the 12-berth "Tydeman Port Development Scheme," involving the construction of a new railway bridge alongside the existing road bridge and the removal of the existing railway bridge thereafter. The report and estimate of cost had to be furnished in about five months' time from the date of instructions.

Here they requested him to bring down a report to put the bridge alongside the traffic bridge, and he brought down his "A" and "B" schemes, and then they wrote for an alternative scheme, and he put that forward. To continue—

> As instructed by Mr. R. J. Dumas, Co-ordinator of Works and Industrial Development, when he called at this office on the 26th August, 1952, we have pleasure in submitting our report on a modified scheme of development for the Port of Fremantle, involving the construction of a new railway bridge to replace the existing structure.

So Mr. Dumas wrote to him and asked him to bring down a report for the bridge to go alongside the traffic bridge, although Col. Tydeman's report says that is unworkable and inefficient. The report continues—

> As the results of the surveys became known to us, we were able to examine the proposed scheme for upstream development in detail and prepare definite proposals for the principal bridges, railways and roads. Drawing No. 3080/19 shows the layout which we developed and which is generally in accordance with the official "Tydeman Port Development Scheme."

It is not in accordance with it at all, because this recommends that it should go alongside the traffic bridge, where Col. Tydeman said it would be unworkable and inefficient. Further—

> At our meeting in London on the 26th August, 1952, with Mr. R. J. Dumas, he explained that, as a result of the proposed developments along Cockburn Sound, it was necessary to review the whole question of the future development of the Port of Fremantle. He further stated that, in view of the Government's desire to exercise economy in capital expenditure, the proposed railway bridge could be regarded as a temporary one, with a life of some 25 years or more, if a saving in cost would thereby result.

The proposal is to put up a temporary bridge costing £1,630,000, not including anything for land resumption and so on, so I think the Treasurer would think twice before agreeing to that. We are told that land resumption will not amount to much, but I think it will be pretty large. Further on he states—

> If practicable the steepest gradients should not exceed 1 in 100 for main line tracks or 1 in 60 for port line tracks. Likewise the sharpest curves should not be less than 12 chains radius for main line tracks or 7 chains radius for port line tracks.

I have already quoted Col. Tydeman on that. Further—

> Apart altogether from the question of providing space for an upstream development of the port, the new bridge should from engineering requirements be located close to the existing road bridge, in order to provide the desired standards for gradients and curves on the south side together with the navigational headroom. It should not, however, be so close as to incur any risk of disturbance and damage to the piled foundations of the latter.

Further, Sir Alexander Gibb states—

> In order to avoid extensive reconstruction of the existing road bridge it is proposed that the new rail tracks should pass underneath the bridge, with the two main line tracks occupying the span over Beach Street and the port line track the adjacent one. At this point the level of the tracks would be approximately 15.5 feet above Port Datum in order to provide the desired headroom clearance. Assuming this as a basis we consider that the location shown for the new railway bridge represents the furthest downstream position for crossing Swan River if the specified requirements for gradients, curvature and navigational headroom are to be observed.

To continue—

> In view of the somewhat limited working space available behind the berths on the south side we have only indicated five berths, although the actual quay length would be sufficient to permit the construction of a further berth.

Then there is this—

> Before finally deciding upon the location of the proposed bridge, as indicated on the drawings, we examined various alternative possibilities in order to determine whether or not some other location would offer any greater advantages. These alternative sites were located upstream of the road bridge . . . .

There he says he did not want this bridge, but when requested, he had to do what was asked of him. To continue—

> but we found that additional cost would be incurred, largely on account of the greater length of approaches required. In some instances dredging for a new channel plus reclamation would have been necessary. In consequence, we have not shown these alternatives.

There again, it seems as though we are to get something cheap and nasty, although I do not think £1,630,000 is cheap for a temporary bridge. He continues—

> This was especially important when taken in conjunction with the adjacent road bridge. We do not, therefore, consider that a structure of this type would be satisfactory, apart from which we understand that there might be some difficulty at the present time in obtaining timber piles of the requisite size.
>
> Under the circumstances, we consider that a steel superstructure is most suited for the proposed bridge. If properly maintained it would have a good recovery value for use elsewhere when the time comes for the bridge to be taken down. For this reason we would propose that the design be kept as simple as possible so that the component parts could be used individually elsewhere if so desired.
>
> Our proposals for the bridge are shown generally on Drawing No. 3080/21. It consists of seven simple spans of 115ft. between centres of piers and is of plate girder construction. In order to reduce the deadweight of the spans, and thereby the initial cost, we propose an open timber deck in which the sleepers rest directly on the stringers. Walkways are provided at the top flange levels of the outer girders.
>
> With regard to the pier foundations, we have tentatively proposed steel cylinders, sunk under compressed air. From the information at present available with regard to foundation conditions we believe that this type of construction should prove to be the most economical, but before making a definite recommendation we should require to have the conditions underlying the river bed confirmed by means of trial bores. In the meantime we consider that, other things being equal, cylinder foundations would have the advantage of offering less resistance to river flow than other types of foundations. Furthermore, they are designed in steel so that their eventual removal would not be unduly expensive.

There he says that, before he can make a definite recommendation, the river bed must be tested by means of trial bores, although last time I spoke on this subject we were told that when Sir Alexander Gibb's report was available we would know all about the bottom, and Col. Tydeman says the necessary testing will take from one to two years.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Before the tea suspension I was about to finish the few words I was saying about Sir Alexander Gibb. For the benefit of members I would like to quote the price of this new structure to be built somewhere, though they do not know where they will be able to get a bottom. The new railway bridge is to cost £675,000; the northern approaches £355,000; the southern approaches £170,000; demolition of existing bridges and provision of labour camp £180,000 and ancillaries and contingencies £250,000, making a total of £1,630,000. That total is only for engineering work and does not include any allowance for the resumption of land. Nor does this amount include an allowance for any new berths which are tentatively shown on the drawings.

So it can be imagined what it is going to cost after this temporary structure has been provided. In answer to a question the Minister said that No. 10 berth would cost something in the vicinity of £900,000. Dealing with the shallows where it will be built will cost more than the berth will, and the Government will be involved in great expense if it takes the bridge alongside the traffic bridge.

I will now leave Sir Alexander Gibb's report for the time being and will proceed to refer to the report by Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane. Mr. Dumas talks about the tonnage handled at the Fremantle wharf. He says—

> Cargo including exports and imports handled at Fremantle during the 1951-52 year totalled 3,115,000 tons in the following categories:—

	tons.	tons.
Petroleum products (inward)	667,000	
(outward)	322,000	989,000
Wheat and flour		569,000
Super rock and sulphur		265,000
Coal		93,000
Steel		90,000
Wool		70,000
		2,076,000
General cargo		1,039,000
		3,115,000

> The imports for 1951-52 were inflated and have shown some reduction during the current year.

In the near future, however, the total tonnage will again rise because tonnages are increasing on the Fremantle wharf and before long they will get back to the old figure.

Let me divert for a moment and read a paragraph from the Fremantle Harbour Trust report. At page 8 we find the following:—

> With the continued heavy demand for accommodation within the Fremantle Inner Harbour by all types of vessels, apart from the general commercial trade, such as migrant and general passenger vessels, vessels calling for bunker supplies only, ships under repair, fitting out for loading bulk grain at Fremantle or outports, whalers, naval craft, ships in distress, etc. the necessity for immediate expansion of the Fremantle harbour is still very essential.
>
> The position has been aggravated by the considerable increase in the size of Fremantle cargoes conveyed per ship, necessitating a longer stay in port, and the increase in the length of ships requiring proportionately more berthage space.

That is another rebuttal of the tall tales that ships would get smaller. We now find that ships are continually getting larger; there is no doubt about that. On page 11 of the recommendations by Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane we find the following:—

> Apart from the financial aspect, consideration has been given to the comparative effect of the two schemes on the Municipality of North Fremantle.
>
> The siting of the railway bridge at Point Brown, with the connecting link to Leighton siding, would greatly injure the business centre of North Fremantle and require the resumption of a number of residences.
>
> The siting of the railway bridge just below the highway bridge would not interfere with the business centre, and would necessitate the resumption of only a few residences.

As I said before—and I quoted Col. Tydeman—this would practically disturb North Fremantle as much as if it went up to Point Brown. Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane say that it would necessitate the resumption of only a few residences and they continue with the following:—

> We consider that it would be unjustified to take any action today which would be so harmful to the town of North Fremantle, which experience in 50 years' time may prove to have been unnecessary.

There is no necessity for them to disturb North Fremantle at all; there is no need to go up to the traffic bridge. If a bridge were placed near part of the Pearse Bros. factory there would be no disturbance at all and they would have plenty of room. When the report says that it will not disturb anyone by going this way, I do not

agree. Mr. Dumas says that in about 50 years' time it would prove unnecessary to put a bridge there at all and he continues—

> It is impossible to see so far ahead the development of air transport, which may materially reduce the number of people travelling by ship. The development of Cockburn Sound may divert much of the bulk cargo from Fremantle harbour.
>
> In addition, in 50 years' time it may be more economical for road transport to handle cross-river freight and no railway bridge at Point Brown will then be necessary.

I hope it is never necessary to go to Point Brown and I hope the extension will not go beyond the present bridge. In their summary, Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane say—

> It would not interfere with the business centre of North Fremantle and would require the resumption of only a few residences.

The estimates given are as follows:—

Site just below highway bridge—

	£
Steel framed bridge on masonry piers	675,000
Railway approaches	525,000
Demolition of existing bridge, railway tracks etc.	180,000
Ancillaries and contigencies	250,000
	1,630,000
Land resumptions	175,000
	1,805,000

With values as they are today, I think we will be very lucky to get away with an estimate of £175,000 for land resumption. It will cost much more than £175,000 by the time we have finished resuming private properties and land. I trust these people will not be pushed out and given less than their properties are worth today. They must get the replacement value for their properties to enable them to get others.

I think we will have to pay twice £175,000. Mr. Dumas goes on to say that it may be unjustified in 50 years' time. He can get out of that by not taking action and thus saving North Fremantle, if he so desires. Mr. Dumas says that this scheme was recommended by Sir Alexander Gibb. As I have said before, Sir Alexander Gibb recommended it because he was requested to do so by Mr. Tydeman by letter and by Mr. Dumas who waited on him in London, requesting him to bring down a report to put it across the traffic bridge.

Now I would like to say a few words about pollution. Whilst pollution is not the main reason for disagreeing with the harbour going further upstream, it is a very good one. We have a great heritage in the Swan River and we should pass it on to future generations in the beautiful natural condition it was handed to us. If we allow the Swan River to be spoiled by dirt and impurities, this will be laid at our door by posterity.

I am satisfied that if the harbour goes up any further, the people using the Swan River will be swimming in undiluted sewage, and I am not prepared to allow the river to be spoiled in any way. I have a great interest in the part of the river nearest to North Fremantle. We can imagine what the fraternity in that area would have to say, particularly those who wish to use the river. The same applies to the Bicton swimming pool—I am a patron of the local swimming club—and where my family often swim. I will not agree that the harbour should go up any further because it will spoil the river and make it unfit for use.

We are told that at the present time there is a weir caused by sandwork at the North Fremantle railway bridge which will allow the river to be scoured out. It might do that to a certain extent, but it will also allow the sewage to go up much further than it does today. It will not only get to the shores of Claremont, as Mr. Meyer has said, but it will go right around to Nedlands, and I hope the member for Nedlands will see that something is done to prevent that. If he does not, I feel sure the people in Nedlands will have something to say to him about it. He is only a young man and it is possible he will hold his seat for some time, so I hope he does something along these lines. The same applies to the member for South Perth. There is portion of his district that badly needs cleaning up; there is a tremendous quantity of algae around South Perth. I think the member for South Fremantle and the member for South Perth are as much interested in the cleaning up of the river as I am.

Mr. Yates: Very interested.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Let us see what Col. Tydeman has to say about pollution. At page 39 of Volume 2 of his report, Col. Tydeman says—

> This report offers no contribution to this problem, which is outside its scope, except to state certain relevant facts.
>
> Pollution of the Swan River occurs from many sources, including a natural surface drainage, sullage, industrial waste, marine growths, sewage from ships and port labour at Fremantle, and sewage from river craft and other sources adjacent to the river.
>
> Pollution may be caused by river flow transporting solids and depositing them on the banks, or by stagnation, which is an important factor and is indicative of minor or no river flow. It is a condition of affairs occurring for the greater part of the year, during the dry seasons.

> Tidal flows in the river are small throughout the year (except at such local restrictions as the Fremantle road and rail bridges) and will remain as existing whether port extension works are created upstream or not, contributing. thereby in passive manner to the stagnation factor. River flood flow would be improved in flushing value by river deepening and straightening works downstream at the port and by the bridge removals.

That will allow it to go up as well as to come down. It cannot come down if it does not go up, and I am satisfied that if removal takes place, it will allow quite a lot more to go up than at present. Col. Tydeman said that the pollution comes from "sewage from ships and port labour". If there was no harm, why did the Fremantle Harbour Trust go to the expense of installing septic tanks at every shed to prevent sewage from port labour going into the harbour? If the harbour was not affected, do members think the trust would have spent the money it did in that way? Of course not!

The report refers to dry weather. In the dry weather, the situation is worse and it is at that time that we want the river to be at its cleanest because people swim in the river during the dry weather and not in the winter months. If we allow harbour development to proceed upstream, it is during the dry weather that conditions will be worse. Mr. Meyer also had something to say about river pollution at page 7 of his report. He said—

> The reasons for this inland trend of flow are interesting, but I have no occasion to treat of them here, except to say that, for their bearing on the question at issue, I have considered them carefully and conclude that throughout the dry season there is, and always has been since there has been a harbour, a continual drift through Freshwater Bay to more upstream compartments of the river, of sea-water that, in the course of a number of tidal oscillations, has made a passage through the harbour before finally clearing for upstream, and has received a full share of all that is discharged into the harbour from ships.

I would like to point out that he also referred to the dry season. He said that "throughout the dry season there always has been a continual drift through Freshwater Bay". If it goes much higher, the boys and girls and men and women who swim there and at Nedlands—because Nedlands will get its share—will be unable to enjoy themselves in this way. We should prevent upstream development and especially do we want the river to be clean in the dry weather.

It does not matter so much if there is a little discoloration in the winter months when the flood waters come down, but it is our duty to see that stagnation and filth are prevented in the dry parts of the year. At page 8 Mr. Meyer says—

> As to physical pollution by way of flotsam cast into the harbour in contravention of Harbour Trust regulations, my investigations indicate that it could only be very rarely that any such could be carried beyond the upper end of Blackwall Reach. On average conditions, the tidal current as traced from the harbour, dies out somewhere about the upper end of the Reach, and I should except the transverse currents of the flowing stream to cause most floating material to fetch up on the banks well downstream of this point, with only such objects as held throughout to the thread of the stream reaching the extremity. Such objects might occasionally be propelled further upstream by wind, but I do not think that under present conditions flotsam from the harbour can enter the picture in any big way in respect of a pollution problem in Freshwater Bay or further upstream.

He says that it fetches up on the banks of Freshwater Bay. I have pictures, which I will show in a moment, indicating where we have picked up filth right past Blackwall Reach. It has extended beyond Keane's Point and Peppermint Grove, and we have photos from Como and Pelican Point. In parts of the year there is nothing but a rotten mess to be seen.

In last night's issue of "The Daily News" there was a contribution from a man representing himself to be a spokesman from the Public Health Department I hope that the Minister for Health is listening. He said that this algae and stinking mud being recovered from the shores of Perth is of no danger to public health. If I had my way, I would dip him in it and see how he liked it. I wonder whether he would allow his children to swim in it. It is good enough for the workers' children to make use of that water. It is good enough for the children of parents who can afford to send them to Scarborough. This man said that the stinking algae and mud is of no danger to health. I hope that no one here is foolish enough to believe that. At page 10 of his report, Mr. Meyer says—

> As to physical pollution by way of flotsam cast into the harbour in contravention of Harbour Trust regulations, the possibility of flood tidal current, as traced from the harbour, extending well into Freshwater Bay, introduces the possibility of floating material, holding to the thread of the stream, finding its way into the bay and fetching up on the beaches thereof, so that if the harbour be extended

upstream as proposed, there will be occasion for special precautions to ensure against this nuisance occurring. Physical pollution of this kind can be controlled by vigilant policing and drastic penalties for any and all who infringe the regulations prohibiting the casting of waste matter into the harbour, and I have no doubt that the Harbour Trust could be relied upon to take all such steps as may be necessary to ensure against any physical pollution occurring to Freshwater Bay as a result of the upstream extension of the harbour.

I do not think the trust can be relied on, because it would cost too much money. In these days all that departments think of is money. The trust wants to save as much as it can. The recommendation made by Col. Tydeman some time ago was that sewage from ships could be caught by putting barges alongside. If my memory serves me aright, the cost of that would have been something like £200,000 a year.

Can we believe that the trust would go to that expense to prevent the distribution of sewage, whether it went to Perth or only to the bridge? Mr. Meyer said that special precautions were necessary to ensure against this nuisance occurring. I hope members heard that. I have here an article and photos that were published in "The West Australian." The photos are headed. "Then and Now: Contrast in Swan River Scene." The letterpress under the photograph reads—

> Children of today cannot enjoy the clean, white sand on the Point Walter spit as these did 30 years ago in the picture on the left. Taken last week, but looking from the shore, the picture on the right shows the clean sands covered with weed and the children replaced by seagulls finding a harvest of marine life.

A number of years ago there was clean, white sand and now there are algae, and filth, and seagulls, and shags, and everything tending to make the place filthy. Here is another picture which shows fruit and vegetable scraps, bottles, tins, pieces of wood, grease and oil scum floating beside a ship at Victoria Quay, Fremantle. The letterpress reads—

> This was one of a number of similar patches noticed by a staff photographer, who took the picture at 1 p.m. The condition of the water was unchanged at 3 p.m.

Another picture is headed, "Low Tide Shows Algae Bank at Como." The member for Canning can have a look at that. Underneath the picture appears the following:—

> At low tide in the river yesterday afternoon, this thick bank of rotting algae was exposed on the beach near Como jetty. Other patches of algae, stranded by the receding tide, partially covered the exposed sandbanks in the shallow water.

And here is another picture of the Claremont jetty with plenty of algae. The member for Claremont can see that. I want to know what he is going to do about it. Another picture shows the Swan River at Keane's Point, formerly Butler's Hump, upon which is set the headquarters of the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club. In the distance is Point Walter. In the water can be seen a lot of dirty weed. Then there is a picture headed, "On This Rotting Mass, the Gulls take a Stroll," and another picture carries the heading, "This Foul Lot is Nobody's Baby."

I think I have said enough to show that the bridge should never be allowed to go further upstream than at present, not only because of the engineering problems involved, but also because of river pollution and the danger to the health of the people. We have a duty to ensure the preservation of the wonderful river we possess. People who come from other States are jealous of us and would like to have our river in preference to their own. I hope that the House will carry the motion and that there will be no further extension of harbour development upstream.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

BILL—FERTILISERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LOCAL AUTHORITIES, ROYAL VISIT EXPENDITURE AUTHORISATION.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

BILL—VETERINARY MEDICINES.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren) [8.0] in moving the second reading said: The Bill contains only one principle, namely, to protect the farmer, as far as is humanly possible, against trafficking in veterinary medicines which are entirely unsuitable and in some cases possibly dangerous.

We have no legislation in the State at the moment to govern such a situation. It is possible in Western Australia for a dealer in veterinary medicines to concoct some liquid which might be only coloured water, and sell it to a farmer who

would purchase it in good faith as a remedy against certain stock diseases. That possibly has been done.

Western Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth that has not protective legislation of this nature. Over the years the other States have all come to the conclusion, through their experiences, that such legislation as this is necessary to give to the farmers that measure of protection which I have mentioned, and which I think members will agree is justified. Members can imagine that if ours is the only State in the Commonwealth without legislation of this kind, then the people who get an easy 1s. wherever they possibly can by manufacturing this and that and selling it to the gullible public, could now be finding refuge here as a result of the fact that no such sanctuary is to be found in any other State.

It should be a matter of some concern for us, as responsible people, to undertake to give to the farmer the protection which I think the Bill will afford. Since I have assumed office, the member for Blackwood has had occasion to make representations to me on behalf of some of his constituents who considered they had been the victims of misrepresentation regarding certain medical products. It is as a result of my discussions with the hon. member that I sought Government approval for the Bill. It was not possible to take legal action in the cases he mentioned because there was no Act on the statute book under which it could be launched.

The farming community have suffered a good deal in all sorts of ways in getting their living in country districts, particularly the remote areas, and they should be protected in this regard. That protection can be given only by a measure of this description. The only person who will be seriously affected by this legislation is the charlatan and, of course, we have no sympathy for him. The people who will receive the benefit of the legislation are the farmers, who, through no fault of their own, might run into all sorts of difficulties with respect to cattle diseases, and who seek the best possible remedy to overcome them.

When they buy a bottle of medicine or some concoction which is allegedly supposed to cure certain diseases in cattle, they take the risk of finding that it is completely useless. So it is intended by the Bill to set up a veterinary medicines advisory committee. In order that the situation shall be governed in the best possible way, the committee will consist of certain officers with specific knowledge of medicines, biology and so on. As a result, a proper analysis can be made at all times of medicines sought to be registered under the Act.

It is proposed that the chairman of the committee shall be the Chief Veterinary Surgeon of the Department of Agriculture He, subject to the Minister, will administer the Act if it becomes law. The other members will be the Deputy Government Analyst; a member of the Animal Health and Nutritional Laboratories; and a veterinary surgeon selected by the Australian Veterinary Association and nominated by the Minister.

Careful consideration has been given to the composition of the committee because it will be concerned with the value to the farmer of certain drugs for the treatment of specific diseases; and this can only be determined by a panel with special knowledge. It will be found necessary at times to receive advice from an analytical chemist with regard to the chemical composition of drugs, if not medicines; and such drugs as vaccines which are marketed by manufacturing chemists will involve the advice of a veterinary pathologist.

To make the picture as complete as possible, a practising veterinary surgeon has also been included on the committee because he has close, personal knowledge of the use of drugs in the treatment of specific diseases. A committee such as this will be able in every way to undertake an analysis of new medicines as they come out as well as of those already on the market, and to make arrangements for the registration of medicines—both the present ones and those yet to come. A further portion of the Bill provides penalties for certain infringements so that there will be complete control of the situation in regard to stock medicines in Western Australia.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: Will the members of the board be paid?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The only person to receive any remuneration will be the practising veterinary surgeon who will come from outside the Government service. I do not know what his remuneration will be. It will be determined by regulation and will be small compared with the number of sittings and the service the Bill offers. This should interest the Treasurer, particularly, and everyone else because of the powers the Bill will give to a body of qualified men to ensure that no veterinary medicines shall be other than what they purport to be, according to the label on the bottle or package concerned.

Should the committee, for some reason or other, refuse to recommend registration of a particular medicine, then in all fairness a statement is to be supplied setting out the grounds for the refusal. There can be an appeal against the refusal, but the provision in this regard is only the normal one which is contained in all Acts of Parliament to see that justice is done at all times. There would be no sense in or reason for an appeal or dispute regarding the findings of a committee of this character.

Hon. D. Brand: A board similar to this would work well with electrical appliances.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We are getting very board-minded these days.

The Premier: The State Electricity Commission looks after that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTNRE: This will mean the creation of another board. We have called it a committee in the hope of sneaking it through without anyone noticing it! The hon. member will appreciate that there are circumstances on occasions over which no one has control. People are not necessarily seeking to break the law, but just the same they are doing a tremendous injustice to others, and unless we have legislation that gives the necessary control, the someone who breaks the law will continue to do so forever. It is surprising to me—without being political at all—that someone here did not think of this years ago because what I have been talking about must have been going on for a considerable time.

Western Australia is the last State which proposes to grant this measure of protection. Because all the other States in the Commonwealth have similar legislation, it is proposed that should the people interested in medicines registered by bodies in the Eastern States similar to the committee we have suggested wish to market those medicines in Western Australia, they will be accepted here after examination by our own committee. In other words, there will be no restriction on the sale of medicines in Western Australia provided they come up to the requisite standard. I think that is fair enough.

Hon. D. Brand: Would you explain line 31 of page 3 of the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I regret, I cannot even pronounce the words it contains. That is why I am proposing to appoint a committee. When members have had a chance of looking into the Bill and making investigations themselves to see just what amount of money our primary producers are paying each year to get medicines for their cattle; and when they bear in mind the tremendous risks the farmers are taking all the time in that they might possibly buy something of no value at all, I think they will agree that the Bill is well worth while. I move—

> That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEME.

Message.

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

BILL—HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR (Hon. W. Hegney—Mt. Hawthorn) [8.15] in moving the second reading said: The parent Act was introduced in 1946 by the late Hon. A. H. Panton, who was then Minister for Labour, and it has never been amended since. Briefly, the original Act provides for the inevitable board, the Hairdressers Registration Board, which consists of a chairman appointed by the Governor and four other members. In this instance those four members have operated for some years. Two of the four members represent the employees, one represents the Master Gentlemen's Hairdressers Association in the metropolitan area and the other represents the Ladies' Hairdressers Union of Employers.

I would like to impress upon members that this measure was not initiated by me, as Minister for Labour, nor by any other member of the Government. This request has come from the Hairdressers Registration Board and the employees and employers concerned.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: It will not increase the price of hair-cuts to the Premier, will it?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I think he would get cut rates, similar to those that apply in the case of the Leader of the Opposition.

The Premier: No-cut rates!

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: When the principal Act was introduced, the basic wage was about £5 a week, but now that wage has increased to £12 6s. 6d. Under the original Act, the registration fee for employees was 5s., and that figure has not been increased. The registration fee for employers was fixed at £2 2s., and for people who desired to be registered, the examination fee was fixed at £1 1s. Those figures were written into the parent Act, and one of the proposals in the Bill—there are only two altogether—is to alter the rates for registration.

Therefore in effect the Bill proposes to increase the fees for examination of those who desire to make application for registration from £1 1s. to £2 2s. This will bring the examination fees more into line with those payable to Arbitration Court examiners. So far as employees are concerned, the 5s. fee is to be increased to 12s. 6d., and the fee for employers from £2 2s. to £2 12s. 6d.

The other amendment is of a minor character. I understand that the Hairdressers Registration Board issues badges as well as certificates. The certificates are referred to in the Act, and the board has power to cancel the certificates of people whose registration no longer has effect. The certificates can be recalled, but the

board has no power as regards badges, and the Bill will give power to the board to recall badges where persons cease to hold registration.

As I said, this measure will enable the registration fees for both employers and employees to be increased, but it has been introduced at the specific request of those concerned. Before I agreed to submit the matter to Cabinet in the first place, I asked the Secretary for Labour, who is chairman of the board, to have inquiries made so that the fullest possible information could be supplied to me.

The annual report and balance-sheet of the Registration Board has been tabled, and this shows that at the end of December, 1952, 596 employees and 471 employers were registered. The total income of the board was about £1,100 or £1,200. The fees of a registrar have to be met and a part-time inspector has to be remunerated for his work. I have found, on investigation, that unless the fees are increased as requested, it will be almost impossible for the board to continue to function. Its financial position is precarious and it is sailing very close to the wind.

Both employers and employees consider that the functions of the board are worth while because it helps to maintain a specific standard in the trade and provides protection for the people who patronise hairdressing establishments. I refer mainly to ladies, who are more particular about their hair. The Leader of the Opposition might also be included in that category! I know that some members may say that this is just another board and that it ought to be eliminated. A proposal was submitted to enable the board to operate throughout the State, but that has not been agreed to. At present the board operates only within a radius of 25 miles of the G.P.O., and we do not propose to extend that area.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Did you mention the estimated income?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: According to figures published at the 31st December, 1952, 596 employees and 471 employers were registered. The amount received from the employers would be about £940 and from the employees about £190, making a total of about £1,100 or £1,200.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: On what does the board spend its money?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The previous registrar has submitted his resignation, and a gentleman by the name of Sands has been appointed to the position. A register of members must be kept and a part-time inspector is paid about £500 a year. He ensures that only those who are entitled to be registered, and are competent hairdressers, actually operate in the business.

Hon. L. Thorn: But the Leader of the Opposition asked you what the board did with the money. It paid a registrar £600 plus, plus, plus. That is where the funds went.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: Apparently that happened after the board was established in the first instance.

Hon. L. Thorn: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The member for Toodyay would have some knowledge of what took place until recently.

Hon. L. Thorn: I have.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The position now is that the board will be working on a bank overdraft unless the fees are increased. Employers and employees are entitled to renew their registration in January and if a large number of them do that, the board will be able to function reasonably well for a short time. But it has many commitments and, as a matter of fact, I think about £160 is still owing to the previous registrar; that is a legitimate charge which must be met.

I know that some people will question the efficacy of this Act and the operations of the board, but from the inquiries I have made it seems to be doing a good job. Employers and employees in the industry are unanimous in the requests they have made, and if the Bill is agreed to I have no doubt that the board will be able to function a little more effectively than it has been able to do during the last 12 months.

Mr. Yates: I know that a lot of men cannot get a shave in some of these hairdressing establishments. What does the board do about that sort of thing?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I am happy to have that information. If any legitimate complaint is made by any member of the public to the chairman or any member of the Registration Board—either the employees' or employers' representative—under the provisions of the Act the fullest investigation is made. If that particular employer is not providing the service to which the public is entitled, he is reprimanded by the board, which has power to cancel his certificate. Where we have a board which includes employers and employees in a particular industry, and they are unanimous in their views—there is something of a monopoly aspect about this business—a certain amount of goodwill is created. So if protection is granted to the employers and employees in the industry, the public is entitled to expect the most efficient service.

Mr. Yates: I agree with that.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I would say that if any reasonable complaint as regards service, or the standard of service, is lodged with the board in the proper way, I am sure it will take action. Those are the main provisions in the measure and I

might add that the Government was not obliged to introduce it. It has been brought down at the request of the employers and employees in the industry, and after due consideration, by the Government. Therefore, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [8.30] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill that will help members of Parliament and also intending candidates. I do not think there will be any opposition to it because it will make conditions easier for everybody and simplify the policing of electoral rolls, and the work of keeping them up to date. This proposal is not new, although it may be in this State. The measure is designed to facilitate the activities of candidates for the Legislative Council. It has been found by candidates that having a province roll set out in alphabetical order, as at present, it creates some difficulties and also involves some expense. It is felt that the matters complained of are easily adjustable.

It needs only a simple amendment to the principal Act to provide that province rolls shall be divided into districts corresponding to Assembly districts. These new rolls, which together form the roll for the province, would be known as "Province-part-rolls." If any precedent is needed, I have only to point to the similar provision in the Act concerning Assembly rolls. As an example, I quote the Murchison district, which has been divided into two sections; the Murchison side and the Leonora side. Compared with some of the provinces, that principle applies more to the Murchison district, because some of the province rolls contain 22,000 names.

Commonwealth rolls are in subdivisions of a division. Going further afield, I would point out that British rolls are divided into districts. I am also informed that they are further divided into streets, so as to keep the rolls in order. When I refer to the number of electors on the three largest province rolls, namely, Suburban, Metropolitan and West, it will be seen that not only will the division of the rolls into part-rolls benefit candidates, but it will also be advantageous from the office point of view.

To facilitate easy handling, the Chief Electoral Officer has divided the official roll of the Suburban Province into four parts, retaining the names in lexicographical order. The amendment should also be of advantage to the public. The figures to which I referred earlier are as follows:—

Suburban Province roll (8 districts)—22,000 electors.

Metropolitan Province roll (9 districts)—14,500 electors.

West Province roll—11,000 electors.

Mr. Bovell: Will these part-rolls be in each Assembly district?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Only in the province, but each province will be divided into sections conforming to the Assembly districts.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: From where did the recommendations for the Bill emanate?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not know exactly. I think it was instigated by some of the candidates who contested elections for the various provinces, and I suppose they have gained information from other parts of the world where they have such divisions of the rolls. That is probably the reason for its introduction. The Bill is a simple measure and will not alter the electoral conditions or the voting.

On motion by Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTRICITY ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Brady in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Part IVA. added (partly considered):

Mr. YATES: There is an amendment on the notice paper in my name, but before moving it I want to discuss a few points raised by the Minister when replying to the second reading debate. He considered that the State Electricity Commission could adequately handle all the matters that are at present referred to an advisory committee in New South Wales and to an advisory board in Victoria. Contrary to the Minister's opinion, those engaged in the electrical trade in this State consider that the State Electricity Commission has enough to do, in view of its present rapid expansion, its varied ramifications—these include the extension of the system and the South Fremantle power house—and the many other avenues it is exploring, and that all matters relating to electrical appliances could be handled by an advisory board.

In New South Wales, although the advisory board refers all its decisions to the Electricity Commission for approval, it

does all the spade work by checking electrical appliances and making outside inspections. Therefore, if a similar body were appointed in this State, the Electricity Commission would approve its recommendations in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred; otherwise, the committee would have nothing to recommend it. I read a list of the New South Wales regulations to the House yesterday evening. As the appliances in question are only of a household nature, it is considered that they should be placed in a separate field and be dealt with by a committee or board.

It is not the intention of the Opposition to direct the Government as to how it shall constitute such a body or what shall be its duties. All we are asking is that one should be constituted so that it may act as a guide to the Government. The appointment of such a board would impose no additional work on the State Electricity Commission and its members would be men who are experts in the trade. I would be quite happy to see a board of three, four or five, as long as one of its members represented the trade.

Although I think the Minister sincerely believes that the commission can carry out this work, I am sure it would not be able to do it as well as an independent body. The experience gained from the operations of such a committee or board in the Eastern States points to the advantages that are to be gained by appointing a similar body here. I am not aware of the conditions in South Australia, Queensland or Tasmania. It is the general opinion that as there are already 60 or 70 boards in this State, one more would not matter. Its establishment would cause no expense to the Government and, in fact, it would save not only the trade a considerable amount of money but also would assist in reducing the cost of articles sold to consumers.

The Metropolitan Water Supply Department inspects and stamps all articles used for water supply and sewerage. This costs manufacturers a great deal of money and that cost is passed on to the consumer. If that expense can be avoided, the cost of the articles will be reduced. The intention of the proposed board is to reduce costs, and this will be carried out by means of inspection, approvals and the sending of prototypes to other States for comment. I propose that this board be given at least a year's trial.

If at the end of that time the Minister is not satisfied with its work, the Act could be amended. The board would in no way alter the policy of the commission or of the Government. It would have a set duty. I take it the Minister will, in the main, adopt the list of regulations made in New South Wales. If that is the case, its job would be quite clear. The board would consist of businessmen engaged in the electrical trades for many years. They would be of great value to the board. I move—

> That in line 1 of proposed new Section 33A after the word "Part" the following words be inserted:—
>
> "Board" means the "Electrical Approvals Advisory Board" established by this Part of this Act.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No argument has been advanced in support of the amendment. The mover does not appear to have a sound idea of the personnel who constitute the board.

Mr. Yates: I named them the other night. I named four to be nominated by the trade and others by the Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has a very nebulous idea of the board. In essence, the member for South Perth asks us to set up a board to take the place of the commission because he said the board would relieve the commission of a lot of work.

Mr. Yates: That is correct.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: To do that we must be satisfied that the board will create confidence in those engaged in the trade and at the same time it must carry out its job under the Bill. I gave the idea of an approvals board some consideration because they exist in other States. I thought of a board with a chairman appointed by the State Electricity Commission, a representative of the electrical goods manufacturers, a representative of the wholesalers, a representative of employees of the industry, and, most important, an approvals engineer. The decision of such a board would not, however, be final. It would make recommendations to the commission.

Mr. Hutchinson: It does not necessarily follow that the board would be of no value.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: To me it does. It is an unnecessary duplication of work. There is already a commission, not an individual but a representative body. It engages expert tradesmen. Under the Bill, the board must include an approvals engineer who would examine electrical appliances and make recommendations. He would do the work as proposed to be done by the approvals board. The provision in the Bill is much more simple than the method recommended by the member for South Perth. Who will be advantaged by the board? If I can be convinced that any great advantage would result, without creating disadvantages at the same time, I would agree to a board.

I went so far as to draft a Bill for the constitution of such a board. On mature consideration I considered such board would be an encumbrance and that its work could very well be carried out by an approvals engineer employed by the com-

mission. He would make the recommendations to the commission. There would be a safeguard that if any decision was not satisfactory, an appeal could be made to the Minister who had power to order a review. That is all that is necessary. Why set up a body of men to consider these applications?

Such a board would not facilitate consideration of applications for approval. This could be done far more expeditiously by an approvals engineer than by a board. The board, if constituted, would have to be called together when applications were received. It would consist of men acting in an honorary capacity, and no doubt applicants would have to wait their convenience in getting together to consider applications.

Mr. Yates: That is so with all boards or committees.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of what advantage would it be here? It would not facilitate applications.

Mr. Yates: If it is of advantage in one Act, it would have equal advantage in another.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not necessarily. Here a commission already exists. In some cases there are no existing bodies and so the necessity to constitute boards would arise.

Mr. Hutchinson: It is possible that such a board could prevent copious correspondence that would ensue from appeals.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would only add to correspondence. To give an example where approval is almost automatic because it has been granted elsewhere, under the amendment the board would consider, agree, report to the commission, which would then agree. Only in cases where the board did not agree would we find considerable difficulty and correspondence. Where there is agreement the matter is more simple, and there would be less correspondence because we would not have correspondence covering recommendations, and the commission replying. With the non-existence of a board, there would be nobody to make recommendations in the first place and there would be no grounds for saying that the board had approved an application, which was subsequently refused by the commission.

Mr. Yates: Only in certain cases.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The approvals engineer would be an employee of the commission.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. If such a board were set up, it must include an approvals engineer. It is inconceivable that we would set up one and not have a qualified person to advise. It does not follow that every man selling electrical goods knows anything about the safety of appliances.

Mr. Hutchinson: There are no approvals engineers in New South Wales and Victoria.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Who advises the boards on the technical side?

Mr. Hutchinson: I am not aware of that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would be obvious. There must be an approvals engineer in the set-up to examine these appliances.

Mr. Perkins: They could secure reports without having an engineer on the board.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If that were done, it would only worsen the situation. It would merely mean calling on an employee to give a report, which would have to be considered.

Hon. D. Brand: Would not the various organisations elect competent and efficient men to achieve that objective?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They would not achieve that objective.

Hon. D. Brand: We must give them that credit.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Every person who sells electrical goods has to sell them whether they comply with the standards or not. The business of an electrical goods dealer is to sell the goods. That is the objective.

Hon. D. Brand: I would not say so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Otherwise one would end up in bankruptcy.

Hon. D. Brand: Otherwise one would build up a bad reputation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What would he do with such goods?

Mr. Perkins: He would not stock the goods.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If a dealer did not stock the goods, he would not have anything in his store to sell. I am dealing with the position where a manufacturer or wholesaler has a large quantity of electrical appliances on hand.

Mr. Perkins: Would a reputable manufacturer seek to sell unsafe appliances?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If all wholesalers and manufacturers were reputable, there would be no need for protective legislation. If a manufacturer had spent a lot of money on producing appliances that were cheap and nasty, he would be doing his best to dispose of them.

Hon. D. Brand: But he would still know that they had to be approved of.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He would do his best to obtain approval. He might even try to get a friend at court to assist in getting his application approved. If he got the approval of a board and a recommendation were made to the commission, that body would ask its engineer to examine the appliances, and if

his report were adverse, the commission would refuse approval and then the correspondence would start.

Hon. D. Brand: Would not that happen with an individual engineer?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, the engineer would have to make his report to the commission, and he would not last long if he did not give a fair report.

Hon. D. Brand: Neither would a representative on an advisory board.

Mr. Perkins called attention to the state of the Committee.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House and there is now a quorum present.

[*Committee Resumed.*]

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The appointment of an approvals board could not be justified because it would not confer any advantage upon anyone. The mover of the amendment should indicate how such a board would improve the position. We would not be justified in interposing any body between the manufacturer and the commission unless we could show that some benefit would result. When I was considering this legislation, I tried to see where advantage would result from setting up such a board, but failed to see any advantage, though some disadvantages were apparent.

The hon. member said the manufacturers believed that a board would be better, but that is not a reason. We need to be shown how a board would improve the position. Such a board must cause delay and give rise to a greater volume of correspondence than if no such board existed. Does the hon. member consider that the commission would not act fairly? If so, a board would not alter that, because the commission would still have the final say. If the commission desired to block an approval, it could still do so despite the setting up of a board.

Mr. Yates: It would be more difficult to do so because the commission would be acting against expert opinion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What would make representatives of wholesalers and manufacturers experts on electrical goods?

Hon. D. Brand: They could be qualified men.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They might know very little about electrical goods generally.

Hon. D. Brand: That is highly improbable.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There might be a manufacturer of a certain line of goods having only scant knowledge of electrical appliances generally. Should there be a representative of the employees on such a board?

Mr. Yates: All those associated with the commission are not experts and how could they judge any more than could an approvals board?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not claim that all of them were experts.

Mr. Yates: The representatives nominated would be experts in their particular lines.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member claims that they would all be experts, I cannot agree.

Mr. Yates: They would have more knowledge that the commission would have.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They would have to rely on the advice of an approvals engineer. I would not agree to any board being interposed between applicants and the commission unless the board had a qualified engineer at its disposal. He would have to be a member of the board to ensure that he had a voice. It would not be sufficient for him to give advice because the board could disregard his opinion. The hon. member would be content to have provision made for the setting up of a board, leaving to the Minister to decide the constitution of the board and the appointment of the members. This indicates that the hon. member has only one idea, namely, let us have a board.

Mr. Yates: That is quite wrong.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: To what other conclusion can I come? The hon. member should have clear ideas of the personnel of the board and who should advise the board. The amendment is too nebulous.

Mr. Yates: It is not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has not indicated the strength of the board, whom they will represent or anything else.

Mr. Bovell: The Minister for Lands when asking for five commissioners for the Rural and Industries Bank, did not tell us what they were going to do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was obvious what they would be required to do.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member may not discuss that matter on this amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No sound argument has been advanced to show that any advantage would be derived from the appointment of a board and therefore I oppose the amendment.

Mr. COURT: I support the amendment. The Government is endeavouring to improve the inspection of electrical appliances and establish a reasonable degree of uniformity between the States, and therefore I consider it desirable to establish a board to meet a clear-cut change from existing conditions. If a board be not constituted, there will be a continuation of the present state of affairs. The appointment of a

board would mean a completely new set-up that would go far towards establishing a degree of confidence on the part of traders and users of electrical appliances, if for no other reason than to create a good relationship between the commission, its officers and the traders.

The present position is causing dissatisfaction in the trade and a feeling that there has been a failure properly to represent the problems experienced to the appropriate authority. I think the establishment of a board might provide the confidence needed in this question of obtaining approvals. A board constituted on these lines with a chairman nominated by the commission and representatives of the manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and employees with specialised knowledge of the use of the appliances, together with an approvals engineer, would be a well-balanced body that could bring a great deal of experience to bear in its approach to the question.

I think the traders fear one individual being constituted an approving authority and although the commission would be over him, I do not think that it could, with its many other duties, give the necessary attention to these matters. The approvals engineer on the board could use his specialised knowledge as a member of it and not just as an adviser, and that would counteract the effect of any other appointee who might not have the technical knowledge necessary to adjudicate on these approvals.

If on the board there is the approvals engineer the reports will be presented with the necessary technical data on which the experts on the commission will be able to make up their minds. The Minister said the board would involve more delay than would occur with an approvals engineer subject to the authority of the commission, but apparently the trade is prepared to accept that delay in the interests of a broader approach.

Comment has been made on the creation of a further board, but this body will be entirely different from a marketing board. It will be a technical board with a special purpose and could be consituted in a manner that would not cost the revenue anything as we can assume that the trade representatives would act without remuneration in their own interests. For those reasons I ask the Minister further to consider accepting the amendment, in spite of the fact that it does not define the board. I do not think it would be practicable for the mover of the amendment to define the constitution of the board other than indicate to the Minister what interests he thinks should be represented on it. I support the amendment.

Mr. PERKINS: The Minister said the member for South Perth has only a nebulous idea of how the system he advocates will work, but any private member moving such an amendment must have difficulty as to the detailed arrangements required if the legislation is passed. I think the Minister could work out the necessary details in conjunction with the commission, but I believe his ideas are nebulous as to how the commission will function in relation to the approval of appliances. I do not think he has his feet on the ground when he suggests that the commission itself will make detailed examinations of the appliances.

The Minister for Works: I said the opposite.

Mr. PERKINS: I am sorry if I misunderstood the Minister, but if he agrees on that point it will save argument. I am afraid some officer of the commission will be deputed to examine apparatus and that there will be a one-man decision as to what appliances shall be used. Such an officer could make mistakes that would unduly restrict the public use of electrical apparatus. The Minister seems to imagine that the only apparatus requiring to be stamped would be that used in installations for which the commission is responsible, but that is not so.

As far as I know the commission supplies only alternating current, as used in the City of Perth, with the exception of a few installations in country towns where it may still be responsible for some 220/240 volt d.c. current, and perhaps some 110 volt and 32 volt apparatus which would come within the category that would require approval. I do not think officers of the commission would have the same detailed knowledge of apparatus as would some of the people in the trade and there should be some safeguard to ensure that the approval of the commission is not capricious, as it might be if the Minister had his way.

I think members on the Government side should take more interest in this measure. At one stage tonight the Minister was supported by only one other Minister although the Bill will affect practically everyone in the State. The question of approving apparatus may become much more important as time goes on and I ask the Minister to pay more heed to the purpose of the mover of the amendment.

The Minister for Works: More heed?

Mr. PERKINS: Yes.

The Minister for Works: I thought I had given it every heed.

Mr. PERKINS: I thought all the Minister had done so far was to think of reasons why he could not agree to the amendment. I feel that he could incorporate in the legislation some of the intentions of the mover of the amendment.

The Minister for Works: His only idea is that there shall be a board.

Mr. PERKINS: That is not a fair statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr. PERKINS: I am trying to do that, Mr. Chairman. Although I am not looking at you, my words can still go through your ears. It is not accidental that in the other States there is the type of set-up that is sought to be established by the amendment and I think the Minister should accept at least some of what it seeks to achieve.

Mr. JOHNSON: I can visualise some amendments to the amendment with which I could agree. The arguments of members opposite have been to the effect that there should be appointed a board with majority representation for those manufacturing and selling electrical equipment, but that is not my idea. Such a board should be representative first and foremost of the consumer and the supplier of current and the tradespeople who deal in the appliances.

The value of the proposed board would be in the judging of the safety of equipment, not whether it was merchantable. It would be more acceptable if the hon. member altered his amendment to provide for a board of three, consisting of a representative of the commission as chairman—he should be, I suggest, a safety engineer—a representative of the workers in the trade who have to handle what could be dangerous equipment—he would be a representative of one of the unions dealing with it—and, finally, a man representing the consumers who could also be in danger if the equipment were bad.

Electricity can be dangerous, not to the person selling equipment but to the man who handles it. I cannot agree to a board designed to protect the merchandising section of the electricity industry in any way. They have control in their own factories as to what they produce and when they produce it. I cannot support the amendment in its present form.

Mr. YATES: The member for Leederville put forward some helpful suggestions but it would be difficult to amend my amendment to fit in with them. The Minister said I did not put up a reasonable case as to why the board should take the place of the commission in approving these articles which are to be prescribed by regulation. One reason is that the present State Electricity Commission has far too much work to be able to give quick decisions to the trade. The member for Nedlands said that one firm had to wait weeks before it could get any reply as to the investigations of the commission.

The Electricity Commission consists of various types of people. There is the consumers' representative who is a man by the name of Mr. F. Ledger. I believe that one of the Government representatives is Mr. R. J. Dumas. They do not work for the Government but are called in to sit on the board when occasion demands. It would be just as difficult for that commission to get together as it would for the proposed board, because the board we propose would deal only with one subject in the electrical field, namely the items mentioned in the schedule.

It would not be long before the members of the board had a complete knowledge of the functioning of the trade and the duties as prescribed in the regulations. They would only have one function, namely, to discuss the allocation of a licence to a particular firm that might want an article placed on the market. The present State Electricity Commission handles the whole financial set-up.

Hon. C. F. J. North drew attention to the state of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: There are 17 members in the House and I understand that constitutes a quorum. The member for South Perth may proceed.

Mr. YATES: The State Electricity Commission deals with the installation of electrical machinery, connections to new premises, the allocation of existing finance, and so on. It deals with the purchase of electrical undertakings for local authorities and these authorities have complained that the commission is well behind in the settlement of their claims. So it has quite enough to do without entering a new field. The Minister said I did not specify who was to sit on the board. I mentioned four members of the various trades in this State who would be likely members of the board.

It is not for the Opposition to decide the names of the members; we can only make suggestions and hope they will be carried out. The four members we suggested were, firstly, one from the wholesale Electrical Trades Association of W.A., one from the Electrical Contractors Association of W.A., another from the Chamber of Manufacturers of Western Australia, and one representative from the Standards Association of Australia. These four organisations could each nominate a man who was expert in the electrical field.

The Minister for Works: Who would be the chairman?

Mr. YATES: That would be for the Government to decide.

The Minister for Works: How many votes would you give him?

Mr. YATES: We are now getting to the finer details.

The Minister for Works: Well, you suggested a board of four and I did not think it would work.

Mr. YATES: I did not suggest any limit. I suggested four representatives; New South Wales has nine members and

we would leave the remainder for the Government to recommend. It has been said that traders would have to wait many months after submitting electrical equipment for approval before they are given a reply. They are afraid of the power the inspectors might get and they are not happy about the inspections made by the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. May: They are afraid of the inspectors.

Mr. YATES: I will not enter into a debate about personalities. We must see both sides of the case to get a true perspective. Many people say that all Government departments are slower than the trades, but I cannot always agree with that. I have however, heard whisperings from men of recognised standing in the trade about their dealings with the commission and that is an added reason why the Government should appoint this board. If the commission had any doubt about the recommendations of the board, it could call for investigations and acquaint the Minister of any irregularities or whether or not it thought the functions of the advisory board were satisfactory.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member's time has expired.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I have listened to the Minister and the member for South Perth, and I must say that I am more impressed by the remarks of the member for South Perth. I cannot see the necessity for the Minister's apparent consternation as it concerns the constitution of this advisory committee or board. In his proposals the member for South Perth leaves it entirely to the Governor, which means the Executive Council and which in effect, means the Minister himself as to what the constitution, administration and management of the board and the prescription of its functions and duties should be.

This discussion about the constitution seems to me to be unnecessary, and I do not think the Minister appreciated the point of view of the member for South Perth. The only point is whether we should have an advisory board or not, and we have had them before in a number of problems of this nature. On some occasions the House has not even been so kind to the Minister as to allow him to constitute the board and set it up in his own manner through Executive Council. Often it has directed, or partially directed, him as to the constitution, and the methods that should be used in the establishment, of such board or committee.

There is much to be said in a matter of this kind for having somebody outside the Electricity Commission to give advice. I have not the slightest animus against the commission. Nor have there been received by me at any time since the last session—when the Labour Party made them in this House—any complaints about the commission. It has always seemed to me that the commission administers satisfactorily the affairs it has to deal with.

But there is always a feeling that bureaucracy exists in a Government department when it comes to a proposal such as is contemplated in the Bill, and an interfering with what might otherwise be the legitimate rights of the public or a section of it. That can usually be removed by giving an opportunity for the parties likely to be affected to tender their advice before a decision is reached. What else does the member for South Perth desire, and what is the substantial objection to this proposal? I must confess I cannot see it.

If the proposal were to set up some body that the Minister could not in any circumstances contemplate; or to incur some expense or indulge in methods of administration or control which were entirely opposite to the hon. gentleman's desire in this measure, I could sympathise with him. But it is the very moderation of the suggested amendment that attracts me and leads me to ask the Minister to give more favourable consideration to the principle, for the reasons I have stated, leaving the constitution of the committee entirely to himself, per medium of Executive Council.

Mr. YATES: The hon. member has further indicated to the Minister the reasons why we want this board set up.

The Minister for Works: He gave one reason.

Mr. YATES: A very good one.

The Minister for Works: What was it?

Mr. YATES: The Minister heard him. We, like the Government, are anxious that legislation should function in Western Australia in conformity with that of other States. The two major States of Australia have respectively an advisory approvals board and an advisory approvals committee. One body has nine members, but I am not aware of the number comprising the other. If those States are functioning satisfactorily under new Acts dealing with the sale of electrical appliances in the home, Western Australia could equally fall into line, and then there would be uniformity, which the Minister mentioned he wanted. The chairman or members of the board in this State would be able to confer with members of similar boards in the East, without having to deal with the Commissions. They would have the power to make their own investigations as between the States. Thus, the board would assist the Government. It would certainly assist the State Electricity Commission and would not be a hindrance to it.

Even the member for Leederville saw some merit in the appointment of a board. He mentioned certain personnel. I do not disagree to those he nominated; I think he struck quite a good note. But I still think that the board should be constituted.

I purposely refrained from nominating members, because we are perfectly confident that the present Minister would constitute the board with men of sufficient integrity and knowledge to be able to perform the functions entrusted to them to the satisfaction of the commission, the Government and consumers.

In all the circumstances, I consider the amendment is advisable, and the Minister should give it a trial for one year. I would be perfectly content if, at the end of 12 months, he told us that the board had not functioned satisfactorily, that the Act should be repealed, and that the commission should take over. But there should be a trial. I know that the trade generally would assist to the best of its ability in seeing that the board functioned satisfactorily and that the articles submitted for approval were of genuine manufacture. I I am sure that nothing but good would result from co-operation between the trade and the proposed advisory board.

The MINSTER FOR WORKS: From the way the member for Stirling began his contribution to the debate, I thought we were going to hear some real wisdom on the subject, but he gave us only one argument in favour of the proposed board. That was that there was much to be said for having some body other than the Electricity Commission dealing with the matter, because there was always a feeling that there was apt to be bureaucracy where a Government department was the sole authority. There might be a little in that argument, but against it is the fact that the commission would still be in existence and superior to the approvals board. So the appointment of the board would not remove the idea of bureaucracy, because the Electricity Commission's decision would override that of the board.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You would not be compelled to have that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think we would. An independent board could not be given the final say.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Subject to the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The commission is the body charged under the Act to give consideration to matters of this kind, and we could not set up some other authority that would have more power. The member for Stirling indicated to me, as did the member for Roe, that he had misunderstood the line I took when dealing with the amendment, and my point that it was a nebulous amendment. I did not complain that I was being permitted to constitute the approvals board and to devise its duties and authorities, but I mentioned that all the hon. member had in mind was that he would like a board; and in proof of that, the fact that he was unable to indicate just how many men ought to be on it, and whom they should represent.

I feel that anybody who suggests there should be a board with a good deal of authority should know just what kind of board he wants. Otherwise, he has just a general idea that it would be a good thing to have a board. I dealt with that aspect not to indicate that I was at variance with the suggestion that the setting up of the board should be left to the Minister, but to indicate that in my view the hon. member did not have a clear idea of what sort of board he wanted. I listened carefully to all the speakers on this matter in order to see whether a sound argument could be advanced to indicate that the appointment of an approvals board would be of any advantage, but I did not conclude that the arguments raised were sufficiently sound to warrant any change of opinion on my part.

Mr. YATES: There are four other boards functioning under the State Electricity Commission, and the decisions of those boards have to be presented to the commission for final approval. Amongst the boards are the Cinematograph Operators Board, consisting of three members—one representing the commission, one the employers, and one the operators themselves; a Radio Workers' Board, consisting of three members—one representing the commission, one the employers, and one the radio workers; and the Electrical Contractors Licensing Regulations Board, consisting of four members.

So there are four boards operating to look after certain sections of the electrical trade. I admit that they have separate functions. The Government set up these four boards to assist the State Electricity Commission in its functions. We propose to set up another board with similar powers. I cannot see why the Minister should object to having another board to assist the commission in carrying out its stupendous operations. If he would give it a try I am certain he would be satisfied to allow it to remain.

Hon. D. BRAND: The argument put forward by the member for South Perth and others on this side is worthy of a trial. The desire for this board emanates, as was suggested by the Minister himself, from the very fear of a bureaucratic approach to the problem by the commission. It is all very well to say that the State Electricity Commission is made up of men from different organisations, but anyone who knows anything about the set-up of committees will appreciate that these men will have no time at all to discuss the whys and wherefores of an electric switch, for instance.

The commission, immediately the Bill becomes law, will appoint a chief approvals inspector and to all intents and purposes his decision will be final. Any appeal to the commission will be an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. Those of us who have had experience of Government depart-

ments and other organisations will appreciate that the commission will be a little biassed in favour of its own technical officers. The Minister for Health, when on this side of the Chamber, talked a good deal about the bureaucratic control by the general manager of the commission, and he said that when he was a Minister he appreciated that the decisions made by his officers were not always correct, and he did not always accept them.

So, the officer appointed by the commission as the approvals engineer might be one of these very men to whom he referred. For that reason, if for no other, the representatives of the distributors, manufacturers and so on, of electrical appliances in this State have asked for a board. The Minister has made great play on the fact that the member for South Perth has not stated a specific number, and what they should and should not do.

The Minister for Health: Do you not think we will soon need a board to control the boards that are established?

Hon. D. BRAND: The Minister for Agriculture tonight set up a board which will have similar duties to the one we are now endeavouring to have constituted.

The Minister for Works: That is a committee to advise the Minister, but you want a committee to advise a committee.

Hon. D. BRAND: We do not.

The Minister for Works: That is the proposition.

Hon. D. BRAND: It is not. The Minister himself has stated that the commission under the Electricity Act, is charged with the responsibility of adminstration.

The Minister for Works: Under the amendment the members of the committee would have to advise the commission.

Hon. D. BRAND : Yes.

The Minister for Works: That is what you just denied.

Hon. D. BRAND. I did not. I said it would be a board to advise the authority charged with the responsiblility of the administration of the Act. In the case of the Minister for Agriculture's Bill, it is the Minister who will have the responsibility. Electrical manufacturers, distributors and so on are interested in the fact that articles to be sold to the public should be made in conformity with the standards laid down.

Mr. May: Would you appoint a representative from the manufacturers?

Hon. D. BRAND: I am not going into any details. I would be quite happy to see a board of three consisting of a representative of those interested in the distribution or the manufacture of appliances, a representative of the employees and a representative of the commission—a technician or engineer—who could be the chairman. I believe those in the trade and others interested would be quite satisfied then that there would be no bureaucratic or adamant approach by one individual to the question of approval.

Even if the decision of the proposed board was not accepted, there would not be an appeal from Caeser to Caeser. If the Minister is of the opinion that no argument has been put up in favour of the board as against the proposal in the Bill, nothing will change his mind, but I feel sure that there is an argument for the setting up of a board because those interested would be content as they would know their applications would be given full consideration.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes	18
Noes	19
Majority against	1

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Manning
Mr. Ackland	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. North
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Owen
Mr. Court	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hill	Mr. Yates
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Norton
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Kelly	Mr. May
Mr. Lapham	

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Oldfield	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Heal
Mr. Wild	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Thorn	Mr. McCulloch

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. YATES: I move an amendment—

> That in lines 6 to 8 of the definition of "electrical installation" the words "and includes additions, alterations and repairs to an electrical installation," be struck out.

This measure seeks to create something new in this State—a provision covering the sale of certain household electrical appliances, which, I take it, will be prescribed in regulations similar to those of New South Wales, and so I cannot see the reason for the inclusion in the interpretation of "electrical installation" of the words to which I have referred. The existing regulations give full coverage in this respect. Regulation 184 states—

> Where existing installations do not comply with these regulations or with the S.A.A. wiring rules as existing at

the time when the installation was carried out, the supply authority may serve a notice on the consumer stating how such installation does not comply with the regulations or S.A.A. wiring rules and shall give the consumer a reasonable time to have the installation brought into conformity with the regulations or S.A.A. wiring rules.

Further, in Regulation 194, we find the following:—

Supply authority inspectors when issuing any instruction to have any fault or defect rectified or any alteration to an installation to be made shall quote with the notice the relevant S.A.A. wiring rules and/or supply authority's by-law under which the notice is given.

With the inclusion of those words in the interpretation of "electrical installation" the inspector does not have to quote the appropriate regulation under which he insists that something shall be done, and if this provision becomes law we can wipe out Regulation 194, and I do not think the trade wants that to happen. Unless the Minister can give some explanation, I must persist with this amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The intention of this legislation is really to give the commission more power than it now has to deal with electrical appliances and installations. We are dealing now with the definition and "electrical appliance" means "an appliance, fitting, wire or other apparatus." "Electrical installation" means any appliance and if we give power to deal with any appliance, we must have power to deal with any additions or alterations to such appliances, because it is conceivable that there could be more danger from unsatisfactory additions or alterations to appliances than was the case in the first instance. If agreed to, the amendment would reduce the power contained in the measure to increase the safety of appliances. The Bill seeks to protect the public against appliances or installations that might be dangerous or unsatisfactory, and it is with the protective aspect that we must be concerned.

Mr. Yates: Does this deal only with the items mentioned in the regulations?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It states, to begin with "approval for electrical appliances," and there is a definition of "electrical appliance" in which we find that it means "an appliance, fitting, wire or other apparatus or material intended, suggested or designed for use in or for purposes of or for connection to any electrical installation"—and that is to be allowed to stand. In the definition of "appliance" there is reference to electrical installations, and so there is now a definition of "electrical installation" and the amendment would remove from that definition that portion which is really included in "electrical appliance" and which connects it up.

All that would achieve would be to weaken the definition and the power sought under the Bill. If "electrical appliance" includes "appliance, fitting, wire," and so on in use for purposes of or for connection to any electrical installation, then we must have in the definition of "electrical installation" the words that appear in the Bill. It means any appliances which are covered by the first part of the definition, "wires, fittings or other apparatus placed in or on or over any land or premises and used for or for purposes incidental to the conveyance, control, supply or use of electricity." If it is thought right to provide that we should have control over the original installations, surely there must also be control over any additions or alterations to those installations!

Mr. YATES: I am satisfied with the Minister's explanation and ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. YATES: I move an amendment—

That in line 8 of proposed new Section 33B (1) (a) the words "stamped or labelled" be struck out.

My reason for moving the amendment is that the electrical trade believes it might be difficult to label or stamp very small appliances. In the New South Wales regulations the following words appear:—"Where the authority considers that such action is warranted, it may approve of the use of a trade name or mark in lieu of the aforesaid letter and approvals number."

The Minister for Works: That is a label.

Mr. YATES: That may be so, but the words in the Bill could be misinterpreted. The trade generally feels that the words should be struck out of the Bill and it wants an assurance from the Minister that similar words will be used as appear in the New South Wales regulations. If that is forthcoming, I will not go on with the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The purpose of the legislation is to achieve uniformity and we do not intend to get out of step with the other States. The idea is to facilitate the issue of approvals and where an approval has already been granted in other States it will apply automatically here. It is certainly not our intention to impose upon manufacturers or wholesalers in this State conditions that are harsh and are not applicable in other States. Where it is obviously irksome to enforce the use of a stamp or label on a small appliance, the commission will not attempt to do so. It will frame its regulations in order to meet such a position. Our regulations will not be a completely new set and different from those in opera-

tion elsewhere. Uniformity has been reached after long argument between the States and we are now coming into line. I hope the hon. member will not persist with his amendment.

Mr. YATES: I am satisfied with the Minister's explanation and I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. YATES: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of proposed new Section 33B (4), after the word "section" the following words be added:—"unless basic design or manufacture thereof has been changed from the prototype as originally approved by the Commission."

If a prototype has been forwarded to the commission and approved by it, there is a possibility that the commission might withdraw its approval, while, in the meantime, a large sum of money might have been spent on the manufacture of the article. In that case the article would become useless because the manufacturer would not be able to sell it. The trade agrees that the commission should have power to withdraw approval at any time because shoddy material might be used. I think my amendment will safeguard the position and I feel that the Minister will agree that it is a reasonable suggestion. The trade will be happy if the amendment is agreed to because they feel that the commission should not be able to withdraw approval after a manufacturer has spent money in producing an article to which the commission has already given approval.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I can appreciate the desire of the hon. member, but there might be deterioration in the quality of material used and yet no alteration in the basic design. The manufacturer could deliberately use cheap materials in place of the materials used in the prototype, which might render an electrical appliance highly dangerous. In such an event, the State Electricity Commission would not have power to withdraw its approval.

If we provide that once a manufacturer has received an approval he need not worry unless he alters his basic design, we will have a lot of trouble. I think the safeguard in the clause is very necessary. While I appreciate the desire of the hon. member to relieve manufacturers of expense that might be incurred by them in providing for the manufacture of an article for which approval has been given and which may later be withdrawn, nevertheless it is our duty to protect the public. I cannot agree to the amendment.

Mr. COURT: I find that I am not in complete agreement with the amendment proposed because I can see danger in it. My concern is based on slightly different lines, although the Minister may have considered this aspect. I agree that the commission must have the right to withdraw approvals. Having granted an approval, some technical fault might appear, even though the standard of materials and manufacture might be maintained. There might be some inherent defect in the appliance which did not develop until it had been used. In the interests of public safety, the commission must have the right to withdraw its approval.

What I am concerned about is the position of a trader who, having been given approval, has committed himself to 12 months' supplies of an article and embarked upon an advertising and marketing campaign which could easily cost him up to £10,000. Such a trader could be placed in an unfortunate position if the approval were withdrawn. Another point is that the officers doing the work in the commission could overlook something. It is possible that they could fail to give the appliance some special test that would disclose a fault, and approval would be given.

The manufacturer could go ahead and organise his sales campaign and then find that his approval had been suddenly withdrawn because the fault had been discovered. Before the amendment is agreed to, I would like to hear the Minister's views with regard to a compensation provision in special cases. I have referred to two instances where the merchant, while not at fault, could be placed in an unfortunate position because of the subsequent withdrawal of approval.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think this is a trade risk that a merchant must accept. Public safety must be the first consideration. This is no new principle. Recently, certain traders in coconut purchased a quantity of contaminated dessiccated coconut, for which they paid good money. When it was discovered that the coconut was contaminated, they were not allowed to sell it. We would not argue that because the contamination was not detected in the first instance, these people should be allowed to sell it. We would say, "No, it is dangerous to the health of the public and, despite the loss to the traders, it cannot be sold."

Exactly the same principle applies here. If an electrical appliance is approved in the first instance, once a fault develops, steps must be taken to prevent its sale. I am sympathetic towards the trader who might be caught with an article that he cannot sell. However, I do not think it would be a complete loss because it would probably be found that it would merely need some modification to put it right. In that case, the safety provision would be adequate and the commission would subsequently grant approval. In any event, if an approval were withdrawn, the trader could always appeal to the Minister if he thought the withdrawal was unfair.

Mr. COURT: There is one thing worrying me about the right of withdrawal. I do not object to the principle of withdrawal; I know it must be there in the interests of safety. But the provision for the board has been defeated and the right of withdrawal can be exercised by the commission. We are assured that the trader will have the right of appeal to the Minister, who in turn will refer the matter to his experts, who will be the members of the Electricity Commission.

Hon. D. Brand called attention to the state of the Committee.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is now a quorum present.

Committee Resumed.

Mr. COURT: I was making the point that the Minister would refer to his experts, who would be the commission, the members of which would make a decision on something which they had already determined. It would be most extraordinary if they reached a conclusion contrary to their previous decision. The only alternatives for the protection of the trader would be the establishment of some fund from which he could be recompensed, but that is rather an involved procedure to contemplate at this stage.

If there were the right for him to go to arbitration in a case like this and bring in some separate body to decide the issue, it would be more acceptable. We are leaving these people exposed without a provision for compensation; I cannot see any in the parent Act. There is no right of appeal except that to the Minister, and it appears to be a little unfair and dangerous.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. YATES: I move an amendment—

> That in line 4 of paragraph (b) of Subsection (5) of proposed new Section 33B, the word "may" be struck out.

The traders feel that as this will be uniform legislation throughout the Commonwealth the conditions of approval should be similar in each State. It is considered that each State should approve of all electrical appliances accepted in other parts of the Commonwealth. The deciding power should rest with the commission to approve an appliance from other States without examination. If an expert in Western Australia is good enough to do without assistance what the Minister suggests, that should apply to the other States as well. Approval for the sale of the articles should be automatic irrespective of in what part of the Commonwealth they were manufactured, provided they were stamped in accordance with State regulations to indicate where they were manufactured.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Members of the Opposition seem to think that the commission will be a big, bad wolf to prevent people from selling their appliances. There is no such intention. Ordinarily approval will be automatic if the article has already been approved for sale in some other State and the necessary application is made here. It would be wrong to direct the commission that it must issue an approval simply because approval had been issued somewhere else. It might follow in 999 cases out of 1,000 that the commission would issue an approval straightaway on proof that approval had been given elsewhere, but we should leave to it the power to withhold that approval until such time as it satisfies itself on a point about which it might be worried.

The commission will exercise this power in the interests of the public and not in its own interests. Its job is to sell electricity and it will encourage the sale of electrical appliances. Accordingly, it will be anxious to issue the requisite approvals. But we must leave it the right to take such action as it feels necessary for the safety of the public. The commission will not act capriciously. The withholding of the approval may only be temporary until such time as the matter has been investigated. I hope the hon. member will not proceed with his amendment.

Mr. YATES: I would like to believe the Minister's statements. There are indications that the commission is not happy regarding the position relating to the approving of certain articles which have already been approved in other States. This clause gives power to examine any article imported from another State.

The Minister for Works: Do you not think that should be the position?

Mr. YATES: If the intention was to do it in one case in a thousand, I would be happy. However we would have articles held up while waiting for examination by the commission. That is possible.

The Minister for Works: That is not the intention. We know that no man is infallible. Somebody in the Eastern States might fall down on the job and approve an article that was defective.

Mr. YATES: I would like to believe that. The trade generally is not happy with the provision. It asks for the approval of all articles which have received approval in other States, after they have gone through a strict and exhaustive test. Before withholding approval, the commission would have to prove that an article was defective. If found to be defective, the commission could exercise the authority vested in it to withhold the article from sale.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 3rd November.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [10.55]: The Bill is one of considerable importance and one that should be carefully considered by the House. It is most important because industrial relations have such an effect on the community. Industrial arbitration over the last 30 years has changed from the mere settlement of issues between employer and employee to a stage where the Arbitration Court now gives decisions affecting not only a particular employer and employee, but the whole of the community. Therefore it behoves us to give every consideration and care to matters relating to this most important subject. Of course, industrial arbitration is controlled by the Industrial Arbitration Act. I want to make my position quite clear, particularly in view of an interjection by the Minister in charge of the Bill to the effect that I believe in the law of the jungle.

The Minister for Labour: I accept your apology.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If there is one member in this House who believes in the proper administration of the law, it is myself, because law is my profession. Those who are brought up in law naturally have the greatest faith in it, so that remark was, in my opinion, quite uncalled for and was entirely inaccurate.

The principal object of industrial arbitration is to ensure that the worker receives a proper share of the national income, and, of course, there are secondary objectives. They are for the protection of an employer from an employee and to ensure that industrial unions of workers and industrial unions of employers conduct their affairs in the proper manner in accordance with their rules and regulations. As we all know, when there is an industrial disturbance, great economic loss to the State results, and it is the responsibility of the court not only to determine issues between employer and employee but also to preserve the public interest when issues come before it.

To enable the court to exercise its functions, it was vested with certain duties, authorities and discretions, with power to enforce as far as possible its decisions. Those discretions and authorities the present Bill does nothing else than to weaken, and I have no hesitation in describing the measure as a sabotage of our industrial legislation. There is not the slightest doubt—and I think I shall be able to satisfy you, Mr. Speaker—that the whole measure is designed to take away either some discretion or jurisdiction of the court.

The Minister for Labour: Where does it get that power?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I repeat that the whole object of the Bill is to take away from the court some discretion, some authority or some power of enforcing its authority.

Mr. Moir: What about the question of the savage penalties?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The hour is late, and if members wish to get home at a reasonable time, they should not interject too much.

The Minister for Labour: Nobody said that we would be going home after you had finished.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That matter is at the discretion of the Premier, not of the Minister for Labour. I wish to repeat my statement that this Bill is a sabotage of our industrial arbitration, because the whole object is to take away from the court some discretion or authority or method of enforcing its authority.

The Minister for Labour: You put through that legislation last year.

The Minister for Lands: What are you annoyed about?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am not annoyed.

The Minister for Lands: You sounded as if you were.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Do not make irrelevant interjections but let the hon. member proceed with his speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! These constant interjections must cease. Most of them are pointless.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: We know it is the duty of the court to prevent industrial disturbances that disorganise our economic life and lower the standard of living whenever they occur. That is one of the most important duties of the court, and so it should have the right to intervene when it considers that any industrial trouble is brewing or occurring and should have the jurisdiction to do so. We should leave to the court the power to decide on what occasions it is necessary to intervene in an industrial matter, but the Bill proposes to narrow the jurisdiction of the court by limiting the definition of the word "strike".

The Minister for Labour: What was the definition before 1952?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The definition before last year was what the Minister is intending to restore, but which had been insufficient, as I shall prove. The effect of the proposed amendment would deprive the court of the authority to intervene in many industrial disturbances, particularly those organised by communistic influences. That is why the definition was amended last year.

The Minister for Labour: Those would not be industrial matters.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Why should not the court have power to intervene in all industrial disturbances? Is there any objection to its having that power? We know that the proposed amendment, which will simply replace the definition that existed previous to last year, was found to be insufficient.

We know of two particular cases in which the Full Court decided that the Arbitration Court did not have the power. One was when a strike was called by way of protest because an admitted communist, Mr. Healy, had been imprisoned by the Federal Arbitration Court. I think it was the Maritime and Dockers' Union of Workers led by a communist, Mr. Troy, that called the men out on strike. Prosecutions were lodged and, if I remember correctly, the men were fined. An appeal was made to the Full Court, which decided that this was not an industrial matter. It ruled that the men had not struck in order to enforce any additional reward or gain.

The Minister for Labour: Have you read the first paragraph of Clause 2?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Then there was another strike in which the Full Court held that the Arbitration Court had no power. That was when the locomotive workers were called out on strike by way of a protest against the refusal of the Federal Court to grant margins. This was undoubtedly an industrial disturbance, but the Full Court was able to intervene and direct that the Arbitration Court had no jurisdiction.

The Premier: To which loco. strike are you referring?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The loco. strike when the men went out and were prosecuted.

The Premier: When was that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Twelve or 18 months ago; I will endeavour to get the exact particulars.

The Premier: I am sure it did not happen.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I remember that it did occur, and will verify the point and inform the Premier.

Mr. May: Not loco. drivers.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Loco. workers, men in the running sheds, fitters, who protested against the court's refusal to grant margins. The existing definition provides full protection to ensure that no injustice can occur because, in any proceedings taken before the court having relation to a strike, the court may declare that it is not a strike. What is wrong with that?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What would you call it when the chemists refused to carry out their job until they were paid more money?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If action is taken before the court and the court declares that it is not a strike, that is the end of the matter. What is wrong with that definition?

Mr. Johnson: It is the antithesis of British justice.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I cannot agree with the hon. member. We know that there were rolling strikes and strikes that were brought about mainly by people who had not the trade union movement at heart. A couple of men were called out and told to leave, and that was the beginning of the famous metal trades strike. I cannot see why the Minister in charge of the Bill wishes to limit the powers of the court. When no injustice is occurring, why should he desire to take such action? If that is not sabotage, I do not know what is.

The Minister for Labour: Read the second paragraph of Clause 2 of the Bill.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have read it.

The Minister for Labour: Read it again.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I know what paragraph (2) provides.

The Premier: Paragraph (2) of what?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Of the Act.

The Minister for Labour: I am talking of the Bill.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Paragraph (2) of the Bill certainly does not cope with the situation that is covered by the Act. The next way by which the Minister is weakening the court is connected with disputed elections. I am surprised at these amendments. We all know that under our system elections are of the utmost importance even when they are elections of trade unions which have so much power and authority and have come to form almost part of our organised method of Government or carrying on our way of life. We have to recognise their immense power. It is absolutely essential that their elections be conducted fairly and in a democratic manner, and that the Arbitration Court have power to ensure that they are so conducted.

Let us look at a few of the provisions of the Act that it is proposed to delete. Section 36A of the 1952 Act provides that applications can be made by any interested person for an inquiry into a trade union election. The registrar, by Section 36B, is given the power to investigate and, where there are reasonable grounds, to refer the matter to the court for inquiry. The registrar has power to take certain action to ensure that he shall get the information necessary to make a report to the court. Certain penalties are provided, one of which, admittedly, is imprisonment for six months. This was suggested by the Premier and inserted in the Act at his instigation, so I am surprised that his Government should now want it deleted.

The Minister for Labour: What was the penalty in the 1952 Bill?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The same as is to be found in the Commonwealth legislation, namely, £100 and 12 months' imprisonment. The Premier moved, and I accepted his amendment, that the penalty be £50 and six months' imprisonment. It is important if there is fraud, which is a matter of great concern to the State, that the court shall have power to ensure that its orders are carried out in connection with its investigations. The penalties may be imposed with respect to refusal or failure to comply with the court's orders, or to persons who obstruct or hinder the registrar in the exercise of his powers. He has power to inspect ballot papers and to require persons to deliver to him, in accordance with the Act, ballot papers, and to enter premises for inspections.

These powers are given to the registrar so that he can inquire whether there are reasonable grounds for assuming that there have been improper practices by a union in the conduct of an election. I think members will consider that this is a matter of some importance. Six months' imprisonment is the maximum penalty which can be imposed and it is imposed at the discretion of the court. It is wrong, in connection with the worst cases, to disagree with that penalty. I heard the Minister for Works argue tonight on a much less serious matter that a penalty of six months was necessary, because some people would not be affected by a fine.

There are many people who might be interested in bad elections. We know that Mr. Thornton was. What would £50 mean to him? Nothing at all. He would say, "I will pay the penalty," and that would be the end of it. He would not go to gaol. Why deprive the court of the authority to ascertain whether there had been a fraudulent election? Clause 36H deals with the position when the court is making an inquiry after it has found there are reasonable grounds for it. The court naturally must have authority to make such orders as it thinks are necessary for effectively exercising its powers and functions for enforcement in this division—that is, as a court of disputed returns.

Here it is given power to fine a person £50 or imprison him for six months. As there may be fraud—there has been a lot of fraud in unions—is that penalty, as a maximum, excessive? I say that here again the Government is weakening the powers of the court. It is all very well—I know it is true—to say that we do not have the same industrial troubles here as in the Eastern States, or have to deal with the same type of people as have to be dealt with there, but who knows when our day will come? We know the fight that Mr. Short has had to get control, and that that fight is not yet ended.

The court needs authority to ensure that its orders, made in connection with seeing that there is a fair and proper inquiry into an alleged faked election, are carried out. Here again it is suggested that the penalty is too high. The next weakening of the Act occurs in connection with Section 36L which provides that, notwithstanding anything contained in the rules of an industrial union, an industrial union and its officers able to do so, shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that ballot papers, envelopes, lists and other documents used in connection with or relevant to an election for an office are preserved and kept at the registered office of the industrial union for a period of one year after the completion of the election.

This is most important because how can we tell if there has been fraud if the ballot papers are immediately destroyed? Last year the Premier submitted that a fine of £50 or six months' imprisonment was correct for anyone who broke this most important rule. It would only be broken by someone who did it intentionally with a view to fraud because if it was done unintentionally, the person would not be liable. Yet the Premier has apparently relented and wants to strike out the word "imprisonment". What is £50 to a man who is elected president by means of false ballot papers, if he can destroy them straight away?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do you think he would have a lot of money?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: What would £50 mean to a man like Thornton, if by that means he remained president or secretary?

The Premier: A president fraudulently elected to the position would not remain president.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The fraud would have to be proved and that could not be done if the ballot papers were destroyed. Is not the penalty a warning to people who desire to commit fraud? Section 36M of the Act states that the registrar is to conduct elections at the request of the court and that any person who obstructs or hinders the person conducting the election under that section, or any other person carrying out directions under Subsection (6), commits an offence, and there again the penalty prescribed is £50 or imprisonment for six months. That is not an extraordinary penalty, and it is the same as that provided in New South Wales, and only half that contained in the Commonwealth legislation.

Now, for some reason, it is desired here to whittle away the protection afforded and make the penalty £50 only. It is not reasonable, and I cannot understand it. Subsection (2) of Section 36N also deals with elections, and states that a person who, in or in connection with an election for an office, threatens or offers or suggests violence, or uses, inflicts or pro-

cures violence, shall be guilty of an offence and the penalty provided by the Act is a £50 fine, or six months' imprisonment. Are we not to ensure that violence is not done? I do not think that imprisonment for six months it too high a penalty, yet the Bill seeks to take away that protection.

Under the Act the court may order a secret ballot, to ascertain the views of the members, or of a section or class of members, of an industrial union at its discretion, and may make such orders in connection therewith and the taking thereof as it thinks fit, and any person who refuses or fails to comply with the order of the court is liable to a fine of £50 or imprisonment for six months, and that, in my view, is not a severe maximum penalty. If the court was taking a secret ballot, which it would do only on a very important question, in order to ensure that that was done in a proper manner, the court is authorised, when an offence is committed in connection with the ballot to impose six months' imprisonment.

I cannot understand the desire to weaken that provision. It is unwise to weaken the authority of the court, as that authority is our only means of ensuring that justice is done. If there is any industrial trouble or disturbance, the court, under Section 98 of the Act, has power to suspend any award, but it also has power to discriminate in respect of any district and can limit the suspension to any extent. Is that unreasonable? I do not refer to Dr. Evatt as a great authority, but he has had a great deal of industrial experience, and he inserted that provision in the Commonwealth Act, where it is to be found today.

If a union is badly led and is contravening awards of the court, is it unreasonable that the court shall have power to say that any particular section of that organisation can have its award suspended? Subsection (2) of Section 98A states that the order for suspension or cancellation may be limited to the persons named therein, to classes of persons, or to particular localities. Why should we rob the court of that authority? It is given power to use its discretion in the widest possible way and in respect of any section of workers or in any particular locality, and it should have that power. Yet the Bill seeks to repeal that section, and thus weaken the power of the court.

Section 132 prohibits strikes, and Section 98 provides a penalty for breaches of awards. The penalty under the latter section prescribed is £500, yet no action has been taken in connection with that provision. Whether it was thought that the employer was more likely to break an award, I do not know; but no efforts have been made to reduce that penalty in the Act. Under Section 132 there is a prohibition against a strike and it is proposed to reduce the penalty from £500 to £250. One of the principal objects of the Act is to prevent strikes and surely a penalty of £500 for a union taking part in a strike is not too much for it to pay. This Bill will weaken the authority of the court by reducing that figure of £500 to £250.

Under Section 137 of the principal Act the court has certain powers to prohibit a lock-out or strike, but there again that section is to be repealed and is to be replaced by another section which was found to be unsuitable. During the metal trades strike we found that the court had no power to act, and it must be remembered that that strike was organised by two communists, Rowe and Wilson, who, at that time, controlled the A.E.U. in Victoria.

They sent organisers here for that purpose and according to the rules of the organisation the services of an organiser can be dispensed with if the union's directions are not being carried out. So Western Australia was the guinea pig and when Mr. Gibson was asked about the matter he said, quite frankly, "Why should this strike be carried all over the Commonwealth when it would be bad policy to have the whole of the metal trades in Australia on strike?"

The Premier: Why could not the court deal with that strike?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It could not deal with it.

The Premier: Why not?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Because Mr. Gibson was not a member of the union and was not an organiser for that union.

The Premier: Mr. Gibson?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think that was his name.

The Premier: I think the hon. member is hopelessly at sea.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It was the organiser who represented those two communists. I may have used the wrong name but the Premier knows who I mean. The court could not deal with that strike and was not able to settle it. Until the 1952 amendment to the Act was passed, the strike could not be settled and everybody knows that because of that amending legislation the strike ceased.

The Premier: That is not so at all.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is a well known fact that that was the reason why it was called off from Victoria.

The Premier: Ridiculous!

The Minister for Labour: When did the strike finish?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: A few days before the Bill became law. When I introduced the Bill into this House, the strike had been going for 28 weeks.

Mr. Andrew: It could have been finished sometime before that if you people had done the right thing.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not believe that because there is no doubt that the strike was controlled by the A.E.U. Council in Melbourne. Three men controlled that council and at the time two of them were communists. It was published in "The Tribune" that this industrial disturbance was to take place.

The Premier: It would have been settled some weeks earlier if your Government had agreed, some weeks before, to what it finally accepted.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know that the Premier is entirely without responsibility. If, as the Leader of the Opposition at that time, he had used the great authority he has in the Labour movement he could have stopped the strike earlier.

The Premier: I think the Leader of the Opposition would tell you that I did use my influence.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think the Premier could have done a little more, but I will agree that at that time he was not the Premier of the State.

The Premier: Your Government could have done better.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: By giving in to them.

The Premier: No, by agreeing, months before, to what you finally accepted.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: We did not get rid of the question of margins until the last stages.

The Premier: And the Court might have made a mistake in deregistering the union at that time.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That was a matter for the court.

The Premier: It was a matter of opinion.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: So there is clause after clause in the Bill, and they all weaken the Act. I now want to deal briefly with some of the discretions of which the court will be deprived if this measure becomes law. The first concerns the discretion of the court to give authority for inspectors to enter premises and interview men. That is a most important privilege and one which should be in the hands of the court.

The court, as and when it thinks fit, should be able to give authority for such action, but this measure proposes to take that discretion away from that tribunal. Why deprive the court of that discretion? It is the court's duty to ensure that we have industrial peace and to ensure that the relations between employer and employee are harmonious. Why should an inspector have the right to enter premises, as and when he thinks fit, and place the onus on the employer to prove that his inspection is hindering or preventing the men from working.

The Premier: The court does not police awards.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Of course it does.

Mr. Moir: It does not.

The Premier: When does it police awards?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Under industrial magistrates and under the industrial law.

The Premier: The court does not police awards; it decides cases.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: There is an appeal to the court on all penalties.

The Premier: Does the magistrate go round inspecting to see whether awards are being honoured?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: He does not do that.

The Premier: Of course, not.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: But, on the other hand, the court gives authority for inspections to be carried out by the appropriate people and those inspections have to be made at proper times. That authority is in many awards, so why should we take that discretion away from the court?

The Premier: The trade unions have to police awards.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I agree, but, on the other hand, the relation between employer and employee have to be dealt with by the court, so why take the discretion away from the court? Why not allow the employer to have a say as to what he thinks is a suitable time and what he considers are suitable conditions? Surely he is entitled to that! Is the Premier frightened that the court will not mete out justice?

The Minister for Labour: If the hon. member will read the clause he will discover that it will cause no interference between the employer and the worker.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have read it very carefully and I do not agree with the Minister.

The Minister for Labour: We want to give an accredited unionist the right to enter any establishment to ensure that workers are working under good conditions.

The Premier: No reasonable employer would object to that.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is a discretion exercised by the court and it should be under its control. A similar argument applies to the next clause. At present the court has authority over unionists and their conditions. Again, it stands between the employer and the employee in order that justice may be served for the benefit

of the community. The court has wide discretion and it does make proper awards for unionists.

Mr. Moir: Only restricted awards.

Hon. A. . R. ABBOTT: The duty of the court is to stand between the employer and the employee for the benefit of the public. Why take this discretion away from it? The Bill certainly proposes to weaken the power of the court.

The Minister for Labour: It does not do anything of the kind.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Bill is weakening the principle of industrial arbitration.

The Minister for Labour: We are laying down the principle of preference to unionists that has been in operation in Queensland for many years.

The Premier: Senator O'Sullivan thinks it is a very good principle.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I will now refer to another provision. At present the Arbitration Court has authority to declare the basic wage and also has the duty of considering quarterly any adjustment or alteration to it when it is considered warranted. Having done that, it may make an order accordingly. However, here again by the provision in the Bill the authority of the court is to be taken away. I will deal with the history of these quarterly adjustments because I think they are sufficiently important to warrant it.

The Minister for Labour: Tell me how many times the court did not make any adjustments in the basic wage during the period the basic wage dropped from £5 8s. to £4 8s. progressively.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The first occasion when the fixing of a basic wage was considered was during the hearing of the Harvester case by Mr. Justice Higgins. I am now referring to the Federal award because it was from that award that quarterly adjustments originated.

The Minister for Labour: There were no quarterly adjustments in Western Australia until 1931.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am now referring to the Federal award and the Western Australian system was based upon that. I have a note here relating to the Harvester finding which reads as follows:—

> Marine Cooks, Bakers & Butchers' Association of Australia v. the Commonwealth Steamship Owners' Association. He said that the same considerations were involved in the fixing of a minimum wage as had been involved in deciding what was the lowest fair and reasonable remuneration, the matter which he had decided in ex parte H. V. McKay, the Harvester case.
>
> "I cannot conceive," he said, "any terms to be fair and reasonable which do not at the very least allow a man to live from his labour, to live as a human being in a civilised community . . . . We must first find what wage a man needs to live, in the civilised sense—the living wage; and then the wage due to skill. For this 'living' wage, he decided to adhere to his 'Harvester' finding. The 'Harvester' wage was thus introduced as the minimum or 'basic' wage of this Court . . ."

That was the first time a basic wage was brought into being.

The Premier: There were no quarterly adjustments when that award was declared.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, I agree. I intend to refer to the quarterly adjustments. They were introduced by Mr. Justice Power, who was sitting on the Federal Arbitration Court bench in December, 1921. the quotation I have here from the judgment of the Federal Court recently given reads as follows:—

> In December, 1921, the then President, the late Mr. Justice Power, decided to alter the method of fixing the basic wage when making awards of the court by what he called basing the rate on the statistician's figures for the preceding quarter, plus three shillings a week, with quarterly adjustments, instead of basing the rates on any of the previous methods adopted by the Court (the fairest method of securing the Harvester Judgment standard to the workers).
>
> As regards the addition of three shillings a week, Mr. Justice Power, who introduced it, declared that its purpose and effect was to maintain the Harvester standard in a period of rapidly rising prices and that it did not increase the standard.

In other words, what Mr. Justice Power did was to declare the annual adjustment.

Mr. J. Hegney: It was not a quarterly adjustment.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: He also made allowance for an increase in cost up to the period of his decision. He then said, "I intend to introduce quarterly adjustments but as there will be some rise before April I will now allow an extra 3s." This gives the lie to the argument that prices are always ahead of wages because at the time of this decision workers were allowed an extra 3s. before any increase in prices took place.

Mr. J. Hegney: He knew that the wages were still behind for the previous 12 months.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: He brought them up to date for the twelve months. Members can read his decision as printed in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court Reports at p. 829. Having brought them up to date, he gave the workers an extra 3s. to allow for the anticipated rise during the next quarter. That allowance of 3s. has been continued ever since in

Federal awards and would now amount to 15s. a week. That also is an answer to the argument that no allowance is ever made for the lag in wages.

Mr. J. Hegney: That was on an annual basis.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, it was not. Mr. Justice Power decided to keep the basic wage up to date. That decision was made during the basic wage inquiry. He said, "In future there will be quarterly adjustments declared based on the figures provided by the Government Statistician." He had used those figures when making the annual adjustment. In addition to ordering that, as there should be another adjustment in three months' time he declared that in the meantime he would grant an increase of 3s. to allow for any lag in wages during that period. As I have said, ever since that allowance has been taken into account when Federal awards have been made and the total would now amount to something over 15s. That was how quarterly adjustments were adopted in the Federal sphere.

Mr. Johnson: That is not in accordance with the Labour report.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is in accordance with the report to which I have referred. The hon. member might look it up; it is on page 829.

Mr. Johnson: The Labour report is official.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: This is an official Commonwealth report. That procedure was followed for some time and then a new principle was introduced by the Federal court in 1931.

Mr. Brady: In what case was your decision given concerning the powers?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I will find that out; I have not got the full report with me. In 1931 a new method was adopted instead of the need system established by the Harvester judgment, and this new system set out that what should be sought was the independent ascertainment and prescription of the highest basic wage that could be sustained by the total of industry in all its primary, secondary and ancillary forms. That is the principle on which the Federal court has operated since 1931. It does not attempt to ascertain what is the minimum a man can live on. The procedure was altered completely in 1931 and the principle now is: What is the maximum basic wage that primary, secondary and ancillary forms of industry can stand. It was on the principle that the Arbitration Court allowed £1, I think it was, in 1952. That was the principle on which it worked.

The Minister for Labour: Did it allow £1 in 1952?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Well, whenever the Federal court did allow the additional £1. It then decided that the economy of the country would permit the basic wage to be increased by £1, and so it was.

The Minister for Labour: That was at the end of 1950.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, I think that was the date.

Mr. J. Hegney: They reduced all wages by 25 per cent.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In the recent case the court pointed out that the present basic wage for adult males included 50s. a week, which certainly has no relation to any system of needs.

Mr. Brady: You have not dealt with the Financial Emergency Act.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The court decided that on the last occasion it ceased to utilise quarterly adjustments. I will not argue the merits or demerits of quarterly adjustments. The whole of my arguments are based on the fact that this authority should be exercised at the discretion of the court and it should not be made a political plaything.

The Premier: It is a pity that your Government in this State did not believe that in 1931.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Mr. Scullin's Government did not believe in that either, so I do not think that the Premier need bring that up.

The Premier: I insist on bringing it up.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: As members know, all Governments were forced to take certain financial action at that time, just as every nation in the world was obliged to. These are the factors which the Federal court considered for the granting of the basic wage—employment, investment, production and productivity, overseas trade, overseas balances, competitive position of secondary industries and the retail trade.

The Minister for Labour: That is in accordance with the recent decision of the Commonwealth judges.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, that is where I have got this information from.

The Minister for Labour: Not from the Labour report.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I got the information from the Commonwealth report.

The Minister for Labour: You did not get that from it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The last one I quoted was from the judgment of the Arbitration Court. The court considers all these matters and goes into them very thoroughly; it hears evidence from all sides, which is adduced by economic experts, and it then gives a decision as to what is the maximum basic wage the economy of the country can stand. I think that is a proper way of fixing a basic wage. A man would be less than human if he begrudged the lower-paid worker the maximum that the economy

of the country could afford. I do not think this Parliament is in a position to decide that issue because whatever we may declare, would not be the final say; if the basic wage is fixed higher than the economy of the country can stand, we would then get inflation, which means that the worker then loses the advantage which a nominal increase gives, because prices rise.

The Minister for Labour: It is not a fixation of the basic wage but an adjustment of it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Federal court has decided that it will from time to time give to the worker the maximum amount as the basic wage that the economy of the country can stand. Our court will do likewise.

Mr. Brady: It might give him less.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If it acted on the same principle and followed the procedure of the Commonwealth, it would not give him less. Our basic wage has always been a few shillings above that of the Commonwealth, and it is so today.

Mr. J. Hegney: Why is that so?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Because it is the decision of the court.

Mr. J. Hegney: Because of the influence of legislation of a Labour Government at the time.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If the Labour Government influenced the court's decision, then it was very bad, but I do not see anything in the Act that does that. This is another discretion that has been taken away from the court. Here again it is proposed to weaken the Arbitration Court. The Federal decision was made by judges of the highest repute in the Federal court after weeks of inquiry and after weeks of hearing evidence adduced by experts throughout Australia.

Is it wise for us to try to decide such an issue? I say definitely it is not. I am not sufficiently wise or studious, nor have I the knowledge or information to know whether the decision of the Federal court was right or what the decision of our court should be. In both instances, however, it would be better, in the interests of the economy of Australia and of the worker, to leave such a difficult matter in the hands of the Federal court, because it has the assistance of every possible expert.

Mr. Andrew: If it freezes wages, why does it not freeze prices?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister has the power to freeze prices.

Mr. Andrew: What about the Arbitration Court?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If the Minister thought there was something wrong in the prices charged, neither he nor the Premier would hesitate for one moment. The reason they do not freeze prices is that they know, from the advice given to them by the Prices Commissioner, that the margins are as low as they can reasonably be made.

If the Minister were not satisfied, does the hon. member think he would stand it for one minute? The Minister is controlling clothing and groceries; he is watching meat and controlling vegetables and fish, and does anyone think he would see an injustice done? The hon. member knows very well he would not. Has he not considered the effect of the Federal award? Of course he has. He is watching the interests of the worker, and I give him credit for doing so. He is accepting the advice of the Prices Commissioner to ensure that a fair charge is made on essential commodities.

The State award is £2 16s. 7d. above the needs basic wage, because I submit the court in this State has followed the system of the Federal court, that is, to give the worker the highest wage it thinks the economy of the country can stand. If the court had not done that but had applied the old Harvester needs method, our basic wage would be lower than the Federal basic wage for the State. But the same system is used by both courts, and that is to give the highest possible amount to the worker. The loading for prosperity, or considerations apart from needs, is £2 10s. according to the Federal Arbitration Court, and, according to our own court figure, I estimated it at £2 16s. 7d.

I have proved that this Bill will do nothing but weaken the authority, the power of enforcement, and the discretion of the court; it takes it away from here, there and everywhere, except in one instance which I shall deal with briefly. That instance is not nearly as important as the other matters I have dealt with. It is proposed to bring domestics under the definition of "workers."

Mr. Lapham: Are they not workers?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: They are people whom one takes into one's home.

Mr. Moir: What does that signify?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: A great deal. Every man who possesses a home values it very greatly and is rather fussy whom he takes in. He does not want inspectors intruding into his home.

The Premier: Not every person who takes a domestic into his home values the domestic very highly.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I agree with that statement. There will always be some people who disobey the law; there will always be people who are inhuman and there will always be murderers. There will always be wrongdoers.

Mr. Moir: Should domestics not be protected against such type of employers?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If possible, yes. On the other hand, is it fair that an ordinary woman keeping a home and requiring some domestic assistance—say a mother with kiddies—should have to keep books showing the hours of work and carry out all the provisions imposed by the Act to protect the average worker? Another point is, can she do this? Of course not. Such a woman may employ a girl to assist her, pay her a few shillings, provide her with board and lodging and perhaps protect her in many ways while treating her as one of her own. Should she be fined for not keeping books. Should an inspector knock on her door and demand access?

Mr. Moir: What about wealthy employers who employ domestics?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know that there are many wealthy employers who engage domestics. There may be some but they would be very few. I suggest there are more women giving help for some small consideration than any other type. Sometimes it is a matter of friendship between the parties, but there is no such thing as friendship under the Arbitration Act. As soon as a person does domestic work she will come under the Act, and the employer must conform to the award.

The Minister for Housing: Would the court not use discretion in making an award?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Assistance is more often rendered in moderate homes to people who need the help. They will now be placed in a difficult position.

Mr. Moir: Do you not think that domestics have been exploited by unscrupulous employers?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think there will always be unscrupulous employers. Does the hon. member not also think there are families that take in domestics, treat them as members of the family and pay them what they can afford? Often the girls help with the kiddies and that sort of work. Do we want to abolish that? Do we want present employers to say, "I cannot have you in my house any more because under the law you are subject to the Industrial Arbitration Act"?

Mr. Moir: You want to give the court all sorts of powers, but you do not want the court to use its discretion in the case of domestics.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The hon. member cannot have it both ways. I am putting the other point of view.

The Minister for Housing: That is obvious.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not want it both ways. If the hon. member includes domestics in the definition, the housewife would be compelled to keep books.

Mr. Lapham: That takes only a few minutes, and any school child can do that.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is all right. An inspector has the right to go in and inspect the books and see that the provisions of the award are carried out. The girl must be treated strictly as an employee. This would do more harm than good.

The Premier: Does the hon. member think there will be a reasonable supply of domestics without making conditions more attractive?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not think there will ever be a sufficient supply of domestics in future. I do not think anyone nowadays can afford one. I myself cannot afford one.

The Minister for Housing: You are not serious about that.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am. How many members of this House have domestics? Very few. Many women in this community engage a girl to come into their homes; they give the girl protection, a home, and they pay a little remuneration.

Mr. J. Hegney: They cannot get any domestics.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not think that is something which should be commercialised.

The Premier: Is it not natural that girls and women seeking employment will avoid working as domestic servants, and go to organised industry where the wages and conditions are better?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Premier is entirely right. I think the day of domestics has gone, and I am not sorry either. In the old days in my father's home it was customary to engage domestics. The woman who was a domestic in my home remained there for 20 years. I found her to be a very fine woman. However, I do not support the second reading. The Bill does nothing but weaken the Arbitration Act and sabotage industrial arbitration.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

HON. C. F. J. NORTH (Claremont) [12.9]: I have listened with some interest to the remarks of the member for Mt. Lawley on most of the points of the Bill. He intimated that the powers of the court would be weakened in many directions. I was particularly interested in two matters, and I strongly support his remarks on them. The first is the quarterly adjustment and the second preference to unionists, both of which I consider should be

left to the discretion of the court. There is another aspect of the matter and I should like to ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, whether I shall be in order in suggesting something that could well be included in the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may refer to it briefly.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: It is an article of some interest dealing with arbitration which members may have overlooked at the time of its publication. I refer to the views of a certain economist, Mr. Colin Clark, on the Arbitration Court and the whole system of arbitration. I propose to quote him to show where the arbitration system could be improved very largely and made more effective than by the Bill before us, with which measure the member for Mt. Lawley has dealt fully and thoroughly.

When a Bill such as this is presented to us, the time is opportune to make passing reference to matters that could be considered with a view to improving the arbitration system. The objective of the court is as far as possible to increase the standard of living to the highest level possible and to enable orderly conditions to prevail in industry. I agree with that, but the question we should ask ourselves is: Where has that system led us? Let me quote a few of the remarks of Colin Clark, who is known as an economist, very challenging, but not a politician.

The Minister for Labour: Is that the article entitled "Wages, Prices and Mulberry Bush"?

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: Yes. Some of it is apposite and I am pleased that the Minister has read it. The writer says—

> No countries other than Australia and New Zealand, to the best of my knowledge, have ever operated a system whereby all wages were subjected to regular quarterly adjustments either upward or downward.
>
> Still less have any other countries tried to operate a system whereby all wages were automatically adjusted in accordance with an official price index, however carefully calculated, and New Zealand does not exactly count as a comparison because, by revaluing her currency in 1948, she at any rate slowed down the upward movement if she did not stop it.
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> In the first place, the index is always in danger of becoming unrepresentative. It is often criticised for inadequate representation of fruit and vegetables. But this criticism is wide of the mark, except during periods when the prices of fruit and vegetables rise faster than those of other commodities.
>
> A much more serious defect is its treatment of the cost of housing. In effect, it only takes account of houses subject to controlled rents, mostly held by people enjoying tenancies established before the award.
>
> It does not take into account the much higher costs of housing which have to be met by the younger men who have yet to buy or build houses in the post-war years.
>
> But more serious still is the constant tinkering with the index, which goes on at the hands of prices controllers, both Federal and State. If an index is supposed to represent a change in prices of all commodities, it is, to my mind, downright dishonest for price control officials to concentrate their attention on keeping down the prices of those commodities which enter into the index while letting other prices rise.
>
> No doubt there will be indignant protests, but I have carefully watched price controllers perform these tricks, and the facts cannot be denied. I should like, however, to pay tribute to the diligence of statistic officers, both Commonwealth and State, in resisting these manouvres whenever they can.

He then deals with a most interesting point—a criticism by the late Lord Keynes —thus—

> The only thing that saves us from chaos is the inevitable inefficacy of the legislature to secure its object.

That is very true. As we all know, we have been attempting over the years to raise wages to the greatest height that industry can support, and all we have done is to run around the mulberry bush with wages chasing prices and prices chasing wages. Then comes a point which is of great interest, and I trust that the House will give it some consideration. It is the question whether we can have a better system for increasing wages than the present system of merely following prices.

The suggestion made by Colin Clark was one that followed a plan mooted by the late Mr. Chifley. I have mentioned that Colin Clark is not a politician but is a man who is prepared to recognise good anywhere, and does not necessarily look for it amongst Liberal or Labour advocates. He said—

> At the end of the war, the Chifley Government produced a White Paper on economic policy which has long been gathering dust in the pigeonholes of Canberra. This document made a cautious but definite approach to what is undoubtedly the real truth of the matter—that the periodic adjustment of wages should be in accordance with changes of productivity, not changes of prices.

If this document had been written a little more clearly and followed up more courageously, we might have been spared a great deal of subsequent trouble.

I shall stop quoting at this stage because you, Mr. Speaker, have so far allowed me to depart from a discussion of the Bill, and I have no intention to trespass on your good nature. However, when such a measure as this is presented to the House and a member has any ideas to offer as to where the existing system can be improved he has a right to voice them, and I am glad of the opportunity afforded me. It is very easy for an economist to suggest working on a system of productivity, but that is only the beginning of the problem because all economists would tell us that wages must come from productivity. Under the existing system, with all its faults, wages must come from productivity, at any rate indirectly. But if there was some method by which we could deal with the system so that, over a period, the whole output of industry may be related to wages, we would have a wonderful system, and certainly something far better than we have today.

The only way in which such a system could be followed would be by adopting some method whereby, with a type of monster robot calculator, such as now exists, we could have a calculation made in a couple of hours which normally would occupy a staff for six months. Then it might be possible to arrange for the whole output of Australia to be translated into wages and enable the court to produce a really efficient system worthy of 1953.

Reverting to the Bill, I do not intend to traverse the ground already covered by the member for Mt. Lawley. He is in touch with all the questions involved in the measure, having been the previous Minister in this field, and he knows how difficult it is to put one's views into a condensed speech without much preparation. I feel that the introduction of such a measure will have a good effect in that it will permit people to air their opinions and perhaps open up the ground for some better technique for our arbitration system, but the present Bill will not have my support.

On motion by Mr. Moir, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 12.20 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Council

Thursday, 12th November, 1953.

CONTENTS.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1, Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment.

2, Local Courts Act Amendment.

3, Royal Style and Titles Act Amendment.

4, Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries Act Amendment.

5, Collie-Griffin Mine Railway.

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAYS AND ROADS.

As to Capital Expenditure and Maintenance.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What has been the annual capital expenditure on the State railway system for the ten years ended the 30th June, 1953?

(2) What has been the annual maintenance expenditure on the State railway system for the ten years ended the 30th June, 1953?